"Reggae music": the lyrics of the music are a useful tool for the political education of Blacks in the United States

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"REGGAE MUSIC": THE LYRICS OF THE MUSIC ARE A USEFUL TOOL FOR THE POLITICAL EDUCATION OF BLACKS IN THE UNITED STATES

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 1988
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ABSTRACT

POLITICAL SCIENCE

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"Reggae Music" The Lyrics of the Music are a Useful Tool for the Political Education of Black People in the U.S.

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Thesis dated July 1988

The major objective of this research is to analyze the political message in the lyrics of Reggae music, and to show how black American audiences can use that message to gain a black political consciousness. The work attempts to show how Reggae music can act as a source of political education to American blacks.

The method used to show how this would be accomplished involved the formulation of a scheme that linked the expression in Reggae to black American music, and domestic American political struggles by blacks. This was made possible through the analysis of Reggae's link to American radio, and the connection between Jamaican born Marcus Garvey and the "Black Power" movement in the 1960's.
Reggae music was found to be a source for political education of blacks in America. Through critical analysis of lyrics of the music, an ideological system was shown to exist in Reggae. This system was a language of black political struggle in the world, based in an African ideology, with the implication of a bio-cultural factor which called blacks to unite and strive towards the Pan-African philosophy invented by Marcus Garvey.

The significance of this work concerns the area of culture and its influence on man's ability to create. In one sense this involves the evolution of Reggae music as artistic creation, and on the other hand it involves Pan-African thought which is an ideo-philosophical creation. These two are important since the basis of culture is learning and communication. Through learning and culture Reggae music's influence is drawn, and in them Reggae as a tool of political education can be validated. This analysis is grounded in a cultural base, which establishes Reggae's relationship to the idea of a "black identity."

This research has found that Reggae music is a useful tool for the political education of black's in the United States. Yet, it has shown that it is the lyrical system presented in the music which is most important. This work suggests that there is an ultimate reasoning in Reggae, and its basic concerns are "black identity" and African identification.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research is an examination of Reggae Music. One goal of the work is to provide a definition of what Reggae is as a music, and to explain how the music came into existence. After that, the research becomes more specific, and evaluates the music's qualities. The distinctive qualities of the music are isolated to show the factors which make Reggae a separate musical form. This work links Reggae to black American music and audiences. This is accomplished by an analysis of Reggae's African orientation, for it is in this connection that the conclusions are drawn which link American blacks to Jamaican Reggae. The research makes a practical analysis of the lyrics in the music, with the goal of ascertaining the ideological messages in the music.

The research begins by examining the forces involved in Reggae becoming a popular style of music. Reggae's Caribbean roots are investigated. Trinidadian Calypso music is found to be the fundamental base out of which the Reggae style came into existence. Calypso music was not the only force at work in Reggae music's development. Other sources of influence on Reggae were West African "High-life" music, South African musical sources and especially important to this research, American music.
There are four primary stages of the music's development discussed in Chapter II of this work, beginning with Reggae's West Indian foundation of Mento, which was the Jamaican variation of Calypso. During the early 1950's Mento was the primary music created by Jamaican artists. During this same period Jamaicans were also listening to American music via American radio.

By the early 1960's Jamaicans were playing a music called Ska. Ska was the attempt of Jamaican artists to imitate American "rhythm and blues" subsequent to the decline in the American sounds, which were being sidestepped for "rock n' roll." Also during this period, the Jamaican government was subsidizing cultural artists, and this made it easier for musicians to expand their talents. The support of the Jamaican government was the major factor in the process leading to the evolution of Reggae. Another important element about Ska is that Ska was a dance too. And as a dance it was connected to what were called "sound system" disc jockeys. These d.j.'s were hot items of dance entertainment. Initially, the d.j.'s specialized in acquiring and playing the latest American songs to Jamaican audiences. This research will show the role of these d.j.'s who were an important factor involved in the development of Reggae music.

The third major stage in the development of Reggae music begins around 1966. Around this time Ska was fading out to a new sound called Rock-Steady. The major difference in Ska and Rock-Steady was that Rock-Steady had a much slower beat. The
period of Rock-Steady is the beginning of a social agenda in Jamaican music. Rock-Steady was characteristic of a "rude-boy" idea. It reflected the conscious of discontented Jamaican youth of rural background, caught up in the rapid change of industrializing, urban Jamaica. Rock-Steady was a stage in the development of Reggae where "sound system" d.j.'s were also increasing their influence in music. Last of all, it is important to note that Rock-Steady was also a dance.

By 1969 the ground work was being laid for the coming of Reggae music in Jamaica. Those factors making Reggae distinct from earlier periods are political, national, and religious. This work shows that it was the idea of Rastafari in the music which acted as the leading component in the ultimate expression of Reggae music.

In Chapter II Jamaica is analyzed. It is important that the conditions of this Caribbean nation be understood. This is necessary in order to gain the insight into the historical forces at work in the creation of Reggae. A popular American tourist advertisement says, "Make it Jamaica again and again," land of sunshine and bays, an island land. In this work Jamaica is Reggae and Reggae is Jamaica, in a sense. Reggae music brings together the entire history of the Jamaican people. The question of how Jamaica should be accounted for is important because of the involvement of the music in Jamaican politics. Reggae's interaction in Jamaican politics has manifested itself in the lyrics of Jamaican artists concerning national political issues. Many times Reggae sets the tone for matters of emphasis
in Jamaican social life. In this way Reggae acts as a reflection of the mind of the Jamaican people. The political history of Jamaica is a long and violent history. It emphasizes the determination of Jamaicans and suggests them to be real rebels. Jamaica gained independence in 1962. Reggae music was extending its influence during this period and many of the events leading to independence involved Reggae.

The events leading to Jamaican freedom in 1962 involved Reggae music which at that point was experimental. Considering the time period of Reggae's development, it becomes clear how the music evolved and the conditions by which the music developed international recognition. Jamaica is drawn further into the analysis when an examination is made into the role of Jamaica's own Marcus Garvey. Garvey himself, a Jamaican, influenced black thought long before Reggae came to prominence. Garvey's role to blacks internationally gives Reggae and its expression of black existence a mythological tone. This is a large part of the Reggae mystique and provides the basis for its religious idealism.

There are a number of authors whose works would be helpful in exploring the topics in Chapter II. Some of these are: Stephen Davis & Peter Simon, *Reggae Bloodlines*; George Beckford and Michael Witter, *Small Garden... Bitter Weed*. Monroe and Robotham's, *Struggle of the Jamaica People*, would also be helpful.

In Chapter III the work moves from the general assumptions made about Reggae, to provide a definitive description. In this
way the specific elements which make Reggae a unique source of musical expression are examined. To accomplish this goal the idea of Rastafari in the music is examined. It has been suggested that it was the idea of Rastafari in Reggae which acted as the most substantial influence on the ultimate development of the music. Chapter III begins by defining the four basic elements involved with the idea of Rastafari in Reggae. These four elements are: Babylon, Rasta, Emperor Haile Selassie and Ethiopia.

The term "Babylon" is used very often throughout Reggae music. Babylon is a biblical term and in Reggae it is used, by analogy, to describe Western society. It expresses the idea of Capitalism and Imperialism as immoral, decadent and brutal ideologies in the world. In Babylon is embodied all the evils of technology, industrialization and science in Western society. Babylon is a city that has in itself become a machine, and its purpose is to fashion men too, to be machines. Babylon is cold, impersonal and spiritless. It is developed out of oppression and a sort of secrecy. This secrecy is the element which has allowed Babylon to thrive. In Babylon men are poor and suffering as the mechanical wheel of oppression bears down on their efforts to realize the "good life". Babylon is a great and rich city, full of all the things that come with industrialization, technology and science. Babylon is opposed to the progress of mass humanity, since total human progress does not promote its goals and interests. Babylon is in constant battle with spirit forces who wish to unseat it and usher in a
humanistic path along which mankind should proceed according to Reggae. In this, the forces of good 'vs. evil in the world expresses the duality of human concerns.

Another element explored in Chapter III is Haile Selassie in Reggae. Selassie was Emperor of Ethiopia from 1930-1974. He was the oldest and longest standing monarch in the world. He was deposed in 1974 and died in 1975, for the most part discredited, in the land where he had long ruled. He became a world symbol prior to WWI, as a result of speeches he made before the League of Nations against Italian occupation of Ethiopia in 1936. It was the first time in history that Ethiopia had been occupied by foreign troops. The political geography of the nation made it invincible in military confrontation. Selassie is Reggae's connection to Rastafari. Haile Selassie's given name was Ras Tafari. His coming to power in Ethiopia played a major role in the formulation of the ideas inherent in Rastafarian thought. Through biblical interpretation of the Old Testament many Jamaicans thought Selassie to be God.

In Reggae JAH is God. In the Bible, in the New Testament of Psalm 68, verse 4 it is stated: "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH and rejoice before him." In Rastafari precepts JAH is his Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I. To the Rastafarian JAH is God, through their eyes he can be recognized in the person of the Emperor Haile Selassie, historical figure and one time ruler of Ethiopia. The trinity of sort which relates to
JAH, God and Haile Selassie exists in the supra-natural sense. JAH is God in the biblical sense and JAH is God in the Rastafari sense. The introduction of Haile Selassie as the personification of God is a separating and conflicting conception towards the understanding of God. It is important to understand these distinctions and to pinpoint the time in which Haile Selassie was inducted as a supra-natural element which further defined the Rastafari concept of God.

Ethiopia is another concept analyzed in Chapter III. Ethiopia has long been a symbol of pride and hope for many blacks in the world. What is the mystery of Ethiopia to Blacks in the world? Ethiopia is an East African nation, which has a long tradition and heritage of freedom, amongst African nations. Many African scholars and leaders have used Ethiopia as a theme in their writings. Ethiopia was a favored theme in the works of Marcus Garvey. To the Rastafarian, Ethiopia is the entire continent of Africa as well as the nation itself. The importance of Ethiopia in this analysis is a historical/bibli-cal/mythological tangle, interesting and at the same time complex. Ethiopia is a force which seems to create a linkage between the events of the past and the concrete problems of today. Through this relationship there is a connection with the future - that is Ethiopia the mythological idea. If these ideas are adequately expressed, then the conditions will have been met which will help further the understanding of Reggae music, as well as Rastafari.
In Chapter III the cultural idea is also explored. In this research, one of the primary goals is to devise a system for the examination of the concept culture. Reggae is an artistic creation; it provides society with the mechanism needed to engage in social interchange. Reggae is favored and liked; it appeals to the sensibilities of society, like all art. However, the idea of culture is a strong influence in all art. Reggae is said to be a product representation which has evolved outside of its poor mystique, developing inside of the so called "culture of poverty". The cultural aspects of Reggae are complicated, for the reason that the concept culture is not a easily definable one.

The problems involving cultural analysis are inherent in the fact that culture in the objective sense is not a readily analyzable phenomenon. Culture presents itself in various forms which could be observable through particular objects and symbols in a society. Culture is an element that involves a peculiar uniqueness and difference that establishes a firm similarity among certain groups. Culture can also be represented by certain ideological or behavioral likenesses among certain individuals. This research examines how Reggae as a medium expresses African cultural ideas, and acts as a voice for black concerns in the world. In this cultural idea is found the problems connected to the struggles of blacks in the world for identity and a historical basis for existence. It is here that Reggae music becomes a challenge to Western ideas and thinking, in regards to blacks. Chapter III begins the discussion of
culture with a brief examination of the life of the man, Robert Nesta Marley.

Bob Marley to many is the "King of Reggae". With Reggae he brought Jamaica and its culture into the international spotlight. To many he was the "mystic Prophet" who through his songs shed light on the problems facing the world. Bob Marley was the first Reggae artist to rise to commercial success. Marley was the catalyst for Reggae's musical artists who achieved success internationally. Marley's name, and his life were and still are, a mystery to many people. Through his music, he still lives, and his message is still very relevant to current world situations. It is important that the life of Bob Marley be examined if Reggae and the conditions under which it evolved are to be known. Through the analysis of Marley, the concept of Rastafari in the music is better understood. The role of Bob Marley in Reggae brings to the analysis the idea of spiritualism in the music. For Reggae is a spiritual message embodying concepts of nature and creation. In Reggae there usually is an attempt to come to terms with the idea of God. The spiritual message present in the music concerns faith and hope as the basic theme. In the music it is the promises of God for the world and men which was presented as the reason to hope for a better future. And under conditions of faith in those promises man is called to believe that a better future is worthy of all his hope. For, in Reggae if one believes strongly enough and acts upon his beliefs, then through the power of God and the Good, one can expect to win in the end. The spiritual theme in
the music is mixed in dual and philosophical valuations. In these assumptions good works bring good results, and bad works bring bad results. Right outweighs wrong, truth is more lasting than falsity. However, the spiritualism in Reggae transcends the individual striving for personal salvation. Instead, it calls for a spiritual redemption as a universal necessity which involves all the forces of good in creating a better future.

Reggae is further expressed in a cultural framework, through the idea of mythology and prophecy in the analysis. Myth and prophecy are important elements in the study since the cultural complex includes these ideas.

Are there mythological interpretations in Reggae? Myth places the analysis within the framework of a theological foundation. What is the specific role of mythology to the creation and ideological conceptions of Reggae? Under what conditions have these conceptions evolved and what role, if any, do they play in the development of music? This type of analysis is important not only for the insight it gives into the idea of religion in Reggae, and its theological tone, but also because it sheds light into the meaning of culture. It is customs, rituals, and ceremonies which embody the idea of mysticism into some concrete form of reasoning. In Reggae music it is interesting and useful to identify the rationale for this mythological foundation in the music. What is the role of myth in any civilization or society? Does identification with such factors as these lead to social attachments and beliefs about the world at large? The mythological evaluation should help to
clarify these points and lead to a clearer understanding of culture in the work. Also, the idea of prophecy is a common feature in Reggae music. In the music, the prophecy that is present does not evolve from the music itself, but rather, from the creators of the music. Bob Marley has been considered a prophetic figure by many Jamaicans as well as others throughout the world. The prophet in society is the force that connects the physical and psychical in existence, in such a way as to elevate one to an understanding bordering on the spiritual. Prophecy often calls on the religious and even historical experience of those involved in a way that links them personally to this spiritual level. In Reggae the creators of the music act as a "medium" through which the concerns and experience of the entire community are ordered and put forth as recognizable elements of their spiritual existence.

Chapter III also concerns itself with ideology and philosophy in Reggae music. These themes further the idea of culture in the music. The idea of philosophy in Reggae concerns the conditions of "Black History" which must be respected and understood, ideology in Reggae is concerned more with persons and national ideas. The idea of persons and national ideas concerns the problems of identity. How must blacks throughout the world and Africa identify themselves? Though connected through history, the processes of African identification have for the most part been a European occupation/avocation. So the
problem of how black people define themselves is a basic element involved in Reggae music. In Reggae music black people are extolled to identify themselves in relation to Africa and the entire history of the African people. Reggae concerns itself with the problems of poor and oppressed people throughout the world. In Reggae, these same problems keep black people in the structural sense out of the general framework of society. The forces involved in this process are those of capitalism and racism.

The major philosophy in Reggae might simply be stated as "Africa for Africans". The major element involved in the philosophy is the idea of "Black History". The forces involved in this history are divided into various categories: Free Africa, Africa of the Slave Trade, Colonial Africa, Neocolonial Africa and Modern Africa. Reggae expresses these conditions and the various symptoms of African thought affected by these categories. In the end these ideas act as the foundation for the ultimate reasoning in Reggae. Out of Free Africa, the idea that black people should be proud of their heritage springs. Africa of the Slave Trade is the indictment of the European world and testament for the condition of black people in the world. Colonial Africa is shown as the European effort to institutionalize racism and make it a permanent condition for the future. Neo-Colonialism though a negative category is seen as a victory over the forces of Colonialism, racism and slavery. While Modern Africa is regarded as the force essential to the rebirth of Africa - and ultimately New Africa.

