

Crossing Continents and Bargaining Space: A Study of Reggae, from Margin to Popular

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Jawaharlal Nehru University

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Doctor of Philosophy

by

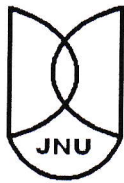
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This thesis titled "*Crossing Continents and Bargaining Space: A Study of Reggae from, Margin to Popular*", submitted by me for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.

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To my Parents
Who mean everything to me

Acknowledgments

In this thesis, I have stated that reggae is not about engaging with a particular form of music from Jamaica but it is an experience. Many musicians believe that reggae cannot be defined in words, it can only be lived and felt. Similarly, the process of writing this research project has been a beautiful experience which cannot be defined in a page or two. I am extremely delighted to come to terms with the realization that I am going to submit my thesis in a couple of days however, it is also a fact that my association with JNU as a student will officially come to an end. I have saved the last moments of my thesis submission for this particular section as I wanted to take my time and ponder over the entire duration of my thesis writing.

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Table of Contents

	Page no.
I Introduction: Towards a meaning of Reggae	1
II Chapter One: Performing Reggae, Subverting Class Bridging Boundaries and Erasing Stereotypes	18
III Chapter Two: Women in Music, Music in Women A Study of Gendered Music of Jamaica	53
IV Chapter Three: The Voices of Resistance Reggae and the Representation of Race	84
V Chapter Four: Being and Becoming Political Violence and Its Impact on the World and Words of Bob Marley	117
VI Chapter Five: Obliterating Lines and Spanning Margins Reggae outside the Borders of Jamaica	154
VII Conclusion: Reggae at Present	190
BIBLIOGRAPHY	200

Introduction: Towards a meaning of Reggae

Sometimes they confuse our minds
And let us all think out of line
Sometimes they confuse our minds
And let us all think out of line
No unnecessary confusion
No unnecessary behaviour
Harmony in the house of Reggae
A letter to the people, fans
People all over
People in general
Little singers and big singers
It's we who build this foundation
This Reggae foundation.

- Burning Spear "House of Reggae" (1999)

It is quite a challenge to define Reggae in a linear definition. Reggae represents multifarious meanings. It is both revolutionary as well as celebratory. Reggae has become one of the means through which Jamaicans define themselves. In the present scenario, it is difficult to perceive Jamaica without keeping Reggae in mind. Reggae has become one of the means to celebrate nationalism for Jamaicans. It shares a close association with colonisation as well. For instance many islands of West Indies were under the colonial rule and Jamaica was no exception. In 1912 the British West Indies¹ were demarcated into eight colonies and Jamaica became one of the colonies. Under colonization most of the islands of West Indies were in a deplorable condition. Therefore, Reggae became a medium to express the agony of Jamaican people who were marginalized.

However, the history of Reggae in Jamaica originates from the oral tradition of Africa as most people in Jamaica are descendants from Africa. The Africans were brought first by the Spanish and then the English to work as slaves in Jamaica. This forced displacement of culture and language was dealt by the Africans with **negotiating music**. Even though, slavery was abolished in 1830s in Jamaica but until the 1930s Jamaicans had to struggle for their fundamental rights. In 1962, Jamaicans finally got independence. The same year Derrick Morgan, a singer from Jamaica released a song titled "Forward March". This song was sung to celebrate the new beginning. As soon as the song was released it established a sense of togetherness amongst all Jamaicans. The song requests everybody to form a sense of unity and integrity through its lyrics:

Gather together, be brothers and sisters
We are independent, we are independent,
Join hands to hands, children started to dance
We are independent, we are independent.
Don't be sad and blues, the Lord is still with you
Because the time has come when you can have your fun
So make a run, we are independent. (1962)

¹ The British West Indies were the islands and colonies around Caribbean and these were the part of the British Empire.

I would like to mention that “Forward March” belongs to the genre of Ska music which is not an isolated form of music as the roots of Reggae are linked with Ska and Calypso and these two forms of music would briefly be explored in this research as Reggae cannot be analysed in isolation. One could argue that Reggae is a form of music which evolved over the period of time. Kevin O’Brien Chang and Wayne Chen in *Reggae Roots: The Story of Jamaican Music* write;

Reggae has two meanings. It is a generic name for all Jamaican popular music since 1960 - ‘West Indian style of music with a strongly accented subsidiary beat’ according to the concise oxford dictionary. But Reggae can also refer to the particular beat that was popular in Jamaica from about 1969 to 1983. Jamaican popular music since 1960 can be roughly divided into four eras each of which had a distinctive beat – Ska, Rocksteady, Reggae and Dancehall. Ska dated from 1960 to mid-1966. Rocksteady lasted from late 1966 to late 1968. The popular beat from 1969 to about 1983 was named Reggae and had two phases ‘Early Reggae’ from about 1969 to 1974, and ‘Roots Reggae’ from about 1975 to 1983. From 1983 onwards the prevalent sound has been called Dancehall. (x)

The early Reggae was influenced by American record labels such as Stax records which is based in Memphis and it was founded in 1957 as ‘Satellite records’ by Jim Stewart. Stax played a significant role in the distribution of soul, gospel, jazz and blues and it also percolated the slowing in tempo which began with the development of **rocksteady**. Early Reggae at times is also referred as ‘Skinhead Reggae’. The terminology of ‘Skinhead Reggae’ came from the popularity of Reggae amongst the working class of the UK who were significantly influenced by the Jamaican Rude boy Culture. A skinhead is a component of a subculture that originated in the 1960s in London. The etymological roots of the phrase ‘Skinhead’ lies in shaven heads or close cropped hair. The first UK skinheads were highly influenced by the Jamaican Rude boys, music, fashion and lifestyle.

This research will look at how Rude boys subculture influenced both the landscape of Reggae as well as the skinheads of UK. Rude boys were also addressed

as Rudy, Rudi, and Rudie and they were considered to be violent, and disconcerted. The image of Rude boys was highly influenced by American cinema hence these boys would favour sharp suits and thin ties. Many Rude boys became a part of Jamaican music as sound mixer or filler and they made Ska and rocksteady popular but the success of Reggae soon took over these two forms of music. As far as 'roots Reggae' is concerned, it primarily deals with the event of everyday lives along with the spiritual side of Rastafari. This subgenre of Reggae is also related with ghetto sufferer and poor people of Jamaica. Roots Reggae highlights various issues such as religion, spirituality, poverty, racial oppression and Black pride.

Reggae is something which colligates nations and identities across boundaries. In the contemporary scenario, it has become one of the significant tools to peep into history, art, culture and literature of Jamaica. It is argued that music is something which is always travelling and as it moves from one point to the next, the meaning of it too goes through certain modifications and alterations. Reggae is one such form of music which emerged out of a captivating melange of Calypso, Ska, rocksteady, jazz and blues. At times, it becomes difficult to define Reggae. For some it is a way to express pain and anguish of everyday life while some believe that Reggae is more like a consciousness to stand and fight for one's rights.

The primary objective of this thesis is to deal with the issues of class, race, gender, identity, and migration through the texts of Reggae songs of Bob Marley, Burning Spears, Jimmy Cliff, Peter Tosh and Mutabaruka. The issue of 'class' is central to the art of Reggae as upper class Jamaicans for a long time did not want to relate themselves with Reggae as it was associated with underprivileged people. Hence, Reggae was considered as an inferior art of the lower class. Stephen A. King in *Reggae, Rastafari and the Rhetoric of Social Control* writes; "One of the few affordable social activities of the poor, the sound system brought music to places where the voice of the poor could be heard without interference by local authorities" (King 16)

The sound system of poor Jamaicans can be compared with the 'ghetto blasters' of African-Americans as they too tried to claim and reclaim the space which was denied to them. Sound not only became a source of entertainment but it

also became the voice of the poor and the oppressed. This research will look into the history of sound and analyse how it travelled all the way from America to Jamaica and eventually from Jamaica to Britain. Jamaican Reggae artists had to struggle and go through a state of destitution as initially there were no recording studios which could provide a sense of legitimacy and authority to these voices. Moreover, the mainstream Jamaican politics and its alliance with Reggae will also be analysed in this research. After the popularity of Reggae, politician Michael Manley's 'People's National Party' and Edward Seaga's 'Jamaica Labour Party' used Rastafarian symbols and Reggae music for electoral campaigns. It is paradoxical that how Reggae was detested at various occasions by the politicians and eventually the same genre was used by them to promote their own political cause.

However, Michael Manley and Edward Seaga had two different approaches towards Jamaica. Manley was a socialist who believed in Rasta ideologies, justice and equality. Manley supported Reggae which would be antithetical to ideological domination of the elites. Manley's anti-capitalism policy was an attempt to erase the gap between the rich and the poor. However these policies brought disruption as many rich people decided to leave Jamaica and move to America. On the other hand, Seaga's vision of Jamaica had to do with money and not with the roots of Jamaica. Seaga placed capitalism above everything. This research will explore how the clash between the two major political parties of Jamaica influenced Reggae.

The thesis will essentially focus on 1970s Jamaica, a time when Reggae had become a strong apparatus to counteract colonialism, unemployment and street violence as this was the time when music had grown to be an avenue of creating Black Jamaican identity. This research project would also focus on the issue of race. Denise Eileen McCoskey in *Race: Antiquity and Its Legacy* defines that:

Race is an ideological structure that organizes and classifies perceived human variation. Race thus allows the division of people into broad categories that presume to demarcate according to fundamental differences, such as 'black' and 'white'... Race does not derive passively from human anatomy, but is dependent on social intervention, on the formulation of theories that designate the surface of the human body as the primary vehicle of race and

also determine exactly which physical features ‘matter’ in determining racial groups. (McCoskey 2).

It is very difficult to define the notion of race in a straight definition in context to Jamaica. I agree with McCoskey’s point of view of perceiving race beyond white’ and ‘black’. One cannot look at race within stiff binaries. There is always a grey area and this region too is equally important to study. For instance, a lot of Jamaican musicians moved to America and Britain to seek a better life prospect as at back home in Jamaica, singers and artists would not get substantial amount of money to survive. Many singers started making music while staying away from Jamaica. Moreover, many British and American musicians started composing and singing Reggae. The questions which one needs to raise here are; should Reggae only be sung by Jamaicans who stay in Jamaica? Or can it also be sung by Jamaicans who stay outside the national boundary? Can non-Jamaicans sing Reggae too? Who is really a Jamaican? Can the colour of skin define one’s nationality? Mutabaruka, the Jamaican Rastafarian dub poet² in his poems highlights the trickeries which are played by the colour of skin.

It is interesting to notice that Jamaica has people from diverse backgrounds. Jamaican population consists of White, Black and mixed Brown people. It is believed that in the early 16th century Africans were brought to Jamaica as slaves by the Spanish and the Portuguese and Jamaica was known as Santiago under the Spanish rule. In 1655 the English captured Jamaica and fought with the Spanish rulers. During this time many Africans escaped the cruel nature of slavery and established free communities in the interiors of Jamaica. The people who managed to run away were known as ‘maroons’. During this time, Jamaican Patois, an English-African Creole language came into existence. The language started to evolve when enslaved people nativized English language spoken by their masters. Rastafari movement too influenced the nature of English in Jamaica. For instance the term ‘Babylon’ is used for any system or a government body which oppresses and

² Dub poetry is a form of performance oriented poetry of West Indies. Dub poetry evolved in Jamaica in the 1970s. The formation of dub poetry consists spoken words and reggae rhythms. This form of poetry is chiefly concerned with political and social issues.

discriminates against people. 'I man' is used to refer to the conception of the existence of inner being within the Rastafarians. The term 'Dreadlocks' too has a deeper meaning. 'Dread' stands for the fear of God and Deadlocks stand for inner power. Furthermore, this project will examine Rastafari movement and analyse the impact the movement had on Reggae music.

It is believed that Rastafarianism was the first movement amidst West Indians which raised the question of the 'self'. Rastafari theology developed with the views and ideas of Marcus Garvey. Rastafari religion developed in Jamaica in 1930s following the coronation of Haile Selassie I as the king of Ethiopia. The coronation of a black king was a way to revolt against the western idea of a white king. Rastafarians consider Selassie I as God. It was Marcus Garvey who opined that Africans should have a black king who would solely belong to them. Africans felt the need to question the colonial regime of oppression. Rastafarians consider Garvey a religious prophet. There are Reggae songs on Garvey. People who follow Rastafari beliefs are also known as Rastas, Sufferers, Locksmen, Dreads or Dreadlocks. After the success of Bob Marley and his music, Rastafarianism spread worldwide in the 1970s.

The issue of class hierarchy will also be discussed keeping the genre of Reggae in mind. Jamaican society has always been highly class conscious and Reggae artists were perceived as an encumbrance. Before Bob Marley and other Reggae artists became well known because of their art all over the world, they were nothing but social outcasts in Jamaica. The working class people of Jamaica had a very negative perception of Reggae and its representatives. The working and the upper class of Jamaica never wanted to be associated with the art and culture of the people who belonged to the lower strata of society. In fact, the music which was coming from the ghettos such as Reggae was rather seen as a threat. For a long time, Reggae was not even considered as a form of music by the upper class of Jamaica. This research attempts to question and challenge such destructive prejudiced views which were prevalent during the formative years of Reggae.

This thesis will also engage with the issue of gender with relation to Reggae as it has primarily been a male-dominated genre. Women in Jamaica were not

encouraged to indulge with music. They were supposed to be within the confinement of domestic space. Any form of interaction with public space by women wasn't appreciated. Female Reggae artists such as Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt, and Marcia Griffiths will be examined with reference to the status and condition of women in Jamaican society? How unproblematic was it for female singers to make it to the recording studios? How did the female artists represent the women of Jamaica? How did the doubly marginalized Reggae female artists deal with the notions of class hierarchy and patriarchy?

A part of this research will look at and analyse how Reggae deals with the subject of Jamaican Identity which in itself is quite problematic to define in a cohesive manner. Reggae artists such as Mutabaruka, Burning Spear, Bob Marley, and Peter Tosh will be analysed through the Post-Colonial lens. How these artists define their nation and its narration by keeping the question of race and its representation in mind? As Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* writes that the first footstep for colonised people in finding their voice and identity is to reclaim their past. Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1964) asserts that colonial discourse is actually ambivalent and conflictual with contradictions. This research will seek to explore whether these Reggae artists and poets want to reclaim their past or they are rather anxious to redefine their present? It is a fact that the history of Reggae and its artists has been quite violent in its nature. The whole process of 'othering' the Reggae artists was simply an act of violation for the genre of Reggae music.

A section of this research will also look into the domain of political violence in Jamaica and the kind of repercussions it had on various Reggae artists especially Bob Marley. It is not a hidden fact that the history of Jamaica shares a close association with violence. Even after the independence of Jamaica, violence did not subside. Places such as Trench Town and Tivoli Gardens in Kingston have had enumerable accounts of violence imposed by the political groups of Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) and People's National Party (PNP) in the name of power and authority. Moreover, the question of how Bob Marley became a phenomenon amidst violence will also be addressed.

Last part of this thesis will investigate Reggae outside the boundaries of Jamaica. This segment will focus upon the African-Caribbean immigrants and their arrival in post Second World War Britain. When the African-Caribbeans were taken to Britain by the British colonial empire for the purpose of assistance in the war, many immigrants had to face racism in the alien land of white people. Reggae became one of the devices of survival away from home for the immigrants. This section will also scrutinise the comparison between the Rude Boy subculture of Jamaica with the Skinheads of UK. What are the reasons that many white British youths could relate with the rebellious nature of Reggae? What is the reason that many of them started to believe in the philosophy of Rastafari? What was so exceptional about Reggae and other forms of Caribbean music such as Ska and Calypso that many British youths in fact embraced these forms of music? These are some of the questions which will be addressed. Furthermore, an attempt to trace Reggae within India will be made too. At present there are young enthusiastic groups/bands which are representing Reggae in India. One such group is ‘Reggae Rajahs’ which is considered to be India’s first Reggae sound system. ‘Reggae Rajahs’ was formed in 2009 in New Delhi. Ska Vengers and Delhi Sultanate are others bands which perform Ska and Reggae all over India. Delhi Sultanate is known for making music which is highly political. Taru Dalmia of Delhi Sultanate has collaborated with various tribal singers as well to highlight the problems of various marginalised sections of India.

Towards the closure of the thesis, Reggae will be viewed within the rubric of popular culture wherein I will analyse how in the popular imagination the figure of Bob Marley has become a commodity? Theodor Adorno in “The schema of mass culture” writes that mass culture is a system of signs and these signs signal themselves. Adorno goes on to remark that “all genuine experience of art is devalued into a matter of evaluation” (70). This part will explore how Reggae is devalued as it has become a product for mass consumption. This part will also glance at Jean Baudrillard’s views on ‘Hypermarket and Hypercommodity’ and study how at present, reality and meaning have been replaced by signs and symbols.

One good thing about music (is that)

When it hits you, you feel no pain....,

Hit me with music now

Hit me with music now³

Emerging from the streets of Jamaica the main purpose of Reggae was not to hurt anyone but to spread the message of peace across factions of a society. However, there has always been a sense of apprehension towards Reggae as many believed that Reggae was a form of music which was invented by some uncultured, aggressive street ruffians who didn't have any work and social responsibilities. A Rasta was considered to be an outlaw as the music of Reggae artists was not acknowledged by the uptown Jamaicans initially. Many would think of Rastas as a figure of disgust.

However, Reggae became a window through which Jamaicans could express their social, political as well as personal angst. The etymological root of Reggae suggests that Reggae came from 'Ragamuffin'. The word 'Ragamuffin' stands for tatterdemalion or ragged clothes. I believe these shreds or ragged clothes do not just represent poverty rather these shreds become the marker of the struggle which the Jamaicans made to earn as well as learn the power of their voice. It is necessary to understand that the journey of Reggae has been a long one, it has been a voyage of assimilation and creation as many sounds were created, accepted, negotiated. Since Reggae and Calypso share a close association with African American jazz, soul, and blues. During my research I will look into jazz and blues too as these two forms of music did influence the pattern of Reggae to an extent. Reggae, jazz, and blues do share a common ground as these forms of music were a reaction to the exploitation and the oppression endured by the Africans.

This research will look beyond the two main categories of Reggae which are political Reggae and roots Reggae. Political Reggae is primarily represented by Bob Marley, Burning Spear, Peter Tosh, Lee Perry and Mutabaruka. On the other hand, roots Reggae is mainly represented by Jimmy Cliff and Bob Marley. The major artists/bands which will be analysed in this project are Bob Marley and the Wailers,

³ These lyrics have been taken from "Trench Town Rock: The anthology 1969-78" by Bob Marley and the Wailers. However this musical anthology was released in 2002. This album consists various recordings of the band.

Burning Spear, Peter Tosh, Mutabaruka, Jimmy Cliff, Millie, Rita Marley, Sharon Marley, Judy Mowatt, Marcia Griffiths, and Phyllis Dillion, Lord Kitchener, Reggae Rajahs, Delhi Sultanate etc.

Some of the questions which this research will primarily explore are as follows:

1. One of the primary questions which this research will seek to explore is the nature of socio-cultural acceptance of Reggae in Jamaica as it was considered to be a low art of street ruffians. Did Reggae become a mean to unite various factions of society or did it become a site of confrontation?
2. What is the reason that female Reggae artists didn't get the kind of social acceptance which the male artists did? Why were the female artists marginalised? Even when they got a chance to perform on stage why is it that they were used as mere props for a long time?
3. How did Reggae become an avenue to create Black Jamaican identity?
4. What are the reasons that Reggae is at present associated more with dreadlocks, marijuana, and bold colours of Rastafarianism than the message of peace and social equality? What have been the reasons for this shift in perception about Reggae?
5. How did Reggae travel all the way to Britain and then to India? Is there an identifiable social message that the British and Indian Reggae musicians are trying to convey through their music?

The primary source materials for this research will mainly be the videos, songs, live recordings, and concerts of Reggae. To enhance the quality of the research, I will also look into the culture of Jazz and Rhythm & Blues of African-Americans as they all are closely interlinked. Essays, books, book reviews, interviews, critical documents, documentaries, journals and articles pertaining to Reggae music will also be taken into a serious and intense consideration during the research. However, ample books which have already been written on different paradigms of Reggae music will be of a great assistance.

Reggae has been an issue of interest within academic intelligentsia. Hence, satisfactory work has already been done on it across Universities. Juleen S. Burke in *The Bob Marley Effect: More Than Just Words* talks about the legacy of Bob Marley through a comparison of his influence in Jamaica and America as Bob Marley spent a substantial amount of time in America. Burke talks about how Bob Marley's message and philosophy were received in these two countries. Burke also analyses that even though Bob Marley is famous but how much his audience really understands his philosophy in both Jamaica and America? This work traces the journey of Bob Marley in two different countries. Melissa Anne Davis in *Jamaican Composers in the Classical Tradition: Three Vocal Works by Dexter, Ashbourne, and Marshall* talks about the dominant socio-cultural influences of African and European culture in Jamaica and how Jamaican music composers created music infusing elements of various cultures into each other. Melissa's work mainly looks at hybridization in Jamaica and how this hybridity provides an answer to Jamaica's obscured sense of identity in the syncretisation of its cultures.

Another work which looks at the two forms of music fusing together is *Routes, Rap, Reggae: Hearing the Histories of Hip-Hop and Reggae Together* by Wayne Glenn Marshall. Marshall remarks that how technology, migration and mass media played a significant role in the formation of hip-hop and Reggae as transnational genres and how these genres overlap and intertwine. Marshall also looks at the cultural politics of blackness which is addressed by both Reggae and hip hop. When it comes to Reggae, the whole idea of mysticism also becomes important as many Reggae artists believe that Reggae is a medium to connect with the supreme God through love and peace. Varun Soni in *Music, Media and Mysticism: The Pop-Propheticism of Bob Marley and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan* examines the artists who invoke the prophetic voices of their religious traditions in their music. Soni remarks that these musicians view their music to be a vehicle to spread a divine message and their voice echo a prophetic voice. It is interesting to notice that many Reggae performers would consume marijuana when they would sing so that they can move away from the material reality of the universe to reach a transcendental state where they can connect with the God. Most of the Rastafarians believe that marijuana is just a medium to connect with the supreme almighty. In *The Globalization of*

Rastafari, Ian Boxill writes that Rastafari cultural practices are now a part of the global culture and Rastafari ideas have become a part of resistance movements all over the world. Moreover, Cameron Frethey in *Better Must Come: Reggae as a New Social Movement* discusses how Reggae was co-opted by the political parties in Jamaica during the early seventies with the purpose of securing votes and constituencies. Cameron also looks at the role of globalization and technology in providing a new space to Reggae. These works will help me to look at Reggae from different perspectives and understand the various facets of this form.

The proposed method for this research will be on the basis of textual, audio and visual reading-based exegesis. The usual methods of historical research in the terrain of literature will also be implemented. During my research I will go through the old and new literary texts along with the old and contemporary oral records of 'Reggae music' to frame up my argument strongly. I will also be going through the interviews and biographies of various Reggae artists to know the approach and psyche of these music artists towards Reggae. Once the data is collected, I will do the research keeping in mind the scope and objectives of my discourse. Most of the research which has been done on Reggae music talks about the history of Rastas and their struggle primarily within Jamaica and America. This research will move further to Britain and of course India. I believe there has not been any work done when it comes to the proliferation of Reggae in India. This research will keep some issues such as race, class, gender, ruptured identity, female empowerment, and colonization at the forefront of the thesis. Most of the books surprisingly do not focus on female Reggae artists and these artists remain mostly at the fringe. This thesis will also look at the plight of women in through female singers. Moreover, this research will also look at the commodification of Reggae within the purview of capitalism.

As far as the individual chapters are concerned, the introductory section of the thesis will provide the background and base of my research topic and propose as well as discuss the issues and queries that I will deal with. This segment will also analyse how the form of Reggae came into existence and what significance it has for Jamaicans. The introduction will highlight the importance of the study stating the objectives and hypotheses. Along with including the methodology, this section will raise some of the key questions the thesis is going to raise with reference to Reggae

and its acceptance in Jamaican society. Moreover, key details with regard to Jamaican history will be mentioned so as to provide a basic understanding of Jamaican social order under the regime of British colonial empire.

The following Paragraphs provide the chapter-wise outline of my work:

Chapter One: Performing Reggae, Subverting Class: Bridging Boundaries and Erasing Stereotypes

This first chapter titled will deal with the idea of class with relation to Reggae. It is a fact that Reggae is associated with black consciousness and resistance. Before as well as after the independence of Jamaica, the poor people didn't see any social change with regard to their status in society. They remained neglected. It is an irony that the heritage of Reggae which is so proudly claimed by Jamaica today came from this ignored and abandoned section of Jamaican society. To use the Rastafari phrase, the poor people have indeed been the 'sufferers' in the true sense of the term. Their lives were drastically hampered by the uncontrollable violence between the political gangs. The only apparatus which could be used by them to make themselves heard was Reggae. It is quite tragic that their voice was perceived as mere noise by many. This chapter will raise certain questions about class and music. The view that Reggae created a sense of chaos and disruption in Jamaica will be argued. It is believed that music doesn't know any boundaries as it connects people across class. This chapter will also glance at other forms of Jamaican music too such as Ska and Calypso. Furthermore, this section will explore whether is it important for someone to be poor in order to be a Reggae artist? This chapter would be an attempt to shatter the stereotypes which are associated with Reggae.

Chapter Two: Women in Music, Music in Women: A Study of Gendered Music in Jamaica

This second chapter is going to be the most challenging one as through female Reggae songs certain issues will be raised about the women of Jamaica. The chapter will look into the struggle of female Reggae artists by tracing their journey to the

recording studios which were primarily dominated by men. For a long time, women singers in Jamaica were asked only to assist the male singers for chorus. They would be asked to perform on stage with male Reggae bands as a prop. The middle class value system of Jamaica didn't allow women to sing. It was thought that women of loose morals sing and record with men. This chapter will challenge the patriarchal notions about women. This Chapter will shed some light on the discourse of marginalisation of female artists in Jamaica. Another possible reason for disregarding the women singers was the absence of female record producers. For a considerable number of years, Jamaican music industry was dominated by the male producers and they would give preference to male over the female singers. However, this section will also trace the phenomenon Sonia Pottinger who was one of the few female recording producers of Jamaica. With the arrival of Pottinger a ray of hope could be seen by most of the female Reggae artists. Furthermore, this chapter will interrogate the gender norms which were in practice in Jamaican society.

Chapter Three: The Voices of Resistance: Reggae and the Representation of Race

The third chapter will look into the domain of race within Jamaican society. Because of the constant exploitation during the period of colonization, white supremacy was questioned by the Jamaicans. This chapter will look into how black resistance gave birth to the idea of Pan-Africanism. Is the issue of race redundant or one still need to look at race in order to understand Reggae? How do Reggae artists deal with the discourse of race through music? This particular section will also examine the plight of people of mixed race in Jamaica. Where do we place them? This Chapter will look at various theorists and their views on race. Moreover, Marcus Garvey and his movement will also be analysed. This chapter will draw a thread of comparison between Reggae songs and Garvey's ideas and beliefs. This chapter will also examine the topography of home and its absence.

Chapter Four: Being and Becoming: Political Violence and the World and Words of Bob Marley

This fourth chapter will glance into the discourse of violence in Jamaica. Apart from tracing the journey of Bob Marley from a ghetto youth to the world artist, the current chapter will deal with the ways Reggae singers and performers dealt with violence through music. When there was an utter chaos in Jamaica because of the senseless killings, at that time Reggae became one of the ways to gain a sense of normalcy. When gang members were on a killing spree because of various political reasons, Bob Marley and other Reggae artists continued to make music to protest and voice against the whole structure of violence in Jamaica. Furthermore, this chapter will read the persona of Bob Marley. What are the reasons that in popular imagination Bob Marley is perceived as the sole representative of Reggae? An attempt will also be made to examine if Marley's success comes across as a hurdle in the dissemination of Reggae's philosophy of love and equality.

Chapter Five: Obliterating Lines and Spanning Margins: Reggae outside the Borders of Jamaica

This fifth chapter will analyse Reggae outside Jamaica. The major part of the chapter will be devoted to the African Caribbean community of Britain. Apart from highlighting the issue of racial segregation, this chapter will deal with how Reggae and other forms of Caribbean music flourished in Britain after much resistance. This chapter will also explore the subcultures of skinheads, rude boys, mods, rockers, and punk. The socio-political reality of the African Caribbean immigrants in post Second World War Britain will also be investigated. The latter part of this chapter will evaluate the current scenario of Reggae music in India. It is heartening to see how Reggae and Ska groups are sensitizing issue of tribal minorities and their exploitation by the Indian government. This chapter has been an eye opener as only a group of people in India are aware of these bands and their seminal work.

Conclusion

The closing section will analyse the inferences drawn from the research work. This part of the research will attempt to give answers to the queries and issues raised towards the beginning of this project. This chapter will summarise contemporary

Reggae from Jamaica. This part of the thesis will discuss how Bob Marley and many other Reggae artists have been turned into products of consumption in the capitalist world. How fashion, dreadlocks, Rastafari Colours, marijuana which are associated with Reggae completely overlook the essence of this art. The chapter will also look at the mass culture and how a market is formed to sell the art(ists) as a commodity. Photographs of the various art movements of Reggae will also be included in this section.

Chapter One

Performing Reggae, Subverting Class: Bridging Boundaries and Erasing Stereotypes

We come from Trench Town, Trench Town,
Most of them come from Trench Town.
We free the people with music;
Can we free the people with music?
Can we free our people with music? – With music,
With music. Oh music!”
They say, “Can anything good come out of Trench Town?”
That’s what they say,
Say we are the underprivileged people,
So they keep us in chains
Just because we come from Trench Town.
(Bob Marley, *Trench Town*)

Music plays an important role in the lives of the people of Caribbean Island. The Caribbean has been a host to a variety of ethnic groups. This variety of groups include Chinese, Syrians, East Indians and Caucasian Europeans. However, Africans who were brought to the islands of the Caribbean played a foremost role in the construction of Caribbean tradition of music. Perhaps, this is the reason that one cannot perceive Caribbean culture without keeping music in mind. It is quite enlightening to know that the people of Caribbean island and the Afro-Caribbeans both share a traumatic past in the form of geographical and political fragmentation which happened because of colonialism. However, despite the socio-cultural disintegration, there was something which connected these groups and that was music. Because of their shared history, Caribbeans and Afro-Caribbeans made music the tool of socio-cultural and political retaliation. However, the White Euro-centric view is of a different one, it believes that Africans hardly had any culture to begin with and even if they had a 'culture' then it got lost while they were forced to move to new-fangled locations under the institution of colonialism. When it comes to culture, Whites for a long time projected the culture of the non-whites as the culture of the other. Melville J. Herskovits opines about the various myths which are associated with a non-white body in *The Myth of the Negro Past*. He writes;

The myth of the Negro past, which validates the concept of Negro inferiority, may be outlined as follows: Negroes are naturally a childlike character, and adjust easily to the most unsatisfactory social situations. Only the poorer stock of Africa was enslaved, the more intelligent members of the African communities raided having been clever enough to elude the slavers' nets. The cultures of Africa were so savage and relatively so low in scale of human civilization that the apparent superiority of European customs as observed in the behavior of their masters, would have caused and actually did cause them to give up such aboriginal traditions as they may otherwise have desired to preserve. The Negro is thus a man without a past. (Herskovits 1-2)

Whites not only considered Africans as inferior but the art forms which emerged out of this so called 'Inferior group' were also believed to be of mediocre nature. Reggae music is one such form which wasn't given any socio-cultural recognition for a very

long time. This chapter will deal with the issue of class segregation in relation to Reggae. Reggae was looked down upon by the people who belonged to the economically affluent class in Jamaica as they believed that Reggae was an art which could create a sense of chaos and disruption in the harmonious fabric of Caribbean society. However, it is quite ironical that Reggae became an art of socio-political struggle. It became a form of music which spoke of love, peace, and equality. Moreover, Reggae could provide a sense of space for retaliation to those who were never considered to be a significant part of the larger social group of Jamaica.

One thing which is quite evident in Jamaica is the class differentiation. On one hand there is this beautiful image of Jamaica which is produced by the government for tourism purpose, while on the other hand, a part of Jamaican history is completely overlooked by denying the fundamental rights to people who belong to the ghettos. Reggae could be considered as an art which was abused time and again by the so called cultural custodians of Jamaica. Reggae didn't come from an established socially cultural institution. This chapter will raise certain questions about class and music. It is believed that music doesn't know any boundaries as it connects people across class. This chapter will argue whether Reggae connects or does it rather divide? The chapter will also glance at music and how it generates power and it will further explore whether is it important for someone to belong to the socially marginalised section of a society in order to be a Reggae artist? Moreover, this chapter would be an endeavour to shatter the stereotypes which are associated with Reggae.