Chapter IV deals with the fundamental question posed in this research. That question is, how does Reggae influence black American audiences? The research also suggests that the music has potential for wider audiences in America. At the same time the work acknowledges that Reggae, the music itself, is not the major factor of influence, but rather the ideological system in Reggae which provides the answer to the usefulness of Reggae to black Americans, as a political tool. This work also assumes Reggae music to be a creative expression of evolutionary Black experience worldwide.

Reggae music poses numerous problems as it is approached as a question for research. In this research Reggae is shown to be an international and transcultural music expressing African thought. How the music evolved, and the roots from which its influence stems are important factors in the development of the study. It is in the analysis of these problems that the major purpose of the research is based, that purpose being to explore black American sentiment for the music.
What forces helped to boost Reggae into the international sphere? What events played major roles in establishing Reggae as a viable musical source? In an attempt to answer these questions, the people and personalities connected with the music must be taken into consideration. These persons, their roles and activities help to better resolve the problems involved in analyzing how the music evolved, and the forces playing the roles in this evolution. Also, these roles and personalities provide the insight which can be used in connecting Reggae with black American audiences and defining that relationship. In relation to black audiences, a general statement is made about black familiarity with and/or interest in the music. Why are blacks slow at catching on to Reggae music?

Does black American taste in music suggest that the music is for some reason outside of the criteria of the judgemental values of black society in the United States? What makes a music popular? Reggae has received a lot of popular attention, both in Jamaica and in other countries. Reggae has proved itself to be a migratory, culturally adaptable music. What factors or qualities are at work in the expansion of any music? Why is one musical form of expression chosen over another? Music appeals to tastes. The factors which determine tastes can vary from one society to the next, in relation to likes and dislikes. A music's popularity might best be attributed to a conglomeration of similar interests in a particular lyric, rhythm or sound associated with a set of tastes. These interests are based on a number of prior conditions: age,
education, race, sex, religion, personality, environment, associations, location, economic standing, family, and other forms of sociological experience.

There is a problem of determining the relationship of Reggae to Black audiences in America, since the music has international influence in the world. This research puts forth the argument that Reggae has not gained a thorough acceptance as a popular mass music among black people in the United States, and there are a lot of valid reasons why this is the case. But, when the musical values are abstracted from the lyrics of Reggae and analyzed, then the progress of the music in the U.S. becomes questionable. This research attempts to explain Reggae's relationship to Black Americans, and to show the elements in Reggae which are products of Black American thought. When this relationship is evaluated it will show how Reggae music is a tool in black peoples' struggle for freedom in the United States.

In Chapter IV of this research, Marcus Garvey is introduced as a political figure influencing Reggae. Garvey plays a part in the message presented in Reggae music, and his role is philosophical, mythological and historical. Garvey's life has influenced the movement of black people in various parts of the world, and his ideas provide a large basis for the ideological tone and expression in Reggae. Garvey's introduction into Reggae helps to resolve those problems involving the concept of blackness in the music. It also provides a base for the discussion of American sentiment towards Reggae, since the ideas
of Garvey have played a major role in the political thought of black people in America. Garvey the Jamaican, the American based activist, and Garvey the minister of Africa, the homeland of black people, is examined. This analysis allows a better understanding of the myth surrounding Reggae and will help in presenting the proper picture needed to grasp the historical forces at work in the music.

Chapter IV examines those factors which occur in the process of a music becoming popular and internationally recognized. The purpose of this line of inquiry is to infer that Reggae is an international music. In this way the basis for establishing Reggae as a political tool for the education of Black Americans, should become more reasonable. Reggae is a West Indian sound. A sound characterized and magnified by a Caribbean pathos in its lyrical system. The tone inherent in the Jamaican use of the English language gives Reggae a distinct flare and uniqueness. In Jamaican (Reggae) songs particular words are used in specific ways that tend to give added meaning to the notions which they describe. Particular "word sounds" are either stressed, or suppressed, adding a greater degree of expressiveness. Yet, Reggae does not appear to lose its national qualities and seriousness. There was a process of evolution at work in the creation of the music. From the very beginning the music had characteristics which made it a potentially new and attractive musical source. The initial impact of the music gave indications that Reggae might one day become a popular entertainment form, with an appeal which would usher it outside
of the borders of Jamaica onto the international musical scene. Still, it is important that the growth of the music be analyzed within the context of the roots which served as the foundation for the invention of the whole concept of Reggae.

In this work, Reggae music is shown to have a large European appeal from its earliest beginnings. Reggae in Europe is briefly examined. To assist in this analysis, Jamaican born, British reared, Linton Kwesi Johnson's work is examined. To fully understand Reggae it is helpful to view the product for its European appeal. Reggae is an internationally marketed commodity. Why has the music succeeded in European markets? The presence of a large Jamaican oriented (West Indian) segment in Europe, especially in Britain might first seem to answer this question. Johnson's work will be used to explore the extent of black participation with Reggae in Europe. It is not necessarily intended to be an indepth examination, however, the examination will provide some clues to black involvement and sentiment towards Reggae music in Britain. Johnson's works will be used since he is Jamaican born and his ideas and cultural thoughts make it possible to better understand the lyrical system in Reggae.

Finally, Chapter IV investigates the notion of conspiracy against Reggae as a music. There is the argument that Reggae has not succeeded in the universal sense, because forces not allied to the reasoning in Reggae struggle against its success. These forces acting under political, social and cultural mandates view the music as too political, militant and
dangerous. In many ways Reggae presents itself as a challenge to Western political, social, cultural and economic thinking, therefore, this idea should be given some considerations. Reggae in many ways, with its political, as well as religious orientation, poses a threat to traditional Western thought. Is there a "conspiracy" against Reggae? How would conspiracy be proved or disproved? The goal of this work is not to prove or disprove the idea of conspiracy against Reggae. Yet, the idea is considered as a measure to describe, and define Reggae's acceptability considering that it is a political medium.


The objective of Chapter V is to do a practical analysis of Reggae's lyrical system. This analysis is important to the understanding of Reggae music's "ultimate reasoning". The analysis will also clarify the basis from which the ideological system of Reggae is further exposed.

Seven specific areas will be taken into account. These include: Capitalist/Neo-Colonial Perspective, African Liberation, South African (Apartheid) View, Third World Culture
Analysis, Rastafarianism, Nationalist/Cultural Examination, and the value of a Drug Argument.

The Capitalist/Neo-Colonialist Perspective will examine how Reggae views the West, which many Reggae songs refer to as "Babylon". Reggae speaks to the problems of Capitalism and Colonialism and the sufferings of oppressed people in the world. African Liberation is an important and serious theme in Reggae music. Under this topic Reggae is shown to be a voice to these concerns.

The South African (Apartheid) question is an ever occurring reference in Reggae. This question categorizes many Reggae artists and is a element in the politics which surrounds the music. Reggae deals with politically sensitive areas, and South Africa has been one of those areas.

Reggae is a Third World cultural music. Reggae is of the Caribbean Islands, and it is influenced by the conditions and environment of 20th century Jamaica. Despite this, Reggae is a dignified and proud musical form, emphasizing hope and faith and struggle.

This analysis examines Rastafarianism. "Rastafari" is the name of the spiritual sons and brethren of Haile Selassie who take the father's name RAS TAFARI. It is the name of those recognizing the Emperor as the personification of the Incarnated Godhead on the earth. Rastafari concerns the religious and philosophical meaning in Reggae. The spiritual message in Reggae is a central theme. Bob Marley and the Wailers called the music "Redemption Songs."
A Nationalist/Cultural Examination will also be made. The Pan-Africanist concept will be briefly analyzed.

Lastly, the Drug Culture Argument will be taken into consideration for its value. References to drugs in the music will be looked at to draw a clear picture of the extent of the drug argument in relation to the progress of the music.

The people in the music focused on are: Peter Tosh, Bob Marley, Dennis Brown, Winston Rodney, Third World, Kwame Heshimu. These six artist will be used to do various measurements of the music. Four albums by Peter Tosh will be evaluated: "Equal Rights" (1977), "Mystic Man" (1979), "Wanted" (1981), "Mama Africa" (1983). From these four the religious, ideological, philosophical, political and drug orientation will be analyzed. All other recordings will be a back-drop to this analysis, which will be the main and most important. It will act as the paradigm for the discussion of the music.

In Chapter IV the methods which were chosen as rational indicators of the connection between Jamaican Reggae and American blacks involved a discussion of "Black Power" in America. The linkage of Jamaican music and American "Black Power" politics was established by the review of the work done by Arthur L. Smith, Rhetoric of Black Revolution, (1969). Smith's analysis shows the similarities in the stance in Reggae and the American "Black Power" ideology. This research suggests that it was Reggae's Rastafarian (religious) roots which acted to firmly establish the music as a lasting social phenomenon. To further connect the "Black Power" movement in America with
Reggae, the "Rodney Affair" in Jamaican politics is investigated.

It is the ideological system in the lyrical composition of Reggae that is the tool which black Americans can adopt, as a means of political education in musical arts. And that ideological system is composed of African cultural values and language expressions concerning the struggles of black people in the world.
CHAPTER II

WHAT IS REGGAE MUSIC?

Many different approaches can be used in defining Reggae music. First an understanding of thoughts into the area of music must be pursued. Music takes on various forms and meanings, from individual to individual, from society to society, and from culture to culture. Of course, music involves sound, hearing and listening. Music brings into relationship feelings, sensations and emotional expressions. In science there is the sound-wave; this wave consists of four major attributes: frequency, amplitude, duration, and wave form. Frequency involves repetition and time which can be measured in intervals of occurrence. Amplitude involves the degree of intensity; it represents the maximum value of quantities varying periodically. Duration involves continuation and time, in relation to the measure of the existence of a certain phenomenon, over a particular period. Whereas, wave form involves frequency, duration, amplitude and the external conditions under which sound occurs.

Music involves individuals who create, perform and listen to music. Those who make (create) music are basic to the musical art. While performers are those who can actually play the music which has been created, a person normally learns to perform a
particular music before he learns to create it. At the other end of the spectrum are those individuals who relate to music as listeners. Representing a large segment, more often than not, they are neither performers nor creators. Listeners represent one of the basic elements involved in the creation and production of musical forms. Virgil Thomson suggests:

musical society consists of musicians who compose and musicians who do not. Those who do not are called "musical artist", "interpreters," or merely "musicians." Those who do compose have all been executants at one time or another. The longevity of musical works, however, is dependent on their performability by executants other than the composer. This particular relation between design and execution is particular to music.1

Thomson's interpretation is important, even today. Yet, in music the practice of "playing by ear" has become more and more frequent and popular. The definition of music in relation to composers and musicians is a rather outdated view in relation to the way music is created today. Still, Thomson's interpretation takes into account the intellectual divide of musical understanding.

That is to say one must be able to read music, in order to perform or create music. This relationship changed with the introduction of rock n' roll in the early 1950's, as more and more artists began "playing it by ear" vs. "sight." This helped to change the whole nature of the music industry - as emphasis shifted from composers (creators) to performers, creating and performing their own sounds. The blues and jazz from an earlier

era also relied on playing by ear; still, the introduction of 'rock n' roll' in the 1950's made it an acceptable style.

A. The Evolution of A New West Indian Sound

Reggae music, is often considered to be a "ghetto music." It is the wail of Jamaican slums and shanty towns. Its evolution is the result of a synthesis of various soul music, African, and Afro-Caribbean rhythms. According to John Huey:

Reggae's musical roots are fairly straight forward. Rastafarians generally claim all the inspiration comes from Africa, but there isn't any question that Reggae stopped by Memphis on the way.2

In the early 1950's Jamaica embarked on the road of industrialization, and urbanization. In this period Jamaican music consisted primarily of a musical form termed Mento. Mento was an outgrowth and extension of Trinidadian Calypso music. Where Calypso was refined and spoke to the social conditions of that particular time, Jamaican Mento was often crude and dirty. During this same period Jamaicans were listening to American radio through Miami and New Orleans. At one point American music was the primary music heard throughout the Caribbean. This suggests a strong Afro-American influence at work in the evolution of Reggae music. Huey states that at Memphis Reggae, "picked up some tricks from 1960's rhythm and blues stars like Otis Redding, Carla Thomas, and Sam and Dave."3

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3Ibid
By the early 1960's a lot was going on with Jamaican music. By this time Mento had evolved into a musical form termed Ska. Ska was a dance, and it became the familiar term used to describe Jamaican rhythm and blues music. During this same period American rhythm and blues, and soul music was in decline. Davis and Simon suggest that, "Around 1960 the major R & B and pop music movements in America fizzled and died. Nobody knows why. It just happened."4

What we can be sure of is that it was Beatles music which filled the void where soul music left off. According to Huey "when the Beatles displaced soul, Jamaicans developed their own hard soul form called Rock-Steady."5

The major American figure involved in the transformation of black American music during this period was Little Richard, "The King of Rock and Roll"; he sped up the rhythm and blues of blacks and turned it into the rock n' roll of whites; he helped the Beatles get started.6 In 1963, the Beatles were little known until they invited Little Richard who was popular in Europe to join them on tour, and he arranged their first recording contract. Little Richard also played a role in the careers of Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding, Joe Tex, Billy Preston and many others.

6Zell Miller, "Little Richard was Pioneer of Rock n' Roll", Atlanta Journal, 26 February 1986, p. 28.
It is important that these factors be brought into account so that the effects of American music on the evolution of Reggae can be shown, and placed in its proper historical context. For the most part it was the demise of black American musical sources that gave movement to the rise of Rock-Steady in Jamaica. Scott suggests:

what the Beatles contrived to do was to add a specifically British freshness to American influences. They put a new and creative galaxy of tunefulness and harmony on what were, and are, basically soulful and rhythmic American Negro sources.7

And since the Beatles originated in Liverpool, which is a port city, one might guess or wonder at what other influences were involved in their originality. No doubt they might have had exposure to West Indian music through Jamaican immigrant sources.

Another major factor involved in the rise of Reggae as a popular musical form, was the efforts of the Jamaican government on behalf of cultural preservation and creation after Jamaican independence in 1962. Nettleford states:

The Jamaican Government's positive support since 1963 of a Jamaican music recording industry, by way of a protectionist policy, has resulted in a guaranteed local market for what was to become a burgeoning supply of indigenously created and manufactured musical material providing monetary returns to a large number of talented persons drawn predominately from the masses of the poor.8


This factor is a major element involved in the stages leading up to the final evolution resulting in Reggae. While it might not be wise to speculate into the situation which led to Jamaica's Government becoming protectionist in the area of cultural arts, it might be assumed that the new radicalism which was beginning to enter into black American music during this period, was one component of its decision.

1. Historical Interpretation of Ska

At this point the major factors involved in the creation of Jamaican Ska will be examined. As has been previously stated Ska evolved using Jamaican Mento, American rhythm and blues, and African elements. It also involved Jamaicans using electric guitars and amplification. According to Timothy White, "In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Jamaican musicians began combining the steel-pan and Calypso strains with an indigenous mento folk beat... laying the groundwork for an aggressive amalgam that also contained South African elements and a percussive tack similar to the highlife music of Nigeria."9 The steel-pan drum is a Trinidadian creation, where music is made using oil drums. In the 1940's the steel-pan drum was a major musical discovery in the Caribbean, and is considered to be the only musical instrument invented in the 20th Century.10 Though

10 Cynthia Mahabir, "Fresh Sounds From Trinidad", Southline, 5 June 1985, p. 18.
this study will not attempt to analyze the African elements involved in Reggae, they represent important influences. The idea of a South African musical factor is interesting, while in listening to Nigerian musical sources one does note Jamaican similarities.