It is believed that music needs to be perceived within a larger framework. Reggae is an art which has always been allied with a history of resistance and black consciousness. However, the status which Reggae enjoys today within popular culture came after much negotiation. It is argued that Reggae attacks the hegemony of the ruling elites of the Caribbean. The art of Reggae is an amalgamation of too many forms and it has highly been influenced by the American Jazz, Blues and Soul music, perhaps which is why it is problematic to delineate what Reggae is? And how did Reggae become one of the most important cultural productions of Jamaica?

One thing which needs to be kept in mind while pondering upon Reggae is that it primarily flourished in Jamaica and much of Jamaica's history was maintained orally in the form of songs. However, the domain of orality and oral history has always

been an interesting one as the West always treated oral history as a sub-standard account of a nation's past. The belief that 'the Negro is a man without the past' clearly highlights the Euro-centric view of the Whites. Edward Said in 'Orientalism' writes; "Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient- dealing with it by making statements about it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." (3).

The Orient is considered to be an integral part of the European material civilization and culture as Europeans defined themselves to be the superior race of art, culture and tradition; something which the Orient could never accomplish according to them. European empire internalised the idea that it is their obligation to enlighten and civilise the uncivilised. Here uncivilised being the so called Orient without a sense of history. Said opines further that the "relationship between the Occident and the Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (10)

However, it is a well-known fact that the some of the early White European travellers projected a highly biased account of the non-westerners. For these travellers the 'other' was a site of exoticism and peculiarity. Cultural unfamiliarity and the imagined racial superiority amongst the White travellers inevitably led to the construction of a problematic projection of the non-whites. Africa was considered to be a place of mystery inhabited by mysterious beings. Africans were depicted as non-humans, susceptible savages and violent in nature. Katrina D. Thompson in *Ring Shout, Wheel About: The Racial Politics of Music and Dance in North American Slavery* gives an instance of a Frenchman, Jean Barbot, who while preparing his writings on his experiences and adventures in West Africa, used rich exotic details and vivid scenes full of unfamiliarity. It is significant to note that cultural practices like dance and music too were looked at through the Oriental lens. Thompson writes:

Eager to publish in one of the most popular media outlets of his time, Jean Barbot, in 1688, was busily preparing his writings on his experiences and adventures in West Africa. The Frenchman was attempting to contribute an illustration of Africa and its inhabitants to an inquisitive European and North American audience. As a slaver and author, he well understood how to create

a sellable product. The slaver richly detailed a scene of music, dance, and debauchery in his narrative, describing men and women “leaping and stamping their feet” while continually “running against each other, breast to breast, knocking bellies together very indecently...and uttering some dirty mysterious words.” The Frenchman described the participants as “more like devils than men” who danced in “strange postures...as if they were possessed, the entire horrid affair ended as perversely as it started with “someone being murdered”, which was only an expression of lack of “respect” West Africans had towards “their lives” and, analogously, to their morality, according to Barbot. (D. Thompson 13-14)

It is quite concerning to observe the selection of words such as dirty, mysterious, devils, strange, horrid etc. by Jean Barbot, clearly hinting upon the baggage which the Europeans travellers often carried on their shoulders. The baggage of the pre-conceived notions and myths about an unknown culture evidently reflect the constricted outlook they had. More than having a narrow understanding and perception, such accounts created an alternative biased history of these lands and their inhabitants in the Western imagination.

It is remarkable to analyse the fact that the superiority complex which the Occident had, came from some kind of a lack of knowledge. The culture which the Europeans were not familiar with was considered to be of low significance as Orientals were defined as non-humans or sub-humans hence the need to colonise them. In short, one can say that Europeans defined themselves by defining the Orientals as they were portrayed as indolent, crude, irrational and of course uncivilised.

As it has already been understood that the art forms of the ‘exotic other’ were looked at through a Euro-centric view. Dance and Music forms were exoticised. This outlandish portrayal helped in forming and disseminating a fallacious knowledge amongst the readers who would be reading these travelogues. It is concerning that how power may change the true nature of truth. The White male traveller’s perspective helped in the construction of blacks as immoral, violent, overtly sexual, and animalistic in nature.

However, by the fifteenth century, Western Europeans and North Americans ventured to West Africa. They had an inclination that Africa will be a prodigious place which could be exploited for many purposes such as; trade, money, economic investment, missionary pursuits and scientific explorations. It is quite ironic how the Europeans completely ignored the rich oral culture of Africa and treated them like slaves and this ignorance continued not only till the Caribbean Islands but in fact the traces of this cultural obliviousness could be felt as far as Europe.

K. J. P. Lowe in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* writes that the journey of Africans from their native land to Europe has been quite laborious. Despite having a diverse culture with many languages, all Africans were clubbed in one universal category. To begin with, their identity and their sense of existence were defined by the colour of their body. Furthermore, they all were given a unified identity of blacks. Lowe writes;

Africa was/is a vast continent, full of cultural, social, religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity, and of religious difference. But the process of removing Africans to Europe in the Renaissance period served to rob them of these distinguishing features, taking away their old, nuanced identities and providing them instead with new, one-dimensional European ones by labelling them all as 'black Africans'. Arrival in Europe as slaves meant the systematic erasure of all the more significant aspects of their past, starting with their names, their languages, their religions, their families and communities and their cultural practices. (Lowe 2)

Just like all Africans were clubbed in one collective category, Reggae artists too were perceived as a homogeneous group. Since, Reggae music represented the poor and the oppressed, it was never observed earnestly by the people who belonged to the affluent section of the society. Most of the Reggae artists in Jamaica were from the ghettos which is why they were taken as street rude ruffians. However, one needs to question the nature of 'Stereotyping'. Why do people stereotype? What purpose does it really serve? Most of the people who stereotype how well are they familiar with the socio-cultural hardships which a marginalised group goes through in order to assert its collective identity.

Lowe in “The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe” writes that the phenomenon of ‘stereotyping’ can be associated with an exaggerated belief which is often related with a category and the primary function of this belief is to justify or rationalise any code of behaviour to that category. Lowe talks about two aspects of stereotyping; “The first is that stereotyping does not allow differentiation between individuals within a category, thus leading to automatic and unthinking reactions. The second is that the process of justifying exaggerated beliefs can cause even a positive stereotype to have a negative implications.” (Lowe 17) However, with regard to the genre of Reggae, stereotypes have primarily been negative. Some of the stereotypes which are quite generic and common are; Reggae artists are anti-establishment, they can be a serious threat to society, they indulge in anti-social activities, they smoke marijuana most of the time, all Reggae artists have long dread locks, they all follow the beliefs of Rastafarianism, and all Reggae singers are black Caribbeans. It must be taken into an account that stereotypes exist within the periphery of the Caribbean as well. Moving beyond the binaries of White v/s Black, African v/s European, one needs to be more observant about the shaping of ethnic relationships in the Caribbean. Anthony Layng in his article “Stereotypes and Ethnic relationships in the Caribbean” talks about the conflicts which often come up in between the East Indians and the Africans. With regard to the arrival of the East Indians to the Caribbean, the British Empire took indentured servants from parts of colonized India such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, and Madras to replace labourers on sugar plantations after the abolition of slavery in Caribbean Islands in 1830s. Between 1838 and 1917, more than half a million of Indians were taken to Caribbean Islands as contractual labourers. The rural East Indians are well aware of the fact that they are considered to be foolish and illiterate and they are perceived as outsiders. However, the descendants of the African slaves too could not escape the policy as well as the politics of Stereotyping. Layng remarks;

The most frequently reported stereotypes in the Caribbean concern the descendants of the African slaves. The rural East Indians in Trinidad feel contempt for Africans because...they allow their women to have complete sexual freedom... In British Guiana, we are told that the East Indians consider the Africans to be incapable of handling finances, preferring to spend all their money on entertainment...(Moreover) it is part of the

mythology of the West Indies that the lower-class negro is immoral and promiscuous and that his family life is 'loose' and 'disorganized'. (131)

It is not only shocking but at the same time enlightening as well to contemplate that stereotypes do feed in the construction of class hierarchy or vice versa. The parameters on which stereotypes and class differentiation is fashioned can be multifaceted. For instance, Reggae was associated with immoral and loose lower-class Negro for a long time. However, as Reggae got a reception all over the world, it didn't remain an art form of the lower class anymore. Which is why more than anything, the formation of stereotypes can be a process and one needs to analyse this process. Furthermore, it is highly essential to demolish the wall of stereotypes. Stereotypes can be long lasting and they can be detrimental for the image of a community. C. Neil Macrae, Charles Stangor, and Miles Hewstone in *Stereotypes and Stereotyping* write that; "Stereotypes can be conceptualised from two complementary perspectives...From one perspective stereotypes are represented within the mind of the individual person. From the other perspective, stereotypes are represented as part of the social fabric of a society, shared by the people within the culture." (4)

As it has been stated earlier, dance and other cultural performances of Africans were perceived as some kind of a socio-cultural frenzy because of stereotyping. The oral nature of these cultural practices was rarely recognised. When the orality of oral culture is questioned then it becomes obligatory to comprehend that oral history has its own history. In many cultures, orality has been an important source of constructing history and identity. Many people from Africa, who were forced into slavery, created a sense of history and existence through their music. For instance, the songs which were sung by the slaves in the cotton fields of America, cannot be called mere songs. In fact, slave songs were a site of testimony which provided a glimpse into the history of African-Americans.

Practitioners of oral history believe that all history was oral in nature before the advent of writing. Oral history is as important as written history with regard to any culture or tradition. For instance, griot tradition of West Africa is quite significant in recording history. A griot passes oral traditions from generation to generation. A griot can be a performer, historian, story-teller, musician, singer, poet etc. The traditional

position of a griot was of an adviser to royal personages. There are certain things which are obligatory to be a griot. For instance, a griot should know many traditional songs, he should have a respectable knowledge of local history, he should be an eloquent narrator, and he should be entertaining.

African music has been rich and diverse despite the fact that the westerners always thought it to be 'primitive'. Francis Bebey in his book *African Music: A People's Art* write that there isn't much of a difference in African and Western musical tradition. He writes;

First and Foremost, both African and Western music are an invention of man, at least as far as creation is concerned. Secondly, we find in both the same notions of instrumental or vocal music, low or high pitch, long or short, sustained or staccato notes. In both cases, music plays a familiar role in life, as lullabies, battle songs, religious music, and so on... Lastly, the musical instruments themselves provide perhaps the most important similarity between African and Western music. Generally speaking, the same categories of instruments are found in black Africa as in the West, namely stringed instruments, wind instruments, and percussion. (Bebey 2)

Despite these similarities, many Westerners found African music to be exotic and bewildering. It is interesting to recognise that in many African societies, there are semi-professional and professional musicians. The task of these musicians is to tie up the threads of culture, tradition, history and identity with each-other. Semi-professional musicians are not isolated individuals. In fact, they belong to a particular group, caste or trade. On the other hand, professional musicians live exclusively by their art and their music is esoteric. Francis Bebey goes on to write that such families or castes may be identified by their unique surnames. He writes;

Keita, Mamadi, Duibate or Diabte, Kuyate and Sory are all names usually associated with griots... The West African griot is a troubadour, the counterpart of the medieval European minstrel. Some griots are attached to the courts of noblemen, others are independent and go from house to house or village to village, peddling stories and adding new ones to their

collection. The griot knows everything that is going on and he can recall events that are no longer within living memory. He is a living archive of his people's traditions. But he is above all a musician, without whom no celebration or ritual would be complete. (Bebey 22-24)

The point that a griot is a 'living archive' of a community, will not be taken seriously by the Westerners as they believe that oral history is amorphous and it can change over the period of time. Moreover, an oral narrative might go through a several transformations as it is remembered and told in different temporal and spatial settings. The West always preferred written documents over the oral ones when it came to the formation of history.

Despite the importance of the tradition of oral history and how historical sources would be transmitted through it, a prejudice arose in the late nineteenth century against oral history. Nineteenth Century German historian Leopold Von Ranke, protested this whole moralistic battle amidst various methods of histories. He said the task of all historians is to record history. It doesn't matter how you do it. One thing which I would like to mention is that memory plays an indispensable role when it comes to oral history. Some might want to question the grounds of 'memory' as there might be a possibility of memory being incoherent and this incoherence might disrupt the structure of history. I would like to point out the fact that history of 'slavery' in America was also constructed through the memory and the words of slaves as most of the slaves were not allowed to read or write. Perhaps, it can be too detrimental to call oral history frivolous. In fact, Oral history may provide an alternative to have a productive dialogue. Paul Thompson in *Voices of the Past: Oral History* writes; "oral history is not necessarily an instrument of change; it depends upon the spirit in which it is used. Nevertheless, oral history certainly can be a means for transforming both the content and the purpose of history. It can be used to change the focus of history itself, and open up new areas of inquiry." (Thompson 3)

I would like to reiterate the fact that memory is the core of oral history and meanings can be extracted from memories. Talking about the various musical traditions, from Gospel, Jazz, Blues, Hip Hop, Soul to Reggae; it is essential to

remember that memory had a great role to play in the progression of these genres of music. Songs which were passed from one generation to next were a significant record of history. Alex Haley in his essay “Black History, oral history and genealogy” writes that memory forms history. It can be a social or family history. He refers that he grew up in his maternal grandmother’s house and every evening his grandmother and her friends, who were always women, would talk about the places they all belonged to and many other accounts of their lives. These conversations made Haley form an understanding of his own existence. He remarks; “It was bits and pieces and patches of what I later would learn as a long narrative history of the family which had been passed down literally across generations.” (Haley 9)

Oral historians have often been concerned about collecting information and the execution of it. The first generation of historians were more concerned about the accuracy of memory. However, the second generation of historians were interested in organising the memory of the past. Thus, they were less worried about the accuracy of memory. Most of the music traditions share a very strong sense of intimacy with memory. As far as Reggae is concerned, the popularity of it has a lot to do with orality and how it embraced memory.

Reggae as a form has a lot in common with other forms of Caribbean music. Some believe that it is highly influenced by Calypso and Cuban music. While other believe that it has more to do with Dancehall and Ska. These forms of Caribbean music will be explored in the latter part of the chapter. Primarily, Reggae is considered to be a form of music which is an amalgamation of African rhythms and European Melody, It has too many elements of various forms of music which is why one cannot define Reggae in a linear definition. One can find traces of African work songs and digging tunes in Reggae. African who managed to survive in Jamaica played an integral role in shaping up the unique sound of Reggae. Most of the Reggae records, which have a strong Rastafarian influence, are generally concerned with the issues of black identity and black pride. The song “So Jah Seh” (1974) by Bob Marley talks about the need of harmony and love in a society which is divided in many fragments and sub-sections when it comes to class. The song has Rastafarian religious undercurrent as Jah is the name of the God of Israel in Hebrew Bible. Rastafari use

the term 'Jah' as a term for God or Haile Selassie I. The song also interrogates the questions of pride and substance. The lyrics of the song are;

So Jah Seh,
Not one of my seeds,
Shall sit in the sidewalk
And beg bread.
No, they can't and you know they won't.
And verily, verily, I'm saying unto thee,
I ignite oneself and love humanity.
Cause puss and dog they get together.
What's wrong with loving one-another?
Puss and dog they get together,
What's wrong with you my brother? (1974)

Reggae as an art form has always been evolving. Cultural Theorist Dick Hebdige in *Cut 'n' Mix: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* writes; "One of the most important words in Reggae is "version". Sometimes a Reggae record is released and literally hundreds of different versions of the same rhythm or melody will follow in its wake. Every time a version is released, the original tune will be slightly modified...creating empty spaces by shuffling the sequence of sounds into new patterns". (Hebdige xiii). There is no rigid definition of what Reggae consists of. It is believed that Trinidad's music is closest to Reggae because Calypso originated in Trinidad and Tobago. Before getting into the socio-cultural domain of Reggae and Calypso, I would like to shed some light on the history of Trinidad. Like many of the Caribbean islands, Trinidad was primarily settled by the Spanish rulers in 1500. Towards the end of eighteenth century, Catholics from the French West Indies were invited to settle down in Trinidad. In 1797, Trinidad and Tobago became British colonies. Most of the Caribbean islands have a chequered history and Trinidad is no exception. Apart from the heavy European influence, the slaves who were brought to these islands, added another dimension to the art and culture of the islands.

The carnival celebration is another reason of Reggae being so close to Trinidad. Every year in Trinidad, for the two days leading up to Ash Wednesday, all the people of the island come together to celebrate. The steel bands and Calypsoes are the centre of this celebration. Without these two entities, carnival will not be possible. However, the journey of the idea of carnival to the Caribbean islands is an interesting one. It is believed that carnival has its origin in the European tradition of masquerade. Class differentiation was quite prominent in Caribbean islands. With regard to Trinidad, it had a respectable number of wealthy French people and every year they would parade through the streets wearing masks. The affluent French people could not carry forward the cultural legacy of Masquerade as after 1838, the emancipated slaves celebrated their new found freedom by taking over this tradition. This act of taking over is quite symbolic as it delineates the disruption of colonial hegemony which the white settlers would practice over the inhabitants of the island. Many things which would be a part of the carnival or the procession would work as a reminder of the turbulent past. For instance, the marchers carried lighted torches and this particular act is supposed to come from the old custom of assembling the slaves at night to put out fire on the plantations.

Many Europeans were not pleased with this form of expression of the emancipated slaves. They would look at the socio-cultural and political expression of the slaves as an act of barbarism. For them, the carnival of the Africans was like a riot. I would like to raise certain concerns about the views which whites had towards Africans. Why was it problematic for the Europeans to accept and respect the culture of the Africans? Was it a fear or some kind of an ignorance which led to the construction of the European view of Whites being superior?

This fear also influenced the beats of Reggae in one way or the other. Furthermore, one phenomenon which cannot be overlooked is 'Drumming'. For many, drumming was a noise which had to be curtailed which is why during 1870s it was banned. Without the sound of drums, one could not imagine of having a carnival. Nevertheless, the roots of drumming lies in the practice of 'Stick-fighting' during the carnival. Stick-fighting was considered to be a central part of all the festivities. The custom of Stick-fighting was probably African in origin but the slaves of Trinidad revived this art and it would basically be a contest about strength and skilfulness.

During the time of the festival, groups of twenty or more armed with big sticks would roam the streets and challenge the rival groups in warlike songs called *Calindas*.

Calinda which is also spelled as Kalinda or Kalenda is the folk music of the Caribbean which arose in the 1720s. Africans were still slaves around this time and by virtue of them being slaves, they were not allowed to be a part of the French carnival as it has already been stated before. Hence, the slaves who were not allowed to take part, formed a parallel celebration which was called Canboulay, it is the precursor of Trinidad's carnival. Canboulay is majorly practised as dance because of the heavy indulgent of beats which would get formed because of stick-fighting. The idea that music can only be produced by a certain section of society is fallacious. Europeans never considered the sound created by freed slaves as music. The British authorities tried to ban Canboulay which led to riots in 1881 in Port of Spain. Hebdige further opines;

From the 1890s onwards, the authorities tried to clean up Carnival. *The Canboulay* processions were phased out, and fancy dress and musical competitions were introduced by local businessman with a view to "improving the moral tone of Carnival". But the old tradition of resistance to authority still lingers on beneath the surface. It has simply taken new and more subtle forms. And although it may seem strange that the music which has made Carnival famous throughout the world can be traced back to the warlike customs of stick-fighting bands. (Hebdige 19)

The relationship between stick-fighting and steel bands is quite significant and conspicuous. After banning stick-fighting, people confined the practice of their musical sessions to the slums and ghettos they belonged to. However, they did try to preserve the custom in disguise and the answer was tambour-bamboo bands. These bands carried bamboo which would be cut in various sizes to produce different sound. The bamboo sticks were either banged together or thumped on the ground. After tambour-bamboo bands too were banned, people started to create sound by tapping kettles or bottles with metal spoons. This shows that no one could kill music which was buzzing within the emancipated people of the Caribbean. It is also factual that the

music which would be produced in the ghettos was never taken in all its seriousness. It was always looked down upon as it belonged to the lower class.

As far as Steel bands are concerned, they are known by many names such as steelpans, steel drums or pans. In 1937, steel bands had re-emerged to gain the lost glory. Many objects such as buckets, frying pans, oil drums, and dustbin lids were used by these bands to create the first orchestra of steel. It is fascinating to notice that these bands created music out of nothing. Objects of the daily life were collected and different sounds were mixed with each-other to produce something which had not been created before. During the Second World War, panmen as they were referred to came across a major drawback when the American soldiers were granted two naval base on the Caribbean island. During this time period, the yearly carnival went underground. While being underground, panmen started developing and refining their music skills. After the war got over, many musicians emerged out of the ghettos but still the music of the streets was considered to be disreputable and of low class. Over the period of time, panmen started to get some respect as they composed classical compositions which were supported by the massive orchestras of steel. There has been a difference in a larger opinion regarding panmen being considered as artists. Affluent sections of Jamaican society always questioned panmen and their role in creating art. The question of how one perceives art is also stimulating? Shall art be seen through the lens of class hierarchy? In my view any art should be kept far away from the shadow of class politics. However, this is also a fact that art and class share a conglomerated relationship. Perhaps that is the reason that arts which originated from streets are considered to be mediocre in nature.

Talking about music and the whole domain of high and low art, there has always been a disputation between the two. Classical music is often associated with high art where as popular is related with low art. Is it justifiable to draw these stringent lines and boundaries? Is it this simple to delineate what a high art is and what could possibly be a low art? Is the music produced by steel bands fall within the paradigm of low art even after many of the bands tried to assimilate classical compositions? Nicholas Cook in *Music: A Very Short Introduction* writes that “High art or ‘art’ music meant the notation-based traditions of the leisured classes, and above all the great repertory of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Low art meant

everything else, that is to say the limitless variety of popular and mainly non-notated- and hence historically irretrievable- musical traditions.” (Cook 42)

Popular music is often segregated from the art tradition. Reggae was considered as something which was not respectable enough to meet the requirements of high art. Elitism and artistic autonomy can lead to the composition of high art, it is thought to be exclusive and limited to a few people. Something which is not easily accessible. What is the reason that any art which becomes popular perceived as a low art? Art needs to be protected from the tags of high and low as art travels all the time and perceptions regard any art too might go through a process of modification. Joy Sperling in his essay “Artists Taking the High Road and the low” which was published in the book titled *Popular Culture Values and the Arts: Essay on Elitism versus Democratization*, writes;

Since the late-nineteenth century, much high art has also gained value from the connected concept of intellectual inaccessibility: if a work of art can be comprehended by only members of the self-appointed elite it carries more value owing to its exclusivity and appeal to the intellectual-cultural vanity of its membership. Alternatively, low art is usually inexpensive, easily accessible and common. Art loses value in direct relation to the quality it is denied by art elites and to the degree to which it becomes popular: if a work of art can be understood by the general public, then it is automatically degraded in meaning, deprived of intellectual value, and designated as popular. In this system, the quality of one’s taste is solely derived from the parameters of class. (Sperling 110)

The common notion that one who belongs to a high class might have a better taste in art compare to someone who is not economically affluent enough is highly flawed. During the 1960s and 1970s when Reggae was still learning to walk on its feet, many people of Jamaica who belonged to the upper class had adjudicated that Reggae is not opulent enough for their taste. This is the reason that many well to do people did not want to associate themselves with Reggae. They would listen to Rhythm and Blues over Reggae. Many people preferred to go to America and purchase their personal music from there. For these selected rich people, Reggae was not really an art and one

of the foremost reasons for this deduction could be the poor people who invented Reggae. Because of a stringent class consciousness, people across different factions of society would not mingle with each other in Jamaica. Sperling in his essay furthermore looks at the class distinction and why the elites decided to separate themselves from the working class. He goes on to writes; “Before 1850, anyone willing to work hard by reading, visiting exhibitions, and purchasing modest prints or reproductions could, in theory, acquire taste and improve themselves. After 1865, class, and by extension taste, became more fixed...Taste was increasingly considered inborn and naturally occurring, and as such it became a reliable social marker for distinguishing class.” (Sperling 114)

Looking at the history of Reggae, the socio-cultural picture wasn't any different as generation of elites separated themselves by overtly displaying their distance from the mass. It is quite paradoxical that the prosperous people of Jamaica Considered Rhythm and Blues which is often abbreviated as R&B to be superior in comparison to Reggae. It is ironic to state that just like Reggae was struggling to attain a respectable position in Jamaica, the status of Rhythm and Blues was no different in America therefore it becomes essential to gaze into the history of Rhythm & Blues as this is a genre of popular African American music which originated in the 1940s and when music is studied in the context of African Americans, then one should not pretermite the fact that music for them has been a movement; a movement against exploitation, slavery, subjection and this catalogue can go on further. Music functioned as the solitary source of strength and power for blacks at the time when not only black voice but black psyche as well was suppressed but more than strength and power, music furnished a cognisance of collectiveness and integrity within blacks. It connected the veins of African-Americans regardless of their class, colour, religion and social prominence. Moreover, it helped blacks to ameliorate their social and economic eminence. Just like Reggae, Rhythm and Blues too had to fight for its socio-cultural acceptance. In White America, the genre of R&B was looked down upon. White Americans would often want to keep themselves away from the music which was primarily sung, recorded and performed by the blacks.

Additionally, the term R&B has gone through a number of alterations over the period of time. In the early 1950s, it was solely applied to Blues. By the mid-1950s, it

referred to the music styles that developed from Electronic Blues, Gospel and Soul music. By the 1970s, the term was used for funk music and in the 1980s it was associated with contemporary R&B. As R&B was going through a process of various transformations, Black freedom movement too was getting stronger. After the Second World War, when blacks were still excluded from participating in various aspects of American society and politics, R&B music was treated as a segregated phenomenon as well. One thing which I would like to mention is that it took a long time for the genre of R&B to penetrate into the white audience as back in the 1960s many white Americans would not listen to African American music as it was not considered to be sophisticated enough. One of the earliest tracks which covertly got acceptance by the whites was called “Sh-boom”. The song was written by James Keyes, Claude Feaster, Carl Feaster, Floyd F. McRae, and James Edwards in 1954. All these artists were member of an R&B vocal group called ‘The Chords’. Before “Sha-boom”, R&B was an isolated phenomenon but after the release of this song, the scenario regarding black music had started to change. There were black oriented radio stations which provided a great exposure to the genre of R&B. Moreover, these stations emerged and evolved as social institutions to provide a sense of power to black community in America. Similarly, Reggae in Jamaica became a foundation to support the marginalised. Even though, Reggae artists were considered to be a group of nonconformists, it is rather appalling that the political parties of Jamaica did not care enough to erase the lines which would exist between several class groups. Jamaica which is a postcolonial plural society has two foremost political parties, the Jamaica Labour Party and the People’s National party. Being postcolonial in nature, Jamaica had a substantial anti-black notion in circulation. Many parties had an aversion towards blacks as they were not encouraged to join politics. The wind of change came around the time when Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia was revealed as the true messiah for blacks. This led to a mounting cynicism about European values and their knowledge production. People started to question the White colonial empire. With the question of class in Jamaica, the status of Rastafarians needs to be spoken about as well. Rastafarian symbols were used by the political parties for vote bank politics without paying much heed to the socio-economic upliftment of Rastas. Anita M. Waters in her *book Race, Class, and Political Symbols: Rastafari and Reggae in Jamaican Politics* writes; “Beginning in 1972, it has been noted, Jamaican political parties have frequently used Rastafarian

symbols and Reggae music in their electoral propaganda...In the English-speaking Caribbean, the use of lower class religious symbols and music by politicians is not uncommon.” (3-4)

Reggae is perceived as Jamaica’s cultural outlet and it is also about giving a philosophy to Jamaicans. The philosophy to fight back and never give up. Reggae has diverse meanings for different people. For some it is a music which addresses social, racial, and class issues. While for others, it is just a beat which evolved through varied genres of music. It is a fact that Reggae imbibed a lot from other musical traditions. For instance, when American soldiers came to Jamaica during the Second World War, they brought radios with them and they would listen to Soul and Rhythm & Blues on their radio sets. When people from Jamaica heard these genres of music, they got reasonably inquisitive about the sound pattern of R&B and Soul hence they started using similar beats in Reggae.

With regard to Reggae music, some believe that it is a response to Rhythm and Blues which most of the radio stations in Jamaica would play in the 1960s. The others think of Reggae to be just like Jazz in terms of feelings. Moreover, as stated earlier Reggae is associated with Rastafarianism as well. Most of the Rastas believe that Reggae is a path to connect with the supreme almighty. David V. Moskowitz in his book *Caribbean Popular Music: An Encyclopaedia of Reggae, Mento, Ska, Rocksteady and Dancehall* writes;

It is a common misconception that Jamaica’s only type of music is Reggae, the fact is that there has been a long line of other types that illustrate some of the origins of Reggae. In the first half of the twentieth century, Jamaican musicians were interested in the American popular styles that they heard coming over the radio waves from the Mississippi delta. This meant that they were part of jazz explosion that took place in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Jamaican dance bands heard and reproduced these sounds to entertain audiences in Kingston clubs and long the north shore of the island. Alongside this American musical influence was indigenous Jamaican music that ran the gamut from the traditional mento to the popular Calypso. During the 1940s and 1950s, the Jamaican

popular music scene was filled with the sounds of American jazz music played with a Caribbean flavour. (Moskowitz xi)

Before we get further into the sphere of Jamaican popular music, it is essential to understand the genres of Mento, Ska and Rocksteady as these are the precursors of Reggae and all of these played an immense role in shaping up Reggae. The period of 1950s is important in the history of Jamaican music, as this was the time when Mento was the predominant style of music in Jamaica. Mento was basically a folk music which was a blend of many cultures. Mento combined the sound of instruments which the African slaves brought to Jamaica. There were rhythmic influence from Cuba, and traces of Calypso from Trinidad. Mento is one of the indigenous musical styles which led to the construction of Reggae. Mento style mixed Pocomania church music, drum sounds, slave era work songs, and elements of American Jazz. It was the first type of music in Jamaica which was recorded and interestingly it did not disappear when other styles of music emerged. In terms of its essence, mento is quite anti-thetical to urban Jamaican popular music as mento emerged from the rural landscape. The earliest recording history of mento dates to 1920s, however, 1950s is considered to be the golden era of mento, this was the time when refined mento was produced. There are different kinds of mento; for instance, classical mento which is also refereed as country mento has a folk quality and it is performed with the banjo, acoustic guitars, homemade reed instruments and hand percussion apparatuses. The slicker and more urban version of mento emerged in the 1920s which was highly influenced by jazz. The traditional instruments were replaced by saxophone, bass and piano. Mento is primarily meant to be danced and sung. Mento is considered to be quite imperative because it paved the way for Ska, Rock Steady, Reggae and Dancehall.

As far as Ska is concerned, it originated in Jamaica in late 1950s. Ska combined a lot of musical traditions in it, starting from Caribbean mento, and Calypso to American Jazz and Rhythm and Blues. During 1960s, Ska was considered to be the first few indigenous forms of Jamaican music. Ska music is quite significant because of the kind of changes it brought to the psyche of Jamaican people. For example, Ska changed the tendency to remake and rework solely on American music and it injected the idea of originality. The Ska movement coincided with the independence of Caribbean islands. Around this time, Ska became synonymous with the assertion of

Jamaican national identity and pride. Ska further developed in Jamaica when Prince Buster, Clement “Coxsone” Dodd and Duke Reid found sound systems. Initially American Rhythm and Blues would be played by these sound systems but soon there was a trend of recording original tracks. Prince Buster is the stage name of Cecil Bustamente Campbell. He is a Jamaican singer-songwriter and producer. He is regarded as one of the significant figures in the history of Ska and Rocksteady. The records which he released in the 1960s, shaped the course of Jamaican contemporary music. After meeting Clement “Coxsone” Dodd, Campbell became more interested in the operational side of running a sound system as Clement Dodd operated one of Kingston’s well established and most popular sound systems. One can draw a parallel between sound systems of Kingston and ghetto blasters of Bronx, America. Ghetto blasters were basically the enormous boom boxes which would play loud beats in the streets of America mainly inhabited by the African Americans. It is a known fact that when hip hop was emerging in America, many a times the American government would not allow hip hop artists to access public spaces to perform. Ghetto blasters of America and sound systems of the Caribbean played a momentous role in the life of poor people of the ghettos as they would get introduced to different kinds of musical genres through these devices. Moreover, the act of playing music by such resources questions the destructive hegemony of the government. The idea of playing loud beats and music also extends the accessibility of a space. Nonetheless, Campbell had started his sound system called ‘voice of the people’ which soon became a rival to the sound systems of Coxsone and Reid. Campbell tried to resource music from the USA but when he could not then he started making his own music. Campbell released his first single in 1961 titled “Little honey/Luke lane shuffle”. Some of his other albums are ‘I Feel the Spirit’, ‘Fly Flying Ska’, ‘National Ska- Pain in my Belly’, and ‘Ska-Lip-Soul’ etc.