Ska arrived in Jamaica around 1956. It was connected to d.j.'s and their "sound systems." The "sound systems" basically were mobile disc jockeys who went about in competition playing their music. American music was the hottest item. The "sound system" d.j., with the latest American hit was the one who succeeded most often.

It is important to remember that during this period Jamai­cans' only exposure to American music, was through American radio. So those "sound system" d.j.'s who were able to obtain and play those hits heard on the radio, became big names and an industry to themselves. Ska developed after the decline in American R & B and soul music. As has already been stated Ska was Jamaican rhythm and blues, developed subsequent to American musical failure. In consideration of the importance of the "sound system" to the creation of Reggae, Davis and Simon suggests, "the bass-driven mojo of the best reggae is derived precisely from the needs of recorded music loud outdoors." One last element involved in the understanding of Ska, is that Ska was the name of the new music, as well as the new dance.

11Timothy White, Catch A Fire, pp. 17-19.
2. The Development of a Rock-Steady Beat

The introduction of Rock-Steady to this analysis is in some ways one of the most interesting phases of Reggae's evolution. Rock-Steady like Ska, was also a dance, while the musical beat was slower than Ska with its Calypsonian base. Rock-Steady was manifested as a 'rude boy' or 'rudie' phenomenon, at first. It also reflected on the conditions of post-independent Jamaica as it pressed forward toward an industrial psychology. Rock-Steady also provided the roots for the initial European appeal to Jamaican music. And Rock-Steady was the stage of development in the evolution of Reggae, where particular characters were establishing themselves as forces involved in the creation of the music. And last of all, it was a period of heightened activity of "sound system" d.j.'s.

The major factor separating Rock-Steady from Ska, was the new beat, which was much slower. At this point less emphasis was placed on horns, while guitars and drums were beginning to lead. After the success of Ska "with the influx of British cash, the producers improved their techniques and equipment. Few instruments were required to produce the basic Rock-Steady sound; rhythm and blues guitars, drums and an organ became the standard set-up."13

The 'rude boy' phenomenon involved the crisis of Jamaican youth in the late 1960's. During this period subsequent to Jamaican independence, many people began to migrate to the urban centers, mainly to Kingston. Unemployment and other social ills

13Ibid., p. 16.
led to heightened criminal activities on the part of Jamaican youths, manifesting in street gangs involved in drugs and robbery, based in street wisdom and prowess. It was a situation where you had to be streetwise, and the youth made their reputations through their potential for violence in varying degrees and intensities. White suggests:

The Wailer's first single, "Simmer Down" was a Ska smash in Jamaica in late 1963 - early 1964, the lyrics calling for the island's young hooligans to control their tempers and help put a stop to the gang wars and savage lawlessness that had reached epidemic proportions.14

Rock-Steady was the period where European appeal to Jamaican music was becoming more entrenched. One reason that can be given for the appeal of the music in Britain is the nature of Rock-Steady with its 'Rude-Boy' tone. This was due to "skinhead", the British variant of Rude-Boy. According to Davis and Simon, when Jamaican music first arrived in England it was taken very seriously, "it was to the violence-prone British youth cult of skinhead that lilting reggae most appealed in England."15

During this period the "sound system" d.j.'s were becoming more important. "By the mid-sixties the "sound system" men were devoting all their energy to recording singles, hustling them at home, promoting them in England, and as usual robbing the

14 Timothy White, Catch A Fire, p. 20.
15 Stephen Davis and Peter Simon, Bloodlines, p. 18.
singers of their socks." So it appears that during this "rock-steady" phase artists were being made through "sound system" d.j.'s who by this time had extended their activities. Where before they merely were playing music, now they were recording and producing musicians. The "sound-system" d.j.'s reputation was one of exploitation according to Simon and Davis, and this might be attributed to the fierce competition which existed between the "sound system" d.j.'s in the early beginnings of Ska.

3. **Reggae: From "Rude Boy" to JAH Rastafari**

The forces leading up to the evolution and creation of Reggae music were guided by the historical and social circumstances of the time. And though these forces culminated into the religious and theological expression of Rastafarianism, Reggae then, and still is now, basically a political medium. Though had it not been for the Rastafarian idea which became entrenched in Reggae, the course of the music may have taken a different direction. And it is the Rock-Steady era along with the "rude boy" phenomenon which allows the new direction in the music to be viewed particularly. For not only does it provide a picture of Jamaican society at a point in time, it also suggests a well-spring of desperation and discontent amongst the young. And through Ska, along with the new focus in the music (Rastafari), a stance is formed based in a new commitment. But

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16Ibid., p. 16.
in examining the factors ushering in Reggae as the new music, the first beginnings of a national idea in the music is detected. White states that the new emphasis in Reggae was "the Jamaican parallel of the injustices exposed in stateside soul." The change to Reggae occurred in 1968 and is attributed to a dance record by the Maytals called, "Do the Reggay". Reggae was slower than Rock-Steady, and the emphasis on the bass was the essential element. Its lyrics became more dependent on a single vocal singing voice, and in this period not only spiritual, but social and political developments entered into the lyrics.

Linton Kwesi Johnson suggests, "The poetry or lyrics of Jamaican music reflects the consciousness of the oppressed... it is the social-economic and political context that is the soil from which the themes of this lyricism spring forth." But it is still Rastafarian origins that are responsible for the social, political and religious tone in Reggae. Race and Class publications suggest: "Rasta is an oppressed class of the Caribbean." At this point it becomes obvious how the evolution of Reggae and the idea of "Rasta" came to be indivisible cultural forms; that is to say, Reggae the product of the Jamaican indigenous community and "Rasta" an oppressed

17Timothy White, Catch A Fire, p. 218.


class ideology. It is in the understanding of this tie that the cultural implications of Reggae the creative medium 'vs' "Rasta" the ideo-religious medium are solved. Reggae and "Rasta" both developed in the same cultural field and environment. Reggae and "Rasta" both existed for the most part on the fringe of Jamaican society and were little tolerated except amongst the Jamaican masses.

The response of Jamaica's ruling classes to Rastafarians provides a revealing example of the ad hoc sophistication of neo-colonial politics in the Caribbean. In the early days, the state characterized them and treated them as madmen and criminals. In its first panic it institutionalized, brutalized and murdered them. But then it studied them, cleansed the 'Rasta' public image, and with university cultural reports, attempted to incorporate and woo them. Selassie was invited to Jamaica. Reggae became acceptable music.20

This contrasts to Davis and Simon's analysis of Reggae, which states, "In Jamaica from the beginning Reggae was slum music and was disdained by all but the lowest class of black society."21 Reggae and "Rasta" were both sources of protest for the social ills in Jamaica, being mutually inclusive and of oppressed origins. Both spoke out on the conditions of the oppressed and suffered the same rejection by the ruling class of Jamaican society.

20 Ibid., p. 72

21 Stephen Davis and Peter Simon, Bloodlines, p. 18.
If a satisfactory understanding of Reggae is to be found, then Jamaica must be analyzed. It is the Jamaican social, economic, political, religious and cultural heritage that embodies the ideas inherent in Reggae. Reggae music is a primarily Jamaican creation, this analysis acknowledges the fact that the music is produced by other national entities, mainly England. It is assumed that these sources stem from West Indian roots and origins.

The history of Jamaica is an interesting history, intermingled with the entire history of the West Indies. Jamaica played an important role in the creation and perpetuation of the slave trade. From the middle of the seventeenth century the island was one great plantation used by the English for the production of the sugar industry. This industry was under the control of British capital. For most of the period during the 1600's the Spanish controlled the trade between Europe and the West Indies. This changed with "the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 symbolizing the opening of Britain's eighteenth-century ascendancy in the slave trade."22 In the initial stages of the 1700's Britain gained control of the slave trade from Africa to the "New World." It is in this period that Jamaica embarked on a road to agricultural production of sugar. In this same period Jamaica became a way-station for the "seasoning" of slaves bound for the English colonies of North America.

America. In the colonies there was a preference for "seasoned" slaves. A slave, "was regarded as seasoned within three or four years and was viewed by mainland planters as much more desirable than the raw Negroes fresh from the wilds of Africa."23 Jamaica and other island of the West Indies acted as both agricultural and slave-breaking plantation for the European in the West Indies during this period. This situation continued until the early part of the eighteenth century as the focus of Europe shifted from the islands to mainland North America. In 1872 Denmark announced that, "from the Commencement of the year 1803, we forbid any of our subject to carry on the slave trade, from the Coast of Africa or any other place, except in our West-Indian Islands."24 In 1807, the United States and the United Kingdom abolished the slave trade, and in 1814 the French agreed in principle that the slave trade should be suppressed. In 1811 and 1824, Britain passed further laws meant to aid in the suppression of the slave trade; these laws carried with them prescribed punishments. Though it was the relationship between the United States and Britain subsequent to the American Revolution of 1776, which helped lead to these new turn of events. After the American Revolution trade in slaves flourished between the colonies and the Islands during this same period of suppression. Irvine suggests that, "the United


24 Keith Irvine, Colored Races, p. 75.
Kingdom sensed that a protectionist American policy would place British slaving at a disadvantage, she embarked upon the total suppression of the slave trade, knowing that this would at once reduce the threat of American competition in Africa to negligible proportions, and encourage other forms of African commerce to develop that would also benefit British merchants..."25

Other factors were involved in the suppression of the English slave trade. The old economic base of sugar and slaves, was fading away and a new industrial system was being ushered in, based on coal and iron. The failure of the West Indian lobby had led to the breaks that ended in the American Revolution. It was based on a protectionist policy involving high sugar prices and tariffs on all goods exported to North America that were not Britain's. As the sugar and slave interests lost their influence, the ground was being set for the suppression of the slave trade, as well as Jamaican emancipation in 1838. Beckford and Witter state that, "Emancipation had come as a result of the struggles of the slaves for freedom when shifting alliances of political and economic forces within Britain left the West Indian planter class too weak to defend its ownership of property and people."26

25 Ibid., p. 77.

In 1838 the Jamaican slave was emancipated. At this point the most important issue facing the freed Jamaican was the question of land. After emancipation the social and economic forces in the society shifted. The major forces involved the large plantation/landowners, small land owning peasants, and an agro-proletariat who worked the large plantations as wage earners. The large plantations persisted in the sugar industry, while the small land owning peasant engaged in subsistence farming. All went well in this relationship until 1865, and "The Morant Bay Rebellion." There were two arms of this single event. One was the rising of small free land owning farmers, led by Paul Bogle at St. Thomas, calling on blacks to resist colonial repression and fight for what was rightfully theirs. While on the other hand there was the voice of George William Gordon, a middle class mulatto, who held a seat in the Jamaican House of Assembly. Gordon spoke out against the conditions of workers on the planter estates and called on the poor and unemployed to rise in protest against their condition. Though these forces were put down, they represent the first real challenge to the conditions of property existing in Jamaica during this period. They are also important because they signaled the beginnings of an emerging peasant, agro-proletariat and middle class mulatto alliance. This is a significant period because it also allowed for the issue of color to be brought into the Jamaican analysis. Jamaican society existed

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27 Beckford and Witter, Small Garden, pp. 43-44.
within strong color consciousness barriers, to the advantage of the lighter skinned blacks. Sio suggests that, "after 1733 the status of free coloured in Jamaica applied to those in the category of mulatto. The free coloured group was also divided into free browns (mustee, quadroon, mulatto) and free blacks (sambo, Negro)."28

The years preceding "The Morant Bay Rebellion" witnessed a lot of change for Jamaica. The primary change was a diversification of its economy. At this point not only sugar, but bananas became an important export commodity. The production of bananas was largely ignored by the large planter class, and subsequently, it was engaged in by the small peasant farmer, since bananas were an easily grown crop requiring little or no capital outlays. Banana production led to a greater degree of class division among the peasants, and the mulatto groups gained the greatest benefits from this economic activity. By 1938, one hundred years after emancipation the major forces in opposition in Jamaican society were the black peasantry 'vs' the mulatto middle class and the "planter class" 'vs' the colonial state. These forces were mainly influenced by five major factors: bananas producing peasants, immigration of Jamaicans to Panama (to build canals), Costa Rica and Cuba (to harvest sugar and bananas), and South America (to build railroads),

World War I, the world depression of the late 1920's and Haile Selassie's reign in Ethiopia.29

After 1938, the primary political figures in Jamaica were Bustamante and Norman Manley. Both rose to leadership after the labor revolts of 1938. The rebellions linked the banana, sugar and dock workers into the same struggle. This represented the first alliance of peasant, rural and urban worker under one banner of protest. The colonial government of Jamaica answered this challenge by accepting the leadership of Bustamante and Manley - though it created between the two activist a rival position. Their coming to leadership placed them as mulatto middle class ingredients in the Jamaican political system, in the role as 'buffer' between the black peasants and workers, and the colonial state. After 1938, the colonial state reassessed its position in Jamaica and set guidelines for free representation in the Jamaican government. In 1938, The Peoples' National Party was founded in alliance with the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union. The (BITU) later broke with the (PNP) to form the Jamaican Labor Party (JLP). The (PNP) was a more radical oriented party with a socialist-communist wing. The (JLP) was a conservative capitalist party. In 1944 Jamaica received a new constitution which gave it self-governing powers, opposed to direct colonial rule. In 1944 the JLP with its large union support was voted into power in Jamaica's first self-ruled government. In the 1949 election the JLP won again under Bustamante. In this period the major emphasis was an economy

29 Beckford and Witter, Small Garden, pp. 49-60.
based in the development of an industrial sector, concentrated in mining and tourism. The official policy of the government was similar to the model of development in Puerto Rico, called the Fomento Programme. Under the Puerto Rican model, economic growth and development were based on the import of foreign investments, under a plan of incentives to the investors, in the form of tax breaks or other favorable advantages. These were the economic practices of the JLP during its rule of the Jamaican government and is the plan which the PNP followed after it won its first election in 1955. In 1962 the JLP was returned to power in Jamaica, and it followed the same policy up until 1972. The most important fact of this period is that in 1962 Jamaica received independence and became a free and sovereign political entity.30

The most crucial test of understanding Jamaica involves post-independent Jamaica of 1962. It is important because Reggae music evolved within this same period. It was the elections of that year that set the direction of the country and gave indications of the complexity of its political circumstance. Four candidates were vying for the leadership of Jamaica.

One was a young, Boston-born white man, a Harvard educated sociologist, who made the promise of economic and social improvements the core of his appeal. The Afro-Jamaicans were Samuel Elisha Brown, a well known Rastafari leader and artist, who ran as an independent; Dudley J. Thompson, the PNP candidate, who was a prominent barrister (Queens Counsel); and the PPP's Byron Moore, a salesman, secretary of his party, and one of Johnson's most loyal lieutenants. The white man was Edward F.G. Seaga of the JLP, a member of the

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30 Ibid., pp. 61-72.
Legislative Council, who had established a reputation of an articulate, left-leaning iconoclast. He registered with the electoral office as an "industrialist and social scientist."

It is important that the roles of these four individuals as well as these three parties in the election of 1962 be understood. Brown provides a tool which is primarily pre-Reggae, which might help in forming the proper picture for viewing Rastafari.

Rastafari is a concrete ideology independent of Jamaican musical developments, during the period. Thompson is important because he adds to the further understanding of the post-1944, labor oriented and entrenched two party system in Jamaica (JLP-PNP). He also allows the basic contradiction of race in Jamaican society to be analyzed. While Moore is a historical source in Jamaican politics, and with his introduction the question of race enters electoral politics in Jamaica. His introduction to the analysis opens the door to the analysis of the Jamaican two-party system, since it introduces the Peoples Political Party. And last is Seaga. "Despite his white-Syrian, wealthy middle-class back ground, Seaga won the election with 51.56 percent of the votes." This fact points to the basic contradiction of Jamaican society - race. And Nettleford's expression of this basic contradiction suggest that:


\[\text{32 Ibid., p. 97.}\]
The view that rigid race, ethnic and even class lines are to be eroded with the improvement of economic conditions among the disadvantaged black poor, especially with the modernization of the political system and the increase in political affiliations on the basis of issues rather than an adultery loyalty to charismatic personages.33

This suggests that the legacy of Bustamante and Norman Washington Manley proved to be determining factors in the political mind of the Jamaican electorate. The Jamaican political mind was based on promises of economic prosperity and specific personalities. Seaga's election campaign was firmly based in economic issues and according to Gannon, "he projected to the voters his person instead of an abstract ideology. In this connection, he understood the deeply embedded messianic traditions of lower-class Jamaicans."34

Brown's campaign was based in his Rastafari following, whose major impact was based in Kingston. Moore ran his campaign under the banner of the People's Political Party formed and inspired by Millard Filmore Johnson in 1961. Its program was based in a black cultural-nationalist appeal. Thompson, the last of the black candidates was supported by the PNP. It further explains the influence of labor unions in Jamaican politics. In 1962 the JLP had 61,163 paying members, while the PNP had 32,499.

33 Rex Nettleford, Caribbean Identity, p. 6.
34 John C. Gannon, Racial Ideology In Jamaica, p. 99.
Seaga and the JLP assumed the political leadership of Jamaica after Independence and the elections of 1962. Seaga and the JLP brought social crisis and political repression to Jamaica, manifesting itself in the "Rude Boy" of Reggae in the mid-sixties. During the same period Jamaica was becoming dependent on foreign investments in its mining industry, and tourism for the stability of its national economic prosperity.

In order to make the country attractive to external capitalist, the Jamaican government was forced to use state repression against "radical elements" in the society to maintain an atmosphere conducive to this economic interchange. This repression is found in the forms of unemployment, underemployment, political corruption, economic stagnation, and a overall decline in the moral and psychological forces of the society. This is especially important in the light of the migration of a large number of Jamaica youths to the urban areas. "Repression is the defense of newly-won and expanding middle-class privileges and ruling-class property, in the face of pressing demands and rapidly increasing consciousness of the masses."35

By the time of the elections of 1967, the Seaga government was at its worse economic period. Still, Seaga and the JLP won over the PNP and Michael Manley, who used the economic problems of the country as part of his appeal. Some suggest that it was huge voting fraud and the disfranchisement of a large number of

35"People's Cause", Race and Class, p. 73.
Jamaican youths that made the victory possible. But by 1972, the Seaga government was still plagued by economic problems, characterized by a disaffection for the government by all sectors of the population, irrespective of class divisions, including the ruling class. During the 1972 election even among the JLP there was political conflict and division. Under the influence of these problems the PNP was placed in power in Jamaica for the first time since 1955, under the leadership of Michael Manley.

Michael Manley's government under the PNP lasted until 1980, when Seaga and the JLP again were returned to power. Under Manley, the idea of Democratic Socialism was introduced in Jamaica in 1974, under the influence of an exchange crisis and pressure from the International Monetary Fund to assist in the economy. This new situation opened a new door and presented a unique and radical turn in the political mechanics of Jamaican society. With all the hopes it provided for the lower-class masses and workers, it ended in failure and disillusionment. Undasynov states that, "It is well known that the social-democratic theories are based on the reformist idea that nowadays "evolution," not revolution, must pave the way from capitalism to socialism."36 The ideas in "social-democratic" thought have at the base, economic betterment, though it does not necessarily seek to disrupt the existing

economic structure within society, in a fundamental sense. These ideas brought Marxist thinking and language into Jamaican politics. Nettleford suggests that, "Black Jamaican ghetto youth object to being referred to as lumpenproleteriats."37

In reality this new turn in Jamaican politics signified new and contradictory economic concerns. It also acted to establish in Jamaica a new form of political bargaining in relation to the union concentrated establishment. During this same period there was "Reggae," tied to and evolving within this new political environment.

37Rex Nettleford, Carribbean Identity, p. 201.
CHAPTER III

ELEMENTS AND PROPERTIES OF REGGAE

At this point it is important to examine those characteristics which distinguish Reggae as a distinct style of music. There are two basic ideas at work in the creation of the music. The first is the elements of religion, which give the music a messianic nature. Secondly, the music has specific cultural properties, which act as interpreters and innovators of particular ideas and "ways of life."

A. Religion and the Soul-ful Caribbean Rhythm

In the late 1960's the music of Reggae was at the threshold of inventiveness in the field of the creation of sound. The new emphasis in the music during this period was characterized by the adoption and introduction of Kingstonian/Rasta drumming styles. Rasta drums were usually constructed using rum kegs and goatskins, yet the Rasta idea did not enter Reggae as a concrete element till the early 1970's, probably around 1974-75, as Reggae was beginning to surface as an international musical source. The importance of Rasta to Reggae began to exert itself after 1966, as Rasta gained creditability and legitimacy after the visit of Haile Selassie to Jamaica. The new trend became more influential with the introduction of the Hebrew, "Twelve
Tribes of Israel" that spread its brand of Rasta throughout West Kingston. Bob Marley, embraced this Rasta form in 1976 and the alliance of Rastafarianism and Reggae were bonded as the perpetuators of both a cultural and spiritual revolution in Jamaican society.

1. Babylon and Rasta

J. Merle Davis suggests that "the outward controls and patterns" in relation to Jamaican society "are English and Christian, but the inner, intimate life of the countryside is still in large part African pagan, superstitious and undisciplined."38 This statement suggests that the people of the countryside are more in tune with their origins and the African view of the world. Though Davis goes further and admits "that with the exception of Haiti, Jamaica has approximately the largest proportion of pure African stock of any county of the Western Hemisphere..."39 These statements give indications of the possibilities of an African cultural heritage surviving in Jamaica. The African people sold into slavery in Jamaica were: Ibo of Nigeria, Hausa, Yoruba, and peoples from the Gold and Ivory Coasts. These various peoples brought with them to Jamaica, their collective religious experiences and knowledge. The Yoruba of Nigeria had the largest collection of divinities of all of Africa's people - more than fifteen-hundred. Mbiti

39 Ibid., p. 32
suggest the Yoruba believes that, "wrong doers cannot escape the judgement of God."40 These factors and influences must be brought into the analysis of elements involved in the creation of the idea of religion in Jamaican society, and the force vital appears to be the idea of superstition. In Jamaica it is called Obeah — and Davis states, "there is something here that presents a fourth dimension to the white man's world. Something that eludes his own instincts, rationalizations, and methods of control. This leads white society to ignore, if not ridicule, this whole area of the black man's experience."41

Can we assume that the black man's experience is an experience firmly grounded in superstitions? Or should it be assumed that the black man's past and his relation to that past, placed him at parity with nature? A parity that was too great to transcend in his experience with Europe and Western society. As was shown in earlier parts of the research, the slaves "seasoned" in Jamaica, came straight from the interior of Africa. And in his new experience, might not he have grasped more firmly his past experiences in nature and his relation to it as a tool for his survival in his new circumstances? And his superstition resulted in his reconciliation of the past with his present situation. At the same time being from the "wilds of Africa," he had little or no conception of the future.


41 J. Merle Davis, The Church in Jamaica, p. 47.
Nettleford suggests, "The hankering after the classical antiquity of an African past is the force vital of much that is the cultural existence in the ghettos of urban Jamaica, and indeed through the main cities of the Commonwealth Caribbean." These factors, influenced by the large African elements still active in the psychology of the Jamaican were stepping stones in the creation of the idea of Rastafarianism in Jamaica in the 1930's.

For the Rastafarian Babylon means many things. Tracy Nicholas states that "The white world, western civilization is Babylon, a decadent, doomed, misguided and corrupt society..." This interpretation of Babylon places it at parallel with Babylon of the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. In the thirteenth Chapter, Isaiah the prophet foresaw Babylon's doom. Isaiah Chapter 13, Verse 19 states:

And Babylon, the glory of Kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

It is through the authority of the Pope that Babylon thrives as it acts to delude mankind, and continues its control in world affairs. Caribbean Quarterly suggests that, "the soon to be resurrected European based Holy Roman Empire, represents the iniquitous Mystery..."

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42 Rex Nettleford, Caribbean Identity, pp. 10-11.
44 "Rastafari", Caribbean Quarterly, December 1980, p. 16.
The idea of Rasta is based in a particular style of life. One of the fundamental characteristics of Rasta is language usages. Through the use and creation of language forms Rasta established itself as a separate social and cultural entity in Jamaica. According to Nettleford:

Conscious change of vocabulary and syntax is itself part of the "politics of protest" in at least one dominant cultural group - The Rastafarians - thus creating greater diversity in the speech patterns and linguistic profile of the Jamaican cultural complex.45

The Rastafarian belief/movement represents a reassessment and reevaluation of African concepts of life. These concepts are based in natural styles and approaches to Jamaican life. The Scriptures as primary in the Rasta view of the world. According to the Rasta, the fact that people are not willing to live properly, in accordance with God's laws, which calls men to live "upright" lives, they suffer. Nicholas suggests that, "through their diet, dress, hair style, speech, language, and political and spiritual beliefs, most Rastas believe they are redressing a wrong, reversing a pattern, reclaiming the past.46

On another level the Rastafarian movement in Jamaica, as well as in the greater Caribbean might be viewed as a culture of survival, since through their own creativeness the Rasta forged a way of life out of the poverty and oppression of Jamaican society. Race and Class states, "No one really knows the entire

45 Ibid., p. 16.
46 Tracy Nicholas, A Way of Life, p. 28.
wealth of means whereby these people pursue and obtain their livelihood, but it is on the basis principally of their invention, that there has been, so far, relative social and political calm in the Caribbean."47

But the basic failure of Rastafarianism is on the economic level. While it has established itself as a social and cultural movement, it still faces the task of providing a mass based program for economic development in Jamaica, and for the Rasta based groupings throughout the Caribbean. It appears that the Rasta economic philosophy thus far is based in the idea of individual self sufficiency and subsistence.

2. Emperor Haile Selassie and Ethiopia

The introduction of Haile Selassie to the analysis of Reggae music is interesting. The factor leading to his role is a reflection of the Rastafari influence in Reggae. In 1930, Rastafari Makonnen was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I, the 225th Monarch of the Solomonic Dynasty. For many Jamaicans Selassie was the black man's Messiah. There were numerous individuals who helped spread the doctrine of Selassie the Messiah. One of the most significant is Leonard P. Howell, who was present at the coronation of Selassie. In 1940 he founded the first Rasta commune called "Pinnacle Estate."48 With the coronation of Selassie, along with the work of Howell and

48"Rastafari", Caribbean Quarterly, p. 97.
others holding similar beliefs - the idea of Rastafari spread and developed. To understand more firmly the introduction of Selassie, a connection must be made involving Marcus Garvey. Burkett, says that Claude McKay states that, "the essence of the appeal of this new "Negro Moses" was Garvey's imitation of one Alexander Bedward, a West Indian cultist leader who flourished in Jamaica between 1891 and the early 1920's."49 A recurring theme in speeches by Garvey was Ethiopia. The most famous of these coming from the Bible: Psalm 68, Verse 31 - "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."

Bedward founded several Baptist churches in Jamaica, and he and Garvey were great influences on Jamaicans during the early 1920's.

Garvey was a prominent figure in the United States for blacks in the early 1920's; he also in the later 1920's was involved in Jamaican politics. As Chapter II of the work suggests, the People's Political Party of Millard Filmore Johnson of 1962 was inspired by Marcus Garvey. In 1928, Marcus Garvey founded a "People's Political Party" which was a political association of individuals running for political office in Jamaica. In 1930, Garvey's "People's Political Party" ran a slate of thirteen candidates in the Crown Colony government. Garvey, himself ran and was defeated, while three of its candidates won their elections. After the elections of 1930, Garvey's "People's Political Party" was dissolved. Gannon states that:

49 Ibid., p. 99.
the first PPP represented a bold attempt by Garvey to stimulate a political awakening - to mobilize and lead progressive creole forces. To this end, the energetic reformer argued forcefully for the efficiency of party politics.

But in 1930, which was the first election in which Garvey's PPP was involved, only 6.58 percent of the total population was registered to vote. Of them, only 48.5 percent actually did vote. Gannon goes further and suggests:

In this context, Garvey failed to achieve the political awakening he sought within the existing electorate. Brashly outspoken, and openly supportive of the black masses, he proved unacceptable as political leader of the conservative Jamaican establishment.50

The purpose of this analysis has been to make an effort to show the influence of Marcus Garvey in the social process and Rastafari's Ethiopian, and Selassie connection as a response to Garvey. The mixture of Jamaican "messianic tradition," with the Ethiopianism of Garvey, provides an indication of the forces at work in Jamaica in 1930. With the crowning of Rastafari Makonnen as Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, the way was paved, based in a religious and political reasoning, that made it possible to proclaim Selassie the black man's Messiah.