Furthermore, Duke Reid and Coxsone Dodd established themselves in sound systems in the late 1950s before founding The Treasure Isle and Studio one labels, respectively. Coxsone recorded his first song at Federal Records. In the history of Jamaican music, recording studios played an excessive role in terms of providing a space to performers and singers to record. Recording studios conveyed a sense of legitimacy and permanence to Jamaican artists. For instance, when Reggae was in its

early stage, recording studios didn't have enough money to give it to the singers who would record songs. Despite all of this, songs would be recorded because at that point of time, recording a song was not a method to acquire mere recognition and money in fact, it was a mode of reaching out to as many people as possible. However, it is remarkable to identify that the first ever Ska song named "Easy Snappin" was produced by Coxson Dodd. The song was recorded in 1956 by Theophilus Beckford.

It is needless to mention that Coxson was quite influential in the growth of Ska and Reggae in the 1950s and 1960s. Coxson's relation with music started much early in life as he used to play records in his father's shop. While playing records, he started getting influenced by different beats. In the early 1950s, working in the sugarcane fields in the Southern United States, Coxson became familiar with American Rhythm and Blues. Talking about the American South, this was the place which laid foundation for most of the black movements in America. Moreover, the history of Southern States were written on the pages of violence, bloodshed and killings. For instance, lynching of black bodies was a norm, the institution of slave labour was a phenomenon which was seen in American South, and the segregated system of different social apparatuses was in function in this part of America. The music of blacks which represented pain and violence had a great impact on Coxson. Perhaps that is why the pain of not being heard, the pain of not being able to fight, and the pain of a silenced voice is projected by both Reggae and other African American musical genres in the same capacity. For instance Bob Marley in his song "Get Up, Stand Up" talks about the necessity to be prepared to fight. Marley writes;

Get up, Stand up, Stand up for your right
Get up, Stand up, don't give up the fight
Preacher man don't tell me heaven is under the earth
I know you don't know what life is really worth
Is not all that glitters in gold and
Half the story has never been told
So now you see the light
Stand up for your right

Get up, Stand up, don't give up the fight. (1973)

Nonetheless, Coxson had set up the downbeat system in 1954 in Jamaica. Being the owner of an amplifier, a turntable which is used to mix records, and a few US records Coxson started making music. He would often import records from New Orleans and Miami. At times, Coxson would visit America to learn about new tunes which he could bring home for Jamaican audience. With the trend of R&B ending in America and the dawning of American rock and roll era in the 1950s, Coxson started to record in Jamaica to meet the local demand. In 1963, Coxson opened a recording studio named 'Studio One' in Jamaica. It was the first recording studio which was owned by a non-white in Jamaica. Coxson would have auditions every Sunday evening in search of a new talent. It was one such evening when he met Bob Marley and the rest is history. During the late 1960s and 1970s, Studio One was associated with the sound of Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae. Many iconic artists in Jamaica worked with Coxson such as Ronald Alphonso, Donald Drummond, Alton Ellis, Dennis Brown, Derrick Harriott Burning Spear, Marcia Griffiths, and Alton Ellis etc.

Now with an active studio, Coxson wanted to form a studio band and thus 'The Skatalites' was born. It went on to become one of the premier bands of Ska in the Caribbean island. The Skatalites was basically a group of instrumentalist who used to study at Alpha Boys Catholic School in Kingston. Established in 1880, this school was run by Roman Catholic nuns. The school was basically built as 'school for wayward boys'. This institution became renowned for the role it played in the field of music. It gave an outstanding music training to its students. Nonetheless, 'The Skatalite's wrote over 300 songs and had a substantial presence in the Caribbean Island. The musical impact of this band was staggering. They had backed a number of Ska performers. David V. Moskowitz in *Caribbean Popular Music: An Encyclopaedia of Reggae, Mento, Ska, Rock Steady, and Dancehall* writes;

The band has come together as the result of Clement "Coxson" Dodd's need for an in-house group for his Studio One facility... the Skatalites worked for all the major producers in Jamaica and played the backing music for virtually every important Ska vocalist. The band broke up as the

result of trombonist Donald Drummond's arrest, and McCook went on to form the Supersonics. The Supersonics then became the studio band for Duke Reid's Treasure Isle Studio. While the Skatalites were instrumental in the birth of Ska, the Supersonics helped usher in the rock steady era. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Ska was reborn through the UK two-tone craze, and McCook reformed the Skatalites. (Moskovitz 271)

Music historians divide Ska into three periods: the original Jamaican Ska of the 1960s, the English two tone of the late 1970s in which Jamaican Ska was merged with faster tempos and the third wave of Ska which flourished across UK, Germany, Australia, Japan, South America and the US in the 1980s and 1990s. The history of Ska lies in its ability to contest for a sense of individuality, dignity, power to express and prosperity. Ska's journey from Jamaica to the Western world helps us in tracing the sense of uncertainty amongst the youth culture. As far as 'Two Tone' phenomenon is concerned, it was late 1970s Ska revival in the UK. Its name came from the record label which Jerry Dammers founded, Two Tone or 2 Tone records. Jeremy David Hounsell "Jerry" Dammers is a British Musician who is a founder of England based Ska revival band called 'The Specials'. It is not really surprising that English youth embraced Ska as a form of resistance just like the Jamaicans embraced Reggae. There were songs about unemployment, racism and teenage pregnancy and some of these issues were as relevant in Jamaica as well. 'The Specials' were the most poeticized band of the Two Tone movement and the band came out with a song titled "Ghost Town" in 1981 which captured the complete essence of that time. The song addressed themes of urban decay, deindustrialization, violence in inner cities and unemployment. The song became all the more relevant as when it was released, there were incidents of riots in British cities. The lyrics of "Ghost town" are;

This town, is coming like a ghost town;

All the clubs have been closed down.

This place, is coming like a ghost town;

Bands won't play no more.

Too much fighting on the dance floor.

Do you remember the good old days before the ghost town?
We danced and sang, and the music played in a de boomtown.
This town, is coming like a ghost town,
Why must the youth fight against themselves?
Government leaving the youth on the shelf.
This place, is coming like a ghost town,
No job to be found in this country,
Can't go on no more
The people getting angry.¹

It is very interesting to observe that first, the British Empire came to the Caribbean islands for the purpose of colonization and later after the Second World War people from the Caribbean islands were brought to England to rebuild the devastated white nation. After the war, England was in a deprived position economically. This was the time when Ska reached England and as soon as it reached people across race and class embraced this form of music.

On the contrary, the picture in Jamaica was slightly different when it came to the issue of class and Ska music. The class system literally divided the city of Kingston in high-class and backward class. During the years of Ska, the class system decided which musicians could perform in which clubs. People like Count Ossie and his drummers were put into a corner to perform under no spotlight so that the upper class club visitors won't have to tolerate the sight of the unwanted and undesirables. Count Ossie was a Jamaican drummer. In the 1950s, he had set up a Rastafari community in Rockfort on the eastern side of Kingston. Many musicians of Kingston learned about the philosophy of the Rastafari movement from this community. Because of Rastafarian beliefs, Ossie and his team mates were considered as social outcasts. Because of this class system Ska music was considered as the music of the ghettos which was only pleasant when performed by those with lighter skin. Heather

¹ This song is written by Jerry Dammers. It was recorded in 1981 at Woodbine Studios, England. It is believed to be one of the most well-known songs of its time because of its socio-political significance.

Augustyn in *Ska: The Rhythm of Liberation* talks about the division of class which was practiced in Jamaica. He writes;

A strong class system was established. The first class consisted of the whites who were plantation owners or professionals. The second class comprised whites who were indentured servants, sent to Jamaica from Great Britain because they were convicted of crimes in their own country. They were essentially slaves, but they could earn their freedom. The third class consisted of slaves from Africa, who suffered horrific working conditions, abuse and poor food and had no hope of obtaining freedom. (Augustyn 3-4)

Amidst this rigorous class hierarchical organisation, Music did flourish and as it has been mentioned before, Reggae artists had to go through a tremendous amount of biasness before they could succeed in establishing their art as an institution which could represent some kind of a socio-cultural identity. The term Reggae was strongly influenced by the traditional Caribbean Mento and Calypso music, as well as American Jazz. It is not really a co-incidence that Reggae and Jazz both genre of music had to struggle in their initial years of formation.

As far as Calypso is concerned, it is an Afro-Caribbean music which originated in Trinidad and Tobago in mid-20th century. Some believe that Calypso evolved from the steel bands because Calypso has been both overtly political and social. While some consider that Calypso has taken a lot from the carnivals. However, one needs to remember that Calypso also has an association with the Gayap, the work song sung by slaves in the field. After the abolition of slavery, African contract workers while working sang Gayap in a call and response format. Just like stick bands, there would be many groups competing through music and songs while working in the field. Calypso is a melange of many folk form which came from Africa and Europe. Calypso pushed the boundaries of free speech and the lyrics of this music would encompass from day to day events to political corruption, which is why the British government enforced censorship and soon the government apparatuses started to scan all Calypso songs.

One of the tools through which a government often tries to combat the so called 'anti-establishment groups' is censorship. To comprehend the definition of the word 'censorship' within the conventional milieu is often understood by a repressive force which prohibits dissemination of ideas, knowledge, images, and messages etc. in a society. Censorship suppresses human expression and it manipulates the information which people receive. However, it is not simplistic to measure the understanding of this word within a linear pattern. Annette Kuhn in *Cinema, Censorship and Sexuality* writes; "Censorship is not reducible to a circumscribed and predefined set of institutions and institutional activities, but is produced within an array of constantly shifting discourses, practices and apparatuses. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as either fixed or monolithic. It is an ongoing process embodying complex and often contradictory relations of power." (p.4)

While this ongoing process of censorship prolonged, Calypso artists continued to record songs which could pose a threat to the hegemonic nature of the British government. However, many records were dumped into the sea in the name of censorship. Heather Augustyn in his book *Ska: The Rhythm of Liberation* analyses the nature of Calypso. He remarks; "Originally performed during carnival in Trinidad between stick-fighting bouts as an entertainment interlude, Calypso may date as far back as 1784, to a professional singer known as Gros Jean. Calypsos were sung in an African tongue, patois, or French Creole." (Augustyn 10)

As far as the political nature of Calypso is concerned, it has been central to the politics of the Caribbean. Calypso is not only a cultural product but it is also a historical experience of the Caribbean Island. It was the pre-dominant music until it was rivalled by Reggae in the 1960s. Calypso emerged as a cultural weapon which disseminated a consciousness across class about one's basic rights. Patrick Hylton in the essay "The Politics of the Caribbean Music" writes; As a result of (Calypso) being an African cultural expression, its status was of lower class; and like the Reggae, it served as the medium of the views and interests of this class. In the word of Lord Lere, an old Calypsonian, "The Calypso was the poor man's newspaper." Its contents reflect the aspirations and resentment of the subjugated masses in the colony. (Hylton 24)

As it has been mentioned previously that Calypso was condemned as well as censured and one of the reasons of this denunciation could be the class it was associated with or the class it came from. Nonetheless, eventually Calypso made this transition from being a medium of socio-political tempestuousness to one of entertainment. Apart from Calypso, one genre of music which needs to be talked about in relation to Reggae is Rocksteady. Rocksteady emerged in the 1960s in Jamaica and it is a successor of Ska and precursor to Reggae. Some of the Jamaican groups which are well known to perform Rocksteady are The Gaylads, The Maytals, The Heptones and The Paragons. In the summer of 1966, the wave of Ska changed into slower rhythms and a new form of dance and performance emerged. This form was way different to Ska. The sporadic movements of Ska became less popular during this time. The beats of Rocksteady were much slower which enabled more time to the dancers to imagine and perform their moves. The brass was replaced by guitar and keyboards which gave a renewed texture to the entire music scenario of Jamaica.

Moreover, there were modifications in the way recording was done. In the early days, recording was not simple as the studio facilities were archaic but as the industry became evolved it became more sophisticated. It became easier to mix different records and create an amalgamated sound. In Ska, the voice track was given more prominence and such is the case in pop music industry where the lyrics of a record are considered imperative. The scenario was considerably contrasting in Rocksteady as the singer's voice was treated like any other instrument. The voice was not allowed to overtake the sound and melody of various instruments. The voice would merge with the sound of other instruments to clean a linear pattern of sound.

Alton Ellis produced the first Rocksteady record called *Rocksteady* in 1966. Ellis is also called the Godfather of Rocksteady. In the mid of 1960s, as Rocksteady was evolving and reaching out to a wider audience, Jamaica as a nation was changing too. There was political instability, social disorder and unity was turning into chaos. There was unemployment and insufficiency of food and the government had no other alternative. The difference between the rich and the poor was becoming apparent as the economic boom of the 1960s helped solitary the elites of Jamaica. There was hardly a concern for the progression of the poor. Conditions in Jamaica were getting deteriorated. Protest groups had started to defy the political leadership of the dominant

classes. During this time a young rebellious group was getting formed in the slums of Kingston known as the Rude boys. The Rude boy subculture was associated with angry, discontented youths. Dick Hebdige in *Cut 'n' Mix: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* writes;

The word “rude boy” referred to a group of youths who hung out on the slum street corners. They were mostly unemployed and had taken to carrying German ratchet knives and hand guns. They could be anything from fourteen to twenty five years old and came from all over West Kingston. And above all the rude boys were angry. Condition in the West Kingston had hardly improved with the passing years. Rather than buckle under to a life spent doing menial work or no work at all, the rude boys took to the streets and to crime. (Hebdige 56)

The rudies as they were addressed wore leather jackets and their eyes would be covered behind a pair of shades. The Rude Boy subculture became too challenging to ignore. Rude boys could crash into any dance or musical event. People normally would not challenge the authority of these boys as any kind of a resistance could lead to violence. The Rude boy image had been a part of the sound system in the 1960s. Songs have been recorded and written on Rude boys. Some songs glorify the behaviour of the rudies, while others condemn it. In 1962, Duke Reid released Stranger Cole’s *Rough and Tough*. Stranger Cole was born Wilburn Theodore Cole in 1945 in Kingston, Jamaica. He was given the title of Stranger as he did not resemble anyone in his family. Cole sings;

Don’t bite the hand that feed you,
Cause the good you do loves after you...
It will be rough and tough on your side. (1962)

In 1965, The Wailers produced the song *Rude Boy* for Clement Dodd. The phenomenon of Rude boy songs became a sensation in Jamaican popular music. The Wailers followed this tradition with the release of *Rule them Rudie* and *Steppin Razor*.

There were other artists too who produced songs on Rude boys such as *Everybody Rudie Now* by Keith McCarthy, *Tougher than Tough* by Derrick Morgan and *Rudy a Message to You* by Dandy Livingston. Moreover, Prince Buster released a string of rudie anthems and one such is *Too Hot* which came out in 1967. *Too Hot* puts Rude boys on a pedestal. This song glorifies violence and points out that if there is anyone who wants to contest the power of the Rude boys then the person should be prepared to face the wrath of rudies. In the song *Too Hot* Buster states;

Too hot, this town is too hot
Too hot, too hot.
Now they calling in for the guns,
About to spoil the rude boy funs,
The rude boys never give up their guns,
It's too hot, too hot.
No man can tell them what to do,
Too hot, too hot.
Pound for pound, they say they are ruder than you,
Too hot, too hot.
They are the boss, and no one back talk,
If mad, then have a coffin you like.
And you choose your burial site,
Pay for insurance, make up your will. (1967)

The Rude boys questioned middle-class values. They were anti-establishment. Since, the Rude boys rejected the middle and upper class principles they became the representatives of an all new generation which opposed the economic and political system which led to unemployment and poverty in Jamaica. The question which arises is how are Rude boys connected to the genre of Rocksteady or for that matter Reggae music? It is essential to understand that both Rocksteady and Reggae highlighted the difficulties of the underprivileged people who lived in the ghettos. Just like the Rude

boys, Reggae music questioned the values of middle and upper class. Music scholars recognised Rocksteady to be more political than Ska.

While Rocksteady, Ska and Reggae protested through music. The Rude boys took to streets and questioned the policies of the Jamaican government. They dressed up in a different fashion so that the mere sight of a Rude boy will be a sign of protest. They didn't believe in the government. They wanted to voice anger and the only way they could demonstrate their sense of antagonism was through violence. There are many Rocksteady records which celebrated the image of the Rude boy. Stephen A. King in *Reggae, Rastafari, and the Rhetoric of Social Control* writes;

Unlike Ska, however, rocksteady songs celebrated the rebel, memorializing the Rude boy as a violent hero who sought "social" and "political" justice with a knife and a gun. While the Jamaican government publicly denounced the Rude boy's violence and anti-social behaviour, many rocksteady musicians championed the "good rudie" by celebrating his strength, youth, intelligence, aggressiveness. (King 37).

For instance, Derrick Morgan's song *Tougher than Tough* (1992) which has been mentioned previously, looks at a scenario in which the violent Rude boys are condemned and severely criticised in a court by the judge. The Rude boys revolt and opine that they have no fear of jail or any other punishment as they are strong like lion and iron. Eventually as the song is about to be over, the judge gets impressed by the fearlessness of the Rude boys and sets them free.

However, after the era of Rocksteady, Jamaican streets started to buzz with the sound of Reggae. The arrival of Reggae saw the beginning of the Rastafarian faith in Jamaica. This was the time when Jamaican popular music was full of radical political themes as well as there was a lot of curiosity about the people who followed Rastafarians. Unlike the Rude boys, the Rastas, as they were called, believed in peace, harmony and equality. However, the treatment which Rastas got from the middle and upper class was no different as compare to the Rude boys. Most of the people thought of Rastas to be inoperable social creatures. The reasons could be the kind of hair 'dread' they kept and the faith they had. Nonetheless, a whole new generation got influenced by the Rastafarian hairstyle where the hair is neither cut nor combed. When

Reggae gained popularity and mainstream acceptance in the 1970s, the locks became a fashion statement. Locks became a part of the gang culture in movies and this portrayal represented a different picture of the tradition of dreadlocks. In the West, dreadlocks gained immense admiration amidst counterculture aficionados such as hippies, punks, goths, and new age travellers. Many people wore dreadlocks consciously because they wanted to stand out in the crowd. Moreover, they didn't want to be a part of the norm. On the other hand, Rastafarians kept locks for a different reason. Rastas see dreadlocks as a way to keep themselves in a pure state of nature in which they don't want to own anything not even a comb. Rastas follow the biblical story of Samson who is considered to be the man of the sun. According to biblical accounts, Samson was given supernatural power to combat his enemies and perform heroic acts such as killing a lion. However, Samson's vulnerability lies in his hair as without which he would be powerless.

Samson's activity takes place around the time when the God was punishing Israelites by giving them into the hands of the Philistines. Manoah, who is a figure of judges from the Hebrew Bible, and his wife could not have a child so an angel of the lord appeared to Manoah's wife and told her that she would give birth to a son. The child was to be dedicated before its birth as a Nazirite. Being a Nazirite mean one has to abstain from alcohol and other intoxicated substances and furthermore, refrain from cutting the hair from one's head. Therefore, being a Rasta is not simplistic. It is about accepting a way of life which most of the people who keep dreadlocks are not aware of. Moreover, the association of locks with the gang culture damaged the image of Rastafarianism. Nonetheless, Rastas are imperative to the art of Reggae.

Unlike Rocksteady, the beats of Reggae was slower and heavier and it created an enormous impact in Jamaica. Reggae emphasized on the idea of home-coming with reference to Africans. The crux of the home-coming movement was that all Africans belong to Africa and this is where they ideally should inhabit. Desmond Dekker, a Jamaican Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae artist released a song titled *Israelites* in 1968. The song referred to Rastafarians as the true black Israelites, the lost twelfth tribe wandering in search of their Ethiopian heaven, Mount Zion. Mount Zion is a hill in Jerusalem just outside the walls of the old city. In a wider sense, it is also used for the entire land of Israel. Early Reggae placed more emphasis on the Rastafarian concepts

of Jah, Babylon and Mount Zion. The phrase Jah has often been a part of many Reggae songs. It is a short form of Yahweh which is a name of God in the Hebrew language. Jah is most commonly associated with the beliefs of Rastafari. 'Third World' which is a Jamaican Reggae band contest the importance of Jah love in the song *Try Jah Love* which was released in 1982. The lyrics of the song are;

A lonely soul was I without direction,
I didn't know which way that I had to go,
I sought the clues to life's unanswered questions,
My mind's heart had to know.
I heard you call while wandering through the darkness,
I'd walk a million miles to find that endless voice,
That speaks to me when I am in temptation,
Echoing my voice.
You know that,
It is time for the world to,
Try Jah love.
The only love that can bring peace is,
Jah, Jah love,
So, won't you try,
Try Jah love, love.

The followers of Rastafarianism believed in a world with harmony and peace. They believed in disseminating the message of non-violence and imagined the world without any bloodshed. They dreamed of a world without class hierarchy, a world where everyone will be treated equally irrespective of one's name, nation, colour, language, and gender. It is quite paradoxical that Rastas were looked at with apprehensive eyes. They were judged with fallacious notions. Hence, they coined the term 'Babylon' to represent any kind of inhumanness which was thrust upon the

Rastas. As far as the word Babylon is concerned, it was a significant city in the ancient Mesopotamia. The Christian may recognise the term from the Bible when the Jews were captured and forced to go through hardships in Babylon. During slavery, the Bible was the only text which was available to slaves as reading and learning were not encouraged when it came to enslaved Africans. They were ripped off from their identity hence the Bible became the sole reference point through which the slaves could connect and put things in context. For instance, they used the term Babylon for any kind of brutality which was done to them. Jimmy Cliff in his song *Reggae down Babylon* (1987) sings;

It's getting to the point

Where I can't hang around no more

It's getting to the point

Really have to open up the door

Times are changing

You better use your senses

Use what you have got

From coincidence, hear me now

Sooner or later you are gonna have to stand up tall

Sooner or later when your backs against the wall

Sooner or later you will have to be the one you are

And you just mind find that you are out of time and it's just too late

Oh, hear me now, hear me now, hear me now

Heavy burden gets you down

And pressure is all around. (1987)

At present, Rastafarian movement has spread around the world and especially among the oppressive and marginalised people of African origin. Rastafari has been embraced by many ethnic groups outside Jamaica as well. Ennis Barrington Edmonds in

Rastafari: From Outcasts to Culture Bearers talks about the significance which Rastafari religion has in making Africans realise the importance of their past and roots. Edmonds writes;

Jamaica owes a great debt to the men who formed the Rastafarian movement in the 1930s. Rastafarianism has served as a lightning rod of discussion about race, identity and the history of oppression that has been part of the Jamaican society for centuries. If Jamaicans have rejected in part the denial of their African heritage, Rastafarianism is the reason. If Jamaican churches have come to re-examine the extent of their relevance to the real experience of the poor, black members of their congregations, they owe a great debt to Rastafarianism for reminding them of cultural history of race in religion. (xii-x)

To conclude, I would like to iterate that Rastafarians contributed to the art of Reggae to a great magnitude. Both Rastas and Reggae had to go through a great amount of negotiation to seek acceptance in Jamaican society. While Rastas tried to create an alternative way of leading a life beyond class binaries, Reggae on the other hand, became the foremost cultural as well as political voice of Jamaicans. Moreover, Reggae became a site of both struggle and socio-political upliftment. It became a medium through which poor people of Jamaica could express their angst. It indeed became a device through which the marginalised sections of Jamaican society could dare to take a step to defy as well as erase the lines of class segregation. At present, Reggae has become a global phenomenon and artists such as Bob Marley, Burning Spear, and Peter Tosh have a major role to play in this. However, one thing which still perturbs me is the absence of female Reggae artists. One simply cannot conclude by saying that Reggae is all about male performers and artists. Reggae has been a male-dominated art and I believe it's time one needs to talk more about the role of female performers in the progression of Reggae. Hence, the next chapter will deal with women Reggae artists who were treated as extras both by the Jamaican society and the Jamaican music industry. The following chapter will analyse how regressive conventions and norms of Jamaican society were questioned by people like Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt, and Marcia Griffiths.

Chapter Two

Women in Music, Music in Women: A Study of Gendered Music of Jamaica

Black woman, ooh, black woman

Light me up, troubled long

You trod one of life's roughest roads

You gut the heaviest load

To be someone, to belong

Too near mile and a half furlong

Don't give up now

Just pray for strength now

For you I dedicate my song.

We are forsaked once in the plantation

Lashes to our skin

On auction blocks we were chained and sold

Handled merchandise
Highly abused and
And thrown in garbage bins
But no need for that now
Free us, stand on back now
And help me to sing my song.

- Judy Mowatt "Black Woman" (1979)

The first chapter analysed the discourse of Reggae music within the rubric of class primarily in relation to male artists. While tracing the history of Reggae, one needs to gaze beyond the male artists and analyse whether Reggae has always been gendered in its nature? There is no doubt about the fact that the journey of male Reggae artists from the streets of Jamaica to the recording studios has not been a comfortable one. The nature of their art and interest was interrogated time and again. Despite that many male Reggae artists managed to bargain their way to the recording studios and the ones who didn't get a chance to knock at the gates of these studios preferred to perform on the streets of Jamaica. As far as the domain of streets is concerned, streets never remain static in fact they always go through a process of metamorphosis with regard to their interactions with individuals as well as the society in general. Initially, during the formative years of Reggae, the studios didn't have enough money to offer to the artists for recording but nevertheless, singers such as Bob Marley and Jimmy Cliff agreed to record songs. As far as the female Reggae artists are concerned, they were mostly embraced for the purpose of chorus to assist the male singers. For instance, when a male singer would be at the centre of a performance, the female singers would be made to stand like objects at the periphery of that performance. Female Reggae artists were marginalised for a very long time. They were looked down upon by the society as music was not considered to be a reputable profession for them. Female artists were not encouraged to sing or perform as according to the norms of the middle class values, this profession supposedly was meant for the so called 'loose women'.

It is stimulating to read that the question of what is morally acceptable was associated with both male and female performers. When it came to male Reggae performers, they were termed as ghetto folks with no work. Even the music which came out of these ghettos was considered to be deplorable and shocking. On the other hand, with women performers the nature of accusations was much severe. They were looked at with the eyes of cynicism. It is interesting to know that male artists were suppressed primarily by the upper class of Jamaica. However, it was a different narrative altogether with female artists as they were doubly marginalised; first by the upper class society and second by the society in which they were born.

Recording studios had a preconceived notion that unlike the male performers' female artists cannot survive for long in music industry as they eventually succumb to their personal domestic responsibilities in which the role of a mother might hamper the singing capabilities of female artists. No doubt such views and notions were not attached with the male performers. The question which becomes essential to discuss is how society forms different perceptions for both men and women? What are the grounds of forming such opinions? Why do women have to suffer more? Is it because a woman even now is considered to be a fragile body which needs to be protected from the unwanted societal gaze? When a woman is perceived as a body then one needs to look into the hegemonic power relations and structures which exist between different sexes in a society.

This chapter is going to be the most challenging one as through female Reggae performers certain concerns will be raised about the women of Jamaica and see which kind of a representation of Jamaican women is put forth in popular imagination through music. This Chapter will shed some light on the discourse of marginalisation of female artists in Jamaica. Is it true that society in general does not perceive female artists seriously? Why is there an element of doubt when it comes to women and their choices? Despite constant subjugation why is it that women have to walk an extra mile to demonstrate their worth? What is the reasonableness that women in many parts of the world are still struggling for their existence? Moreover, many women are still searching for a sense of identity in the so called biased male dominated world.

This chapter will also glance upon the phenomenon of I-Three, a trio of female singers in Jamaica. I-Three represented the women of Jamaica by performing with Bob

Marley. It was indeed a significant space which I-Three got. They became the voice of the ignored and downtrodden. With regard to the domain of performativity in public, it becomes extremely important as it provides a sense of visibility. With reference to I-Three this visibility became a sight of power and strength.

However, before we proceed further it is essential to understand the nature of agency of women in Jamaica. It is believed that the historical records indeed documented the activities of women in Jamaica but for a long time these records remained unexplored and inaccessible. Women were at fringe within the entire social structure and no attempts were made to give these women a voice of their own. On the contrary, the documents and texts dedicated to Jamaican history didn't pay much attention to the so called 'weaker sex' till the 1970s. In fact, before the 1970s, no single work dealt with the history of women in Jamaica. There were no significant writings which could provide an insight into the domain of gender and its analysis with relation to Jamaican society in general. One of the reasons of this lacunae could be the fact that writing and documenting history was essentially limited to men as women were not encouraged to indulge into the dominion of writing hence women were ostracised to a great extent. As far as the historical records are concerned, Hilary McD. Beckles and Verene A. Shepherd in their introduction to *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica 1655-1844* write that;

Gender-differentiated data have always existed in plantation records, statistical data sources, inventories, newspapers, colonial correspondence, court records, and the texts, diaries and journals generated by both male and female writers such as Thomas Thistlewood, Maria Nugent, Matthew Gregory "Monk" Lewis and Cynric Williams. What is undeniable is that for a long time, the information on women remained unexplored, buried in these sources and repositories. (ix)

This clearly indicates that the need to explore information on women of Jamaica was not considered to be important enough. Is it because the Jamaican society just like the many other societies of the world was regressive and patriarchal in its nature and ideologies? Why did nobody feel the need to address the question of gender inequality? To move beyond the boundaries of Jamaica if one perceives the issue of

gender inequality in general then it becomes pertinent to mention that one of the key factors which advocated the landscape of this phenomenon was the absence of men during the Second World War. Since the number of men who were fighting was dwindling drastically because of the pervasiveness of violence everywhere, women were asked to engage themselves into the economic tasks. It is essential to remember that women were supposed to fulfil only the domestic obligations as economic tasks were considered to be too masculine to be performed by women. Thus, women were not allowed to encroach into the domain of this masculine chore. However, one thing which took shape during the course of this transaction was that women had started to get a lot more visibility. As far as the Reggae female artists are concerned, they had to negotiate a lot to push these lines and the biggest irony is that these lines were drawn by the other. The hegemony was practiced in all ways possible by the various state machineries to keep women beyond the space of any kind of perceptibility. An institution can flourish through various ways possible and coercion can be one of the ways to shackle anything which questions the norm. Despite all the attempts, women in Jamaica continued to protest and resist.

However, if we look into the demography of women and gender in Jamaica then it becomes essential to highlight the presence of white women in the Caribbean islands. White women were empowered in many ways in comparison to black women. There was a sociological reason why initially white women were brought to these far off islands by the white men and one such reason is that there was a shortage of women to do various chores on the plantations which were explored by the European men during the 15th-16th century. One could not categorically access indigenous women for work purpose as it would create a sense of clash and conflict in between the white explorers and the native men.

It is believed that the process of colonization cannot succeed without the establishment of home hence the immigration of women from many continents became the need of the hour to form the empire of colonization. By the time the British had colonised Jamaica in 1655, many women were brought from both Europe and Africa to set up a sagacity of home as well as to make use of women and their labour on plantations. Needless to say women from Africa would primarily be asked for the latter. The nature of the work which would be affiliated to both white and black women would depend upon whether the colonisers would perceive a particular

location as a permanent settlement or as just a site of exploitation. If a location or land would just be perceived as a site of exploitation then less of an effort would be put to create a sense of home and more thoughtfulness would be granted towards gathering wealth and capital.