B. The Challenge of a Bold, New Cultural Ethos

At this point the research will turn to the question of culture. It is important to this study because Reggae is an artistic creation. But since Reggae is in many ways a medium

which acts as the interpreter of Rastafari ideas and thought, it presents other problems involving cultural analysis. In this sense Reggae is the cultural object, both expressing and promoting a cultural idea. In this, it must be assumed that music is an object of culture and that ideas are cultural products. In this analysis it is also assumed that culture involves the interplay and exchange between individuals, and societies, in relation to values. Also, an important element involved in the creation of culture is innovation. Charles Ellwood suggests that:

"culture includes all of man's acquired power of control over nature and himself." 51

These are his material and spiritual abilities to invent new things. Around 1969 this ability to invent led to the creation of Reggae music, and in 1930 to the idea of Rastafarianism. And these involved individuals, society and values. Ellwood goes further and states that:

"culture, whether it is tool making, ritual making, institution making or idea making, is all a process of learning and communication." 52

The process of learning involves the ability of individuals to modify their conduct in relation to society, based on information which has been communicated to them. In social theory all behavioral changes or modifications take place within an individual's own value or belief capacity. All behavioral

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52 Ibid., p. 6.
changes involve the individual's position and relations in his or her society. Communication is the element which allows for learning. The fact that individuals are able to rationalize with verbal expressions makes it appear that values are related to approval or disapproval. An individual's values are a product of his or her culture. That is to say, if an individual promotes or participates in a particular behavior not approved of by that society, it will be met with disapproval, and vice-versa. It is man's biological nature, his specific environment and the particular nature of his social and cultural systems are essential to the establishment of his value structure.53

In this analysis Reggae music, as a physical object, shall be viewed as material culture. It was the interaction of a particular group of individuals involved in the music in relation to social conditions who began to inject Reggae with ideological or spiritual culture, Rastafari. Though the similarity of the two was stated earlier, both being cultural sources, acted to propel each other along to further development. Sheldon states:

Culture is a theoretical model, and the abstractions and principles from which it is made up are free creations of the mind. Some of these... deal with matters close to the minds of the individual culture bearers... this aspect of culture is usually called explicit culture, are so generalized that in many cases the culture bearers are unable to formulate them these are the "ways of life," tacit premises about how things are.54


54 Ibid., p. 37.
1. Bob Marley and Spiritualism

In the analysis of Reggae music the role played by Robert Nesta Marley is one of the most interesting, and complex. In the final analysis Reggae music became the embodiment of Marley's life, and deeply connected with his social experience. It is through Marley that the spiritual ideas in Reggae are heightened. Marley has been termed a mystic, shaman, and prophet. Bob Marley was before his death in 1981, and still is now, considered the "King of Reggae" music. He is credited as being the person who popularized and internationalized Reggae and the Rastafari idea. Nearly three-hundred thousand people attended his funeral at the National Arena in Kingston. Marley was a hero for a large number of poor, black Jamaicans, and his involvement in Reggae and Rastafari was the source of his influence and popularity. Horton suggest, "But still the death on May 11 shocked many; some of them even believed that a worldwide conspiracy had somehow caused his demise."55 For not only did Marley's use of Reggae express the idea of Rastafari, but it also sought to identify the problem of racism and oppression of blacks and poor people around the world. In this sense the music was highly religious as well as political. Horton goes on to state that, "Prime Minister Manley attributed Marley's political growth to his continued travels throughout the world, especially his African trips."56

56 Ibid., p. 22.
Bob Marley through his music had become a symbol for many people of a new type of commitment to the idea of black unity. His assertiveness, with his knowledge and understanding of the past, along with his ability to give prophecy about the future was the root of his success, for many of the lyrics in his songs were bold, and aggressive challenges to the status quo and established political reasonings. Marley was so steadfast in his ideas and beliefs as reflected in his music, that a spiritual dimension appeared to be involved. James Cone suggests that:

The working of God's Spirit in the life of the believer means an involvement in the world where men are suffering... The work of the Spirit is what happens to a man's total being, a change where he is now repelled by the bigotry of others. He is repelled because statesmen and politicians say we need more time before black men can have human dignity.57

2. Symbols of Myth and Prophecy

There are several elements involved in Reggae music which allows it to be viewed from a mythological and prophetic angle. What makes this a useful analysis is that in this manner the idea of symbols in the music can be addressed. In this way the field for viewing culture is widened and expanded. Earlier the human figure, Bob Marley, was shown to be a cultural object. As an object of culture, Marley's role was symbolic, in the sense that his musical creations spoke to the needs of other people,

primarily. In this way Marley, though his experience was individual and personal, reflected the socio-cultural mind of Jamaicans as well as other individuals throughout the world. He represented both an aesthetic-artistic culture source, with an ideological-philosophical foundation. Reggae music was the aesthetic-artistic source, while nationalism, along with Pan-Africanism the ideological-philosophical base. So Marley was the cultural symbol in the sense that he was a producer of culture, (Reggae music) and a promoter of culture (nationalism, Pan-Africanism) on the ideological level. Marley's popularity was due to the fact that on the artistic plane he was at the vanguard in the creation of Reggae music. This popularity widened as he became a symbol of the cultural idea, Pan Africanism. Since Marley was also viewed in relation to Rastafari, a religious idea involving culture, African culture particularly, it becomes easier to understand how Marley evolved as a symbol of culture and prophecy.

Sheldon suggests that culture exists "as a body of artifacts and a system of symbols." In this way the creation of Reggae music in the physical-material sense (LP's and 45's), represents cultural artifacts existing in time and space. While on the other hand the symbol system exists on the ideological dimension and is indivisible with the cultural artifacts, which are artistic and religious. In this approach to culture in Reggae, a distinction can be made which allows for the

58 Parsons and Shils, Toward A General Theory, p. 41.
separation of Reggae - the art, the idea, and the religion. Bob Marley, the artist, and symbol of culture has been termed, prophet, mystic and shaman. Theodore Roszak says that the shaman and artist are alike in the sense that both possess a somewhat magical power. He states:

magic as it is practiced by the shaman and the artist - is that it seeks always to make available to all the full power of the magician's experience. While the shaman may be one especially elected and empowered, his role is to introduce his people to the sacramental presences that have found him out and transformed him into their agent.59

In relation to culture, one of the most bold and innovative challenges to Western concepts of reality is dreadlocks. This fashion of wearing the hair by many Reggae musicians and Rastafarians, acts as a symbol of an outward and identifiable rejection of white society. For to the Rasta, the wearing of "Dreads" emphasizes their commitment to the concept of blackness and their link to their African past. Dreadlocks give more indication of the mythological basis in Reggae, going as far back as Ethiopia. According to Irvine, an account given by the Portuguese explorer Gasper de Correa around 1520, concerning his contacts with the people of Ethiopia states that they were, "a tall black people with thick matted locks, which from their birth they neither cut nor combed."60 To the Rastafarian the wearing of dreadlocks represents the reclaiming of the past


60 Keith Irvine, Colored Races, p. 53.
with the understanding of it being a rightful and honest claim. To help in understanding the influence of Reggae artists as a cultural influence it is useful to examine the words of Kenneth Jones, who says:

My initial exposure to dread-locks was by way of Rastafarian musicians. Their Pan-African messages and flying locks radiated an energy unlike any I'd ever known.

The choice of an individual to grow dreadlocks comes with social, political and economic drawbacks, since dreadlocks are an overt protestation. Jones states:

I pay a price for wearing dreads. My marketability is restricted to jobs where some degree of political integrity and self-expression is permissible.61

3. The Ideological and Philosophical Tenets in Reggae

At this point an attempt is made to explore the ideological and philosophical tenets in Reggae music. The major facts at work in these concerns involve the concept blackness and the idea of African history. On the ideological level the concern of blackness refers to the methods in which blacks define themselves. The basic argument in this case is the degree to which black people should accept and define themselves using the Western traditional model, which tends to undervalue blackness. While on the philosophical level it becomes more specific, and the questions involve the response of blacks to the continent of

Africa, from which all black historical experience derives. These assumptions about African identity and blackness are for the most part based in cultural propositions.

According to Stoddard, "the basic factor in human affairs is not politics but race." In Reggae music the black man is called upon to organize and unify under the bio-cultural fact of blackness. In this the philosophical tenet of "Africa for Africans" was grounded. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, one of his characters Tom Buchanan expressed:

>Civilization's going to pieces. I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read The Rise of the Colored Empires by this man Goddard?... It's a fine book, and everybody ought to read it. The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be - utterly, submerged. It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved.

This literature coming out of the mid-1920's is a reflection of the mind of the white world, and gives indications of the white world's attachment to the idea of supremacy over people of color. The book which the character Tom Buchanan was referring to as scientific was the work by Stoddard, whom earlier was shown to suggest race not politics as the fathom in human affairs.

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On the ideological level, the greatest force involved in the creation of the black man's inferiority was slavery. This new literature was the method the white world used to reconcile its treatment of blacks into an acceptable psychological framework to fit its own mental needs. This was needed because of the white man's involvement with Christianity. In 1880, Blyden stated that Africa was not adversely affected by the slave trade:

she is as populous today as she ever will be...
Africa never lost the better class of her people.
As a rule, those who were exported - nearly all the forty millions... belonged to the servile and criminal classes.64

According to Blyden in 1880, Europeans had no firm control of Africa - and their only contacts were along the West Coast, with the exception of South Africa and Egypt. They knew little of the inner parts. In 1590 the Kingdom of Songhai was defeated by an international force, by way of Morocco. The defeat of Songhai, led to a disintegration of the Songhai empire and the conditions following the war led to an increase in the trade in slaves. During this period the prisoners of war and other captives of the war torn Kingdom produced so many slaves that the price of slaves dropped to its lowest point than at any other time. As a result of the fall of Songhai, two new African Kingdoms rose: Ashanti and Dahomey. Both obtained their power and influence through the trade in slaves.65

65 Keith Irvine, *Colored Races*, p. 66.
these two were at odds with European powers, who after 1800 were attempting to abolish this form of trade. "Ashanti met British forces in battle seven times before British authority ultimately prevailed in 1900. These battles occurred in 1806, 1811, 1814-1815, 1823-1826, 1873-1874, and 1895."66 In this brief history of existing conditions around this period an idea is shown of the facts in Blyden's writings. It becomes clear that African forces under the pressures of economic issues were active forces in the perpetuation of slavery. But the collective European and African conflicts involving slavery were a different and less serious issue to the New World, in its demand for, and its attitude towards people of African origin. In this analysis it becomes clear how the idea of blackness became associated with inferiority. It gives an indication of the forces inside Africa which for economic reasons, willingly sold their people into slavery - in the end leading to the enslavement of the continent itself. Though it is important to understand that it was outside intervention at the authority of Portugal, in the war with Songhai that turned slavery into a wholesale commodity; and which led to the creation of Ashanti and Dahomey as slave trading states. In Chapter II of this research it was pointed out that the Europeans began an effort to end slavery at the beginning of the 1800's. The most important historical events and figure of this time, was Toussaint L'Ouverture, and the slave revolts of Haiti. The

event of his coming into control of Haiti was the force compelling the Europeans to reverse their exploits in Africa and re-think their course in relation to the black man. Thus arose the idea that slavery was to be suppressed and eventually abolished. In some ways it represented an economic sabotage of the growing, thriving African Kingdoms. While at the same time Toussaint's rise in Haiti opened a new discussion in the New World concerning the equality and position of its African inhabitants. It is the struggles of Haiti that gave the black man in the New World a lens in which he could focus on his condition, and with his new psychological strength, he began to rebuild his consciousness. This same period led to the coming of a large number of New World, black idealists and philosophers committed to the idea of freedom and the equality of the black man.
CHAPTER IV

REGGAE AND BLACKS IN THE UNITED STATES

At this point the fundamental question involved in the work will be analyzed. This analysis is undertaken in light of the previous examination of Reggae music, Jamaica and culture. To say that Reggae music is a tool to be used in the movement of blacks within the United States, is a serious statement. The first question that might be asked is, what kind of tool? If that question is answered, then the question that must be answered is, how useful? The first thing that must be established is a mechanism for the association of the rise of Reggae to the political activities of American blacks. In this process a link must be established that connects Reggae the mid-sixties musical movement with the, mid-sixties "Black Power" movement in America. Through this process a framework can be devised for the comparison of the growth of Reggae in relation to the growth of the "Black Power" movement in the U.S. This connection is significant in the sense that it works towards bringing the black cultural idea into fuller focus, especially as it relates to black identity. During the period of the "Black Power" struggle in the U.S., blacks showed physical and psychological behavioral changes as they redefined blackness in a positive way. Some of these changes were reflected in
hair-do's, mode of dress and in the lyrical assertiveness in the music of that period. During the late 1960's American black music was a mouthpiece for the "Black Power" movement, speaking out on political and social issues of prejudice and injustice. Because of the ties between Reggae and American black music, it would be a mistake to isolate Reggae music from this trend in black music during that period. It might be assumed that the black American artist could not maintain the new lyrics in changing times. While the Jamaican artists' new lyrical emphasis, which is assumed to be influenced by the new American trend was sustained by a spiritual/religious commitment (Rastafari). In 1964, Curtis Mayfield in his song "I Plan To Stay A Believer," was telling blacks to get up and use what they have, to help themselves; he says:

we're over 20 million strong and it wouldn't take long to save the ghetto child, if we'd get off our ass... I plan to stay a believer.

This was the new consciousness of the lyrics of black American music during this period, emphasizing a commitment to black people and the idea of blackness. In emphasizing how Reggae music was influenced by black American music the fact that Bob Marley lived in Delaware during 1966 gives further indication of its influence. White suggests that Marley:

After being laid off from his job at the auto plant, Bob applied for welfare, and in October he received a notice from the Selective Service Bureau telling him to register for the draft. Exasperated, Bob packed up his things and caught the next flight back to Kingston.67

67Timothy White, Catch A Fire, p. 215.
White goes further and suggests that the Wailers LP "Burning" of 1973, "was filled with dangerous, wailing Black Power songs..." 68 One indication of the influence of the idea of "Black Power" in Jamaica was the so-called "Rodney Affair." In 1968 Rodney was banned from re-entering Jamaica because of his espousal of a "Black Power" philosophy. During this period Rodney was a lecturer at the University of the West Indies at Mona. Caribbean Quarterly, suggests that three elements were basic to Rodney's philosophy:

the break with imperialism which is historically white racist;... power by the black masses in the islands; the cultural reconstruction of the society in the image of the black. 69

Rodney was the one individual who was able to express the idea of "Black Power" to Jamaicans in a way which they came to understand. Prior to his banning he was considered to be one of the most controversial personalities in Jamaica. His banning ultimately led to a student revolt, which subsequently led to riots and looting by the general masses of Jamaica. Though these events dissipated, they provided the groundwork for serious discussion of "Black Power" among radicals, and brought the Jamaican Government, and the University in Jamaica into open political conflict.

These ideas and events are important in the attempt to link Reggae with black American audiences. The ideas involved in "Black Power" represent an American element, and the new

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68 Ibid., 261.

radicalism in Reggae are post Rodney. It is important to note that the Rastas were involved in the events surrounding the "Rodney Affair" as Caribbean Quarterly suggests in relation to Rodney's expression of the "Black Power" idea. The response to this message by the urban youths, the unemployed and the Rastafarians was overwhelming.\textsuperscript{70}

One source which might be used in the analysis of Reggae music is Arthur L. Smith's, \textit{Rhetoric of Black Revolution}, (1969). Smith's research is basically concerned with the rise of revolutionary consciousness, amongst black people in America. Reggae music is a revolutionary music, and the music developed parallel with the rise of "Black Power" and the black "revolutionist" in America. This relationship between Reggae and the black revolutionist, makes Smith's research a useful tool in understanding Reggae, and the political atmosphere under which it came into existence.

According to Smith, "the black revolutionists are concerned with identity, black identity in a white world."\textsuperscript{71} In Smith's analysis every revolution has its own language in which the claims of the revolutionist are justified. It is usually an aggressive and unifying language, since it reaches out to the masses of blacks. In Smith's analysis the origin of black political protest arrived with the Montgomery bus boycott and the Supreme Court School Decision of 1954, Brown vs. Board of

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid

Education. In Smith's analysis, the primary forces involved in black protest were organizations like the NAACP and Martin Luther King, Jr. and his followers. Though the NAACP has successes, and though Martin Luther King motivated the black masses to act, it was their failures that led to the rise of the black revolutionist. Out of these failures the more aggressive elements began to wield their influence, such as, the black nationalist. These groups, and others like them, suggested a more radical stance was necessary, if America was to come to terms with the problems associated with the black predicament. Out of the language of black revolutionary protest grew expressions such as, "Black Power." Smith suggests, "if these phrases produced a certain dissonance for white Americans, for blacks they signal the dawn of a new age." 72

The key involved in the protest of the black revolutionist was the problem of black identity. It was the language of the black revolutionist which was grounded in a "definition and redefinition" of black culture. This made them a viable source for the interpretation of black life in America. According to Smith, with the rise of the black revolutionist protest "the situation in which whites held the key even to the black man's definition of himself no longer exists." 73 While the struggles of a large number of new and independent States in Africa played a large role in the creation of the new black

72 Ibid., p. 5.
73 Ibid., p. 8.
language of protest, it is the black revolutionist who provided the black masses with a new sense of pride and respect for things black and African, while allowing it to come to terms with the idea of blackness in general. Smith says that the black revolutionist had a wide audience, "... they inherited a ready-made audience. The audience of Martin Luther King, Jr."74 Their assertive language emerged as an off-spring of King's non-violence, to which American society was slow in responding. Smith suggest however, that the black revolutionist protest may not necessarily be violent, he states: "it is in the use of language that the rhetoric of revolution becomes identified as militant."75

There are four language strategies used by black revolutionist in making their point. These are: vilification, objectification, legitimation and mythification. Vilification is used to degrade a person, his actions or ideas. It is accomplished by using harsh language against a particular person whom the revolutionist see as his opponent. The major uses of "vilification" are for exposing corruptions, inefficiencies, lies, intrigues and injustices.

Objectification presses claims against particular groups or collectivities: institutions, nations, races, or political parties. Blame is the major element involved in objectification. In this instance the opponents of black revolution

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74 Ibid., p. 13.
75 Ibid., p. 22.
are placed into defensive positions, and blamed for particular black problems.

Legitimation is also used; it acts as a justification of the actions and tactics of those involved in the black protest movement. It explains the actions of those involved in the movement as a result of the opposition's actions and behavior. Thus, the actions of the followers of the black revolutionist are just, and what is to be expected, given the conditions. It was a common language strategy used to justify the Watts, Detroit and Newark riots of the late 1960's.

Mythification encompasses the moral and righteous basis of black revolutionary protest. It suggests its actions are sanctioned by supra-rational forces, with a spiritual dynamic, sometimes using religious symbolism in order to strengthen its cause. Mythification relies heavily on historical events, pointing to events in history where changes occurred, as a result of similar actions or events.

Many themes involved in the language of the black revolutionist evolved from the religious traditions of the slaves. Biblical terms and concepts in this case are related directly to the liberation of the black man, though these themes are more characteristic of secular protest. Secular protest was used by W.E.B. DuBois, whose appeal was to the intellect of white America. His appeals were for power, democracy, brotherhood, humanity and justice primarily. To DuBois the major concern was that each man should be treated equally under the law. The problems of mythification did not play a major
role in the analysis of the problems plaguing the black man in America. However, it was Malcolm X and his ideas about black people in America that forced America to rethink its racial scheme. Malcolm X's major theme was "power." Revolutionists like Stokley Carmichael, Maulana Karenga, H. Rap Brown, LeRoi Jones, Huey P. Newton, and others who shared his beliefs and ideas, made it a major theme in "Black Power" protest. The names of particular organizations reflected the change in black political protest themes: US, Black Panthers, Afro-American Action Committee.

According to Smith, there are four major themes of black revolutionist protest. These themes include: the idea that all black people have the same enemy, that there is a conspiracy against black manhood, America is a hypocrite, and that black people must unify if they are to ever be free. Smith's analysis of the politics of black revolutionary struggles in the United States is important, and useful for this research for several reasons. Reggae music in Jamaica, and black political protest in America developed in the same historical time frame. It is useful in order to draw conclusions concerning this relationship, and the possible connections between the two developments. Since Smith's analysis gives indications of the factors involved in the process leading to revolutionary structures, it is important for the understanding of the revolutionary stance in Reggae.76

76 Ibid., pp 1-71.
A. "The Ghost of Marcus Garvey"

No one remembers Old Marcus Garvey
No one remembers him
No one
Garvey's old yet young

Burning Spear (1977)

The lyrics involved in the song "Old Marcus" by the Reggae band Burning Spear lead one to ponder the influence of Marcus Garvey in black protest, old and new. The audience for whom the song was composed was the black Jamaican masses; yet it has significance for American blacks. Though Garvey is an important figure in the struggle of blacks in America historically his role and involvement is little known amongst the black masses in America. Garvey becomes the "Ghost" in the sense that his ideas are alive and at work, while Garvey the man has little or no historical significance to those whose destiny his ideas played a major role in shaping.

As it has been shown Garvey's ideas were the fundamental basis for the creation of Reggae music and the concept of "Black Power." Since both Garvey and Reggae music are products of Jamaican society it becomes easier to understand how Reggae music might have developed as the propagator of Garvey's ideas. When the fame of Bob Marley in Reggae is taken into consideration, along with the fact that both Marley and Garvey were born in St. Ann's Parish in Jamaica, some insight may be gained into Marley's inspiration. At the same time both Reggae music and Garvey come together and act as the vehicle giving the music a mythological base.
It is Reggae music's connection to the ideas of Garvey and Garvey's link to black political struggle in America, that makes the music a tool, to be used in the continuation of that struggle. It is significant and important to understand the influence of the ideas of Garvey to the "Black Power" movement in America in the mid-sixties, as well the link between that movement and the evolution of Reggae. Reggae has to be viewed in the light of the questions of black identity, raised in the process of the development of the idea of "Black Power" in America.

B. International Sound and Musical Popularity

In getting at the problems of analyzing Reggae music the question of what makes a music popular and international must be answered. One major point concerning international music according to Boublil, is that "... English is the only language in which a song can become a world-wide hit..."77 If this statement is correct it would no doubt be attributed to the fact that English is widely understood throughout the world. McLuhan suggests:

The patterns of the senses that are extended in the various languages of men are as varied as styles of dress and art. Each mother tongue teaches its users a way of seeing and feeling the world, and of acting in the world, that is unique.78

77Alain Boublil, First International Music, p. 42.
In this analysis it becomes even clearer that in relation to language and culture, the two are distinct yet inseparable. At any rate, Reggae music is considered to be an international music. Though it expresses a particular way of seeing the world using the English language, still it represents a distinct mother tongue (Jamaican pathos). It is the result of elements of Jamaican society and its popularity results from its appeal to various audiences. McLuhan goes further to imply that:

Words are complex systems or metaphors and symbols that translate experience into our uttered or uttered senses. They are a technology of explicitness. 79

So music in this sense, using words and various languages acts as part of a society's identity. These factors make music a powerful influence in society. According to the report of the First International Music Conference:

We are quickly moving towards a world where no kind of music is any longer strange to us – a world where no one music is universal, but where many kinds of music have universal appeal. 80

The first Reggae songs to be played on American stations were Desmond Dekker's, "Israelite" in 1968 and Jimmy Cliff's "Vietnam" in 1969. It was stated earlier that Johnny Nash produced the first international Reggae hit, with Bob Marley's, "Stir It Up" in 1972. After 1973, with the help of the Rolling Stones band, Reggae and Reggae-derived hits were becoming a familiar part of the works of various artists throughout the

79 Ibid., p. 64.
80 Alain Boublil, First International Music, p. 3.
world. The major factors at work in the internationalization of Jamaican music were the combined forces of emigration and the Jamaican tourist industry, both acting as external and internal mechanisms involved in the spread of, and the popularity of Reggae music. It is under the emigration/tourist premise that we must conclude that whites are more familiar with and in touch with Reggae music than black Americans. Under this premise it must be assumed that emigration is Reggae's European connection, and tourism in Jamaica, its American connection.

By 1957, Jamaican emigration into Britain was more than 20,000 persons per year. At that time nearly 63,000 West Indians were in Britain. It is these people who provided the cultural exchange that paved the way for the introduction of Reggae in Europe. As was suggested earlier it was the United Kingdom's alienated and rebellious youth that played the largest role in popularizing the music, via, "Skin-head."

The Caribbean's warm beaches and sunshine getaways lure large numbers of foreigners to Jamaica. This cultural exchange places the monied traveler with greater probability of knowledge of Reggae music. So, in the beginning of Reggae's popularity it is easier to predict why whites may have appealed more easily to the music.

C. Reggae and Europe: Linton Kwesi Johnson

One example of Reggae and its British influence is the scholar, poet and musician, Linton Kwesi Johnson. Johnson initially began his interest in Reggae as an academic endeavor.
He was the son of a Jamaican immigrant in Britain. Johnson coined the lyrics of Reggae music as "dub poetry." Later he began to write his own "dub poetry" in the same tone of the Jamaican artist. In his poem "Youth Rebel" he states:

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a bran new breed of blacks
have now emerged
leadin on the rough scene,
breakin away
takin the day,
saying to capital neva
movin forward hevva.81
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Johnson's poetry is a reflection of the Jamaican use of the English language and extends the ideas of Black identity. At the same time, like Jamaican artists, he expresses the domestic conflicts of blacks in Britain.

D. Conspiracy and the Music Market

One theme that persists in Reggae music is the idea of conspiracy against the music, by various forces internationally. Though the theory of conspiracy might be a difficult one to prove, still, it is important because it acts to help in developing the idea of Black audiences and Reggae. For as has been suggested, Reggae is Third World oriented and political. Through the conspiracy theory insight into the thought of music as a social force is taken into consideration. In this analysis, Reggae has been shown to be concerned with the question of black identity. This provides one indication of why the music might be suppressed, given that Reggae in this

analysis has been shown to be a challenge to traditional status quo/establishment politics. While there are cultural factors involved in Reggae and its relation to black American audiences, the idea of conspiracy is still a strong argument. It is strong because it persist as a theme in Reggae music. If the conclusion of conspiracy is accepted, then the question must be asked: Who conspires? According to Reggae artist Peter Tosh, "the record industry has spent millions to keep Reggae down." According to Tosh it is the recording industry backed by political and economic motives which seeks to suppress Reggae as a musical source in America. Tosh goes on to say:

Because Reggae music is not an American music and its ingredients are so spiritual, it creates a conflict against the commercial music would. It's a very great political conflict because they know its influence.

So at this point music becomes more than an artistic source and is suppressed along ideological lines via the producers, promoters and distributors of music in society. According to Thomson music is afflicted by a style crisis, one which he suggests:

May better be resolved by economic descriptions, sociological studies of the music market, and reflection about political theory than by esthetic reasoning.

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83. Ibid.
At this stage it becomes important to question how a society establishes what musical styles it will support and promote. As Thomson suggests this question involves economic factors, music markets, (commercial music world) and politics. Thomson goes on to state:

The private adherence of musicians to revolutionary or anti-revolutionary or counter-revolutionary political organizations is a legitimate thing and a very frequent thing.85

So it becomes clear that music is a very serious element in a society, and a great influence. Reggae has been shown to be both revolutionary and highly political, each acting as elements for suppression. Though suppression in musical styles is social, political, economic and cultural, the idea of conspiracy against black music extends further.

Since much of the most popular music on records is performed, written by, or stolen from black artists, there should be a much broader based attempt to utilize black talent in all areas of the record business.86

It appears that blacks, in consideration of their contribution to the creation of music as innovators, play small roles in the production and distribution of music. Those individuals in the music industry who do control the resources of music, also determine the success or failure of various musical styles. Though in the case of Reggae, it might be assumed that while the American music industry has attempted to suppress it, it has sustained itself through its Jamaican

86 Alain Boublil, First International Music, p. 317.
roots. While the Jamaican music industry helped make Reggae music competitive in America, the American music industry suppresses it. This suppression is basically economic and political. Though involved in the economic and political suppression it is a cultural factor. It is for these reasons that Reggae music has not reached black people on a larger scale in the United States in relation to its growth as a musical expression which gave some indications that it would.

The only real and serious evidence to support this claim is found in the lyrics of Reggae. A basic theme in the music is the idea that Reggae is suppressed and "held down" by powerful forces, afraid of the possibility of the music succeeding.
CHAPTER V

REGGAE: A CRITICAL MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The final part of this work analyzes Reggae music itself. This analysis is necessary because it allows Reggae to be viewed as a cohesive and concrete system of ideas. First, four albums by Peter Tosh will be examined: *Equal Rights* (1977), *Mystic Man* (1979), and *Mama Africa* (1983). From these an attempt is made to examine the religious, ideological, philosophical, political and drug orientation. All other recordings analyzed will be a backdrop to this analysis, which will be the main and most important. It will act as the paradigm for the discussion of Reggae music.

The logical question which might be asked at this point is: Why Peter Tosh? Tosh's work has been chosen as the basis of this analysis for several reasons. Tosh's work is used because he played a major role in Reggae becoming international in scope as an artist. Secondly, Tosh's works that are used for this examination are periodic and occur in intervals that gives his overall work a historical significance, (1977, 1979, 1981, 1983). This allows Tosh's music to be isolated, so that changes over time becomes more easily identifiable. Lastly, the various categories which are used in the examination, are in one way or another found in Tosh's music. There are seven categories:
The four LP's by Tosh to be analyzed are as follows:

### Equal Rights (1977)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side One</th>
<th>Side Two</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Get Up, Stand Up</td>
<td>1. Equal Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Downpressor Man</td>
<td>2. African</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Stepping Razor</td>
<td>4. Apartheid</td>
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### Mystic Man (1979)

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<tr>
<th>Side One</th>
<th>Side Two</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mystic Man</td>
<td>1. Buk-In-Hamm Palace</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Recruiting Soldiers</td>
<td>2. The Day the Dollar Die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Can't You See</td>
<td>3. Crystal Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Jah Seh No</td>
<td>4. Rumors of War</td>
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<td>5. Fight On</td>
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### Wanted (1981)

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<tr>
<th>Side One</th>
<th>Side Two</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Coming In Hot</td>
<td>1. Wanted Dread and Alive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nothing But Love</td>
<td>2. Rastafari Is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Poor Man Feel It</td>
<td>4. Fool's Die</td>
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<td>5. Cold Blood</td>
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### Mama Africa (1983)

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<th>Side One</th>
<th>Side Two</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Glasshouse</td>
<td>2. Where You Gonna Run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Stop That Train</td>
<td>4. Feel No Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Maga Dog</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Capitalist/Neo-Colonialist Perspective

In Reggae the concept of Capitalism is seen as, more or less, a falsification of the real, true values and concerns of society. The spiritual decadence of this system of economics is the major factor which suggest its influence is doomed and will fail. In Reggae music the poor are the major theme. Poor people have no role to play in the capitalist system of development, except to be exploited. Being thus alienated the poor suffer the injustices which are the outgrowth of capitalist expansion. Under these conditions what outcomes are to be expected and worked for? According to Reggae a day will come when the poor people of the world will wake up and decide that they no longer will accept the existing conditions. Since Capitalism is an international, world-wide system, this new awakening will take place on a universal level throughout society. This universal awakening makes the concept, "culture of the poor" a valid and binding phenomenon in society, exerting
pressure on the traditional economic arrangements at work in society.

In Reggae the idea of Colonialism is taken to be a historical progression with evil connotations which manifest themselves in many forms in society. Colonialization is seen as the stage from which the world was put upon the path of racial inequality and injustice as a fundamental mode of rationalizing the demand for material resources which were essential to the industrial development of Western society. In choosing this path over some humanistic direction the world has been set upon a course which in the end will provide the foundation from which the ultimate conflict in political society will develop and erupt. Though Colonialism can not be judged as primarily a political tool working in society, Colonialism must be viewed more as an economic element whose ultimate destiny will reveal it as the basic component of the racial separation evolving in society. Reggae music tries to come to terms with Colonialism and expresses it as the historical condition which led to the emasculation of Africa and African people. The music of Reggae insists that this prevailing condition will be countered and that black people will be restored to a position of authority and respect in the world.

In Reggae music Neo-Colonialism is seen as one more evil in the scheme to continually oppress the poor throughout the world. In this guise the colonial forces in historical progression have been forced to shift methods and to progress towards more rational forms of exploitation. In this partial
retreat the music focuses on the success in the struggles of people in the world to be free. Neo-Colonialism is seen as a victory over the forces of racial oppression. It is taken as a deciding factor which will assist in the ultimate liberation of all people who at one time or another in their history, lived under colonial domination. Neo-Colonialism is viewed as the factor which in the end will indeed lead to the conflicts which will usher in a new human and spiritual plan for mankind. The role of the black or African world is a fundamental role in this ultimate confrontation with the deteriorating forces of Colonialism's historical progression, of which Capitalism is the primary mechanism of support. This is the hope and faith embodied in Reggae music, and the philosophical-ideological thrust in the music.