As far as the arrival of black women to the Caribbean islands is concerned, one needs to be a bit sensitive as well as sensible about the condition and status of women in both pre-colonial and post-colonial Africa before entering into the milieu of women Reggae artists of Jamaica. When the colonizers from the West came to Africa there was a clash of cultures. Western culture and their knowledge production were embedded into the institutions of monogamy, morality, virtue, and chastity and according to this culture a woman who shares any form of intimacy with a man who is already married is a loose woman. Needless to say, men would not be judged for indulging with women outside their marriage. These westerners were very particular about how a woman should behave and act both in public as well as private. When the so called civilized West came in contact with the African polygyny structure which allowed the husband to move overtly from one woman to another, a sense of disruption prevailed within the beliefs of the Westerners. They could not fathom how African men and women could be so unrestricted in their agency especially when it comes to accepting other women as wives something which the West could never imagine. As a result, the African culture was termed as primitive devoid of morality and virtue. On one side African men were perceived as over-sexualized beings and on the other African women were considered to be naïve and submissive. Hence, polygyny was seen as a repulsive institution oppressed by the black masculinity. Lucille Mathurin Mair in *Historical Study of Women in Jamaica, 1655-1844* writes;

West Africa was unquestionably a masculine domain; but it was also more than that. It was a cultural milieu, in which a varied range of human associations was carefully identified and carefully regulated, it spelt out in detail its sexual, matrimonial and inheritance patterns, giving precise definition to the woman's status and simultaneously modifying her "subordination" in ways unknown to European male chauvinism. It clarified the man's responsibilities to the woman. The procedure of bride wealth, for example, confirmed his obligation to her, as well as his rights in

her. Her pregnancy imposed on him ceremonially prescribed duties owed to her and to the child. (45)

The above mentioned lines clearly state the nature of interdependency within the African society. Moreover, many skills would be taught to women in closed female societies which will include the domestic as well as economic skills to make the society more inclusive. For example, women were taught the complexities of selling and buying things. Furthermore, women would make war medicines for the men of the society and it was indeed a significant contribution. However, after the intervention of the West things transformed drastically. New-fangled societal code of behaviour and practice came into existence and this code of behaviour was Euro-centric within which a reductive sense of understanding was implemented and performed. Especially with the arrival of slavery, an attempt was made to level the sexual distinctions within Africans. One here might observe that there is nothing erroneous about levelling of sexual distinctions in fact it's rather a worthy act for the betterment of society and its people. The destruction of sexual hierarchies might establish the fact that everyone is equivalent to each other.

I would like to shed some light over the fact that with levelling of sexual differentiations, a common knowledge was formed amongst the authoritative whites and this knowledge was of the objectification of both the African male and the female body. With this levelling, the division of labour and work which was prevalent within Africans was destroyed completely. In fact, it is believed that slavery transformed the historicity of gender roles in the Caribbean and questions have been raised whether Caribbean slavery was gender neutral? With the institutional framework of Caribbean slavery, gender identities went through constant restructuring. Hilary McD. Beckles in her essay "Freeing Slavery: Gender Paradigms in the Social History of Caribbean Slavery" highlights that one needs to talk about the hegemony of white men over the black men to comprehend the gender dynamics. Even though this chapter promises to focus on gender and music but before getting into the milieu of this genre of art one needs to see the gender binary which was redefined by the whites and argue if this division of gender had any impact on women who chose to be a part of Reggae? Beckles writes;

White men believed that black men were best equipped to the physical task of frontier plantation construction, but suggested that black women better prepared for the subsequent maintenance of efficient production. Critically, they did not share the black male's view that field work was "woman work". Colonial managers, therefore, recognizing conflict within the gender order, used the brutality of the death threat in order to enforce a regime of field work upon black males that ran counter to their traditional gender identity. Black men found the reversal of sex roles a major challenge to their masculine self-consciousness, and reacted with both outright violence and a persistent negotiation for entry into prestigious, non-agricultural occupations. (204)

One can observe that there was a conscious choice to attack the black men and their masculinity. The right to power and glory were snatched away from the black men and eventually they were portrayed as the other. They were denied the privilege of mind so that they could be repressed in multiple ways. However, in my opinion, the black male body was denied the privilege of both mind and body. Their bodies were kept under the white gaze all the time. Michel Foucault in his book *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* writes about the relation which knowledge and power share in a society. Foucault believes that knowledge is a form of power. For instance, blacks were denied the knowledge of their own mind so that power could be exercised upon them. He goes on to say that in fact knowledge can be gained from power and it is always connected to power. Foucault remarks; "Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power; this is just a way of reviving humanism in a utopian guise. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power." (52)

As far as the question of 'gaze' in relation of power and knowledge is concerned, Foucault in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) talks about the structure of panopticon which was designed by the English Philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century. The basic concept of this design was to propagate a sense of being observed amongst the inmates of an

institution by a single watchman without the inmates being able to decipher if they were being watched or not. A sense of constant fear of being gazed at was propagated amidst the convicts. It was the same idea of surveillance which tried to subjugate the black male body.

As it has already been discussed that music became a medium to liberate oneself from oppression and suppression. It became a voice of the voiceless. Could we argue that music became one of the mediums to restore the fractured identity of blacks precisely the men? If we look into the musical genre of calypso and Reggae then what are the reasons that these genres were dominated by male artists for a long time? What could possibly be the motives of curtailing and curbing the artistic expressions of female artists?

It is an acceptable truth that musical forms such as dancehall, calypso, and Reggae have been perceived as the representative of creative, social, and political voice of the common people. The question which I would like to pose is that do we include women within the ambit of these so called ‘common people’? Were there female artists who were raising their voice without being judged by the society? Starting with calypso which was the precursor of Reggae, the art of dancing or “wining/wukking up” becomes significant as it is one of the performative characteristics of calypso. Wukking up basically stands for the circular motion of waist, hip, and pelvis on the beats of calypso primarily performed by women. Women had to be really cautious about performing these movements in public as a social stigma would be attached with “wukking up”. Colonial ideologies brought in the issue of chastity and virtue in the Caribbean islands and these ideologies viewed women who enjoy calypso as unrespectable. Interestingly enough, men could dance and sing calypso but nobody would tell them that they are being unrespectable. It is nothing new that many civilizations and cultures have had different set of rules for both men and women and Caribbean society was nothing different. The idea of shame is always attached with women and they are always told to be careful when they are in the public domain. Women were stated that if they must sing or dance on calypso then they should do it within the domestic space of home beyond the gaze of the other. Why is it that a women’s body is considered to be a glass bowl which needs to be protected all the time? A single crack on this bowl might ruin and pollute the body of a woman. I fail to understand the peculiar nature of society as calypso songs would be

recorded by men about women but women themselves would not be allowed to dance in open on such songs and if one happened to be a dark skinned girl from a working class background then the idea of shame would be much serious in its nature.

The art of calypso has been a site of resistance responding to various socio-political issues such as politics and the problematics of gender roles. It has also worked towards building a bridge in between the artists and the uneducated and socially deprived masses. The noteworthy male presence that emerged in calypso somewhere played an essential role in the formation of the standardized view of it being a working class male art. However, it wasn't even considered an art by the ruling and the educated class. There is a need to analyse the dichotomous nature of public and private to understand the dynamics of the knowledge which perceived calypso as a male dominated sphere. Jennifer Thorington Springer in here essay "Roll it Gal": Alison Hinds, Female Empowerment, and Calypso" writes;

Conversations about the public and the private sphere dichotomy can also aid us in understanding why men dominated calypso. It was viewed as part of a public space not accessible to women. This public space of leisure and play contrasts with the public space of work and thus complicates the ways that many Caribbean women occupy public and private spaces. Most have been profiled as working women who were expected to be contributors to household income and who were not allowed to occupy only a single sphere (public or private) until some became middle-class and occupied only the private sphere. (97)

It is quite ironical that the definition of public space was dissimilar for different women. This space would considered to be respectable as long as it was a working space. It is important to understand that art and music were not considered to be creditable enough to fall within the paradigm of work. For many music was as an act of leisure something which was needed to be frowned upon and condemned in all possible ways. If calypso was looked down upon then one could only imagine the dreadfulness of dancing on the beats of this music during the Caribbean Carnival which has already been discussed upon in the previous chapter. Jennifer Springer goes on to remark that; "Carnival has been noted for its place as a counter-hegemonic

colonial construction of cultural production.” (97) This further strengthens the point why anything to do with music and women was criticised as it would create a site of conflict and disruption within the middle class ethos of the Caribbean. The middle class will try its finest to disassociate itself from music which erupted from the lower section of the social order. Moreover, their middle class values created a rigid pattern of behaviour which would be forced upon the women to be followed. Something to the same effect happened with the art of Reggae too as the middle class was always in a dilemma regarding any kind of an association with this form of music.

To delimitate further on Carnival, it worked as a reaction against the alien beliefs of the west which the Caribbean society tried to assimilate. Trinidadian writer Merle Hodge in her Novel *Crick Crack, Monkey* (1970) talks about the cultural and linguistic complexity of the postcolonial Caribbean society. Hodge paints two opposite worlds of the Caribbean society in her novel; one belongs to the working class and the other is of the middle class which is exceedingly dominated by the colonial values. The narrative of *Crick Crack, Monkey* revolves round the protagonist Tee and her brother Toddan who are forced to reside in two different worlds with their aunts coming from the dissimilar sections of society. After the death of Tee and Toddan’s mother, their father decides to move to London leaving behind the children with Aunt Tantie who represents the working class and Aunt Beatrice who is obsessed with colonial etiquettes. Tee is forced to live with Aunt Beatrice to receive a better education hence she leaves the abode of Tantie. This displacement results in an identity crisis. Aunt Beatrice’s values which are based on Victorian code of conduct forces Tee to reconsider her participation in carnival. In the novel Tee observes;

Carnival came and I discovered that I did not even want to go home for Carnival. We went to the stands on both days where we sat primly and watched the bands in the company of the tourists and of the nice people who were in two minds about Carnival- saw the unmistakable niggeryness of the affair but were not able either to stay at home.” (85)

The predicament of positioning the self also comes from the occasion when black themselves negate the idea of blackness on the grounds and ideologies which have been established by the whites. One of the premises of ignoring the black past

and heritage could be money and wealth. Many people in the Caribbean islands who were in a possession of a moderate amount of capital would make sure that they don't indulge with the common black people. In the novel, Tee has a strong desire to be in the middle of the carnival with her friends who belong to the working class but her aunt demands Tee to act like a sophisticated woman. The idea of a sophisticated woman at present context can be understood by a woman who decides to be passive, docile, shy etc. Simon Gikandi in her article "Narration in the Post-Colonial Moment: Merle Hodge's "Crick Crack Monkey" writes; "Merle Hodge, whose novel *Crick Crack Monkey* marks a crucial transition from nationalist discourse to post-colonial writing in the Caribbean, has written on how colonial education, by presenting the lived experiences of the Caribbean people as invalid, negated the very subjectivity of the colonized by taking them away from their "own reality"." (1)

The above mention lines clearly indicate how subjectivity and reality of the Caribbeans were questioned by the western import of education. One thing which needs to be addressed is that the dissemination of knowledge, ideas, and beliefs, which happens through education can have the potential to alter the course of history and the so called colonial hegemony did a copious damage to the issue of gender equality in the Caribbean. Gina Ulysse in *Uptown Ladies and Downtown Women: Informal Commercial Importing and the Social/symbolic Politics in Jamaica* argues that the binary of 'lady' and 'woman' made the path of eradicating the gender stereotyping all the more arduous. A downtown woman was seen differently in comparison to an uptown lady. A woman from downtown would be perceived as a subaltern and the idea of a 'lady would be seen with respect and honour. Ulysse goes on to remark that during colonization there was an attempt to hypersexualise the black women and desexualise the so called "White ladies" (148). This hypersexualization can be seen in many calypso songs as well. Mac Fingall in his song "Cushion" which was released in 1999 criticises women who do not look feminine enough. He believes it is respectable for a man to be masculine. In this song Fingall sings women should look feminine so that he "can feel the cushion and watch it bounce like jello". Another singer Edwin Yearwood in his song "Hunting" implies that man is the hunter and his job is to hunt women. The lyrics of the songs are;

Target practice,

Get ready to fire,
Hold light.
Lock on de bumper,
Cause you are the hunter (2000)

Most of these male performers do not realise that by recording such songs they end up endorsing the idea that woman and her body is meant for objectification. They project the female body as a commodity. Moreover, woman's body is projected as a target which needs to be hunted. Traditional religious institutions in the Caribbean choose to preach woman by stating that if women themselves decide to participate in carnivals and continue to dance on calypso beats then such songs would be composed and women are to be accountable for this as they are the ones who spread profanity in society by dancing and if at all women have to dance then they should in closed spaces. The act of 'wining' by women while dancing on calypso is also criticised by many by calling it obscene. However, Alison Hinds who is a Calypso artist begs to differ as according to her 'wining' while dancing is an art which has been an intrinsic component of Caribbean culture. Hinds believe that women don't dance to arouse male sexual fantasies so society should be cautious before passing any judgment. In her song "Bumper killer" (1998) Hinds touches upon the issues of a woman's agency to take care of her own body and sexuality. The song also sheds light on the subject of freedom to express desires without inhibitions. The song reads as;

Boy you better leave me alone and let me wine on my own,
As I gone in the fete boy you trying to get this nice sexy girl to dance with
you,
Every turn that I make you down in my neck telling me what you want to
do,
When you see the bam bam rolling you better beware
When you see the dam bam rolling you better step back,
Cause it will kill you
The wine will kill you

When a gal pay she money and she gone in de party
She don't want no body hassle she
But all of de time boy you trying' to wind
And rubbing on the young lady
Don't even think that you can buy me a drink and
Then grab me up in the party
Wrong call
Just give me some space and let me wine up me waist." (1988)

Hinds through her music not only celebrates women's choice to decide what they desire to do but she also interrogates the binary within which a black woman's body was seen as disgraceful and a white body was seen as normal and superior. The basic premise of establishing a particular kind of a body as normal cannot be normative. Nonetheless, Calypso became a medium of speaking out for women who had been marginalised and suppressed for a long time. Before entering into the milieu of Reggae and gender, I would briefly like to discuss the genre of dancehall in relation to gender too. Even though dancehall primarily developed after Reggae but the reason of disrupting the chronological order of events in terms of discussion is the attempt to avoid digression while dealing with Reggae and gender.

The genre of dancehall is named after the Jamaican dance halls in which popular Jamaican songs would be played by the local sound systems as it has already been mentioned before. It began in the late 1940s amongst the people who came from the lower sections of society such as Trench Town, Rose Town, and Denham Town. These locations belonged to the inner parts of Kingston which would normally be avoided by the people from the upper class. One of reasons for the existence of dancehall is the incapability of the people from the lower class to visit the high class city clubs. Dancehall has its roots in Reggae. Often existing Reggae rhythms are reproduced on a drum machine at a much greater speed in this style of music. Dancehall culture is commonly understood to be misogynist and homophobic. Many believe that this form of music dehumanises the women as mindless bodies which are

on exhibition as a commodity for the male sexual pleasure and male sexual gaze. Dance is an important part of dancehall and it is this act of bodily movement which questions the rigid gender conventions of the Jamaican society. Another significant point which needs to be taken up for a sincere investigation is that dancehall essentially being a heterosexual space engages both men and women who play eroticised roles. What is the reason that a woman's body solely becomes a site of a constant inspection while the male body is often ignored and overlooked?

Carolyn Cooper who has contributed a lot to the discourse of dancehall music believes that it is a site of liberation for female performers and participants. Many cultures which engage with women as well as their body spaces are often blamed in society for moral corruption and same happened with dancehall however many scholars believe that the study of dancehall clearly indicates that more than anything it is a site of resistance. Cooper in her work *Sound Clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture at Large* writes:

I propose that Jamaican dancehall culture at home and in the diaspora is best understood as a potentially liberating space in which working class women and their more timid middle class sisters assert that freedom to play out eroticized roles that may not ordinarily be available to them in the rigid social conventions of the everyday. The dancehall, thus conceived, is an erogenous zone in which the celebration of female sexuality and fertility is ritualized. In less subtle readings of the gender politics of dancehall, this self-conscious female assertion of control over the representation of the body (and identity) is misunderstood and the therapeutic potential of the dancing body is repressed. Indeed, the joyous display of the female body in the dance is misperceived as a pornographic devaluation of woman. (17)

Cooper's understanding of dancehall being a liberating space can be read on the equivalent grounds of calypso being a public space and how both these spaces challenge the regressive patriarchal hegemonic definitions of womanhood. However, one term which is associated with dancehall is 'slackness'. The word 'slack' is also used with women who are considered to be of loose morals. Dancehall artists Marian

Hall better known as Lady Saw, the queen of dancehall, is criticised for being far too loose or slack. Hall took the name 'Lady Saw' after the well-known Jamaican singer Tenor Saw who inspired her music. Many believe that Saw lacks agency as she glorifies 'erotic' through her songs as a result her music corrupts the younger generation. On the contrary, Saw thinks that her music cuts through the moral guardianship of Jamaican society. Carolyn Cooper in her essay "Lady Saw Cuts Loose: Female Fertility rituals in the Dancehall" counter argues the point which the moral society puts forth that women who wear short skirts do not respect their own self and this lack of self-respects results in the objective display of the female body as women are the ones who must be responsible of morality. I fail to understand why women should be the only ones to carry this burden of morality on their shoulders? And who decides what is morally acceptable? Cooper is of the opinion that women decide to transgress by projecting their body is rather positive as it is a way of women asserting the beauty of their bodies in a culture which does not acknowledge the values of black women's bodies. (102)

American anthropologist Obiagele Lake in his essay "Misogyny in Caribbean Music" talks about the way Lady Saw is abolishing the moral fabric of Jamaican society. Lake opines that one can understand, sexist lyrics coming from men but what really deplorable is when women start to use same kind of terminologies to represent themselves as it doesn't change anything apart from attracting men. One really wants to understand what Lake is trying to suggest here? Is he saying that men can be sexist as they are men? Men can denigrate women as they have a license to do so? Women should not be bold in their approach as it does nothing but invites masculine gaze?

What Lake fails to understand is that being bold and assertive can be a way to combat patriarchy and male supremacy. An unintimidated approach from a woman can disrupt and wobble the structure of gender binary. A woman using sexist lyrics to project herself can be an act of anti-establishment as it questions the authority which men ruminate to have over the female body. Cooper in *Sound Clash: Jamaican Dancehall Culture* quotes a 1998 radio interview of Lady Saw in which the singer counters charges of obscenity;

Interviewer: Lady Saw, you do things like, yu grab yu crotch on stage.

Lady Saw: Michael Jackson did it and nobody say anything about it.

Interviewer: And you gyrate on the ground. I mean, do you think this is acceptable for a woman?

Lady Saw: Yes, Darling. For this woman. And a lot of woman like to do the same but I guess they are too shy. (111)

Marion Hall goes on to say that Lady Saw is just an act, a mere role playing. Saw says that she has a public image and a private image. It is very interesting how Saw uses her public persona to counter issues of patriarchy and moral purity. Saw believes that her audience is smart enough to distinguish between the public and private sphere.

Reggae and Gender

While defining the discourse of gender in relation to Reggae it becomes pertinent to give some space to a few female artists who questioned the parochial societal structure of the Jamaican society. These were the few women who didn't bother about how they would be perceived if they decide to step out of their houses crossing the boundaries of domesticity. These were the women who decided to enter into the public domain of music which was primarily dominated by men. Questioning the conventions of patriarchy, these women were known as I-Three. I-Three was a Jamaican signing group which was formed in 1974 to support the band 'Bob Marley and The Wailers' after Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer, the original back vocalist left the band. The three new members who joined the band were Rita Marley, Judy Mowatt, and Marcia Griffiths. I-Three provided the Wailers with extra vocal power and zest and they wore the head-wraps with Rastafari colours, these head wraps would stand out when the band will be on stage to perform. It is also important to articulate that the act of wearing Rastafari colours during the performance by I-Three led to the formation of an understanding amongst the audience that somewhere the band believed in the

philosophy of Rastafari. The prominent Rastafari colours are Black, Green, Yellow, and Red and these colours have a rich sense of history. The colour Black stands for African people. Green represents the homeland Africa. Yellow delineates the sun, light, and warmth and the colour Red is a marker of the blood which the Africans shed under the brutal system of colonization.

Klive Walker in her essay titled “Reggae Sistas’ Stories: The Women of Roots Reggae” which is a part of her book *Dubwise: Reasoning from the Reggae Underground* writes;

The I-Three were vital in nurturing Bob Marley’s iconic persona as recording artist and live performer. They were an important element of the Wailers at a time when the band enjoyed its greatest popularity. The story of the I-Three is the story of three female vocalists nurturing and decorating the music of a man. The stories of Judy, Rita, and Marcia describe the substantive careers of three unsung female Reggae pioneers whose contribution to the music is as notable, in its own way, as that of Bob Marley, Burning Spear, and Peter Tosh. (79)

Before proceeding further, I would like to highlight upon the three powerful artists of I-Three briefly. As far as Alphonse Constantia Rita Marley is concerned, she grew up in Kingston, Jamaica. Rita Marley’s father, Leroy Anderson was a musician who worked as a carpenter as music was not enough to sustain a family. Rita grew up amongst the beats and rhythms of Jamaican streets. Her father and aunt used to sing in church choir and her uncle Cleveland was in demand for weddings and other occasions because of his baritone voice. Because of her surroundings Rita Marley got inclined towards music and she learned a few wedding songs by heart. Apart from this, she started singing in church too. When Rita turned ten, her aunt asked her to sing for radio. However, Rita was highly sceptical about being on radio as this was not equivalent to singing within the periphery of church. One could reach out to a larger society in general through radio as it was one of the major mediums to send one’s voice and ideas across in Jamaica. Especially it was a daunting task to be heard if one came from a ghetto and for a woman to be heard in a male dominated society was indeed a tough nut to crack. Rita Anderson before she became Rita Marley came from

Trench Town, Kingston. Amongst all the violence and pessimism, singing on radio was a prodigious prospect. Rita Marley in her memoir titled *No Woman, No Cry: My life with Bob Marley* writes;

I was an ambitious girl child. I knew even then that I had to be, in that environment of thugs, thieves, killers, prostitutes, gamblers- you name it, you'd find it in Trench Town. But alongside the bad lived the good, a lot of strong, talented people who were really aiming at being someone. Barbers. Bus drivers. Seamstresses. Bob himself worked as a welder for a while...Trench Town was, and still is, a ghetto in Kingston, Jamaica's capital. Back then it was a shantytown lease for it, and then built anything they could. You'd find cardboard houses, houses made of corrugated metal, concrete block houses. It was like Africa, one hut here, one there. Many places in Jamaica are still like that. (1)

Many people left Jamaica and moved to developed countries to seek a better life as corruption was prevalent in all corners and the Jamaican government bothered the least for people who stayed in slums. One such person, who left the streets of Trench Town to provide his family with an ameliorated life prospect, was Rita's father. He boarded a boat to England to escape poverty and hopelessness. Rita's family was soon to join him in England but that dream could never be materialized as there was always a paucity of money. Dreams of many people from Trench Town met with a rotten death. Some dreams remained dreams and some were simply deferred. Langston Hughes in one of his poems titled "Harlem" which first appeared in 1951 in a collection of Hughes's poetry, *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, deliberates upon the dreams of 'Blacks' hoping to live in a world devoid of socio-political and racial segregations. Hughes Writes;

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

Like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore-

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over-
Like a syrupy sweet?
May be it just sags
Like a heavy load.
.... Or does it explode?

Rita Marley didn't want to defer her dreams. Abandoned by her mother and father residing in England, Rita had enumerable challenges to overcome. Amongst all this, Rita continued to sing and practice every evening at the 'government yard', the same yard which Bob Marley refers to in his song "No Woman, No Cry" (1974). It is interesting to analyse that in a society where women were not encouraged to step out and take up music, Bob Marley tried to accommodate the issue of women's rights and their representation in his music. Bob Marley in the above mentioned song speaks up against the Jamaican public-housing project which as a matter of fact did not do much to uplift the poor and downtrodden. He assures women of Trench Town that 'do not shed tears as one day everything will be alright' Marley sings;

No, woman, no cry
No, woman, no cry.
I remember when we used to sit
In the government yard in Trench town,
Observing the hypocrites
As they would mingle with the good people we meet.
Good friends we have, oh, good friends we have lost
Along the way.
In this great future, you can't forget your past,
So dry your tears, I say. (1974)

It is also essential to mention that Reggae artists irrespective of their gender were more concerned about music and the issues of love, peace, and equality. It was the orthodox Jamaican society and recording studios which tried to counter argue the question of egalitarianism in relation to male and female Reggae artists. Rita Marley in her memoir recounts that if she had to speak to male Reggae performers, she could certainly do so but the only condition was that she was to socialise over the boundary of her house. Hence, she would open the gate and stand half in and half out of the periphery to talk and sing. (11) Rita Marley was not the only one to negotiate her space and freedom over the border of her house. In fact, there were many women who wanted to cross the boundaries of their homes and move into the public arena. However, the transition from personal to public was not an easy one. In fact if a woman was seen talking to men, primarily the ones who were involved with Reggae in public then all kinds of judgements would be passed on. Women would be warned to take care of their status. Men with guitar and Reggae blood in their veins were looked down upon by a lot of people. They would be advised to go abroad and make something productive out of their unhopeful and despondent lives. As a matter of fact, Rita Marley was told not to mix up with such men as they could possibly abuse her both mentally and physically. Perhaps this fear which she grew up with somehow could never leave her. For instance, when she was asked by Peter Tosh to come to Coxson studio for an audition, the first thought which crossed her mind was what if I am raped by these men? Violence was not uncommon in Trench Town as rude boys were quite renowned for their nonsensical fights and opprobrious behaviour. Nonetheless in the mid-1960s, Rita met Bob Marley after meeting Peter Tosh. Once it was learned that she was a singer, she was asked to be a part of Soulettes, which was later known as I-Three. The group initially included Rita, her cousin Constantine Walker and Marlene Gifford. Bob Marley became the mentor of the group and they started performing. It was during these performances, Rita Marley understood the philosophy of 'Black is beautiful' and how essential it is to know oneself. It is an established fact that Rita Marley was subjected to racial discrimination in her school because of her black skin. However, soon she had started to learn how important it is to question the preposterous parochial and racial norms of society.

Patricia Hill Collins in her work *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* advocates the issue of women and

their empowerment. She remarks that empowerment of women can never happen in a context which is characterized by oppression and social injustice alone. With reference to African-American women, Collins states that one can indeed gain power by subjugating and dominating the oppressed. However, African-American women intellectuals and writers believe that one can be centered in ones' own experiences and yet be engaged in coalitions with others. (ix) This is something which can be analysed in relation to Rita Marley and other women artists of Jamaica who had to negotiate their freedom and subjectivity by this twofold process of being centered in their experiences and yet be involved with others. Collins furthermore writes;

Maintaining the invisibility of Black women and our ideas not only in the United States, but in Africa, the Caribbean, South America, Europe, and other places where Black women now live, has been critical in maintaining social inequalities. Black women engaged in reclaiming and constructing Black women's knowledges often point to the politics of suppression that affect their projects. (3)

As far as the suppression of the knowledge production of the oppressed by the dominant groups is concerned, it is quite evident that Reggae artists especially the female artists and their spaces of knowledge were surely measured by the dominant groups of Jamaica. For instance, the miniscule representation of women in the music industry of Jamaica was reduced effectively in the 1960s when women artists such as Dawn Penn, Norma Fraser, and Patsy Todd decided to terminate their solo careers abruptly. These three were not pleased with the way women artists were treated in the music industry. Women were not taken as seriously as men and the attitude of some of the record producers was unreceptive and condescending towards women. Hortense Ellis, who was considered to be Jamaica's best female vocalist in the 1960s, too had to face discrimination. Record producers were of the opinion that she was a remarkable artist but then she had too many children. I fail to understand the biasness which was quite apparent in Jamaica against women. Bob Marley too had many children but then that was never considered to be an issue of concern. In fact, during the period of this research I did not come across any record producer who was of the belief that Bob

Marley cannot be a successful artist as his children might act as an interference in his music career.

Jamaican Reggae singer, Dawn Penn had a short career between 1967 and 1969. She is known for her song titled “You don’t love me” which was released in 1967. Her songs met with some attention through the sound-system dancehall parties. In the middle of her career Penn shocked many because of her self-imposed exile from the music industry. The lyrics of her song “You don’t love me” portrays the image of the material girl which was quite common in the 1960s as purposefully women would be given such lyrics to record a song. However, I would like to read the song from a different lens. The text of the song is;

No no no
You don’t love me
And I know now.
Coz you left me...
And I got no place to go now.
No no no
I would do anything to stay boy. (1967)

This song seem to suggest the state of hopelessness and homelessness which many Jamaican women had to suffer with. The sense of insecurity is quite prevalent all throughout the song. The words “you don’t love me” seem to represent the insensitive and hostile behaviour of the song producers. To become an established singer was not an easy assignment for women artists as their struggle would continue even after they would manage to bargain a space for themselves in the music industry. Women have to work harder to seek an entrance into the music genres which are considered to be male friendly in popular imagination. Penn spent many years in the Virgin Islands, away from the Jamaican music industry which was antagonistic to female artists. Another artist Norma Fraser’s journey wasn’t any different. She started her music career with two successful recordings such as “We’ll be lovers” (1961) and “The first cut is the deepest” (1967). However, soon she left Jamaica for the Unites States.

During this period, she was told by her parents that she possibly should pursue a conventional profession. By ‘conventional professional’ one may assume that they meant by a profession which could promise some kind of a social security and financial stability.

Moving back to Rita Marley and her contribution to Reggae, there was a point in her life when she was highly influenced by Bob Marley and Rastafarian beliefs and one could see her music addressing and engaging with teachings of Rastafari. She also acknowledges that Marcus Garvey’s ‘Universal Negro Improvement Association’ had a great impact on her psyche as Garvey spoke about black pride something which Rita Marley since her childhood was really fervent about. Her most well-known album ‘Who Feels It Knows It’ (1981) accommodates various songs dealing with Rasta principles such as “One Draw”, “Thank You Jah”, “Good Morning Jah”, “A Jah Jah” etc. Rita Marley in Chapter third titled ‘Chances Are’ of her memoir *No Woman No Cry: My life with Bob Marley* writes that a lot of people outside Jamaica did not know about the Rastas before the sixties. There were enumerable misconceptions in Jamaica about Rastas. Common people believed that Rastas steal children. This is as banal as it can get. Nobody wanted their children to be Rastas as they were considered to be worthless fellow who are extremely unclean and inconsiderate as they don’t cut their hair. (20) It is quite fascinating to see that people said the worst things about Rastafarianism ignoring their philosophies of black power, peace, love, sense of individualism, questioning white hegemony, understanding justice, repudiating pain, violence, and abuse. If Rasta men were criticised for their ideologies then one can just dread how women with faith in Rastafari must have been treated. Being a woman who endorses Rastafari was simply outrageous and appalling for many. It was surely a way to be a social outcast. Moreover, it was a grave matter of disgrace, even more so than men. Rita Marley in her song “Thank You Jah” highlights her respectfulness towards Rastafari doctrines. She sings;

Thank you Jah¹ for what you have done for me

Thank you Jah for what you are doing now

Thank you Jah for every little thing

¹ It refers to the Rastafarian name of God.

Thank you Jah for you make me sing
I'm gonna singalong, singalong.
Said I'm in no competition,
But I've made my decision,
You can keep
You can keep your opinion
I just callin' on the white man communion...
Thank you Jah for every little thing.
Thank you Jah you make the birds to sing. (1981)

Another female artist who needs to be enunciated about is Phyllis Dillion. She is a Jamaican rocksteady and Reggae singer. Dillion recorded her first song "Don't Stay Away" in the late 1966. Many believed that Dillion was an extraordinary artist gifted with a powerful voice. She recorded several songs such as; "This is a lovely way" (1967), "Walk through this world" (1970), "This is me" (1970), "Midnight confession" (1971), etc. She also recorded numerous covers of American songs. At the end of 1967 she moved to New York and she abruptly ended her recording career in 1971 for years to come. Dillion's impact on Reggae cannot be erased so simply. Her song "One Life to Live" (1971) points out her struggle towards life with a sense of empowerment. Dillion sings;

Win or lose, this is my way to play
Right or wrong, I will play it my way
And if I make mistakes
It's my own heart that breaks
I've got to find my own way of life, myself alone.
I only have one life to live
I only have one love to give...
I don't know what changes time may bring

But right now, there's today's the important thing

Together come what may

We'll welcome each new day

With love to be our guiding light, to make it through tomorrow. (1971)

As for Marcia Griffiths, she is called the queen of Reggae. Griffiths started her career in 1964, performing with Byron Lee and The Dragonaires. She recorded many songs for Dodd's Studio one label. She had a list of duets with male singers such as Tony Gregory, Bob Marley, Jeff Dixon, and Bob Andy. From 1970 to 1974 she worked with Bob Andy as a duo 'Bob and Marcia' on the Harry J. Label and from 1974 to 1981, she was a member of the I-Three. Marcia's inclusion as one of the supporting singers in the band 'Bob Marley and The Wailers' was both a triumph and a curse. This association brought her fame and financial stability but Marcia Griffiths lost her individuality and identity as a solo artist. The persona of I-Three completely overpowered her ability and strength. However, before joining the band, Griffiths did come up some of the most promising songs ever recorded by a female artist in the history of Jamaican music and some of her best recordings were produced by Sonia Pottinger. During the 1960s, when Jamaican music was primarily controlled by the male recording producers, Sonia Pottinger emerged as the only female producer of Jamaican music industry. Many Reggae fans and researchers are not aware of the contributions which Pottinger made during the rocksteady, early Reggae and roots period. The reason for this lack of knowledge could be the oral historical accounts of Reggae which were strictly male-oriented. The role of a record producer can be pivotal as it may range from providing money for a recording session to being involved in the minute details of a song selection, song writing, selection of musicians, arranging the whole text of a song etc.