2. African Liberation

Reggae with its emphasis on problems plaguing the continent of Africa, has played in one form or another a serious role in African Liberation struggles. This research looks at some cases where Reggae may or may not have had some influence on the outcomes of such struggles and movements. Southern Africa as a region of Africa has held a very strong attraction in this case. Zimbabwe is one African nation which might be used as an example to help understand the involvement of the music in African domestic conflicts. Bob Marley performed at the ceremony which acted as the official foreground to Independence in Zimbabwe. The part the music played, not only Marley's, but
others, in politicizing the situation in what was then Rhodesia needs to be analyzed and critiqued. The music acted as a force which helped to establish the idea of the African "Freedom Fighter" as a valid and righteous movement of people to secure justice and equality. This helped to establish Zimbabwe and its internal war in the overall scheme of racial and colonial oppression.

3. South African (Apartheid) View

The South African implication in Reggae music is a major factor which helps to give Reggae its politicalness. Though it is in no manner a universal topic in the music, it is a theme which is characteristic of the music. This theme might shift in degrees from artist to artist, and recording to recording. Still, in general it is a theme which prevails in the music. This is in keeping with the music's willingness to challenge existing situations throughout the world. It emphasizes that the music attempts to stand firm in its philosophical and ideological commitment to the problems plaguing African and poor people throughout the world. In Reggae music the question of Apartheid, South Africa and the racial scheme which characterizes Apartheid is criticized on several grounds. Even the question of "one-man, one vote" is brought into the music as an issue for the world to debate and solve. This challenge to the political state of blacks in South Africa acts as a challenge to racial inequality in any form elsewhere in the world. The music puts forth a positive speculation on what the
outcome will be and uses its philosophical mechanisms to support this positive stance.

4. Third World Culture Analysis

What is the Third World? Reggae is often considered to be a Third World music since it developed in Jamaica, and since Jamaica could be placed in that category. The factor which establishes a nation as Third World is its level of development. What factors characterize development? In this analysis it shall be assumed that the terms implies economic underdevelopment, or that it is synonymous to "poor". The degree of industrialization and Westernization is a factor in defining the term Third World. Since in Reggae a lot of attention is placed on the urgency of the plight of the poor throughout the world, it is important that the term be defined. This is especially important in formulating the ideas of race and racism as factors in this particular analysis.

5. Rastafarianism

Though the idea of Rastafari was examined in Chapter III of this research, it also must be viewed from a musical standpoint. An attempt will be made to show its frequency of occurrence, as well as its significance as a theme in Reggae music.
6. **Nationalist/Culture Examination**

Nationalism is an idea in Reggae music. This analysis identifies the forms in which it expresses the idea. The problem is the method of establishing the meaning of nationalism. For instance, African nationalism is a strong element in Reggae music. This is some ways gives Reggae its Third World mystique. But the real thrust that makes Reggae Third World music is the attention it gives to the concerns of the poor. Reggae originated in the nation of Jamaica, so it is a message through music in African, Jamaican and Third World national lives. It also has impact in Western nations; in the United States, Great Britain, and Europe. Reggae crosses into the various culture of all nations. The question is how Reggae music expresses Nationalism and in what form? The music is international, so the idea of Nationalism becomes an even more difficult question. Reggae's appeal as a music, provides it national acclaim. It crosses national boundaries in a cultural capacity expressing the hope of equality, and the elimination of racial injustice in society.

Pan-Africanism is a concept which attempts to explain the black struggle as being essentially a struggle for the liberation of the continent of Africa. It calls for the full independence of Africa and the end of all forms of exploitation on the continent. Underlying this desire towards independence for the continent, is the idea of the empowerment of people of African origin in different parts of the world, in an effort to forge a freedom from racial oppression of black people.
throughout the world. Of course these ideas did not originate as an outgrowth of Reggae music, though the music in many respects has acted as the mouthpiece for these ideas as a real possibility in the futures of struggling African people. In the Pan-Africanist view these people of African heritage in the world, must forge a unity and connectedness, which must be used with collective purpose, in an attempt to make the dream of unity of black people a true and physical reality in the world. In this unity all black people then become equal partners whether in Jamaica, Africa, North America, Central America, South America, in reviving the African tradition in the world.

7. Value of Drug Argument as a Measure of Analysis

One basic argument against Reggae music has been that it promotes the use of drugs through its emphasis on the use of marijuana. In this analysis drugs will be examined as a theme in Reggae music. In this way the idea of drugs as a topic in Reggae can be shown for its influence and role in the music.

The work of Peter Tosh is the primary measure that will be used in classifying Reggae. Those categories which have been chosen as a reflection of the music will also apply where other Reggae artists are taken into the analysis. This analysis can be considered a critical analysis because of the historical relevance it establishes, in using LP's that are current and periodic.
CAPITALIST/NEO-COLONIALIST PERSPECTIVE

It would be safe to say that Tosh's song, "Downpressor Man" from his 1977 "Equal Rights" LP is a reflection on this perspective. The song "Downpressor Man" is an indictment of those people in society who control the material and psychological tools of control and exploitation. The song makes the suggestion that a day will come when the tide will turn and these same people will themselves be in need of sanctuary. The major questions put to the idea of the oppressor is "Where you gonna run to?". While the Capitalist/Neo-Colonialist perspective is further understood in the song when it suggest:

You can't bribe noone
They don't want no money
Cause money get funny

In Tosh's LP, "Mystic Man" of 1979 this theme is more easily shown in the song, "The Day the Dollar Die." This song deals with problems of unemployment, deficits, inflation, political corruption and their effects on the people involved. It suggest that when the "dollar dies," people will give up a lot of their Capitalist ways and base their actions on human feeling and ideas.

Tosh's LP, "Wanted: Dread and Alive" of 1981 does not have any songs that would necessarily fit into this particular category. The same conditions for this particular area are not met in any of the songs presented in Tosh's 1983 LP, "Mama Africa." It would be safe to suggest that the LP, "Burnin" by the Wailers in 1973 involves this perspective when they state in their some "Small Axe".
If you are the big tree
We are the small axe
Well sharpened-
Sharpened to cut you down

While the LP, "Rastaman Vibration" of 1976 by Bob Marley and the Wailers again reflects on the Capitalist/Neo-Colonialist perspective when they suggest in the song "Crazy Baldhead":

Build your penitentiary
We build your schools
Brainwash education
To make us your fools

These suggest the Neo-Colonial apparatus at work in society, and it exploits the labor, and efforts of those whom it oppresses. Though they suggest that they are, "gonna chase those crazy baldhead out of town." The same message can be found in Bob Marley and the Wailers' LP, "Babylon By Bus," of 1978 where it is suggested in the song "Concrete Jungle" which reflects on the idea of Neo-Colonialism:

No chains are around my feet
But I know I'm not free
I know I am bound
Here in captivity

Similar sentiments are expressed in the 1983 LP, "The Fittest of the Fittest" by Burning Spear, in the song "Bad To Worst." It suggest that the conditions and problems of the world are worsening, and calls on people to recognize it and to act in accordance with those facts. While Third World's 1983 LP, "You've Got The Power" deals with this theme in its song, "You Play Us Too Close":

Jobless People
Starving babies
Spreading over the land
War-oppression to the have nots
Is how you play your hand
AFRICAN LIBERATION

Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" in the song "Equal Rights" the question of African Liberation is dealt with when he suggest:

Everyone is fighting for Equal Rights And Justice
Palestine is fighting for Equal Rights And Justice
Down in Angola, Down in Botswana
Down in Zimbabwe, Down in Rhodesia

While in his 1979 LP, "Mystic Man" Tosh made a prediction in the song "Fight On," where he states:

Africa has got to be free
By 1983
For if Africa is not free
Then you all will see
We'll all be back in Shackles
My Brother fight on

Tosh's 1981 LP, "Wanted": Dread and Alive" does not deal with the topic of African Liberation. Though his LP, of 1983 "Mama Africa" appears to be dedicated to the problems of Africa. In the song, "Not Gonna Give It Up," Tosh reaffirms a commitment to speak out on the problems plaguing the continent, he suggest:

Africa is the richest place
But it has the poorest race
And to me it's a disgrace
Africa don't wait too long
We got to fight cause it's not wrong

Though the basic idea in the song is expressed in Tosh's words:

I'm not gonna give it up
I will be fighting-
Till Africa and Africans are free
SOUTH AFRICAN (APARTHEID) VIEW

Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" offers a very strong indictment of South Africa and its system of Apartheid in a song titled, "Apartheid." Tosh's message is that black people must unite and fight against Apartheid in South Africa. The song deals with conditions inside, as well as outside of South Africa. Inside of South Africa he suggests of the Apartheid regime:

You don't build no schools
For black children
No hospitals
For black people

And in relation to South Africa's black neighboring nations Tosh states:

You cross the border
And shoot the children
You cross the border
And shoot the women

The song goes further and implicates other Western powers in the problem, stating:

Getting forces
From colonial powers
Taking our diamonds
Building ballistic missiles

While Tosh's 1979 LP, "Mystic Man" in the song "Fight On," states concerning South Africa:

We need majority rule
Vorster is too cruel

And also on Tosh's "Mystic Man" LP in the song "Rumors of War", which speaks of war in various places in Southern Africa, the region, he states:
Again, as has been the case in previous categories concerning Tosh's LP, "Wanted: Dread and Alive" – there is no mention of the problems of South Africa. And while Tosh's 1983 LP, "Mama Africa" speaks of diamonds, gold, pearls and precious stones – all products of South Africa, in the song "Mama Africa", but there is no mention of South Africa in any specific way.

THIRD WORLD CULTURE ANALYSIS

Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" does not possess any song which falls into the Third World Culture Analysis category. This category must necessarily deal in specific terms with the problems of poor people in the world, in the context of the particular analysis. It would be safe to say that the same necessary conditions do not exist in Tosh's 1979 LP, "Mystic Man." The LP, "Wanted: Dread and Alive" from 1981 contains the song "The Poor Man Feel It." This song expresses the problems of inflation and the strain that it places on poor people. For Tosh, this condition is considered as a form of "pollution" of the poor, and his song suggests that "We've got to find a solution to this pollution." He goes on to state:

Gas gone up
Bus fare gone up
Rent gone up
Food bill gone up
Light bill gone up
Tax gone up
Car parts gone up
And me can't take the fuss
While on the same LP, in the song titled "Fools Die," Tosh states:

The rich man's wealth is in the city
Fixation of the soul is vanity
Destruction of the poor is their poverty
The poor man's wealth is in a holy,
Holy place

Tosh's LP, "Mama Africa" does not contain any songs that might be placed into this category.

RASTAFARIANISM

It has been shown in the earlier examination that the idea of Rastafari is a basic and grounding theme in Reggae music. Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" mentions Jah on two separate occasions. These songs are "Get Up, Stand Up" and "Downpressor Man." Though Jah is mentioned in these two songs, the songs are not specifically dedicated to that particular theme. On the same LP, there is a song called JAH-GUIDE, which speaks of JAH as a protector and keeper of a man through all adversity and circumstances in life - man 'vs' man, and man 'vs' nature. At the very end of the song the sound effects are those of automatic weapons rounds being fired. Tosh's 1979 LP, "Mystic Man" has two songs dealing specifically with Rastafari. In the song, Recruiting Soldiers, Tosh says:

I'm recruiting soldiers for Jah's Army
Recruiting soldiers, Jah time is now

While in the song "Jah Se No," Tosh states:

Must Rasta bear this cross alone
And all the heathens go free
Jah se no,....,...,
In Tosh's song "Cold Blood" from the 1981 LP, "Wanted" Dread and Alive," a Rasta is given the oath to tell the truth in court. In repeating the oath, I solemnly swear, that the evidence I shall give, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, "so help me God," the Rasta repeats instead, "so help I Jah." This angers the official giving the oath and he repeats it three times - the last time that he says it, the Rasta said: So help I Jah Rastafari." This LP also contains the song "Rastafari Is," it expresses the strength and force of Rastafari as an idea to be proudly and boldly followed, stating:

Rastafari Is
Lord of Lords and Savior

Tosh's 1983 LP, "Mama Africa" does not contain songs that deal with this theme.

NATIONALIST/CULTURAL EXAMINATION

The Nationalist/Cultural factor is found in Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" in the song titled "African." This song expresses the idea of blackness and black identity. Tosh suggests:

Don't care where you come from
As long as you're a black man
You're an African
No mind your nationality
You've got the identity of an African

The song deals with issues of color and complexion in black society, Tosh states in relation to this idea that:
If your black shines high
If your black shines low
Or if your black shines in-between
You're still an African

The song "African" also deals with the idea of religion in black society. In this case Tosh says:

No mind denomination
That is only segregation
So if you go to Catholic
And if you go to Methodist
Or if you go to Church of God
You're still an African

Then the song "African" goes even further and expresses the idea of the African diaspora, and suggests that no matter what city or country you live in; you can't deny or avoid being African, because the fact makes one peculiar and unique. Neither Tosh's 1979, or 1981 LP's deal with the Nationalist/Cultural idea in the particular sense in which it is used for this specific category.

While Tosh's 1983 LP, "Mama Africa" does have at least two songs that might fit into the Nationalist/Cultural factor: "Mama Africa" and "Not Gonna Give It Up"; they are not used in this category, since they express the idea of African Liberation in the music.

VALUE OF DRUG ARGUMENT AS A MEASURE OF ANALYSIS

Tosh's 1977 LP, "Equal Rights" deals with the idea of drugs in some ways. In the song "Stepping Razor," Tosh is suggesting that he not be bothered by others with hostile motives. He says "if you're a junkie, a dopey, or drink alcohol or whatever you do," he still must be treated as a man, if he is to be gotten
along with. The tone of the song suggests that these things are seen as negative behavior which is not condoned in the song. In Tosh's 1979 LP, "Mystic Man" in the song, "Mystic Man" Tosh states:

I'm a mystic man
Don't drink no champagne
I don't sniff no cocaine - choke brain
Don't take them morphine - dangerous
Don't take no heroin
I'm a mystic man

On the same LP, on the song titled "Buk-In-Hamm Palace," Tosh is trying to borrow rolling papers, and a match in order to roll and smoke a spliff inside the Palace. He says:

Music and herb is healing all the nations
Sent from Jah whom we praise

The 1981 LP, "Wanted: Dread and Alive" and the song "Cold Blood" involves the idea of drugs. The Rasta whom was shown in court earlier receiving an oath involves this topic:

You are brought before this court
For having ganja in your possession
Do you plead not guilty?

Tosh's 1983 LP, "Mama Africa" has no mention of drugs.