She built a nurturing environment for women artists in the times when male singers were given preference. Pottinger started her career as a producer by assuming control of her husband's recording business after his death. She worked with a few solo male artists too with ample success. In 1969, Delroy George Wilson, a Jamaican ska, rocksteady and Reggae singer recorded "Put yourself in my place" and "I'm the

one who loves you” for Pottinger. However, her greater role lies in producing and supporting a crop of female singers. Klive Walker in her article “Naturally: The Crucial Contributions of Sonia Pottinger” writes;

The history tells us that Dodd and Reid were two of the best producers during Jamaican popular music’s gestation, birth and adolescence. If mentioned at all, Sonia Pottinger is treated as secondary to those primary producers. Very often she is only discussed as a footnote to the stories of the pivotal recordings she produced for Marcia Griffiths, Judy Mowatt, Bob Andy and harmony trio culture. In an ironic way, the Reggae history is just as guilty of marginalising Reggae women as the Reggae industry. (65)

Klive walker is quite displeased with Kevin O’Brien Chang and Wayne Chen who in their book *Reggae Routes* do not even mention Sonia Pottinger and her contribution in Jamaican music industry. Nonetheless, Griffiths and Pottinger created as many believe possibly their finest work together. *Naturally* and *Steppin* are the two albums Griffiths recorded for Pottinger towards the end of 1970s. The title track “Steppin’ out of Babylon” from *Steppin* talks about the social groups and how they deal with various forms of injustice. The term ‘Babylon’ refers to both white oppressive culture as well as corrupt state apparatuses. Many Reggae singers use this term to refer to the police violence and brutality. In this song, Babylon can either be a situation or a system. According to Griffiths this song represents all the African-Jamaican women who have been treated unethically by the society in general. Griffiths sings;

When I think of all the bitter times I’ve had

Oh god it doesn’t make me sad

Oh no it doesn’t bother me

Strength and honour is all I see

Oh give thanks unto to the Almighty god

He showed me what I had

He said

Stand firm and keep the faith
Oh your reward should be great
So now I see the day.

Furthermore, Marcia Griffiths believes that any kind of violence can be countered through peace. Rastafari beliefs too validate the need to have faith in the philosophy of peace and harmony. In the song “Peaceful Woman” (1979), Griffiths raises the question of freedom for women to decide what they desire to do. Especially in a male dominated Jamaican society, where women are always warned to be vigilant about their actions. The lyrics of the song are;

I don't believe in doing wrong
I am a peaceful woman.
Tell me why
Why do they always try to put me down?
To spend my name all over the place
With a big disgrace
It's a crying shame again and again
All over the place.
Tell me why can't a woman be what she wants to be
Some of them I try
Some of them I try to take my place
But I wonder why they're almost to try
When they're all too late. (1979)

In the 1970s, Bob Andy and Marcia Griffiths recorded the cover version of “To be Young Gifted and Black”, a song which was originally sung by Nina Simone in 1969. Simone is an American singer who is identified for a range of musical styles such as jazz, blues, gospel, classical, folk, R&B etc. This song was written in the

memory of Simone's friend Lorraine Hansberry, the author of the play *A Raisin in the Sun*. This cover redefined both Andy and Griffiths. As far as Bob Andy is concerned, he is acknowledged for his mature poetic lyrics and he has written several songs for Marcia Griffiths. In fact, he has played an essential role in the musical triumph of Griffiths. This song connects both African-Americans and Jamaicans because of their shared history as it talks about black empowerment and a hope for a world without racial discrimination. The text of the song is;

Young, gifted and black
Oh what a lovely, precious dream
To be young, gifted, and black
Open your heart to what I mean.
In the world you know
There's a million boys and girls
Who are young, gifted, and black
And that's a fact.
Young, gifted, and black
We must begin to tell our young
There's a world waiting for you
Yours is the quest that's just begun. (1970)

Nevertheless, many believe that the journey of women in Jamaican popular music started ten years before Bob Marley recruited the I-Three. The voyage starts with a twenty two year old vocalist named Millie. Klive Walker in *Dubwise: Reasoning from the Reggae underground* writes;

Chris Blackwell, the founder of Island Records, took Millicent Small to London, England for the purpose of recording a Jamaican ska song. Millie Small's debut single, the pop-oriented "My Boy Lollipop" showcased her thin brash vocal, cooing bubble-gum, lyrics: "My Boy Lollipop/ you make my heart go giddy-up". The record became the first international hit of a

Jamaican popular music that was barely a toddler...American Bob Marley biographer Timothy White has found it easy to dismiss “My Boy Lollipop” as simply a novelty tune that provided Small with fluke fame. (80)

Even though, Millie’s success was termed a fluke but this is a fact that many male Reggae artists from Jamaica benefited from her sudden popularity. Artists like Wilfred Edwards, Owen Grey, and Jackie Opel all moved to London and developed their respective careers outside the boundary of Jamaica. Ernest Ranglin who was the music director on the ‘Lollipop’ recording session got the status of an accomplished jazz guitarist later on in his career. It is a known fact that one cannot overlook the significant contribution of Millie Small in Jamaican music industry. However, what is more interesting is that many do not acknowledge her as a figure of prominence.

As far as Judy Mowatt is concerned, she became a member of a dance troupe at the age of thirteen which toured Jamaica and other islands in the Caribbean. In the early 1970s, Mowatt wrote a few songs for Bunny Wailer, the founder of the Wailers. She wrote songs under the pseudonyms of Julian and Jean Watt. The Wailers album *Burnin* which was released in 1973 had two of Mowatt songs; “Hallelujah Time” and “Pass It On”. In 1974, Mowatt joined the I-Three. Mowatt’s album ‘Black Woman’ (1979) is considered to be the most promising Reggae album by a female artist. In this album, Mowatt talks about the history of black women who have been dehumanized. Her song “Sisters Chant” asks black women to continue their struggle even without the support of men. Moreover in “Slave Queen”, Mowatt critiques the Eurocentric idea of beauty which doesn’t consider black to be beautiful. The words of “Slave Queen” urges black women to liberate themselves from a very reductive understanding of beauty which has been formed by the West. This song seem to represent the conventional Rasta rationales of the 70s which discoursed black women to wear their hair naturally and refrain from make-up. The song attempts to challenge the hegemonic nature of the white world and their idea of beauty by stating: “Your lips are red, yours eyes paint blue / Slave queen remove the shackles from your mind”

Mowatt in her song “Warrior Queen” from the album *Look at Love* highlights the history of the figure of Nanny, leader of the Portland Maroons, who fought against slavery. Nanny has played a seminal role in the freedom struggle of Jamaicans as she

established a six hundred acre liberated settlement for freed slaves. However, Nanny and her contribution were barely recognized till the 70s. Mowatt through her music touches upon the pages of history which have been ignored for a long time. It is an established fact that the history of Reggae has been the history of men which hardly recognises the female artists and their presence. No matter how much one tries to suppress the female Reggae artists but one surely can't disregard the work of Griffiths, Mowatt, Pottinger, and Rita Marley as their work still remain to be an integral part of Reggae's unspoken history. After moving from the milieu of 'gender', the next chapter will explore the domain of race and its representation with relation to Reggae music. The next chapter will also analyse the racial tension which exist between the Whites and the Blacks. Moreover, Marcus Garvey and his ideologies and beliefs about forming a nation solely for Africans will also be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

The Voices of Resistance: Reggae and the Representation of Race

West Indians, black Americans

West Indians, black Americans

You know where we are coming from original?

In the name of Jah

In the name of Jah

This is the time when we should own each other together

No more disowning each other

No more disowning each other

West Indians, black Americans

You know where we are coming from original

Africa, yes Africa

African, yes Africa

-Burning Spear "One People" (1990)

Burning Spear in the above mention lyrics points out that both West Indians and Black Americans need to have a sense of unity and belonging as their roots have a distinctive and significant association with the land of Africa. Spear through many of his songs highlights the shared experience and turbulent history of both the Caribbeans and black Americans. The need to trace the collective past has been one of the primary questions of concern of many roots Reggae artists. The issue of race and its representation with relation to Caribbean history and society has been one of the most noteworthy areas of research however the present chapter will focus upon the complex terrain of Caribbean race in relation to Reggae. An attempt will be made to look into the various movements which advocate the subject of black race.

This chapter will critically observe the shift in the representation of black race from a Eurocentric to an Afrocentric perspective. However, looking into the complex socio-cultural fabric of the Caribbean society how much sense does it make to support the policy of Pan-Africanism? It is a harsh truth that during the period of slavery many Africans were brought to the Caribbean and under the epoch of colonization many slaves went through a drastic process of transmogrification not only in terms of their culture but language as well. If such is the case then how much sentience does it make to propose a belief which considers that all blacks must belong to Africa as that is their native land? It is an established fact that during the brutal period of slavery, many Africans were violently deracinated to new-fangled locations of the colonial empire. In this process of crossing borders and boundaries many people got dislocated and uprooted. If a community or a group of people are made to leave their homes to subsist under the hegemony of an alien culture for a long time then will it be right to enunciate that after years of alienation from the native culture, the prospect of home coming will be a home coming in the true sense of the term? Would it not rather uproot the community further which has already been dislocated? What about the people of mixed race who do not qualify to be entirely black and are indeed treated differently? Thus, this chapter will attempt to look into the nuances of roots and rootlessness while discussing the troubled topography of race.

It is true that music has been one of the strongest avenues to claim ones past and roots and many Reggae artists such as Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Mutabaruka, and

Burning Spear composed songs interrogating the necessity to perceive Africa as the ideal land as Marcus Garvey and his ideologies had expressed. This chapter will argue whether Reggae bridges the notions of home and race together or it creates a rupture by reminding the homeless of their home?

It is a fact that the Caribbean has suffered territorial fragmentation because of the long history of colonization. There have been colonial interventions by the Spanish, French, British, Dutch, and Danish during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On the other hand, America has managed to enter deep into the psyche of the people of the Caribbean islands through various art forms and music. Many islands of the Caribbean have been decolonized however it led to other problems. The process of decolonization resulted in insularity. C. G. Clarke in his essay “Insularity and Identity in the Caribbean” writes;

Insularity engenders a feeling for place and gives a sense of identity however frail. Caribbean societies are rarely impersonal. Social distance is mitigated by spatial proximity, and many West Indians take a pride in knowledge of their neighbours and their genealogies. But however attached Caribbean islanders may be to their native soil inter-island relations are fraught with tensions...”we live together very well” claims Errol Barrow, Prime Minister of Barbados, “but we don’t like to live together together.(10)

It is believed that Caribbean territories have not been able to return to themselves with a feeling of profound respect after a period of colonization as many of these territories are still caught up within the module of manufactured societies which were created by the colonial empires. Rejection of the Caribbean identity and desire for white Europe is a commonplace phenomenon amongst the West Indians. Many of them consciously want to erase their colonial past and history. One fails to comprehend this ambivalence, where on one hand West Indians want to run away from their violent past which was in fact a gift from the Western empires, and on the other hand want to imitate and associate themselves with the European culture. In order to find a way through the multitude of these complexities, West Indians in my understanding surely want to obliterate their past but solely a part of their past. They want to tear the blood

stained pages of slavery off their conscious mind only to feel less guilty when they opt to imitate the white man and his cultural burden. Colonialism apart from being a political fact, is also a state of mind and many people have decided to embrace this state of mind as it has been mentioned in the first chapter. The upper class in the Caribbean diligently followed the colonial pattern of social conduct. In fact, the white man was covertly admired by the people who belonged to the upper class. Denigration of local culture and products occur in many Caribbean societies. Local form of patois which is predominantly used by the islanders for communication is certainly not encouraged by many. The term ‘patois’ comes from old French which stands for local or regional dialect. Patois can refer to pidgins and creoles. The Haitian, Fouché in a poem originally written in Creole states;

Creole is for black people
Market people
People from the country parts
Creole is not for the bourgeois.¹

The above mentioned lines undoubtedly indicate that the bourgeois class in the Caribbean wants to maintain as much distance as possible from creole. The line “Creole is for black people” seem to signify that creole is for people who take pride in being black, who can accept their past and history without any sense of contradiction. Furthermore, creole is for people who can tolerate the psychological burden of slavery unlike the people who belong to the bourgeois class. Isn’t it true that a complete sense of identity can only be formed if the past of a race is not effaced? The domain of identity and its construction can only be negotiated if one is prepared to let go of socio-cultural borrowed masks as identity is not just about how a person looks and behaves but it is also about how a person ruminates not only over the present but the past too.

¹ Quoted in C. G. Clarke, “Insularity and Identity in the Caribbean”. Vol. 61, No. 1, 1976. P. 12

One thing which I would like to emphasize is that many groups exist in the Caribbean such as the Jews, Portuguese, Syrians, Maroons and of course East Indians who were mainly brought by the British Empire to the Caribbean islands from parts of North India to work as indentured labourers on sugar plantations. In this chapter, I would refer to the people who share their roots with Africa as the “bourgeois class”. Nonetheless, pondering over the issue of race and colour, a desire to be fair skinned was observed amongst the people who didn’t belong to the lower strata of society. It is this very common aspect of race which is questioned by Peter Tosh, Burning Spear, and Mutabaruka through their music. For instance, Mutabaruka² in his song ‘Skins’ expresses;

Black is the colour of my skin
But there is more of me to see within
Skins have played many tricks on me
Skins yes skins is what they see
But I am made with bones and skin like you
Doin hopin for the same things you do
For justice, peace and a place on earth
For life existence and what its worth. (1989)

The above mentioned lines highlight the societal prejudices which are associated with a specific skin colour which in all possibility is black. The line “Skins yes skins is what they see” hints upon the gaze which the black skin frequently invites. What is the reason that a person with dark skin becomes a source of undesirable scrutiny? The probable riposte of this question may lie in the process of imitation of white demeanour by the non-whites which as a matter of fact continued after the abolition of slavery as well. In order to improve the colour of the skin, many wanted to mate with

² Mutabaruka is known for ‘Dub Poetry’ which is a form of performance oriented form of West Indies. The genre of Dub poetry evolved in Jamaica in the 1970s. The formation of Dub poetry includes spoken words and Reggae rhythms. This form of poetry is chiefly concerned with political and social issues.

fairer people. This conjugation would translate into an offspring often called a 'mulatto'. The usage of the term is considered to be offensive in general. If we go by the principle of Pan-Africanism of Marcus Garvey which will be discussed at length in the latter part of the chapter then where do you place the offspring of a black and a white parent as Garvey says that all blacks should have one unified identity? Moreover, it is believed that the blacks from the lower class or the peasants were least concerned about the quest for Africa. If such is the case then who really are the people Garvey was fighting for?

Moreover, peeping further into the domain of race and black identity, many people who came to the Caribbean from Africa prefer to use the title 'Afro-Caribbean' to address themselves. However, some scholars have serious problem with this hyphenated identity. They believe that there should be an autonomous identity for Caribbean inhabitants. Lawrence O. Bamikole in his article "Creolization and the Search for Identity in Caribbean Philosophy" articulates that one has to pay attention over how the Caribbean subject differs from the African subject. Only after stating the difference one can hope to define the independent identity for the Caribbeans. (72) Lawrence goes on to accommodate various philosophers from Descartes, John Locke to Dalfovo in order to formulate an understanding of an isolated Caribbean identity. Descartes essentially enunciates that a person can have an identity because of his/her thinking capabilities. Locke on the other hand begs to differ from Descartes by saying that a person's identity cannot be based on the ability to think alone as thinking may get interrupted time and again hence the domain of identity formation dwells in continuity of consciousness. Dalfovo believes, there is a cultural aspect to the conception of identity whereby he says that the sphere of identity is not just about the outer realities but it is as much about the mind and soul of a culture. Furthermore, Edward Kamau Brathwaite who is considered to be the one of the foremost voices of the Caribbean literary canon believes that Caribbean history is a process of cross-cultural hybridity and he coins the word 'creolization' to represent this process. If the construction of Caribbean history is about creolization then how do we differ between various subjects? Bamikole writes; "Creolization is coming together of different elements in an interacting process, producing a new reality or an entity which is neither one nor the other of the original elements, but which nevertheless share some features with the original elements." (76) These lines indicate that it is not simple to

keep the Caribbean subject away from the African subject when it comes to define the independent identity of the Caribbeans because Africans over the period of time have become an intrinsic constituent of the Caribbean terrain. Moreover, there are scholars who believe that creole is a highly unstable category and one needs to look into multiple parameters and resonances to really be able to understand the term in its true sense. The term creole is associated with the process of interculturality which eventually results into hybridity. Taking up the issue of interculturality, one needs to understand that the blending of culture and race in the Caribbean which happened not only between the Europeans and the Africans as the common understanding goes by, but also amongst the various Africans ethnic groups. At times the language and culture of these ethnic groups were as different from each other as the culture and language of many European colonizers. Hence, creole subjectivity can be understood by analysing these intricacies. Melanie Otto in the article “The Caribbean” writes that “The word creole also means Caribbean-born, as opposed to aboriginal or European born. It is not a racially specific term in the region but applies to people of all races whose place of origin is the Caribbean.” (97) Thus, a creole subject or culture may be black, white, colonial, East Asian and so on.

However, before the process of creolization was seen as a marker of Caribbean identity beyond European categorization, there was a movement regarding the issue of identity which mainly focused upon the African heritage and it was known as ‘Negritude’. This movement primarily aimed to reorganise the beliefs towards the conception of Caribbean identity. ‘Negritude’ defined the Caribbean cultural identity as one which shared a close association with the land of Africa. Leon Damas from French Guyana was one of the foremost thinkers of this movement. ‘Negritude’ circulated the common knowledge amongst the people to reject anything which was European and embrace everything which had anything to do with Africa. It was this movement which questioned the derogatory terms such as Negro and Savage which were associated with blacks for a long time. Damas played a significant role in translating the term ‘Negro’ into a signifier of black pride and black racial superiority. However, the movement was questioned from many factions of Caribbean society for its restrictive view towards Caribbean Identity and its non-representational nature with reference to people of mixed race. Somewhere this movement failed to address the multicultural reality of the Caribbean society. Keeping in mind the multiple

perspectives towards Caribbean culture and its past, Braithwaite's definition of 'creolization' appears to be more inclusive than of the writers who represented the Negritude movement.

Furthermore, creole indicates a very complex heritage reflecting multiple contexts within the geographical space of the Caribbean and as it has been mentioned earlier that this heritage led to the construction of hybridity. Conceptually, the term hybridity is considered to be something which lies 'in between' and something which is an antithetical of pure. Basically in the broader sense hybridity can be seen as a module which violates the purity of race, culture or identity and it is viewed as something which is transgressive in its nature as it challenges the conventions of racial distinctiveness. To shed further light on the concept of 'hybridity' one needs to look into the dominion of both heterogeneity as well as homogeneity. To critically look into the idea of homogeneity, there is a need to analyse the culture of 'monoculturalism' which Goldberg in his book *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader* talks about. At present, most of the societies and communities are going through a drastic change in terms of their cultural landscape. For instance, there are numerous communities inhabit within the Caribbean hence monoculturalism can only be brought through some kind of a repression which can be both political. It is a fact that any kind of suppression or authoritarianism in order to maintain a sense of purity can be highly detrimental for a social group as it tries to alter the course of history by means of violence. For instance, blacks were considered to be inferior in white America. There was an attempt to maintain the white homogeneity. Blacks were not given equal rights for a long time as equality of different races could strengthen the idea of heterogeneity. It is quite disappointing to notice that even now many social groups are belligerent to preserve a sense of purity in the name of language, colour, race, identity, culture and so on. When a group of people is constantly forced to oscillate between social and cultural binaries then it gives birth to a 'Double Consciousness' which W. E. B. Du Bois in his *Soul of Black Folk* (1903) talks about. In fact in the very beginning of his work, Du Bois poses a question of how blacks are viewed as a problem by the whites.

So Du Bois asks boldly, and responds: Feeling yourself to be a problem, he says, "is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of

always looking at one's self through the eyes of the others, of measuring one's soul by tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels this twoness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings" (215)³

For blacks being the object of the white gaze and to be seen and analysed constantly through the eyes of the other was a common phenomenon and it is quite prevalent even now. This kind of segregation happened quite often with Reggae artists as they were considered to be a source of danger to the peaceful fabric of Jamaican society.

As far as the question of 'Double Consciousness' is concerned, there are multiple views regarding the terminology. For Du Bois the term basically stands for a state of double blind in which an individual feels to be caught up in the world of hyphenated identities. For Ralph Waldo Emerson who coined the term, 'Double Consciousness' represents the state in which the blacks are pulled in opposite directions and the act of dragging results into some kind of a conflict. Emerson opines that there should be a principle of coordination between the opposing forces as it is this coordination which can convey a sentience of order in the midst of chaos. Some believe that 'Double-Consciousness' makes a mockery out of the word identity. However, Doris Sommer in his essay "A Vindication of Double Consciousness" opines that it is time to see and analyse double consciousness from multiple perspectives as it should not be limited to "the meanness of one thought, one striving, one measure of value" (165). Sommer writes; "today we might notice that double consciousness is a normal and ever more universal condition of contemporary subjects. It is also, I have been saying, a structure of democratic feeling. Du Bois called it a curse, we know, but he hinted that double consciousness could also be a double blessing, for Blacks in particular and for America in general." (171)

Taking the argument further, could we view the identity of Afro-Caribbeans within the purview of double blessing? In the beginning of this chapter, a point was raised regarding a need to differentiate between the Caribbean and the African subject in order to understand the issue of race in the Caribbean with much intelligibility and pellucidity. In my opinion, the subject of race and identity cannot be analysed from a

³ Quoted in Doris Sommer, "A Vindication of Double Consciousness". Henry Schwarz, Sangeeta Ray. A Companion to Postcolonial Studies. 2000. P. 165

fixed viewpoint and certainly it cannot be looked at within binaries. To state that independent identities can be defined only after establishing the differences may sound unproblematic but it isn't so considering how multiple identities get absorbed into each other in the Caribbean. Hence, one cannot discard out rightly that hyphenated identities may be a blessing to provide more than one cognizance to comprehend the society in its multiplicity.

Delimitating further on the issue of race, W. E. B. Du Bois in his article "The Conservation of Races" writes about the development of human history and how human beings have been divided into races in a subtle, delicate and elusive way. He goes on to opine that;

The history of the world is the history, not of individuals, but of groups, not of nations, but of races, and he who ignores or seeks to override the race idea in human history ignores and overrides the central thought of all history. What, then, is a race? It is a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life. (80)

Theorising the domain of 'Race'

This part of the chapter will look at the issue of race and the multiple complexities associated to it during the colonial as well as postcolonial periods. During the epoch of colonization, a certain type of racial identification was experienced by the colonised. It is believed that colonialism and imperialism helped in generating and constructing images of a particular nature of the 'other' who were colonised and marginalised by the powerful white empires. Furthermore, it is also assumed that the idea of race was a product which came out of the examination of the differences between the coloniser and the colonised. In the nineteenth century when European colonies were expanding both in Africa and Asia, the black was portrayed as the so called 'primitive' as Edward

Said too points out the production of the exotic primitive self of the non-whites in *Orientalism*. The primitive was scrutinised and evaluated in multiple ways and one of the ways to view him was through the lens of the absence of aesthetic sensibility. Les Back and John Solomon in their introduction to *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader* opine that one needs to move beyond the establishment of overgeneralisation as both in Africa and Asia, there were a number of methodologies at work in the construction of images of both the natives and the colonisers. They go on to write that; “We need to remember that most Victorians had no personal contact with the ‘exotic’ peoples and places that they were assuming responsibility for. Their opinions were formed according to the sources of their information, and these sources were for the most part the popular press and literature.” (14)

It is not a hidden fact that many Western explorers and travellers presented a unidimensional image of Africa and other non-Western territories in their works and diary entries. For instance American Illustrator, Howard Pyle (1853-1911) provides a Eurocentric understanding of Jamaica in a monthly magazine titled ‘Jamaica New and Old (1890). The words and vocabulary which Pyle uses in his account clearly indicate the white man’s burden which many explores could not really shed off their civilised, sophisticated shoulders. Many a times these accounts would be highly insensitive. For Instance Pyle writes;

Black faces, rags and tatters, gaudy petticoats and red and yellow turbans, that blazed flame like against the whiteness; negro women, lithe and erect, bearing upon their turbaned head huge baskets piled high with a wealth of tropic fruits...strange fruits and monstrous vegetables, each little patient beast led or driven by a negro boy or girl, barefoot and tattered shouting shrilly in the soft, rapid, negro-English dialects of the tropics. The language sounded as foreign to our ears as the life appeared strange to our eyes. (172)

Phrase such as ‘strange’, ‘foreign’, and ‘monstrous’ undoubtedly subvert the faculties of aesthetic sensibilities of the so called Negro. I get exceedingly perplexed to analyse, whenever there is a reference of an interaction between the whites and non-whites in European travellers’ writings, as it is always the white who tries to assert the linguistic as well as cultural superiority. The above mentioned description of Jamaica by Pyle

reminds one of Charles Marlow's journey up the river Congo in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Marlow in this novella expresses a great amount of shock and disgust when he comes across the natives of Africa. *Heart of Darkness* is full of references and incidents in which the physical appearance of the natives is coloured with an aura of mystery and scepticism. Conrad had used words such as 'unknown planet' for Africa and 'prehistoric men' for Africans. Chinua Achebe was categorically infuriated by the way Africa and its people had been projected by the writer. Hence, he wrote an article "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness" in response to the novella. Achebe writes; "*Heart of Darkness* projects the image of Africa as "the other world", the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality." (2)

To say that civilisation is the white man's forte was nothing but a pretence which was performed by the Europeans. Nonetheless, the first English settlement on the African coast is supposed to be at Kormantin in 1631. As far as the initial contact of English and African is concerned, it happened beyond any power struggle between the two. For a long time, the so called Negro was not looked at as a slave. However, Englishmen were utterly shocked with the way Negro lived his life and the most defined characteristic of the newly discovered Africans was his colour. The black skin became the site of amazement for the whites and travellers often commented on the colour of the Africans apart from their manners and dress. Robert Baker in his narrative poem recounting his two voyages to the West African coast in 1562 and 1563 writes;

And entering in a river,
We see a number of blacke soules
Whose likeliness seem'd men to me
But all as blacke as coles,
Their Captaine comes to me as naked as my naile,

Not having witte or honestie to cover once his taile.⁴

The colour black had a great impact on the psyche and perceptions of Englishmen. As a result, blackness became synonymous with Africa. Winthrop D. Jordan in his article “First Impressions” talks about the gravity of the impression which the black colour had upon Englishmen. For instance, England’s primary exchange with Africans took place in West Africa and Congo where men had an extremely dark complexion because of the climatical conditions. One of the fair skinned nations suddenly came face to face with people of black skin colour. (35) In the sixteenth century, words such as dirty, foul, deadly, disastrous, sinister, atrocious, wicked, horrible, etc. were associated with people who were black. In fact, black was considered to be a symbol of evil, and danger. On the other hand, white connoted purity, pleasant, virtue, beauty etc. Most of the white commentators felt that Negro could behave better under their guidance. It is such a paradox that the white man who introduced the institution of slavery and violence was talking about reason and civilised behaviour. The black body was commodified and objectified and perhaps the white man wanted to teach the lesson of well conduct out of a process of this objectification and commodification. Frantz Fanon in his essay “The Fact of Blackness” writes about the trauma of being a black man and how this trauma intensifies when the black man comes across a white man. Fanon begins his essay with the line “DIRTY NIGGER! Or simply, “Look, a Negro!” (257).

The opening line seems to suggest that how the existence of the black man was absolutely undermined because of his colour. In fact he wasn’t even perceived as a man but a Negro or a dirty nigger. What happens to a black man when his identity is reduced solely to his appearance? Fanon goes on to opine that a black man was supposed to behave like a ‘black man’ or a nigger. It is galling how blacks were categorised under one universal category of hate and abhorrence. Moreover, black body was projected as a site of threat and intimidation. Fanon writes;

⁴ Quoted in Winthrop D. Jordan, “First Impressions”. Les Back and John Solomos. *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*. London: Routledge. 2000. Pp. 33-50

The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly, look, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up. (259)

The above mentioned lines clearly talk about the fashion in which the black man was perceived. Racially insensitive remarks by the white man was a common phenomenon within the historicity of black man. Bob Marley in one of his songs titled "War" attempts to initiate a discourse on the subject of race. The song first appeared on Bob Marley and the Wailers' 1976 island records album *Rastaman Vibration*. It is believed that the lyrics of the song is derived from a speech made by the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I before the United Nations General Assembly on 4th of October, 1963. Before the speech took place, the entire African continent was going through a period of political revitalization. The 'Organization of African Unity' was found in the presence of almost every African head of state. In the 1960s when many African nations were struggling to seek Independence, Selassie's historical speech gave a great momentum to the entire movement. He spoke about the issue of world peace and suggested that this could only be achieved by eradicating racial discrimination and class differentiation. Selassie remarks; "Until bigotry and prejudice and malicious and inhuman self-interest have been replaced by understanding and tolerance and goodwill; until all Africans stand and speak as free beings, equal in the eyes of all men, as they are in the eyes of heaven; until that day the African continent will not know peace."⁵ Bob Marley's "War" expresses the same sentiments of peace and equality. Marley sings;

Until the philosophy which hold one race superior

And another inferior

Is finally and permanently

⁵ These lines have been taken from his speech delivered on October 4th, 1963, at the United Nations' General Assembly in New York City, America.

Discredited and abandoned
Everything is war
Me say war.
That until there no longer
First class and second class citizens of any nation
Until the colour of a man's skin
Is of no more significance that the colour of his eyes
Me say war.
That until the basic human rights
Are equally guaranteed to all,
Without regard to race
Dis a war.
And until that day,
The African continent
Will not know peace,
We Africans will fight- we find it necessary
And we know we shall win
As we are confident
In the victory. (1976)

Bob Marley in this song asserts the need to fight against all kind of bigotries and oppression in order to achieve a state of harmony. Marley appeals that the wall of class disparity must be demolished and one needs to come out of the shallow binaries of superior vs inferior, white vs black as such binaries don't contribute anything constructive to the society in general. Moreover, after the speech of Selassie, a dialogue had started to take place amongst the African nations on the subject of

decolonization as many African nations were yet to gain freedom from the western colonial rule. Furthermore, there was a need to create a knowledge which could challenge the western production of biased illustration of African race. As it has been mentioned before that mostly Africans were represented as a problematic violent race by the white explorers and it was time to erase such representations by rewriting the past. David Theo Goldberg in his essay *Racial Knowledge* articulates the creation of knowledge which takes place around the sphere of race. He starts the essay by stating that there are two entities which need to be evaluated with reference to the dominion of race and these entities are 'race and its formal character' and 'race and its universality. Delimitating over African race and its portrayal, one cannot subterfuge the fact that the universality of black race happened through the abrogation of its formal character. By using Foucauldian tropes of knowledge and its establishment, David writes; "Power is exercised epistemologically in the dual practices of naming and evaluating. In naming or refusing to name things in the order of thought, existence is recognized or refused, significance assigned or ignored, beings elevated or rendered invisible." (155) As far as Africans are concerned, their existence was surely recognised by the colonial empires as without acknowledging the 'other' they couldn't have been able to exercise their power. However, the irony was the presence of subversion in their recognition of the other. Thus, it was this subversion which transmogrified their existence into a refusal, ignorance or an invisibility.

Africans and their existence was torn apart violently by the whites and there were many reasons why this happened. One of the most significant reasons was that Africa was Europe's last colonial possession therefore when whites came to the African land they had a wealth of experience. Aime Cesaire in his work *Discourse on Colonialism* writes about the nature of African colonial experience;

The great historical tragedy of Africa has been not so much that it was too late in making contact with the rest of the world, as the manner in which that contact was brought about; that Europe began to "propagate" at a time when it had fallen into the hands of the most unscrupulous financiers and captains of industry; that it was our misfortune to encounter that particular Europe on our

path, and that Europe is responsible before the human community for the highest heap of corpses in human history. (23)⁶

Colonialism had a radical impact on Africa. Constant exploitation in the hands of the colonizers had completely destroyed many African communities. According to historians, indigenous communities and their structures of self-development were completely ruined by the so called civilised action of development which was introduced by the Europeans. Moreover, Africa was represented as a waste land by the self-proclaimed culture saviours. Angela Waters in her article “How I learned African History from Reggae” writes about how biased images of African people and their culture have been cultivated for years by texts books and other references including media. (43) These biased images have done a great amount of damage to African past as well as their present. The unfortunate part is that even now African culture has not been able to come out of the prejudiced shadow of the colonial past. Mutabaruka in his song “Great Queens of Africa” highlights the glorious past of Africa which has long been forgotten. Mutabaruka sings;

Great queens of Afrika
Rulers all aroun’
They were might brave and strong
Europeans couldn’t get them down.
Afrika had great kings and queens
You should know
Search your history
It will show
If you know not from whence you came
You are not doomed to live in shame.

⁶ Quoted in Tejumola Olaniyan. “Africa Varied Colonial Legacies.” Henry Schwarz, Sangeeta Ray. A Companion to Postcolonial Studies. 2000. P. 267

In a Afrika
Talkin' about Makeda
Queen of Sheba
Ruled from Arabia to Ethiopia
Fell in love with Solomon Brought forth Haile Selassie
Forefather Menelik I.
In a Afrika
Amina rode at the head of
Her troops in war
Conquered enemies near
And far
Great queen of Hausa land
A woman as capable as any man.
In a Afrika
Nzinga of Angola
Fought the portyguese
As a guerrilla soldier
Si queen nanny of Jamaica
She rule de area
When de English dem lick shot
All she do is spit it back. (1991)

In the above mentioned song, there are multiple references of African Queens who have been a major constituent of African history. There have been attempts to erase the name of these queens from the pages of history. Mutabaruka mentions Makeda in

the very beginning of the song. Makeda was the Ethiopian Queen and there are many legends about her. According to the Old Testament, she is the chaste queen of Sheba who went to meet the king Solomon of Israel when she came across the narratives regarding his wisdom and knowledge. King Solomon proved his worth when he met Makeda and in return the queen gave him precious gifts which she had carried along with her. Makeda and Solomon fell in love and together they had a son Manelik I who became the first emperor of Ethiopia. According to another legend, during 1000 BC, Ethiopia was troubled by a gigantic serpent king. He would eat countless animals every day and started to demand young chaste girls too. Once, it was Makeda's turn and when the serpent king tried to consume her she simply killed him thereby putting an end to the misery of the Ethiopians. However, many versions of the Old Testament have no reference of this powerful black woman. The lines by Mutabaruka where he says; "Afrika had great kings and queens/you should know/search your history" brings us to the question of history and its construction. How can one find the history of a nation when history has been wiped out from the documents which contain history? A search for history is certainly not enough, one has to analyse the whole process of history making.

As far as Amina is concerned, she was the warrior queen of Zaria, north central Nigeria. Under her rule, Zaria became the centre of trade and power. Amina was well known for her authority and bravery. When she was asked to marry, she humbly refused as she was afraid that she might lose her power after marrying. She bargained a solution to deal with this predicament. She would simply pick a lover from the lost army after each battle and would kill the person in the morning after having spent the night together. As for Nzinga, she was the 17th century queen of Angola, known for her political shrewdness and military intelligence. Mutabaruka in this song attempts to trace the African race and its pride despite the fact that history and its construction can be a product of falsehood. Joan Dayan in his essay "Who's Got History? Kamau Brathwaite's "Gods of the Middle Passage" writes about past histories and their trappings. Dayan in the very beginning of the essay quotes American poet William Carlos Williams's views on history in *Kora in Hell* which is a narrative poem. William

articulates; “Of course, history is an attempt to make the past seem stable and of course it’s a lie”⁷

Can history be a tool to provide some sense of coherence to the chaotic events of the past? Can history be misleading as Williams strongly believes that it is a lie and nothing else. Joan Dayan writes “The lie of history is a grave one. It has been used to dispossess, reduce, and annihilate. As Marcus Garvey told his fellow Jamaicans; ‘the white world has always tried to rob and discredit us of our history.’ And Frantz Fanon gave colonialism that special talent of throwing the past in your face, but a past revised as grotesque: ‘it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it.’” (726).

As far as historical events and their representations are concerned, Walter Benjamin in his work “Theses on the Philosophy of History” draws a line of distinction between historicism and historical materialism to understand the concept of history and what role it has within the larger framework of society and culture. The primary reason of the basic tension which lies between historicism and historical materialism is found amid the dissimilar approaches both offer to the whole conception of history. Benjamin articulates that historicism remains concerned to the analyses of the past only in relation to itself which limits the understanding of history to a rigid structure and this kind of an approach can be problematic in order to comprehend the larger meaning. Moreover, events need to be read and compared beyond the fixed temporal and spatial locations. According to him historicism does not see the presence of barbarism in isolated events hence it becomes important to relate ‘past’ beyond the boundaries of past to understand the production of culture. Benjamin writes; “There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.” (256) This definition of culture can be understood and scrutinised within the purview of Reggae music as during the initial years of its inception Reggae became a victim of multiple misunderstandings and misconceptions. To sing, perform or indulge with Reggae in any way whatsoever was seen as an act of violence and criminality. Thereby, Reggae didn’t have a positive image which was perceived as an excuse by the state machineries to be oppressive and barbaric in their attempt to curb

⁷ Quoted in Joan Dayan. “Who’s Got History? Kamau Brathwaite’s “God of the Middle Passage”. *World Literature Today*. Vol. 68, No. 4, 1994. P. 726

and limit the creative space of this art form. One must not forget that many Reggae songs were against the government and its policies and this could be the reason why Reggae had to face so many challenges. Nevertheless, Reggae garnered attention because of its message of justice, equality and love.

Bob Marley and the wailers released an album titled *Exodus* in 1977 which had songs dealing with the idea of love and unity. One song from the album which became extremely popular both within and outside Jamaica was “One Love”. Because of its worldwide success “One Love” has been included on many compilation albums of Bob Marley and the Wailers. Bob Marley in this song “One Love” sings;

One love, one heart

Let’s get together and be all right

Hear the children crying (one love)

Hear the children crying (one heart)

Give thanks and praise to the Lord and I will be all right

Let’s get together and feel all right.

Let them all pass their dirty remarks

There is one question I would really love to ask

Is there a place for the hopeless sinner?

Who has hurt all mankind just to save his own?

Let’s get together to fight this Holy Armageddon

So when the man comes there will be no, no doom

Have pity on those whose chances grow thinner

There isn’t no hiding from the Father of Creation. (1977)

In this song Bob Marley requests everyone not to overlook the pain and suffering of human beings. One of the ways to overcome the agony could be unity and the sense of belonging. Bob Marley believes that even if dirty remarks are passed one should not

abandon the path of love and compassion. In the song the phrase 'hopeless sinner' might be a signifier for corrupt politicians who solely care for their own contentment and well-being even at the cost of hurting others. Marley was disillusioned by the Jamaican government to a large extent and his annoyance got reflected in many of his songs. In this song Biblical reference 'Holy Armageddon' indicates the holy fight which the people of Jamaica need to take up against all kinds of mistreatment, abuse, brutality, dictatorship and domination. As far as 'Armageddon' is concerned, it indicates the site of gathering for various armies for a final battle during the end times of human civilization and the word 'Armageddon' is supposed to have come from Hebrew which means a mountain or a range of hills. According to Christian interpretation Jesus came back to earth to defeat Satan in the battle of Armageddon. All said and done, 'Armageddon' represents the triumph of good over evil and when Bob Marley says that "Let's get together and be alright" despite all the conflicts, it clearly exhibits the victory of will to love and subsist over sinners.

Nonetheless, as for historical materialism it questions the traditional historicists and the way they observe the past. According to these historicists the past has no relational value with the present. It believes in seeing the past from a set position. For historical materialists the present is highly essential and it can be a significant tool to understand the past. Benjamin further writes;

To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognise it "the way it really was" (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger. Historical materialism wished to retain that image of the past which unexpectedly appears to man singled out by history at a moment of danger. The danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers. The same threat hangs over both: that of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. In every era attempt must be made a new to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it. (255)

Thus, the past of the blacks which was portrayed and revised as grotesque could possibly be understood better through the modules of historical materialism and in fact history can become an apparatus to decipher the chaotic pattern of the past as past is also imperative to race and its understanding. The question which needs to be

examined is that do we preserve race or rather eliminate it amidst the plethora of racial identities in society? Moreover, some people believe that there won't be racism if the concept of race is eradicated altogether. Du Bois in his essay "The Conservation of Races" which has been discussed previously states that elimination of racial differentiation would be a grave mistake because it might lead to a state of confusion when it comes to individual identity. Du Bois considers that Africans need to carve out an individual identity for themselves to provide a crucial insight into the province of black history and race.

However, at present when 'racial eliminativism'⁸ is on the rise then how do we find a way to represent race and its conservation? Joshua Glasgow in *A Theory of Race* articulates that one doesn't have to eliminate 'race-thinking' altogether nor one needs to embrace it unequivocally and an attempt should be made to replace the racial discourse with another label and that could be 'racial reconstructionism' and terms like race, white, black, brown should be used to refer to social categories. (2-3) 'Racial reconstructionism' believes in reconstructing the racial discourse. For example race is a complex category to define which is why a conventional understanding of race as a biological entity needs to be argued. Glasgow writes; "Many contemporary realists, taking inspiration from Du Bois, maintain that race is not ultimately about biology at all. Instead of being a biological kind of thing, race is, on this alternative theory, socially constructed but real nonetheless. Racial groups are real groups that have been created by our social practices, rather than by some biological process". (5) In my opinion too, the domain of race can be a social construct. For instance, multiple meanings are attached with the colour white and black and it has happened because over the period of time, a certain kind of a perception is attached with people who are black and the ones who are white. As far as the representation of race through Reggae music is concerned, most of the Reggae artists attempted to project a gracious image of black race through their songs.

Reggae and Marcus Garvey

⁸ The term has been taken from Joshua Glasgow, *A Theory of Race*. 2008. P.1.

Garvey Garvey rise again
Take we from this evil then
Garvey Garvey rescue we
From this ideology
Marcus Garvey rising from earth
Like Moses pick from birth
Come children say it loud
Make them know we still black and proud
I'm black and I'm proud.
African leaders just wait
Garvey action we can duplicate
Black pride indeed preach
To the young we must teach
Put Garvey in we reality
Make we check in philosophy
Talking about African dignity
In this insanity
Talking about our history
That began before slavery
Come children say it loud
Make them know we still black and proud. (1996)

The above mentioned lyrics have been taken from a song titled “Garvey” which was recorded in 1996 by Mutabaruka. This song wishes Garvey to rise again and rescue the common people from the ideology of evil and destruction. The song advocates the concerns of African unity and black pride. Moreover, this song is an example to highlight the influence which Marcus Garvey and his ideologies had on Reggae.

After the First World War, a mass movement developed amongst the people of African origin to come together and unite against the racial atrocities. Blacks had started to question the social segregation which they had been facing. Voices were emerging to seek a sagaciousness of equality and one person who played a seminal role in bringing the people of Africa to one united platform to fight and resist is Marcus Garvey. Under the leadership of this Jamaican Negro, black people from different continents had started to question their surroundings in which the colour black was frowned upon. Marcus Garvey and his beliefs had an enormous impact on the art of Reggae. Bob Marley and the Wailers, Burning Spear, Mutabaruka and many others had composed songs which were influenced by Marcus Garvey’s philosophy.

Garvey established the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914 to ameliorate the status of blacks across nations. UNIA was founded in Jamaica and later on it was extended to West Indian islands, Africa and of course United States. Garvey came to America in 1906 and began his ‘back to Africa movement’ to inaugurate the foundation of Negro Nationalism. When Garvey started his movement he realised that blacks were being fed a very disparaging image of themselves hence he felt the need to raise a consciousness amongst the blacks about their colour. He spread the view that being a black was not a matter of shame rather it was a glorious symbol of national pride and one must acknowledge this pride. Garvey was a great orator so whenever he delivered a speech it had a significant amount of an impact on people and their psyche. Outrageous narratives of racial discrimination and lynching would be highlighted by Garvey in his speech. While growing up Garvey observed that there was a strong racial hierarchy in Jamaica which was based on the colour of skin. American historian E. David Cronon in his book *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* writes;

Generally speaking, the white element forms the social aristocracy of the island, the mulattoes make up the middle class, and the blacks are the laborers.

There is no fixed color line in the sense that a black may not rise to middle class status, but the question of color looms large in island thinking...the lightest of the mixed bloods, often called "Jamaican whites" because they consider themselves white, generally possess the most racial prejudice. The mulattoes act to protect their status as "almost white" and look down upon their more Negroid brothers. The Negroes far outnumber the other two classes combined, but despite their numerical superiority they are relegated to an inferior economic and social position. (10)

It was this inferior position of the blacks which made Garvey raise his voice against the colour prejudice. Moreover, Garvey was extremely perplexed at the fact that neither Jamaican whites and nor the almost whites wanted to seek a change in the societal status of black majority. I am not surprised at the reality that they didn't want to see a transformation and the possible reason for this behaviour could be the position of privilege which the non-black Jamaicans relish in the society. Moreover, no social or racial group would really want to leave the position of power and authority. Such circumstances led to a feeling of bleakness amongst the blacks as they could not see a possibility of climbing the ladder of upliftment and progression. What is the reason that many white Jamaicans wanted to follow the colonial legacy of hierarchy? Derek Walcott in his essay "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" writes about the European civilization and how it acted as a mirror to the colonized space and race. The word 'mirror' in this context represents the state of hierarchy and balance which of course the inferior colonized lacked. Walcott writes; "The civilized virtues on the other side of this mirror are the virtues of social order a lineally clear hierarchy, direction, purpose, balance. With these things, so we were taught, some social justice and the exercise of racial memory which is tradition."(7)

As it has been stated earlier that it was quite a common practice to associate the white with order and balance and black with chaos and anarchy and Garvey was in fact revolting against such prejudiced practices. One person who had influenced the psyche of Marcus Garvey to a great extent was a well-educated black man Dr. Love the publisher of *Advocate*. Dr. Love had spent some time studying in England and eventually came back to Jamaica to work for the underprivileged Jamaican peasants.

Garvey realised that he would have to become the voice of the people who were at the fringe in the entire social structure. Garvey travelled to many nations such as Ecuador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Columbia, Venezuela etc. to observe the condition of the blacks. Most of these places had ample narratives of exploitation of powerless blacks. For instance, the mistreatment of black labourers of mine and tobacco fields was quite normative. The labourers would be forced to work for long hours and they would hardly be given the wage they deserved for their work. Exploitation was quite blatant and rampant.

Nonetheless, in 1912 Garvey went to London to learn more about the British colonial empire. Over there he met Duse Mohammed Ali publisher of the monthly magazine *Africa Times and Orient Review*. Interactions with Mohammed Ali led to a keen interest which Garvey developed about African history and heritage and it's past. Charlotte Phillips Fein in her essay "Marcus Garvey: His Opinions about Africa" writes that there were two primary beliefs which Garvey had about Africa; "First, he believed that African civilization was the first of all world civilizations to develop beyond the primitive stage...Second, he held that there was nothing inherently inferior about the African race, which, given time, proper aid, and education, would rise again to untold splendour." (447)

One can find an echo of Garvey's views of Africa in many Reggae compositions. For instance, Bob Marley & The Wailers in their song "Africa Unite" from the album *Survival* recorded in 1979 almost forty years after Garvey's death sing about the unification of all Africans. The lyrics of the song are;

Africa unite
Cause we are moving right out of Babylon
And we are going to our father's land.
How good and pleasant it would be
Before God and man
To see the unification of all Africans...

We are the children of the Rastaman

We are the children of the lay man

Africa unite

Cause the children wanna come home. (1979)

In the above mentioned lyrics, Bob Marley talks about the idea of home coming and for him home translates into moving out of Babylon. Just to reiterate many Reggae singers use the term 'Babylon' to point out the corrupt state machinery. In this song, Africa is projected as a utopian land for blacks as Marcus Garvey proposed in his writings and many of his speeches. I personally believe that the whole movement of 'Back to Africa' was romanticised to a great extent and Africa was projected by Garvey as an ideal land. The problem with romanticising a place renders into the place losing its objectivity. Nonetheless, Garvey requests mainly educated black men to return to Africa so that they can reclaim the lost glory of African culture and civilization. Garvey in his work *The Black Man* argues that the historical research which was done on Africa by the white scholars was biased as Africa was never projected in its cultural entirety by such scholars. Hence, Garvey articulates; "we have a lot of research to do to uncover for ourselves the true history of the past" (447)⁹ Garvey believes that history writing is a subjective exercise and for whites history and its creation became a tool of subjugation. Thus according to him, Africans needed to rewrite their history to obliterate the prejudiced elucidations introduced by the whites.

The status of Africans in America too had a lasting impression on Garvey. He observed the kind of colour segregation blacks had to face in white America. Moreover, lynching was considered to be a common act of punishment by whites. Garvey read about the cruel tradition of slavery in America and came back to Jamaica in 1914 to gather his thoughts and to begin with something constructive for blacks. This was the year when he proposed that all the Negroes of the world should come together to form the nation, culture, society and government of their own. Even though this proposition may sound like an ideal solution which the blacks could get in the

⁹ Quoted in Charlotte Phillips Fein, "Marcus Garvey: His Opinions about Africa". *The Journal of Negro Education*. Vol. 33, No.4, 1965. P. 447

midst of all the violence. However, this proposal had its own complications which I started this chapter with.

Nonetheless, when Garvey went to America in 1916, the American Negroes were going through a state of hopelessness. The World War I had a deep effect on the lives of blacks. A sense of disillusionment was proliferating as everything was falling apart for the American Negro world. In the midst of this chaos, an alien figure like Garvey who was talking about black unity and power was accepted without any resentment. Garvey introduced the idea of 'race redemption'. Moreover, During the First World War, many blacks joined the American army forgetting how they had been treated in America and stood shoulder to shoulder with white citizens to fight the enemy in order to restore peace and harmony in the hope that this gesture of loyalty will be rewarded with better treatment from whites. However nothing really changed in fact the increased mobility of the blacks during the war invited serious friction between whites and coloured. Some of this tension was actually traced to the formation of black armed forces. Thus, separate units were formed for white and black forces so that the moments of crisis could be as less as possible.

In 1916, Harlem became the centre point of black resistance in America. Many black writers, poets, intellectuals, editors, artists spoke about the Negro urban society and the problems they had been facing. This was the time when Garvey visited more than thirty states in America researching upon the living condition of blacks. In 1917, the New York division of the Universal Negro Improvement Association was established and one of the reasons of Garvey's success in America was founding of *The Negro World* the newspaper dedicated to the issues of black Americans. Garvey gave a vision of a new land to African Americans and interestingly enough his movement coincided with Harlem Renaissance. The movement became so immense that it was considered to be a threat for colonizers of Europe who were still controlling the African nations. Many scholars believe that Garvey had stepped into the black world at possibly the right moment as this was the time when racial discrimination was the norm of the day and black soldiers even after fighting for America were treated with humiliation and hatred.

Bob Marley recorded a Reggae song about the soldiers nicknamed as "Buffalo Soldiers" who fought during the First and Second World War representing

America. The song was written by Bob Marley and Noel Williams. Even though it was recorded in 1978, the song didn't appear until 1983. As far as the Etymology of the title 'Buffalo Soldier' is concerned, it comes from the 'Cheyenne Warriors' which translates into "wild buffalo". The term became synonymous with all the African American regiments in 1866. Marley sings;

Buffalo soldier, dreadlock Rasta
There was a buffalo soldier in the heart of America
Stolen from Africa, brought to America
Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival.
If you know your history
Then you would know where you coming from
Then you wouldn't have to ask me
Who the heck do I think I am?
I am just a buffalo soldier in the heart of America
Stolen from Africa, brought to America. (1978)

In this song Bob Marley highlights that one must be aware of one's history as the knowledge of one's past is essential to from the present. 'Buffalo Soldiers' and their history and identity certainly share a close alliance with Africa. According to Marley, this association must be acknowledged. After all Buffalo soldiers had been stolen from Africa and brought to America. What Marley says in this song is precisely what Marcus Garvey said to the black world. He wanted the black men to reclaim their past and identity which were denied to them by the powerful empires of colonizers. Garvey conveyed the dream of 'One God, One aim and One destiny'. After the first UNIA international convention of the Negro of the world which took place in 1920, a new wave of black unity could be felt. It seemed that Garvey had arrived and his dream was soon going to turn into a reality. After this convention a new phrase became an important part of popular black imagination and the phrase was 'Africa for Africans, those at home and those abroad'. It is interesting that 'land' is considered to be one of

the signifiers to represent one's identity. Perhaps that is the reason that when Europeans attempted to colonize any nation they first marked the land with their colonial symbols so that the purity of land representing a particular race could be contaminated. Garvey in his poem "Africa for Africans" writes;

Say! Africa for Africans,
Like America for the Americans:
This the rallying cry for a nation,
Be it in peace or revolution.
Blacks are men, no longer cringing fools;
They demand a place, not like weak tools;
But among the world of nations great
They demand a free self-governing state.
Many kingdoms have been truly reared
On the bones of Blackmen, facts declared;
History tells this awful, pungent truth,
Africa awakes to her rights forsooth.
Blackmen's hands have joined now together,
They will fight and brave all death's weather,
Motherland to save, and make her free,
Spreading joy for all to live and see.
Blackmen shall in groups reassemble,
Rich and poor and the great and humble:
Justice shall be their rallying cry,

When millions of soldiers pass us by.¹⁰

Even though UNIA members were growing in number and Garvey's movement was gaining a massive popularity and acceptance, there were people who were not really in agreement with the way his movement and his ideologies were shaping up and one of these people was W. E. B. DuBois. Both Garvey and DuBois were Pan-Africanists who were fighting for the freedom and redemption of African people but they would hardly converse with each other over the issue of black race. Many Pan African leaders including DuBois believed that Garvey was too overt in his speeches and many of his remarks were highly provocative. Garvey was of the belief that even if blood needs to be shed to remove whites from the African land then it is not an unreasonable proposition. Du Bois accepted that Garvey had an overarching vision and he was quite determined to achieve it but at the same time he was stubborn, dictatorial, and authoritarian. Garvey and his movement had a short life in America as he was charged with a case of misusing the mails which took him to a Federal prison and soon he was deported to Jamaica. On the other hand, the Garvey movement began to decline with the end of Harlem Renaissance. However, Garvey was still considered to be the national hero in Jamaica. Reggae singer Peter Tosh composed a song echoing the sentiments of Garvey in his song titled "African";

Don't care where you come from
As long as you are a black man, you are an African
No mind your nationality
You have got the identity of an African.
Cause if you come Trinidad
You are an African
And if you come from Nassau
You are an African

¹⁰ <http://u.osu.edu/gordon.3/files/2012/06/Appendix-VI1.pdf>

And if you come from Cuba, you are an African.

So don't care where you come from

As long as you are a black man, you are an African

No mind your complexion

There is no rejection, you are an African. (1977)

To conclude, one could say that Marcus Garvey did gain a huge support from the black world as many people did believe in his policy of creating a world for Africans which will be ruled by Africans alone. However, there were many who called Garvey a fascist because of his strong assertion towards creating the black world at any cost. Some found his ways to be violent as his hatred towards white people was quite apparent and he actually believed that violence could be one of the means to decolonize the African land. One more problem which I felt with Marcus Garvey and his Pan-African movement was that it is simple to opine that all Africans will belong to one land which will have one unified identity however, one must realise that Africa has multiplicity of dialects, languages, customs, traditions etc. thus to force unidimensional identity over the diverse inhabitants of Africa is indeed an act of both violation and violence. Despite these contradictions Garvey's popularity didn't recede in Jamaica. There are Reggae songs about Garvey which are sung even now in Jamaica and one person who contributed immeasurably to spread the views of Garvey through Reggae music in Jamaica is Bob Marley. He wasn't just another Reggae performer, Bob Marley was an institution in itself therefore whenever he sang the Jamaicans did pay attention to what he was trying to convey through his music. The next chapter will solely focus on this singer and analyse how Marley became a symbol of dissent worldwide. Moreover, the next chapter will also attempt to analyse how Bob Marley from a revolutionary became a commodity in popular culture. What happened to the legacy of Bob Marley once his persona took over his words?

Chapter Four

Being and Becoming: Political Violence and Its Impact on the World and Words of Bob Marley

From a youth of ghetto
To the world artist
It has been a long journey
Journey full of struggle and pain
That turned into a hope to claim.
The right to perform and sing
Sing for freedom and joy
That can fight violence and rude boy.
Trench Town, a reality of our lives
Lives of poverty and bleakness
That didn't remain our weakness

Weakness we turned into Reggae

And painted the world with sound

Sound that will hit but never hurt¹. (Composition mine)

Bob Marley has been one of those iconic figures who does not need any introduction. His music is followed by many all over the world. His songs have been covered by different artists at different occasions. He is considered to be a performer who brought Reggae to an international platform. The journey of Bob Marley is as fascinating as the expedition of Reggae. In fact one cannot really analyse Marley without keeping Reggae in consideration or vice versa. Initially, I did not want to consecrate an entire chapter to Bob Marley as I consciously wanted to avoid any attempt which may give the impression that Bob Marley's role in proliferation of Reggae is acknowledged more in comparison to other artists. However, it has become a norm that whenever the name of Reggae is mentioned then one figure which dominates everyone's psyche more often than not is indeed Bob Marley. It is a fact that Marley who was born in a poor family appreciated music from the very young age and for him music was not one of the means to gain popularity. He was just another boy in the neighbourhood who used music as an apparatus to express his views and ideas. The more I tried to avoid to write a chapter on Marley the more problematic it became to overlook as I was inquisitive to examine the epistemology of Marley's persona and analyse how he is perceived as a figure of synonymity with Reggae even today? This chapter will look into the domain of Reggae as a protest music and Bob Marley as a symbol of dissent. Through his songs Marley questioned the Jamaican government, politicians and their biased policies. Marley in fact became the voice of those who were afraid to raise their own voice against the powerful regimes. What is the reason that Marley continues to remain a popular figure even now? Moreover, does the popularity which Marley receive act as an obstacle in conveying his philosophy of love, peace and equality? This chapter will further look into the political violence of Jamaica and its effect on Bob Marley and other Reggae

¹ The last line of this poem is inspired from Bob Marley's song 'Trench Town Rock' (1971). The song starts with the line "One good thing about music, when it hits you feel no pain/so hit me with music, hit me with music now".

artists. How the clash between PNP and JLP changed the landscape of Reggae in Jamaica?

Bob Marley was of mixed race as he was born to a black Jamaican mother, Cedella Malcolm and a white Jamaican father, Norval Sinclair Marley. Irrespective of the race Marley belonged to, his music represented various factions of society. There was a sense of universality in his music which connected people across race, class, and gender. The universal nature of his music convinced those as well who initially thought that Bob Marley was just a street singer who did not deserve any admiration or appreciation. Marley grew up in West Kingston ghetto of Jamaica. Even though Kingston was the capital of Jamaica but West Kingston was a different world altogether. It had no resemblance with the poster image of Jamaica which is promoted by the government to entice people from other countries for the purpose of tourism. West Kingston ghetto was filled with tin and wood shacks and life was quite a challenge. If this was not enough, violence was quite rampant in the ghetto in fact it was a common practice and Bob Marley spent a major part of his childhood surrounded by violence. What really fascinates me is that Marley learnt as well as taught the lessons of love, peace, and harmony being within the dominion which was full of turbulence.

However, an event took place in the year 1938 which changed the socio-political landscape of Jamaica. Prior to 1938, there was a sense of economic stability in Jamaica because of sugar and banana plantations which provided a living to most of its inhabitants. Even people who belonged to the working class didn't have to struggle a lot to persist because of these industries. Cane cutters strike of 1938 proved to be fatal as it gave birth to Jamaican trade unions and out of these unions emerged the two major political parties of Jamaica: Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) and People's National Party (PNP). One of the reasons of the strike was the Great Depression of the 1930s which created a mayhem in the whole world. With reference to the Caribbean, migration stopped and migration policies led to the deportation of many. One must realise that migration was one of the important aspects of Jamaican economy because of its sugar industries. Nonetheless, Depression brought poverty which made labourers fight to uplift their degrading lives hence they started to demand more wage and many joined the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union.

Alexander Bustamante was the founder of JLP and the first Prime Minister of Jamaica from 1962-1967. The emergence of trade union created a threat to the established structures of colonial authority in Jamaica. Colonizers were not delighted with labourers raising their voice in order to claim their rights. British colonial empire used coercion to gain power over the leaders of the trade unions by arresting many of them. Union leaders were prohibited from making any political speech in public as there was an assumption that politically motivated rhetoric might instigate the common republic of Jamaica. Moreover, British colonizers were familiar with the reality that PNP represented the Jamaican working class as well as rural and urban peasants and Michael Manley of PNP was subversive in his approach hence the colonial institutions gave the responsibility to JLP which was pro-British and in favour of Anglo-Jamaicans and mercantile class to prevent PNP from gaining any support from the common Jamaicans.

PNP and JLP have been controlling the Jamaican government since the 1940s. Moreover, multiple cases of corruption have taken place amongst both the parties which further translates into the disillusionment of Jamaican people from the modules of governance. People who were underprivileged and belonged to the working class suffered the most because of these constant incidents of venality. Political parties showed support for poor under the pretence of constructing low concrete units in west Kingston, known as government yard. Many Reggae artists including Bob Marley have referred to the government yard in their songs by the name of 'Trench Town' as it was commonly called. Trench Town has a distinct place in the history of Reggae music as many artists such as Bunny Wailer, Peter Tosh, Bob Marley, Delroy Wilson, and Adina Edwards etc. came from the streets of this town. On one side Trench Town is known for its poverty, unemployment, political and gang violence. On the other hand, it is acknowledged all over the world as the birthplace of Reggae. The lanes of Trench Town are full of signifiers such as statues, sculptures, and graffiti signifying the historical importance of the town. It is quite interesting to observe that many forms of music such as jazz, blues, rap and of course Reggae came out of the ghettos. In my opinion, music can be a source to provide some sense of sanity in the midst of chaos, violence and hopelessness and this is what Reggae music did to the people of Trench Town. It provided them with a ray of hope to dream or imagine a better world which is not fraudulent, the world in which the poor could imagine to be happy.

Kevon Rhiney and Romain Cruse in their article “Trench Town Rock: Reggae Music, Landscape Inscription, and the Making of Place in Kingston, Jamaica” write;

Trench Town, formerly known as Trench Pen, was a thirty-three-acre cattle estate located near downtown Kingston. Although it is a common misconception that the name “Trench” was derived from the large open sewer that runs through the middle of the community, Trench Town obtained its name in the late 18th century after its owner James Trench, a prominent Irish immigrant who at the time, was utilising the vast area of land to rear livestock.

During the mid-1960s, new housing units had started to crop up in Trench Town and many of these units were allotted to the political supporters of whichever party was in power. The phenomenon of illegally assigning the housing units continued for many years. But this practice eventually led to violence which erupted between the supporters of both the political parties and this violence continued till 1990s. There is no doubt in stating that many ghetto youths lost their lives in enumerable episodes of violence. Moreover, concrete units in Trench Town started to deteriorate because of political and gang conflicts.

Jamaican/Black Politics and Its Impact on Bob Marley

It is essential to look into the sphere of political and gang clashes which have been an important part of the formation process of Jamaican Government. During the 1960s many gangs were encouraged by the political parties to defend local constituencies at the cost of violence. Garrison form of mobilisation was created by the politicians and this form had a deep impact on the inhabitants of Trench Town. Gangs would indulge in a lot of illegal activities such as drugs and crime but political parties will keep quite as during elections gangs’ assistance would normally be required. As a result, gangs started to become powerful and local political leaders soon lost control upon these

illegitimate formations. Once it happened, gangs became all the more assertive in their violent approach. More often than not the thin line between the gang violence and political violence got blurred in Jamaica. For instance the violence related to the 1938 labour movement of Jamaica is suspected to be fuelled by the state and its policy of repression.