**BURNING SPEAR**

On the LP, "Live" by "Burning Spear" of 1977, the voice of Winston Rodney brings together a wide collection of thoughts and ideas concerning the black predicament. The LP places the questions of the memory of slavery and Marcus Garvey among black people. He suggests that "Marcus Garvey's words will come to pass." "Burning Spear's" 1983 LP, "Fittest of the Fittest,"
also deals with this identical theme, suggesting in the song, "Old Boy Garvey":

Them don't know him
Mr. Garvey
Them don't know Mr. Garvey
First full run from Jamaica
The prophet
He'll prophecy
Moses
Them don't know him

While the slavery theme is present in "Burning Spear's" 1983 LP:

They take us away from Africa
Split us up and smile plantation

And as relates to the African Liberation topic in Reggae music "Burning Spear's" 1983 LP, in the song "Visions" says:

My vision come true
To be upon the side of Africa
All my brothers hands in my hand
All my sisters hands in my hand
I'm on the side of Africa

This particular song also has both the idea of Nationalism as well as Rasta religious thoughts as suggested in the following:

One black family
Africa/Jamaica
One black religion
Here comes Rastafari

While by the same token, the song "Repatriation" from the 1983 LP also deals with African Liberation and Nationalism when it states:

Repartriation-
Means that you run go to Africa
Go and stay with your brother
Run and stay with your sister
One skill for one in Africa

and,

All the states of Africa
Should come together
Open the gates of Africa
Remove the barriers

The LP, "Foul Play" by Dennis Brown, from 1981 deals largely with the theme of love. There are three songs from the LP that deals with the topic from the particular categories which have been established for this analysis. Also this album will allow a contrast in the spectrum of Reggae artist. The songs with a Rasta type theme are "The Existence of JAH", which states:

All who allow Satan to control them
shall feel it-
All who allow Satan to mislead them
shall feel it
All who forget his majesty exist
shall suffer and pay the consequence

And the song "I Need Your Love" suggests:

I and I are Rasta children
We come from Zion
Living out here in Babylon
Enduring the strife and tribulations

The last song by Brown from his 1981 LP, is titled, "The World is Troubled." This particular song is in some ways prophetic in the way that it mirrors the conditions of the world internationally in the 1980's. This song is placed into the Capitalist/Neo-Colonialist theme, since it is the forces of capital that lead to the conditions which Brown expresses.

The world is troubled
And living ain't easy
After all these things have come to pass
The end shall not be near
There shall be hijacking and kidnapping
All over the earth
We got to come together
Heshimu is a lesser known Reggae artist, yet in his music are reflected the various topics most frequent in Reggae songs. Heshimu's 1980 LP, "Follow I" has songs which fit the basic criterion for this analysis. The first fits the South African (Apartheid) View and is titled, "Zimbabwe." Though the name of the song is misleading, the song concerns the whole Southern African area. As Heshimu suggests:

You can't say love
Till you say Zimbabwe
Can't say peace
Till you say Mozambique
You can't say free
Till you say South Africa
Free South Africa

This particular LP was released in 1980, and spoke of how black South African leaders were being killed by the regime in South Africa. The second song on the LP deals with the Rasta idea in Reggae in the song called "Hell Hounds", Heshimu states:

Rasta man he's alright
He's free to be what he wants to be

While these particular artists represent only a very small sample of the music - each, in one way or another deals with at least one of the categories used in this analysis. The idea of Rastafarianism in Reggae appears to be the most frequently used topic, though sometimes only subtly. Second to the Rastafari theme is the topic concerning African Liberation to one degree or another. The African continent and its problems are prominent themes in Reggae. But Reggae music is stylistic, creative and individual, it changes from artist to artist, and from time period to time period. Still, it is a strong moral
force emphasizing black pride and struggle, and it cries out in many instances for the needs of the poor all over the world. It becomes clear that in the LP, "Babylon By Bus, Bob Marley and the Wailers knew exactly what they were saying in saying that:

I'm glad to say it
This here music
Is Rebel Music
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In concluding this work on Reggae music and its impact on black Americans, a further reflection on what has gone before is necessary. This work has evaluated the forces which reacted to establish Reggae as an artistic musical form. Reggae was shown to be basically a variant of Caribbean based Trinidadian Calypso music. An indepth analysis was not provided about Calypso, though enough information was involved to establish the relationship between Calypso and Reggae. Other musics were shown to be valuable elements in the evolution of Reggae music. In the work the concept "evolution" is used to express the historical processes that occurred on the levels of creation, stages, changes and differentiation in the scope of the music's intentions. At first the music was termed Mento which was a basic West Indian sound based in Calypso. Yet Reggae has other important musical influences. Both South African, as well as Nigerian (High-Life) music were shown to be involved. The impact of, and the avenue by which these two musics found expression in Reggae are not clear, yet it is clear that elements of these sounds are found throughout Reggae. Last, there is the U.S. sources in Reggae. Both African and American elements in Reggae are equally important influences. The most
probable hypothesis is that the African elements might be traced to the Trinidadian origins of Reggae.

In this work Reggae is presented as a music which has experienced four major stages of development. The first involved Jamaican indigenous music, termed Mento, which more or less a Trinidadian imitation. Secondly, an attempt by Jamaican artists to imitate black American music led to the development of the music of Ska. The third stage involves Ska forming into its own pattern, and a period of innovation by Jamaican artists which established distinctive styles and sounds in Reggae. In this period the lyrics of Reggae were also becoming more specific and meaningful. The new meaning in the lyrics of the music concerned the social context of various critical problems of youths in Jamaica. The last major stage concerns the introduction of the idea of Rastafari in Reggae. The work has shown how this was an almost inevitably predictable process by Rasta. In the end it was the main focus of emphasis in the ultimate meaning in the music. The introduction of Rastafari into Reggae coincides with Reggae's introduction to the world as a popular international force. It was Rastafari which provided Reggae with depth and sophistication; through it Reggae no longer was simply a music - but became something of a religious experience.

In this analysis Jamaica is an important element which was evaluated. It was that analysis which provided the insight into the environment and circumstances in which Reggae music evolved. Since this was an overall historical analysis of
Jamaica, it provided the background for the understanding of the social, economic and political events that worked together to give Jamaica its national character. And this was important because it gives indications of how these events acted on the creators of Reggae, in the process of the stages in which the music developed. The stages of Jamaican history which had the most profound affect on Reggae were the post-Independence period after 1962 and the period following the election of 1974 in Jamaica. The post-Independence period is important because it was during this time that a social agenda began to occur in the music. The period following the 1974 elections, represents a period of political crisis in Jamaica, and provides the clues as to the new radical and militant foundation which was found in the music at that time. Though the new radicalism and militancy at that time were merely academic, reflecting the rapid changes occurring in Jamaica society. Of the procedures that are used in the process of isolating the fundamental ideas at work in Reggae music, the greatest of these were the ideas of Babylon, and of Rastafari. The term Babylon as it pertains to Rastafari precepts is in some ways a difficult concept to grasp, and understand completely. It is implicit, imprecise terminology. In some sense the meaning is clear and understood, but one cannot provide a definite expression of its meaning. Babylon is felt and known and experienced only. Rastafari is a spiritual existence and knowledge. Its goal is to act as a force that challenges and seeks to expose the core of implicit Babylon, and to uncover its physical and tangible nature. In Rastafari
thought Babylon is a real and physical element in society, whose true nature it attempts to conceptualized into a compact system of ideas, so it can be understood. When the Rasta says that "he is in prison, when he never did no crime", he means the world existence he feels is that which prisoners feel. In that sense, intangible Babylon is his captor, and his prison. Through his existence, which is prison-like, he feels and knows it. This research expresses Rastafari as a positive, and useful system of religious ideas.

The complexity of the ideas concerning Haile Selassie and Ethiopia in Reggae presents deep problems. The death of Selassie leaves a gap in the fundamental system of Rastafari theological suppositions. It should be interesting to see what future developments arise in Rasta thought to fill the void, as Rasta evolves into the future.

Reggae music is a prophetic and spiritual medium. The persistence of its creators is an indication that the music will succeed and prevail as a major musical source in the world, including North America. For Reggae is not purely an entertainment form, but rather, a deeply artistic and creative medium. The messages presented in the music of Reggae are age old and continuously meaningful. It is the religious foundation of the music which has been the fuel to the engines of Reggae's success. Bob Marley was the individual whose life was the force acting to move Reggae into the mind of the world. Through Reggae, Marley helped to propagate the ideology and philosophy of Rastafari, as well as the problems facing black people in the
world. Marley was the symbol of cultural commitment and seriousness, which was expressed in the music of Reggae. Through Marley and Reggae blacks possessed a mass media source which cried out on their behalf and sought to express their concerns and problems in a language which the world understood. Through the music of Marley the black predicament became more than just a shallow debate about the future of black people. It became a matter for serious question and analysis, for the political reasoning of Marley and Reggae were deep and serious.

This research has worked to show how and why Reggae music is a tool for the political education of blacks in America. The analysis has been consistent towards that intended goal, and the content of the analysis has been pertinent to the subject matter. The purpose for pursuing this line of inquiry has been based on serious contemplation and concern regarding the idea of culture. The research has shown that the music is a tool of political education for American blacks. The work is a complete and useful analysis of Reggae music. The research is not, and is not intended to be a definitive analysis.

Still, the appreciation of Reggae by black Americans appears to be rather limited. Those attitudes and responses which act as factors determining black Americans appeal to Reggae are mostly social and political. A more definitive analysis must take into account black attitudes and responses to music in general, and the role of black American popular music has to be accounted for. The major elements at work in determining the appeal of black American popular music are: age, education and
class position. These segments are represented by the younger vs. older generations, well educated vs. lesser educated, and various appeals and musical interests across all the economic barriers. A more definitive analysis must also take into account the important role of the black American artist and his influence on the promotion of musical styles. The part played by these individuals in trends in music is important, and their commitment to their audiences must not only be to entertain them, but also to educate and enlighten their social conscious. Some examples can be found in the works of black American artists like Gil Scott Heron, Roy Ayers, and Stevie Wonder. The conclusion drawn in this research suggests that Reggae is a tool that can be used for the political education of American blacks. Though it recognized that the music itself is not the primary tool, but rather, the ideological system which is in the lyrical messages of Reggae. Reggae music is an expression of the mind and thinking of African cultural experience.

It is the responsibility of black American musical artists to create serious works, with important messages for their audiences. By the same token it is acknowledged that in order for black American musical artist to reform their works, that they themselves must be politicized in many cases. Then too, black American audiences must be more demanding in their musical tastes and appreciation. Black Americans must recognize and support those artist who strive to inject the language of the struggles of black people in the world into their music.
Black American radio could also play a wider role in advancing the idea of cultural, value oriented music as a source for education of blacks. This is no simple task, considering the complexity of problems and the competition for music markets within the music industry. The solution may be that Reggae musical artists must seek to Americanize their musical styles. This would mean that Jamaican artists would be faced with a challenge to de-mystify Reggae, while still holding its ideological grounding.

Yet, it is Reggae music's link with the ideas of Marcus Garvey which gives the music an American connection. Blacks in America must focus in on this particular connection and evaluate the relationship in the sense of an on-going historical struggle, kept alive in Reggae. For Reggae's relationship to the ideas of Garvey are significant and important to the formulation of an adequate reference for viewing the music.

Then there is the question of Reggae and black American musical taste. The factors that are involved in the establishment or creation of musical tastes are difficult to determine. However, if Reggae music is to obtain any degree of success among American blacks, first blacks must begin with the conclusion that the music is not beyond their musical tastes. Blacks must approach Reggae with the understanding that Reggae is African oriented, and not a purely Western musical source. The factors necessary for the growth of Reggae among blacks in America are varied.
They are:

a. More emphasis on, and attempts by, American artists on all levels to create and/or adopt Reggae styles into their musical works.


c. More young Reggae groups on the style of Britain's band "Musical Youth". This group which is basically all teenagers attracts and interests the young towards appreciation of Reggae.

d. More female Reggae artist.

e. Bob Marley's memory and life must be preserved by blacks, and he must be remembered not only as the individual at the vanguard in the creation of Reggae music, but also as a fighter committed to equal rights for blacks around the world.

On another level this research has shown Reggae to be a Third World musical source directed towards poor people, both originating from an under-class orientation, and being created by the lower classes in Jamaican society. The "Rude Boy" phenomenon was shown earlier to be Reggae's manifestation of Jamaican youth and criminal society - characterized by street gangs, and a hood psychology. It sheds light on the idea of the lumpenproletariat in Marxian theory, though the introduction of the idea of Rastafari in Reggae offers an important contradiction to Marx's idea of this particular class in society. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*, suggest it to be:

The "dangerous class", the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of society,... its conditions of life, however, prepare it more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

The real meaning in this is that Reggae music evolved from the under-class of Jamaican society. As this work has shown Reggae
musicians at one point played the role of mediators between the street oriented factions of Jamaican society. These youths were an aberration of criminality and lawlessness in Jamaica. These groups were the product of Jamaica's social and economic systems, who were cast off as elements which did not and could not respond to reason. Since Reggae music grew out of this same chaos, and in the end came to be the political voice of these elements, an argument for the cause of the lumpenproletariat might be valid. The ideology and philosophy which found their way into Reggae music might by the same token be termed lumpen-intellect. From its earliest beginnings Reggae music spoke to the conditions and existence of this class in Jamaican society. Though at the same time it focused on the political, social and economic conditions in Jamaica that worked to produce the existing problems.

Then, there is the question of Reggae music and culture. This research has made an attempt to differentiate Reggae the object of aesthetic culture, and Reggae the medium of explicit culture. And though no specific or concrete definition of culture was formulated, the cultural framework for viewing culture in relation to Reggae was established. Reggae was shown to be a vehicle of black, African, as well as Jamaican culture. By the same token Reggae was shown to be an object of culture with relevance and importance in expressing the meaning and existence of those bearing a specific cultural trait: blackness. The meaning found in the idea of blackness established a cultural link to Africa, which is shown to be a
separate and distinct cultural entity. The idea of Rastafari was also important in the analysis of culture. The research showed that Rastafari was a mass based movement in Jamaica with social and political implications involving its African identification orientation; while on the other hand Reggae was a mass creation, scorned by the better classes of Jamaican society. And Rastafari was no new element, since its earliest beginnings were in the 1940's. Rasta, being of oppressed origins, with an African outlook provided Jamaican music with a forceful ideological stance that brought both Reggae music and Rastafari concepts into widespread propagation. Though it was essentially through the new found faith of Jamaican artists that this synthesis was made possible. And the new music, and old cultural idea were manifestly expressed in the character of the one Robert Nesta Marley, "King of Reggae," and we might go further and suggest, "King of Rasta."

Then too, Reggae and Jamaica were viewed as mutually inclusive entities. For Reggae is a purely Jamaican creation. The problems of Jamaica are a reflection of conditions of poor nations throughout the world. The problems of Jamaica are long lasting and persistent. The Atlanta/Journal Constitution states in an article titled, "Jamaican Opposition Wins" (30 August 1986):

Former Prime Minister Michael Manley's opposition political party routed the ruling Jamaican Labor Party in violence marred local elections....the opposition party said it would call for early national elections if it won in the local election.
This turn of events in Jamaica will no doubt signal more violence for Jamaica's near future. This represents a problematic condition for Jamaica and all the Caribbean Islands which depends on tourism as a source of revenues. Jeffrey A. Rosenweig of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta in an article titled, "Elasticities of Substitution in Caribbean Tourism" (September 1985), suggests that riots and political violence in one specific Caribbean island affect tourism in the others, and are viewed as a general Caribbean problem. Rosenweig states:

The December 1980 Election in Jamaica precipitated violence in the middle and second half of 1980... all four major Caribbean tourist nations had declining tourist flows in 1980 second half against the 1979 period. Tourism in general was growing, so it seems this part of the region suffered from Jamaican violence.

It seems that Jamaica, which is a democratic nation should have free and open elections, without political violence. But apparently that is not the case; it is this open political violence in Jamaican society that has been expressed in Jamaican music since 1973. It is this influence in Reggae that gives it a radical and aggressive tone. While at the same time the music attempts to speak for those individuals in Jamaican society who are poor and outside of the political structure in Jamaica, but must none-the-less exist in these conditions.


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