K. W. J. Post in his article “The Politics of Protest in Jamaica, 1938: Some Problems of Analysis and Conceptualization” writes about different groups which participated in the labour movement. Groups such as Public Works Department labourers and The Dockers were as involved as the workers at sugar estates. However, it is interesting that many clerks, shop assistants did not partake in the movement despite the fact that many of them were abused and paid poorly. One of the reasons of their disassociation could be the blindness which many clerks had imbibed towards their exploitation. They didn’t want to address their problems as by virtue of addressing the problem they would be associated with the category of the labourers which was not acceptable to many of them. (377) Post also looks at the binary of rebellion vs revolution with regard to the labour movement. He articulates;

I would distinguish a rebellion from a revolution along two main lines. First, rebels accept the prevailing social values...what they are seeking to do, in fact, restore those values- or, more accurately, an idealised version of them- maintaining that they have been flouted. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, assert against existing values a counter consciousness of values of its own. Second, rebels do not seek major structural change: they desire either minor adjustments, or else that the system should work in the idealized fashion which its own ideology suggests that it should. Revolutionaries believe that their ultimate aims in term of their new values can only be achieved if existing structures are destroyed and rebuilt...the aims of revolutionaries are likely to be far more clearly articulated than those of rebels. (388)

With reference to the labour movement, it began as an act of rebellion and soon became a revolution when the state machineries failed to bring any structural change. Since, the state could not bring any reform, violence became the only device to answer the questions of the protestors. On the other hand, Alexander Bustamante

and Michael Manley were on the verge of being called the failed leaders. In the 1940s, a series of violent confrontations took place between the supporters of PNP and JLP. This was the time when everybody in Jamaica realised that violence and politics had become two parts of the same coin. It had become impossible to avoid violence. It was everywhere from dance parties, streets, political gatherings, to campaigns. Politicians were being killed in the broad day light if they were seen in the constituency of the opposite party. In fact, Michel Manley himself was fired upon once when he was attending a PNP rally. Violence was changing everything in Jamaica including Reggae music and this violence was soon to knock at the door of Bob Marley too. Violence could no longer be seen as something which was peripheral to Jamaican politics because the parties relied on local gangs to disrupt the election process and many other events.

Another major problem with Jamaican politics is the treatment of political leaders by their supporters. Leaders are never questioned by anyone. Such a treatment is quite threatening as there have been cases of manipulation of the grass root supporters. The ghetto youths have been politicised by using narratives of distortion and fabrication. Such a situation may lead to fascism which can certainly damage a nation in multiple ways and the most shocking part is that the leaders don't even contemplate twice before stating in their rhetoric the usage of violence and muscle power to propagate control and authority. For instance, in 1965 a monument was being erected in the memory of Paul Bogle² at National Heroes park and during the ceremony Edward Seaga of JLP, who was the Minister of Development and Warfare at that time challenged PNP workers openly and acknowledged in public that if any problem is created by PNP then gangs will be brought in from West Kingston to deal with any opposition. I objectively ruminate that when violence has been so intrinsic to Jamaica and its formation then why weren't the tropes of violence curbed when the

² Paul Bogle was born in 1822 and was a supporter of George William Gordon who was a Jamaican businessman, magistrate and a politician. Bogle led a protest march in 1865 to fight poverty and injustice. The protest proved to be a violent confrontation with the people who were in power as nearly five hundred people were killed and many were flogged and punished. Bogle himself was captured and hanged for his act in 1865. His protest did bring a change as policies were introduced for the betterment of poor people. In 1969, he was recognized as the National hero of Jamaica. In Jamaican popular culture, Bogle has been addressed by many. There are Reggae songs by Bob Marley and Burning Spear which mention Bogle. Moreover, Dancehall performer Gerald Lely's stage name was Bogle.

trade unions came into existence? On one side these unions were protesting against the colonisers and their brutal ways of subjugation but on the other side they continued with the analogous violent legacy of colonizers. The hope to create a better world turned into a nightmare. In fact, Jamaica became explicitly violent because of the greed for power amongst the political parties. The second point which is highly unsettling is politicians flaunting their alliance with gangs overtly. In such a situation gangs tend to become political in the most apolitical way possible as they get a license to indulge in unlawful activities under the disguise of law. In such a scenario, there is a possibility of a role reversal whereby a politician may act like a gang leader and a gang member the other way around. It is believed that political violence, began in the 1960s with the rise in gun violence and threat, became a symbol of power for many politicians.

Robert Paul Wolff in his article “On Violence” delves into the spheres of politics and violence whereby Wolff states that the concept of violence is highly confusing as it can only be understood by understanding the notion of legal authority but then to define legal authority is another challenge because it is inherently incoherent. To define ‘legal authority’ with regard to Jamaican politics will be all the more laborious as the assimilation of gangs in the mainstream politics has blurred the line between legal and illegal. Wolff further introduces the principle of ‘de facto authority’ which refers to;

The ability to get one’s authority claims accepted by those against whom they are asserted...de facto authority is the principal means on which states rely to carry out their decisions. Threats and inducements play an exceedingly important role in the enforcement of political decisions, to be sure, but a state that must depend upon them entirely will very soon suffer a crippling reduction in its effectiveness, which is to say, in its political power.
(604)

Wolff’s model of analysing power and authority can be applied upon Jamaican politics as many politicians from Jamaica as a matter of fact believed that it was easy to rule if people were threatened and intimidated as the tools of threat were often adopted by them to enforce their political decisions. Moreover, underprivileged

people were so petrified by all the violence around, they hardly raised their voice against any kind of oppression or corruption. Violence wasn't limited to one part of the city. For instance, PNP had formed a group called 'Group 69' to protect its members against the wrath of JLP in the Tivoli Gardens District³ and most of the members of 'Group 69' were unemployed youth and for many violence was a way of earning a livelihood. Moreover, it was quite ironical of PNP and JLP to announce that they were against violence when violence continued as it is. For instance, local gunmen would be hired by politicians for their safety and security and they would be granted with enough freedom to act in case of any hazard. These unsurmountable conflicts clearly had an impact on Trench Town. The units constructed by the government were abandoned by people and many more turned into debris. Investors too moved away from this town because the risk factor was too high.

However, one thing which didn't move away was Reggae music. One could still hear diverse Reggae tunes coming from different corners of the town. It is a fact that amongst corruption, poverty, and negligence from the government; Reggae became one of the avenues to seek a life with some kind of an economic stability and for many it became a significant device to move out of the ghetto as well as a tool of distraction from violence. Hannah Arendt in her book *On Violence* articulates about terminologies of power and violence in relation to history and politics. As far as the discourse of power is concerned, Arendt opines that power cannot be considered to be the property of an individual as it belongs to a group and it exists as long as the group decides to be together. On violence she writes that it is adjacent to strength and it has the capability to destroy power. Moreover, violence has become normative to human affair and the normativity of it can be a sign of worry for a social structure. Arendt writes;

No one engaged in thought about history and politics can remain unaware of the enormous role violence has always played in human affairs, and it is at first glance rather surprising that violence has been singled out so seldom for special consideration. This shows to what an extent violence and its

³ Tivoli Gardens is a political garrison which is situated in West Kingston, Jamaica. It was developed between 1963 and 1965 by demolishing the area of the Rastafarian settlement. Tivoli Gardens continues to be a poverty stricken area which suffers from drug trafficking and social fermentation. This neighbourhood has seen enumerable confrontations between gunmen and Jamaican authorities.

arbitrariness were taken for granted and therefore neglected; no one questions or examines what is obvious to all. Anybody looking for some kind of sense in the records of the past was almost bound to see violence as a marginal phenomenon. (110)

However, it was impossible to see violence as a marginal phenomenon with regard to Kingston and its ghettos. In 1966 there were so many cases of violence in Jamaica that a state of emergency had to be declared and in 1967, a huge quantity of arms and explosives were found at JLP headquarters. James Ewart in his documentary titled “Trench Town: The Forgotten Land” highlights the issue of senseless violence and its severe impact on the people of Trench Town specially the school kids. For instance, ‘Trench Town Comprehensive High School’ borders the JLP and PNP sections which means school children can become the victim of local gangs and their disputes at any given moment. Many young boys who choose not to go to school are often lured by the local gangs promising a life of luxury and comfort without working hard. Therefore, many such boys join gangs and they are rewarded with guns and weapons. The moment these boys acquire guns they feel a sense of achievement and power.

Ewart narrates that Trench Town is one of the most dangerous places in the world. There are gun battles almost every day. The sound of gun fire has become an intrinsic part of people’s life and psyche. The ghetto inhabitants prefer to be inside their shacks after evening as a walk at night in the streets can be fatal. Ewart calls this ghetto the forgotten land which is dominated by the culture of revenge. The Government is aware regarding where the expensive weapons and explosives come from in this extremely poor town as described by a few individuals in the film but politicians choose to ignore gangs. They don’t want to take any action against them because during elections gangs can promise votes. It is like the people of this ghetto are caught up in a vicious cycle of agony and to find an exit point out of the cycle is close to impossible. People can’t even report about gangs to the government authorities because no one trusts the police or the government. Horace Campbell in his article “Jamaica: The Myth of Economic Development and Racial Tranquility” talks about the paradox which Jamaica has become over the period of time. A deep

sense of hollowness which exists within Jamaica is often manipulated under the myth of Economical development. Campbell writes “Contrary to the commercials of the Jamaica Tourist Board that is of beautiful hostesses, tranquil beaches, and luxurious hotels the average Jamaican lives in abject poverty...the rich have been getting richer and more powerful, while the poor and unemployed sink deeper and deeper into poverty and despair” (16)

Despite all this, Bob Marley was engrossed with creating music. He was repulsed with the obscene amount of violence. He discerned that he had to create an image of a pertinacious man to survive in the streets. He in fact, composed a few songs on the phenomenon of rude boys too. The act of performing a persona is quite integral to the art of hip hop as well. Just like Reggae, rap too emerged out of the chaos of Bronx, a ghetto in New York City. Many rappers realised that the only way they could flourish in the lanes of Bronx was through a performance of being a rapper who is rugged and has close alliance with local gangs.

It is quite interesting to analyse that during the formative years of Bob Marley and the Wailers, America was going through a drastic transformation. Apart from the civil rights movement which became one of the most influential incidents of the 1960s, one more event which gathered attention all over the world was the Counterculture movement. It was an anti-establishment artistic phenomenon which questioned the rigid conventions of society. The movement started in Unites States and UK and soon it became revolutionary as a lot of young people apart from discussing the issues of sexuality, freedom, and women’s right had started to question the widespread military interference of America in Vietnam. The movement further gave birth to bohemianism and hippie culture.

Nonetheless, during the 1960s Bob Marley and The Wailers paid a close attention to the civil rights movement which was going to change the course of history in United States for ever. History is full of narratives and testimonies representing the social and racial segregation which Blacks had to face in America. For a long time blacks didn’t have even a right to vote. They were denied both education and employment on the basis of their colour. Organisations such as National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Congress of Racial Equality were formed to resist the biased white hegemony and supremacy.

Even though the non-violent civil rights movement brought legislative changes but in practice discrimination continued as it is. Around this time, the Black Power Movement came into existence. It was a political movement and its primary aim was to render a sense of power amongst the blacks. Under this movement, various forms of activism including both violent and peaceful were practiced to attain black empowerment. Bob Marley and The Wailers began identifying with the movement in United States. Soon all the band members got rid of their dreadlocks and styled their hair as Afro. Significantly during the civil rights movement, many black Americans had decided to wear large Afro as a site of resistance. Moreover, the act of wearing Afro was to send the message across that blacks are proud of their appearance and undoubtedly they don't want to succumb to Eurocentric classifications of beauty.

Kobena Mercer in the article "Black Hair/Style Politics" talks about the art of hair styling and the multiple meanings which are associated with this practice. The choice of a Rasta to keep dreadlock or afro can both be individual and social. The question which one needs to raise is why do people even care for hair styling? Can hair-keeping be a significant symbol of meaning? Mercer writes; "From a perspective informed by theoretical work on subcultures, black people of the African diaspora have developed distinct patterns of style across a range of practices music, speech, dance...which are politically intelligible as creative responses to the experience of oppression and dispossession." (34) Even though hair is a biological fact, yet it goes through a continuous process of change within a social structure over the period of time. The act of shaping and re-shaping hair may signify the cultural practices within which meanings and values are attached to it. Just like the colour of skin, one's hair too was viewed within the binaries of superiority v/s inferiority.

It is needless to guesstimate that African hair (Afro/Dreadlocks) was considered to be antithetical to the idea of beauty and aestheticism. It is also essential to mention that African hair historically has been devalued. The phrase 'nigger hair' was quite common in usage amongst the Europeans to refer to too curly, woolly, and tough hair. It is quite interesting to see how meaning changes in different social contexts. For instance, historically in sub-Saharan African communities, dense and thick hair was admired to a great extent. Grooming of hair was an important constituent of daily life as groomed hair would be a symbol of rank, status, identity,

ethnicity, wealth etc. However during the period of slavery, hair grooming was the least of concern amongst the slaves. There were no avenues to clean hair. While some slaves would recourse to kerosene to disinfect their hair, many would be forced to shave off their hair altogether. It is an established fact that there was a clear sense of hierarchy between the house slaves and field slaves. House slaves were more privileged. For instance field slaves would work in harsh weather conditions for long hours and use hats to protect their shaved head from the sun. On the other hand, house slaves at times wore wigs imitating their masters. The power structure between the groups of slaves could also be noticed by analysing how they managed their hair. Moreover, the act of forcing Africans to shave off their hair was a degrading ritual. Enslavers knew quite well that in Africa bald-headedness represented the state of loss following the death of a family member or a close acquaintance.

In the 1960s and 1970s people like Angela Davis, Assata Shakur, Elaine Brown, and The Jackson Five attempted to engage with the discourse of black pride by keeping Afro. Both Elaine Brown and Assata Olugbala Shakur had an association with Black Panther Party and as far as The Jackson Five is concerned, it was an American music group which was formed in 1963 under the name the Jackson Brothers. This was one of the first Black American music groups to witness crossover following. Apart from music, one more thing which was common amongst all the five brothers was their afro hair and many followed their style. Jackson brothers played a significant role in popularising afro which was looked down upon by the Europeans. On the other hand, Twinkle Brothers, a Jamaican Reggae band which was formed by Norman and Ralston Grant in 1962 composed a song about not using a comb and letting the hair grow into dreads. The song titled “Since I throw the Comb Away” (1980) highlights the plight of people with long dreads and how they were treated like outcasts both by society and family. I fail to understand the paradoxical nature of Jamaican society as on one side violence, gangs, guns were criticized and frowned upon and on the contrary if a person decided to follow the non-violent beliefs of Rastafarianism even then the society in general got disconcerted. Twinkle Brothers attempt to address this dilemma and sense of ambivalence in their song;

Since I throw the comb away

My mommy don't wanna see me no more,

My papa say don't come at the house no more.

I used to be the pride of the family,

But now I'm the black sheep.

Since I throw the comb away

I got fired from my job last Monday,

For no reason at all.

The bossman called me to his office

And gives me a two weeks' pay, and say:

You throw the comb away

There is no vacancy for you today,

So you better pack your things,

And leave, he say.

So I told him,

That I got my qualification.

I am a hardworking man,

Why this victimization?

Is it because I am a Rastaman? (1980)

Hair indeed became an essential device to protest not only in Jamaica but in America as well. The most remarkable aspect of this practice of dissent was that afro and dreads were non-normative in their nature and their acceptance could create a rupture. Probably this is why state machineries tried to suppress these alternative modes of expression and resistance as much as they could and it was this suppression which gave birth to civil rights movement in America. The movement was a product of the helplessness of the blacks as they wanted to live a life of respectfulness. However, a militant turn emanated in civil rights movement when working class

Negro came in full support of Black Power movement. Philip G. Altbach in the article “Black Power and the US Civil Rights Movement” writes;

Black power is the result of a desire for effective political power for Negroes and a conviction that Negroes must be self-reliant if they are to achieve their justified place in American society. Much of the press has labelled the new concept as “anti-white”. It seems fairly clear that this is incorrect, except insofar as Negroes are no longer willing to rely on whites for their political emancipation, and find it necessary to achieve their freedom, in both political and economic terms on their own. (234)

A lot of people were apprehensive over the philosophy of Black Power movement especially after the formation of Black Panther Party. Originally called the ‘Black Panther Party for Self-Defence’ was a Black Nationalist and Socialist organization which was active in America from 1966 to 1982. Black Panther Party did not shy away from using violence to achieve its objectives. In the 1970s, the movement grew really violent and because of which many people dissociated themselves from the movement. For Black Panthers violence was one of the means to achieve one’s right and freedom. I believe their aggression and assertiveness came out of the suffering of blacks. However, the impact of their movement could be felt as far as the Caribbean where a group of socialists formed the Black Power Revolution to bring socio-economic change primarily in Trinidad and Tobago. The Black Power Revolution was also known as 1970 Revolution, Black Power Uprising and February Revolution. Nevertheless, one person central to the civil rights movement was Martin Luther King, Jr. and the speech which he made on 28th August, 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington D.C. categorically influenced Marley and his group members. Just to quote a few lines from the speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. said;

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, “When will you be satisfied?” We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can

never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: “For Whites Only”. We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. (1963)⁴

Both Bob Marley and Martin Luther King Jr. were completely against violence unlike the Black Panther Party. The issues of black unity and equality which were raised at Washington D.C. had been highlighted upon through music by Marley as well. This particular speech deepened Marley’s understanding of what Blacks had been going through in America. In fact, Bob Marley went to Delaware in 1966 to earn money so that he could start his own recording studio in Jamaica. Marley could not tolerate the exploitation his band had been facing which is why he thought of recording his own songs. Marley stayed in Delaware for seven months with his mother who had left Jamaica in 1962 to seek economic permanency. Marley did many odd jobs in America and in his free time he would play guitar and write new songs. Delaware has a rich colonial history as many English colonial settlers came to this place. The colonial empire was primarily based on tobacco plantation. Africans slaves would be made to work for long hours on tobacco fields and the line between the African slaves and labourers would be amorphous. America and its history had some effect on Marley as he became more assertive in his music after moving back to Jamaica. However, Cedella wasn’t very happy with Marley’s choice to leave America. She was afraid that Marley would become an aimless Rasta in Jamaica.

Bob Marley: From an International Star to a Symbol of Dissent

This section of the chapter will look into how Marley became a global representative of Reggae and how he emerged as the source of inspiration for the people of Trench Town who lived amidst poverty and hopelessness. Moreover, this part will also touch

⁴ <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm>

upon the issue of Marley being a symbol of dissent as he voiced his concern for multiple issues through his songs. Music has been a strong tool to protest and question and Marley used this tool to its entirety. Marley composed song addressing the number of issues such as; political violence, hunger, poverty, Trench town, Jamaican history, Rasta philosophy and so on.

Nonetheless, Bob Marley came back to Kingston in October, 1966 to pick up the thread he left behind and he exactly did what Cedella dreaded the most. Marley grew his hair and soon he had dreadlocks. In 1968 a catastrophe took place when Peter, a member of Bob Marley and the Wailers, was arrested for taking part in a street protest against the Jamaican government and its policies. If this wasn't enough, Bob and Bunny too were jailed for marijuana possession. Not to sound very defensive, it is important to take note that during this time the group was going through the phase of exploring Rastafarianism and for Rastas, marijuana was a medium to reach the transcendental state of existence and purity. Marley eventually embraced Rastafari religion and it had an effect on other Wailers too. Paprocki in "The Rasta Influence" writes; "Marley's embrace of Rastafari brought about the full flowering of his artistry, helping him order his understanding of his individual identity, the nature of Jamaican society, and perhaps even the very meaning of earthly existence." (55)

Bob Marley and The Wailers were indeed becoming certain about their identity but financial stability was still a problem. The band had recorded multiple songs but financially the situation remained the same. During one of the Rasta gatherings Bob Marley met Johnny Nash, an American singer and song-writer who is best known for his song "I Can See Clearly Now" (1972). Johnny Nash was one of the first non-Jamaican singers to explore the terrain of Jamaican music by recording Reggae music in Kingston. Bob Marley used to be the centre of attraction at Rasta gatherings as he would sing songs one after another on his acoustic guitar. Nash and his manager Danny Sims realised the worth of Marley and signed him as a songwriter and singer. Both Johnny Nash and Sims had started a record in 1964 call JoDa named after them but it proved to be a failure. During this time, Caribbean was emerging as a destination of multiple sounds which invited a lot of attention. Keeping this in mind, Nash and Sims soon opened a record label named 'Cayman Music label' in the

Cayman Islands. From the business point of view it was cheaper to make records in the Caribbean in comparison to America. This music duo realised that they could make a considerable amount of money by exporting Jamaican beats to the rest of the world. Moreover, after signing Bob Marley things started to fall in place. The Wailers were quite enthusiastic about this collaboration as Nash and Sims wanted to promote the band on an International level. Soon after the release of Bunny from jail in 1968, the band recorded more than eighty singles with Cayman Music. Songs as “Mellow Mood”, “How Many Times”, “There She goes”, “Put It On” etc. were accepted quite well. These songs fell into the category of Rocksteady but none of the songs hint anything about the fact that one day the band would be known for disseminating the beliefs of Rastafarianism. Even after recording so many singles the band could not achieve a sense of artistic and economic certainty hence the band decided to move on and eventually formed a relation with Lee Perry, this association proved to be seminal for Bob Marley. Finally Marley could sing and write songs with freedom which was denied to him so far. The freedom of expression which Marley accomplished could be seen in his songs too. As far as Lee Perry is concerned, he is a Jamaican music producer who had a keen interest in the intricacies of sound. Perry was born in poverty and he moved to Kingston to pursue music. Perry was also known as ‘Scratch’ because he believed in the philosophy of starting things from the beginning. He is credited as one of the people who played an essential role in carving out a new sound for Jamaica which was known as Reggae.

Perry had Jamaica’s most sought after instrumental group called Upsetters formed by Aston and Carlton Barrett in his employ and he wanted to disturb the sound of Jamaica by making Upsetters and The Wailers record together. Aston Barrett known as ‘Family Man’ played bass and Carlton had a great sense of time and together the brothers/Upsetters proved to be the backbone of The Wailers. During the late 1969 and early 1970s the Barrett brothers and the Wailers created classics like “Duppy Conqueror” and “Mr. Brown”. At the beginning of 1970s, Bob Marley launched his own record label named ‘Tuff Gong’ with a hope to address issues with a sense of independence and objectivity but unfortunately the new label failed. Nonetheless, during the early 1970s, The Wailers and Perry recorded songs such as “Kaya”, “Lively up Yourself” and “400 Years”. These songs represented the deep understanding of music which both Perry and the Wailers had achieved by now.

Moreover, these songs gave the message of living a life with a purpose. For instance Marley in “Lively up Yourself” says; “Lively up yourself and don’t be a drag”. In 1971 one more song on Trench Town was released by Marley titled “Trench Town Rock” which put the Wailers on Jamaican chart. David V. Moskowitz in his book *Bob Marley: A Biography* writes; “

The success of “Trench Town Rock” created a great demand for the Wailers around the island. It also marked the end to song writing that was not of substance. Also, for the first time the Wailers made significant money from one of their hits. With Bob’s share, Bob and Rita established a record shop where they sold Wailers releases. (Soon) followed another period of productivity that produced songs such as “Satisfy My Soul”, “Natural Mystic”, “Concrete Jungle” and “Reggae on Broadway.” (19)

In the 1970s, Reggae witnessed international popularity as Bob Marley made an international breakthrough with his song “No Woman No Cry” from the album *Natty Dread*. Marley instead of being preachy simply portrayed a picture of his surroundings by highlighting the issue of hypocrisy and the way people live in the ghetto. Marley articulates about cooking cornmeal porridge through the night as this is all people could afford to consume as impecuniousness was rampant in Trench Town. Marley sings;

I remember when we used to sit
In the government yard in Trench Town
And then Georgie would make the fire lights
And it was logwood burning through the night
Then we would cook cornmeal porridge
Of which I will share with you
My feel is only my carriage
So I have got to push on through. (1975)

In this song Bob Marley has mentioned people who had been around for him when he chose to stay alone in Kingston after his mother Cedella just like many other Jamaicans had decided to immigrate to United States. Bob Marley was asked by his mother to come along as she was anxious about his future but Marley chose Reggae and the harsh life of ghetto over United States. One person who Bob Marley was really fond of was an old man George Headley Robinson referred as Georgie by everyone. Bob Marley would often visit Georgie, who was a fisherman and would stay back and sing the whole night. In the morning when Marley would wake up then Georgie would provide him with a cornmeal porridge. Marley would often spend time on his own with his guitar creating new sounds or writing songs. Many believe that Marley was a lonely child and music was one of the means through which he would express his feelings and emotions and there were few people who were close to Marley and Georgie was indeed one of them. He is remembered by Marley in the above mentioned lyrics. Georgie and Marley both were nurturers to each other in the solitude of Kingston. Georgie would nurture through food and Marley through music.

Sherry Beck Paprocki in *Bob Marley: Musician* writes about Kingston and how it evolved. One of the sections of the book titled “The Garden Parish” Paprocki writes; “Very few found Kingston to be the Promised Land. More often, it was called the “house of bondage” by the suffering inhabitants of Trench Town. The sites and names of the various West Kingston shantytowns give some indication of the quality of life there” (21)

Many residents called themselves ‘sufferers’ or ‘Israelites’. In Old Testament, the term ‘Israelites’ represents the exile of Jews into the wilderness from the holy land. The exile of Jews is associated with pain and suffering. Just like Jews, the people of Trench Town wanted an exit from the house of bondage. Despite life being really challenging in the ghetto, Marley didn’t leave the ray of hope and optimism. People who believed that nothing good could come out of the ghetto, were questioned by Marley in his song “Trench Town”;

Up a cane river to wash my dread;

Upon a rock I rest my head.

There I vision through the seas of oppression,

Don't make life a prison.
We come from Trench Town, Trench Town
Most of them come from Trench Town
We free the people with music
Can we free the people with music?
They say it's hard to speak;
They feel so strong to say we are weak;
But through the eyes the love of our people,
They've have got to repay.
They say, "Can anything good come out of Trench Town?"
That's what they say,
Say we are the underprivileged people,
So they keep us in chains,
Just because we come from Trench Town.

In this song Bob Marley elucidates about the segregation and prejudice people of Trench Town had to face. The line "we free the people with music" is thought-provoking as it can be read in multiple ways from numerous perspectives. The idea of freedom and liberation can be associated with people who resided in the ghetto as well as the ones who belonged to the so called respectable factions of Jamaican society. The word 'liberation' in present context can be seen as a signifier to represent the physical as well as the mental aspects of freedom. Thus, freedom in the true sense can be achieved not only by uplifting the life of 'sufferers' but also by rewriting the psyche of the people who believe that Trench Town is a black hole which only produces trash in the name of music. Moreover, the line "they keep us in chains" refer to the power relation within which the poor people were forced as well as conditioned to act like puppets in the hand of the powerful ones.

Another important event which took place in the history of Reggae was the arrival of radio transistor in Trench Town which I briefly talked about in the first chapter. One city which could be heard in Kingston through the radio was New Orleans which is a Louisiana city on the Mississippi River, near the Gulf of Mexico. New Orleans is a city of historical importance when it comes to blacks and their resistance against racial bigotry. It is one of the cities where slaves were allowed public spaces to gather and sing and this freedom to sing in public contributed a lot in the proliferation of music and art. Moreover, New Orleans is known as the city which gave birth to Jazz. Interestingly, when Bob Marley was yet to become a figure of recognition his teacher Joe Higgs who lived in a yard right behind Marley's advised him to listen to jazz to learn music. Joe Higgs was the other half of the singing duo Higgs and Wilson. In the 1960s Higgs had his share of success in the sphere of Jamaican music. However, Higgs chose not to follow the footsteps of other successful singers who left Trench Town rather he stayed back and turned his house into a music academy in which anyone from the ghetto could come to learn music. Many ghettos youths used to come to Higgs to learn music for free. Higgs's decision of teaching music was of great social significance as music was probably one of the best ways to confront hatred. Moreover, it worked as a distraction for people to focus upon beats and sound of harmony instead of joining gangs. Higgs is considered to be one of the finest singers of Jamaica and his teaching had a great effect on Marley and his music. As far as jazz is concerned, without getting into the history of the form, I would like to cite a quote from Martin Williams's book *The Jazz Tradition* in which he writes;

The high degree of individuality, together with the mutual respect and cooperation required in a jazz ensemble, carry with them philosophical implications...it is as if jazz were saying to us that not only is far greater individuality possible to man than he has so far allowed himself, but that such individuality, far from being a threat to a cooperative social structure, can actually enhance society. (18)⁵

⁵ Quoted in Nat Hentoff. *Jazz Is*. New York: Limelight Edition, 1992.

It is this sense of individuality which Bob Marley might have learnt from jazz. Furthermore, Marley played an essential role in changing the perception of people who perceived Reggae as a site of threat and conflict. Marley's music made people view Reggae as a form which could contribute in constructing a cooperative social structure. It was all the more essential to form a society which is based on a sense of commune and collectivism rather than individualism considering the exploitation of the powerless by the selective powerful ones. Through Reggae the world got to know about the socio-political reality of Jamaica.

Bob Marley came across many people at various points of his life who facilitated him achieve his goal of being a singer. One such person was Desmond Dekker who Bob met at a welding shop where they both used to work together. Apart from being a welder, Desmond Dekker was also a musician. One might think here that if Dekker was a musician they why was he working at a welding shop? The answer of this question lies in the exploitation of the artists by the recording studios. Many artists would not be paid for their work and some would be a given a meagre amount for recording a song which would not be enough for survival. Nonetheless, Dekker was connected to Jamaican recording industry which came as a blessing for Marley. Nobody thought that one day Marley will become one of the foremost voices to speak up for the marginalised and the oppressed sections of Jamaican society

Before Bob Marley became a known figure in the 1970s, he recorded many songs in the 1960s which were released without any publicity. It didn't prove to be a good idea for Bob Marley. Radio airplay paid hardly any attention hence these songs met with the state of obliviousness without creating any ripples on the surface of Jamaican music. Marley just like many other young Reggae singers of Trench Town found himself to be caught up in the vicious cycle of poverty. First unemployment was rampant and if a singer would get a chance to record a song after much trouble even then the state of destitution will prevail because studio owners didn't mind exploiting the young artists.

One more person who facilitated Bob Marley and the group in their music endeavour is Alvin Patterson who was a Rastafarian hand drummer. Patterson had a sound knowledge of music as he was a professional musician. He was acquainted with a person in Jamaican record industry who was as significant as Bob Marley and

The Wailers when it comes to Reggae and its expansion. The person was Clement Coxsone Dodd, who owned a recording studio which had primitive tools but that didn't dissuade the Reggae artists to come and practice for hours at the studio. In my opinion Coxsone Dodd's Studio One conveyed a sense of hope and confidence amongst the artists who were considered to be outcasts in Jamaican society.

While giving an audition at Studio One, one song which attracted Dodd's attention was "Simmer Down". This song was written by Bob Marley as a warm up song for the band. The phrase "Simmer down" basically means calm down. Marley had seen enough violence while growing up and he was somebody who detested violence in all forms. In this song Marley requests rude boys of the ghetto to control their anger as nothing constructive can be achieved out of anger and violence. Marley sings;

Simmer down, you looking too hot, so
Simmer down, soon you will get dropped, so
Simmer down, can you hear what I say?
Simmer down, that why won't you, why won't you
Why won't you simmer down?
Simmer down, oh control your temper
Simmer down, for the battle will be hotter
Simmer down, can you hear what I say?
Simmer down, oh that I am leaving you today (1963)

"Simmer down" saw a huge acceptance by the beginning of 1964. It was on top of all Jamaican charts. It is believed that the song wasn't just about the rude boys but it was as much about the band's inner dilemma because there was an acute desire within them to express a lot through their music but Bob Marley and The Wailers were not getting enough avenues to let their feelings flow. The band continued to record songs but somehow all the band members remained poor. Jimmy Cliff too recounts the days when he wasn't paid for singing. For instance, he recorded a song titled "Daisy Got

me Crazy” in 1962 for a Jamaican producer, Count Boysie for which he didn’t receive a penny. As it has been mentioned earlier that mistreatment of artists was the norm of the day and the easiest way to get fired was to ask for money or royalty.

Does this sense of ill-treatment remain restricted to artists or it moves beyond to the genre of music in general as well? Are we to believe that “entertainment apartheid”⁶ exists? Christopher John Farley in his book *Before the Legend: The Rise of Bob Marley* uses this term to define the covert segregation which exists in music. Farley writes;

Walk into a music store today, you will often find recordings by white artists clustered in one part of the store, and works by black artists in another. In music, segregation is expected and accepted. It has long been commonly assumed that whites and blacks make different kinds of music and listen to different kinds of music because they lead different kinds of lives. The reality was different. The exotic became erotic. Separation sparked desire. White fans constantly cross the color line to listen to music they were forbidden to listen to. Some white artists crossed the line to make the music they were supposed to be unable to make. Virtually every major genre of pop music born in the twentieth century- including blues, rock, and rap- has its roots in the black experience. In almost every case, the commercial superstar that emerged to represent the genre has been white. There is, however, one genre of pop music in which a black performer is widely considered, by both blacks and whites, to be its most iconic star. The music is Reggae and the artist is Bob Marley. He managed to break through racial constraints in a way that his black counterparts in other genres were unable to do...Just as he challenged color barriers in his life, he transcended them in his art. (36)

To correct John Farley, Bob Marley was not black as I had mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. His father, John Sinclair Marley was a white man who was born in UK in 1885. John Marley is hardly mentioned by Bob Marley in his

⁶ The term is used by Christopher John Farley in his book *Before the Legend: The Rise of Bob Marley*. 2007

interviews. He was this absent white father who Bob Marley didn't want to discuss much about. In fact, Marley was not proud of his white heritage at all. Somewhere there was a deep sense of resentment and embarrassment within Marley for his mixed racial background. Nevertheless, it is a truth that Marley challenged colour barricades through his music. For Marley it did not matter if there was any hierarchy in between white and black artists. For him, music was an avenue which did not know any boundaries and he wanted to use this avenue to reach out to as many people as possible.

One album which established Marley as a significant Reggae artist was "Catch a Fire" (1972). 'Catch a Fire' is a Jamaican phrase for someone who is in discomfort and trouble or going to get in some kind of a problem. The people of Jamaica could relate with the album as many of them were living a life of agony and suffering. In one of the songs from this album titled "No More Trouble" Marley sings about the need to put an end to the life which is full of trouble. Marley says that what people really need is love. Marley sings;

No we don't need, no more trouble

We don't need no trouble

Make love and not war! Cause we don't need no trouble

What we need is love

To guide and protect on us

If you hope good down from above

Help the weak if you are strong now

We don't need no trouble.

Furthermore, other songs of the album such as "Concrete Jungle", "Slave Driver", "Stop That Train", and "Stir it Up" added to the political and creative spirit of the band. Moreover, Judy Mowatt, Rita Marley, and Marcia Griffiths provided with additional vocals. Once the basic recording was done, Marley took the master tape to London for overdubbing and enhancing the technical aspect of the album.

Overdubbing is primarily a process which entails adding of new tracks to a recording which is already complete. This album was not a big commercial success yet it brought the Wailers to the mainstream. After this album, Marley earned a name for himself and he won't have had to do odd jobs to make a living. After the first full-length album, the band planned to travel to England and United States to perform. It is quite fascinating to observe that in the wake of the Wailers' success, Reggae music had created a great amount of curiosity amongst the youth of England and America. Bob Marley was no longer a ghetto boy. He as a matter of fact had become the voice of the deprived section of society. In fact, I will be exploring in detail how Reggae travelled to these two countries in my next chapter. After these international performances, Reggae was no longer the secret sound of Jamaica. Soon after "Catch a Fire", Bob Marley and the Wailers released "Burnin". This album was dedicated to Jamaican underclass. Songs such as "Get Up, Stand Up", "I Shot the Sheriff", "Burnin and Lootin" from the album were an appeal to the people of Jamaica to take matter in their own hands if they wanted to improve their lives as political parties and state apparatuses cared the least for them. The only time politicians used to show interest in ghettos was during election which Marley disliked as well as criticised a lot. In the song "I Shot the Sheriff" Marley narrates the story of a man who shoots a policeman in self-defence but the person is wrongly accused for killing the deputy. It was a common phenomenon to witness the harassment of Rastafari believers by the Jamaican police. At times, dreadlocks of the Rastafarians would be shaved off forcibly by the state machineries in the name of law and order. Rastafarians were highly critical of this act of coercion. Nevertheless Marley sings;

I shot the sheriff

But I didn't shoot no deputy

All around in my hometown

They are trying to track me down;

They say they want to bring me in guilty

For the killing of a deputy

For the life of a deputy.

But I say:
I shot the sheriff
But I swear it was in self-defence
Sheriff John Brown always hated me
For what I don't know
Every time I plant a seed
He said kill it before it grow
He said kill them before they grow.
I say: I shot the sheriff- oh, Lord!
And they say it is a capital offence
Freedom came my way one day
And I started out of town!
All of a sudden I saw Sheriff John Brown
Aiming to shoot me down
So I shot- I shot- I shot him down and I say:
If I am guilty I will pay. (1973)

Some believe this song to be about racial profiling and corruption within the system. How poor people were exploited by the government. Moreover, it is also considered that this song has traces of Marley's own experiences in the ghetto. How being a person of mix race, he was often targeted. He was teased and rejected because he was not black enough according to many. The line "Every time I plant a seed, he said kill it before it grow" might be analysed as whenever Marley would try to plant a seed of hope for the downtrodden. The sheriff/authority would try to obliterate the seed of optimism and courage. As far as the etymology of the word 'Sheriff' is considered, it represent the designation of an officer who was responsible to maintain peace and harmony in a shire or a county. After the commercial acceptance of this album, Bob

Marley and the Wailers performed extensively across USA and UK. This was a clear enough sign that Reggae had managed to penetrate into the domain of music of these two nations. Bob was quite contented with the acceptance of Reggae outside Jamaica. He was hopeful about the crossover success of the band. But another setback was soon to follow in the middle of all this. Both Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer felt the need to leave the band. Peter felt that he was not able to express his potential in totality because of Marley's presence. Marley was the leading man of the band which Peter was not really happy about. Somewhere he may have felt that he is being overshadowed by Marley's persona. On the other hand, Bunny too wanted to record and release songs on his own. Hence, both Bunny and Peter left the band permanently. Bob Marley had worked assiduously to reach at this stage and when his hard work was to materialise into success, the clouds of uncertainty started to oscillate over the band and its future. With the band in a state of crisis, Marley felt all the more determined to gather himself for his next album.

The question which arises is what was so exceptional about Bob Marley and his persona? He was the kind of an artist who was least bothered about fame. He wanted to sing and indeed make money but money was not all he was singing for. Bob Marley was emerging as an anti-establishment because of the nature of his songs. His next album which he recorded without Bunny and Peter had songs about revolution. The album titled *Natty Dread* was released in 1974 and it was a collection of old and new songs such as "Lively up Yourself", "No Woman No Cry", "Them Belly Full", "So Jah She", "Natty Dread", "Rebel Music", "Talkin Blues" and "Revolution". Marley in his autobiographical song "Rebel Music" points out the senselessness of roadblock and curfews which was quite common in Trench Town. Many streets in the ghetto would be blocked every now and then because of gang violence. Marley wanted to live in a free space where he won't have to worry about getting shot. In "Rebel Music" he asks "Why can't we roam this open country? / Oh, why can't we be what we wanna be? / We want to be free" (1974). On the other hand, his song "Revolution" communicates that politicians can't be trusted with anything and a change can only be brought through the unity of common people. Marley articulates;

Revelation reveal the truth- revelation.

It takes a revolution to make a solution;

Too much confusion, so much frustration

I don't wanna live in the park

Can't trust no shadows after dark.

Never make a politician grant you a favour;

They will always want to control you forever.

Let righteousness cover the earth

Like the water cover the sea. (1974)

In the above mentioned lyrics, Marley asserts that a solution can only be achieved through a revolution and it is a fact that between PNP and JLP, the people who suffered the most were the common people of Jamaica hence the term 'sufferers'. Songs of protest unsettled the political authorities in Jamaica to a great extent. The Jamaican tourist board was not at all happy with the proliferation of Reggae on a national and international level. Marley highlighted the truth and reality of Jamaica through Reggae and the Jamaican government was not pleased with the genuine projection of Jamaica which was not just about the beautiful serene beaches and shiny resorts of Jamaica. What I find most disturbing and shocking is that the government instead of working for the nation by resolving the problems of the poor people rather focussed upon subsidizing and diminishing the expressions of protest. Bob Marley was considered to be potential threat who was capable of destabilizing the Jamaican society. Marley was being observed both by Jamaica and America's Central Intelligence Agency. After the release of *Rastaman Vibration* in 1976, the Jamaican government became more assertive in its approach towards censoring Reggae music. Songs such as "War", "Crazy Baldheads", and "Rat Race" were banned from the radio.

Marley was getting popular by the day but at the same time there were people who found his popularity to be unsettling. Apart from his songs, Marley too was political. He was the supporter of PNP's policy of socialism. In the year 1976, Marley was approached by Manley's government to play a concert. Marley was quite sceptical to be a part of the event because of security concerns. Nevertheless, after

specifying several conditions Marley agreed and the concert was finally scheduled for 5th December, 1976. The performance was supposed to be non-political and independent. It was a free concert and Marley was happy that poor people too could attend the concert. Interestingly when everything about the concert got confirmed, PNP declared that national election will take place fifteen days after the concert. It had become clear that PNP had its vested interest in planning the free concert for the people of Jamaica. Bob Marley was quite perturbed with this development. The proximity in between the dates of election and concert made it appear as if Bob Marley's performance was going to be a promotional act for PNP. Keeping the history of violence in Jamaica during elections in mind, it was not shocking when Bob Marley started to get death threats. As the day of the concert was getting closer, Marley and other band members could feel the tension which was building up. Armed guards were deployed by PNP outside Marley's house in the name of security. It was apparent that if anything happened to Bob Marley and the Wailers then JLP would invariably be under suspicion. One the other hand, PNP could not be trusted either as any attack on Marley was going to help PNP in elections. Marcia Griffiths could no longer deal with the tensed surrounding hence she chose to leave Jamaica. What everyone feared finally became a reality two days prior to the concert. David Moskowitz in his book "The Words and Music of Bob Marley" writes;

Don Taylor (Marley's manager) had come to the house to meet with Chris Blackwell⁷; Blackwell had not yet arrived, so Taylor waited in the kitchen talking to Bob and the guitarist Don Kinsey while they snacked on some grapefruit. No one was aware that minutes earlier, two white Datsuns had followed Taylor's car into the yard at 56 Hope Road. Six Gunmen exited the cars, and while two men stood guard, the other four opened fire on the house. Rita Marley was shot in the head as she tried to shelter her children. In the kitchen, Bob, Don Taylor, and Don Kinsley were surprised by the popping of gunshots as one gunman stuck his head into the kitchen and opened fire with a submachine gun...Don Taylor was the most exposed of the group and took the

⁷ Christopher Blackwell is the record producer and founder of Island Records. Island Records is considered to be one of the significant independent labels in Jamaican music industry. Blackwell formed Island Records in Jamaica in 1959. He was amongst the first to record the Jamaican popular music. He noticed that Jamaican music was quite popular in England. Being from London, he would sell records in England after recording them in Jamaica.

majority of the bullets. Eight shots were fired into the kitchen, two of which were wild and ricocheted around the room. Five of the bullets hit Don Taylor, riddling his torso and pelvic area the last bullet hit Bob, grazing his sternum and lodging in his left bicep. For a full five minutes after the attack, no more moved at 56 Hope Road for fear that the gunmen were still in the area.

There was no doubt that the whole attack was politically motivated as the guard had peculiarly disappeared right before the gunmen entered inside the house. The violence which Marley criticised in many of his songs had managed to create scars on Bob Marley and the Wailers. The entire Jamaica was in a state of shock. There were all kinds of rumour in circulation. Some people thought that Marley was dead or the band left the nation and moved to a disclosed location. Amidst all this, Marley was still speculating and thinking that the only way to retaliate this gruesome attack is by not cancelling the concert but it would have been too risky to perform. Moreover, Rita Marley was not in agreement with Bob Marley. She was horrified with the thought to be on stage. Even after this, PNP Housing Minister was persistent that Marley must not cancel the event. After much consideration and deliberation Marley decided that he will perform despite being injured. More than eighty thousand people had gathered for the concert and Bob Marley and the Wailers opened the performance with the anti-oppression song “war”. The question which was raised earlier about Marley and his persona can possibly be answered by referring to this particular incident. Despite being a solitary person Marley was certain that come what may he will not succumb to the oppressive forces of Jamaica.

After the performance, the band members left Jamaica as the situation was highly precarious. As far as the Jamaican national election is concerned, it did happen on the 15th of December, 1976 and PNP remained in power. Michael Manley was well aware that further incidents of violence could happen especially after the attack on Bob Marley and the Wailers. The PNP government proved to be incompetent in its attempt to curb violence when it happened. More than two hundred Jamaicans died. Manley under the garb of martial law tried to mollify the situation by sending the national army into the streets and gave orders that anyone who is seen with a gun must be arrested. The deployment of the army more than anything certainly helped in

painting the streets red with blood. During this time two political hooligans; Claudius Massop from JLP and Bucky Marshall from PNP were arrested. Both Massop and Marshall were Marley's childhood friends and like many others they too were tired of so many killings. They both wanted Marley to get back to Jamaica and spread the message of love and peace through his songs. Marley was in a state of dilemma as he knew that he and his band members were targeted either by JLP or PNP. After much pestering Marley finally agreed to be a part of the Jamaican peace concert and he came back to Jamaica in 1978. Marley had been vocal about various socio-political issues of Jamaica hence he was despised by both PNP and JLP to an extent. He was the artist who believed in showing mirror to the society. There is no doubt in understanding that Marley has been one of the significant figures of dissent in Jamaica which was appreciated by many but also despised by some. John Robb in his essay "Reasons for Dissent" writes;

There are two polarities at which dissent operates and a spectrum of positions in between. At one polarity is the anarchist, confiding in no one – isolated. The killing of others and the death of self are consistent with such a perspective of dissent. The anarchist remains apart from and, as such, isolated from others. At the other pole, the dissenter expresses his independence as a part of the society of others – a part of, yet at one with (in tune with) the others to whom 'he' relates. Between these two poles, the exercise of choice moves us in one direction or the other. (20)

Jamaican politicians termed Bob Marley as an anarchist for the political content of his songs. The word anarchy basically means a state of lawlessness and disorder. Marley through his songs and interviews was primarily enlightening people to stand up against the chaos which was created by none other than the politicians of PNP and JLP as they were too busy plotting against each other that they hardly paid any attention to what the common man really desired. Despite being a nonconformist, Marley was very much in tune with the Jamaican society. He wanted peace to prevail. Moreover, he wanted mindless killing to stop.

It is essential to understand that dissent is a practice of questioning unreasonable hierarchies which can bring a liberal change in a society. Furthermore,

it is very important to protect the culture of dissent in order to form a progressive and tolerant social structure. In Jamaica there was a clear hierarchy both within and outside the ghetto. Politicians were at the top of the hierarchical framework and poor people were at the bottom of it. Marley knew that it was necessary to dissent to bring a social reform in Jamaica. Even though his songs were censored by the government but he didn't discontinue writing songs. On the contrary, his voice became louder and strong. Austin Sarat in the essay "Terrorism, Dissent & Repression: An Introduction" writes that dissent can be extremely dangerous to those who practice it and it can be upsetting to whom it is directed. With Bob Marley he was upsetting the power structures of Jamaica. Marley kept singing about unemployment, poverty, discrimination, political corruption but the politicians did not buzz from their glass palaces to address the issues. His songs were a constant reminder of the acrimonious reality of Jamaican society and politics. Sarat writes;

The dissenter is neither conformist nor revolutionary. She is at once within, but outside of, the community and its conventions. In part because of her liminality the dissenter is often accused of disloyalty and subject to sanction and stigma by state and society. Pulled from the one side by those who say that dissent does not go far enough and from the other by those who demand acquiescence as the sign of loyalty, maintaining the "in-betweenness" of dissent is very difficult. (2)

Sarat goes on to argue that dissent has had an important role in America's national history and cultural imagination. In fact, America's past is rooted in dissent which is why the dissenters who changed American history are treated like heroes in historical narratives but on the other hand the same dissenters were criticised for their actions when they were challenging the power structures. However, same is the case with Bob Marley and other Reggae artists. After Bob Marley was acknowledged as the first global artist from a third world nation, the Jamaican government felt the need to appropriate the legacy of Marley. For instance after Bob Marley's untimely death in 1981 because of cancer, Edward Seaga who was the Prime Minister of Jamaica at that time arranged for Marley to receive Jamaica's third highest award, the Jamaican order of merit. It took Jamaican government a long time to understand the message which

Reggae artists were trying to convey. Nevertheless, Marley protested both within and outside the Jamaican society and its conventions. In his song “Positive Vibrations” which was released in 1978 as part of the *Babylon by Bus* album, Marley delineates that it is time to give violence and hatred a pause and delve into the world which is full of positive vibrations. He sings;

Live if you want to live
That's what we got to live
Got to have a good vibe.
If you get down and quarrel every day,
You are saying prayers to the devil, I say.
Why not help one another on the way?
Make it much easier.
Say you just can't live that negative way,
If you know what I mean;
Make way for the positive day. (1978)

Furthermore, Bob Marley became more assertive in his representation of Africa after the attack on the band. Marley wanted to visit Ethiopia as it had a significant place amongst the believers of Rastafarianism. He visited Ethiopia in 1978 and one year later he came up with the album *Survival* which had songs dealing with the topic of rebellion and escape from subjugation. The album had multiple songs such as “So Much Trouble in the World”, “Zimbabwe”, “Ambush in the night”, “Babylon System”, “Survival”, and “Africa Unite”, etc. The song “Ambush in the night” was a befitting reply to the political parties and gangs who had ingeniously tried to suppress the voice of dissent in Jamaica. Bob Marley as a dissenter functioned both within and outside the Jamaican community and its conventions. One can observe

a sense of transition from local to global in the issues he took up to address through his music. Marley in “Ambush in the Night” sings;

See them fighting for power
But they know not the hour;
So they bribing with their guns, spare-parts and money,
Trying to belittle
Our integrity now.
They say what we know
Is just what they teach us;
And we are so ignorant
Cause every time they reach us
Through political strategy;
They keep us hungry
And when you gonna get some food
Your brother got to be your enemy.
Ambush in the night,
All guns aiming at me;
Ambush in the night,
They opened fire at me now.
Ambush in the night,
Protected by his Majesty.
Well, what we know
Is not what they tell us;
We are not ignorant, I mean it,

And they just cannot teach us;
Through the powers of the most,
We keep on surfacing,
Through the powers of the most,
We keep surviving. (1978)

To conclude, one could say that Bob Marley and his legacy of peace continue to prosper even today. In fact, United Nation gave the Peace Medal of the Third World to Bob Marley and the Wailers in 1978 and The Jamaican government started Bob Marley Award for Culture for those who continue to contribute to Jamaica culturally. Marley has indeed emerged as an iconic figure of protest. The Jamaica authority today takes pride in acknowledging and accepting Bob Marley as an artistic treasure of the nation. It is a different story that Marley was criticized for years for his courageous voice by the politicians of the same nation. For the people of Trench Town Marley is more than a singer as his legacy continues to inspire people to dream for a better life. Marley chose the guitar over guns as he said in one his songs that music and gun both have the potential to hit people but music unlike guns does not hurt.

Nevertheless, many releases of Marley saw the light of the day after his death such as; *Legend*, *Confrontation*, *Chances Are*, *Songs of Freedom*, and *Talkin' Blues* etc. Marley and his songs have crossed continents over the years. The next chapter will look into the domain of Reggae outside the boundaries of Jamaica. The chapter will deal with the negotiation which Reggae had to make in post war England for its existence. The Fifth chapter will examine how Reggae faced racism and marginalization in UK and how it travelled all the way to India.

Chapter Five

Obliterating Lines and Spanning Margins: Reggae outside the Borders of Jamaica

It is a known fact that Reggae at present is as popular outside the borders of Jamaica as it is within the Caribbean Islands. In the previous chapters, the phenomenon of Reggae was analysed through the terrains of race, class, and gender. The present chapter will look at the proliferation and acceptance of Reggae outside Jamaica. Two nations which share an intimate association with Reggae are England and America. It has already been discussed formerly how the art of Reggae was influenced by the beats which came from America through Radio. Moreover, Many Jamaicans viewed America as a nation of immense prosperity and success. This fascination brought many Jamaicans to America and Bob Marley was one of them. Even though, Marley never viewed America as the Promised Land. Moreover, many Jamaicans frequently visited America so that they could lay their hands over the latest albums and recordings which were in great demand back at home in Jamaica. Nevertheless, Marley and many other Reggae artists believed Ethiopia to be the Promised Land for Africans. In fact, Marley towards the last phase of his musical career consciously

attempted to focus on Africa and the socio-political turmoil which many African nations had been grappling with.

As far as Reggae and its relation with England is concerned, the Two-Tone phenomenon of London was highlighted upon in the first chapter. Moreover, Christopher Blackwell from London emerged as one of the canonical figures in the Jamaican recording industry. The relation of England and Jamaica goes back to the epoch of colonization. Moreover, during the Second World War many Caribbeans were taken to England as the English colonial empire needed man power so that the English nation could be represented with more soldierly authority and control in the war. This movement of Caribbeans resulted in the dissemination of many forms of art and culture. Reggae was one of the forms which received a significant amount of reception in England. This chapter will analyse the domain of calypso, ska and Reggae in relation to the Jamaican youths of England. The present chapter will also explore the reasons why so many white youths could relate with the art of Reggae? Is it because Reggae in nature was quite rebellious since its inception? Moreover, this chapter will peep into the domain of skinheads, mods, rockers, and punk subcultures of England and draw a connection between these forms of subculture with Reggae. The chapter will also explore the socio-political reality of African-Caribbean immigrants and their music in post Second World War England.

The last section of this chapter will look at the growth of ska and Reggae within the dominion of India. In the last couple of years bands such as Reggae Rajahs, Ska Vengers and Delhi Sultanate have emerged and changed the landscape of music within India. Delhi Sultanate has recorded multiple songs taking up various socio-political issues pertaining India. These bands keep performing all over India creating a space for a dialogue. This chapter will look at the reception of these bands and discover how Reggae came to India.

It is true that the art of Reggae has moved to many countries but it was a conscious choice to limit this chapter to Britain because Jamaican history shares a very close alliance with the English colonial empire. The Jamaican sound of Reggae got submerged with the sound waves of America and then the same sound became a huge phenomenon in Britain. An entire generation was inspired by Reggae in Britain. On the other hand, I was quite curious as well as surprised to know about the terrain

of Reggae music in India. Sounds of ska and Reggae are adding a new dimension to the art of expression through music in India.

Nonetheless, one cannot deny the significant contribution which the people of African descent have made to the music of Britain. Many such people of African lineage came from the Caribbean and music forms such as ska, calypso, dancehall, dub, steelpan, rocksteady, and of course Reggae travelled with them. It is essential to highlight that the colonial Empire of Britain in one way or the other led to the dissemination of various art forms across nations and boundaries under the process of colonization. For instance, the inception of chutney music happened because the British colonial empire brought people from India to work on the sugar plantations of the Caribbean Islands. The amalgamation of Indian and Caribbean cultures would not have happened if the British kingdom had not been ruling these two countries. At present, chutney music is popular in many countries such as; Canada, India, Britain, and America. Tina Karina Ramnarine in the essay “Indian” Music in the Diaspora: Case Studies of “Chutney” in Trinidad and in London” writes about the expedition of chutney music. Ramnarine delineates that because of the lack of documentation chutney music is not accessible easily. In Britain, commercial cassettes of chutney are not available but one can get them from a local vendor. (134)

Nonetheless, it is a fact that the practice of colonization made various art forms belonging to diverse cultures communicate with each other and the arrival of Reggae in Britain was an outcome of one such practice. For instance, Empire Windrush, a cruise ship brought one of the first clusters of West Indian people from Jamaica to London in 1948. Empire Windrush which was formerly known as Monte Rasa was launched in Germany in 1930 and during the Second World War, the ship was attained by Britain. The Caribbean people who were brought on this ship are referred as the Windrush generation as well. “Windrush generation” is a broad term which encapsulates the migration of African-Caribbean people to many countries such as; America, UK, France, Canada, and Netherlands. The Second World War proved to be a major loss for the British Empire as it was losing its dominance and authority. This War established that Britain was no longer a world power. The British people were getting disillusioned with Britain’s policy of colonization. Many British youths had lost their lives in the war which alienated people even more. Donny

Gluckstein in his book *A People's History of Second World War: Resistance Versus Empire* writes about the hopelessness and futility of the Second World War. People of Britain could not understand why so much of money was being spent on the war as it did not make much of a sense. There was a sagacity of unrest all over Britain because of the economic calamity. To deal with this crisis, the British government encouraged mass migration from the colonised nations of the British Empire and Commonwealth. The state of economic catastrophe was so grave that the British government promised citizenship to immigrants from the commonwealth and other colonies. Many Caribbeans in the hope of a better life moved to Britain. Labour shortage had become one of the major problems. On top of that there was a need to expand the British Armed Forces and the merchant navy so that Britain could continue to project itself as a nation of power and substance. Therefore, many people from the Caribbean were made to join air force and navy services of Britain. However, after the war got over many people returned to West Indies. On the other hand, many realised that many islands of the Caribbean were in the midst of several problems. For instance, Jamaica had a huge class difference and there was a very diminutive chance for the poor people to cross the line of poverty which is why many West Indians decided to reside in various parts of Britain.

After the war, Britain was in shambles and it needed labour so that once the great empire could be rebuilt. However, the British government was not very keen on promoting further migration from the West Indies. There was a general notion amongst the whites that people from the Caribbean islands are lackadaisical and indolent. I fail to understand the foundation of this opinion which is coloured with racism. The people from the colonies were welcome during the war but once the war got over Britain abruptly realised that it cannot accommodate people from the West Indies anymore. Initially, people from the European nations were preferred by the British authority for the purpose of labour. However, the demand for labourers was extremely high and it could not be overlooked by the English government. Eventually people from the colonies were allowed to migrate. Many West Indians had imagined that life in the foreign land will allow them to enhance their lives financially however the reality was completely opposite. Most of the West Indians were not skilled which is why they had to settle with jobs of low-paying nature and the localities which the migrants inhabited were of poor quality. Nevertheless, a sense of socio-cultural unity

was formed by the migrants and amidst all the problems music became an avenue to provide a sagacity of solace and comfort.

British author Andrea Levy in her novel *Small Island* (2004) writes about the diaspora of the Jamaican immigrants and the hardships they had to face in the foreign land. Immigrants left their Caribbean islands so that they could escape the economic destitution at home. Little did they know that life in the new country will be as harsh as it was at home? One of the characters of the novel Gilbert had experienced the reality of life in Britain during the war unlike many. A lot of Jamaicans were absolutely aghast when they reached the English nation and found out the living condition of the immigrants. Many of them became the object of white gaze and it really unsettled the Jamaicans. It seemed like they were not at all welcome in the nation of whites. *Small Island* portrays the counter historical narrative of the times of Second World War. Levy deals with the issues of nation and identity with regard to Jamaican immigrants inhabiting within the dominion of Britain. It is a historical fact that many Jamaicans chose to go to England because they had a desire to see what one of the powerful nations was like? The nation which was symbolised with power and wealth; the nation which was ruling Caribbean Islands and many other parts of the world. Windrush migration is at the centre of the novel.

Windrush is considered to be a significant event in the history of Britain as it transformed the British society and its culture to a great extent. Windrush opened up the issues of public space, employment, and the subject of equality for a dialogue. Nobody imagined that the people who boarded Windrush cruise were going to be a part of history. Alicia E. Ellis in the article “Identity as Cultural Production in Andrea Levy’s *Small Island*” writes; “Windrush as an historical event not only marks the rise of multicultural Britain (at least, in the popular imagination) but also follows a long history of migration to Britain, especially on the part of Afro-Caribbean and other colonial subjects.” (70)

It is true that after Windrush, many African-Caribbeans moved to Britain oblivious of the fact that homecoming for many will not be possible. The gallant persona of the British Empire was forced upon the immigrants through various state apparatuses. The immigrants were not granted the option to look back and trace their past or history. In fact, they were to engage with everything British from language,

culture, history to knowledge production of the self and identity. One can locate a paradox here because on one hand, the immigrants were taught the British culture and history but on the other hand they were treated as the ‘others/outsideers’. On one hand, they were told to embrace new history by erasing their past and memories but at the same time they were constantly reminded of their colour and appearance. Author and journalist Mike Phillips in his article for the BBC titled “Windrush- the Passengers” articulates about the socio-cultural and political changes which took place in Britain by the seventies. Phillips writes;

By the start of the seventies, West Indians were a familiar and established part of the British population, and they had achieved more than mere survival. Throughout the seventies, the children of the first wave of post-war Caribbean migrants began to develop a ‘black culture’ which is now part of a black British style shared by Africans, Asians and white young people alike. The people of the Windrush, their children and grandchildren have played a vital role in creating a new concept of what it means to be British. To be British in the present day implies a person who might have their origins in Africa, the Caribbean, China, India, Greece, Turkey or anywhere else in the spectrum of nations. (2011)

Before defining the discourse of ‘black culture’ of Britain, one must remember that people who boarded Windrush came from diverse backgrounds. Aldwyn Roberts, a calypso singer from Trinidad was on the Windrush too. Roberts is better known by his stage name Lord Kitchener and he is considered to be one of the most significant calypsonian of the post-war era. Before leaving for England, Kitchener spent six months in Jamaica leaving behind his homeland. After his arrival in England, Kitchener started performing at various clubs. Soon he became a known figure in England and started performing in as many as three clubs in a single night. English people were quite receptive towards the new sound which Kitchener had brought from Trinidad. One of the first few songs which he had composed upon his arrival was “London is the Place for me” (1952). The song gives a sense of Windrush Generation’s interaction with England. Many Caribbeans who could not go back

home could connect with the song. Kitchener in his song “London is the Place for me” sings;

London is the place for me
London this lovely city
You can go to France or America
India, Asia or Australia
But you must come back to London city
Well believe me I am speaking broadmindedly
I am glad to know my Mother Country
I have been travelling to countries years ago
But this is the place I wanted to know
London that is the place for me. (1952)

The above mentioned lyrics represent a sense of optimism, elation and a hope to survive for the immigrants. The sound of calypso facilitated in creating a sagacity of home or an imagined community as Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* writes that a nation is nothing but an imagined community which is imagined by a group of people. Kitchener’s other songs from the same album such as “Sweet Jamaica”, “No Carnival in Britain”, “Jamaica Woman”, “Steel Band Music”, “Victory Test Match”, and “If You’re not White You are Black” seemed to be extremely significant to West Indian post-colonial society within which the immigrants could imagine home.

Another person of historical importance who boarded Windrush which docked at Tilbury in 1948 was Lord Beginner from Port-of-Spain of Trinidad. The genre of calypso which was limited to small clubs was at the threshold of becoming an integral part of British black imagination in the 1950s. Lord Beginner played an essential role in bringing calypso out of the clubs by composing the song “Victory Test Match” after the success of West Indies Cricket Team at Lords in 1950. The victory at the test

rendered a sense of fulfilment amongst the immigrants as the colonisers of the Caribbean islands were defeated at the game which was invented and mastered by the Britishers. It was an ideal example of a colony striking back at the colonisers. Moreover, the most stimulating part was that the colonizers were defeated at their home ground. Lord Beginner in his song “Victory Test Match” sings;

Cricket Lovely Cricket,
At Lord’s where I saw it;
Cricket Lovely Cricket,
At Lord’s where I saw it;
Yardley¹ tried his best
But Goddard² won the test.
They gave the crowd plenty fun;
Second Test and West Indies won.

Both Lord Kitchener and Lord Beginner contributed immensely to the genre of calypso in Britain and it was soon followed by Reggae, rap, and dancehall. Calypso was embraced by both West Indian immigrants and a very small section of whites. In fact, calypso was considered to be the official sound of black Britain in the 1950s and early 1960s. The immigrants would soak themselves in the nostalgia of their past by listening to calypso records. They would recollect street marching and steel pan bands which played a fundamental role in forming the Caribbean Identity. Lord Kitchener had finally opened a night club in Manchester which would cater primarily to the music of the Caribbeans. As far as the issue of public space for the West Indians and the access of it is concerned, a lot more public spaces were available to the non-whites by the seventies. Stuart Hall in his article titled “Calypso Kings” writes about the journey of calypso in Britain keeping the immigrants in mind. He writes;

¹ Norman Yardley was an English cricketer.

² John Goddard was a cricketer from West Indies.

Calypso in Britain has an interesting prehistory. The oldest living calypsonian on the Honest John is Young Tiger, now 82, who was born in Trinidad, became a seaman on oil tankers sailing the seven seas, and finally disembarked in Glasgow in 1942. Though not musically trained, he played and sang a little and when he and a friend landed a job in the famous Minstrel Show, they were bitten by the showbiz bug. Singing and playing all sorts of music in the small London drinking clubs, he composed a Christmas Calypso in 1943, which became a seasonal favourite...After playing and touring with a number of successful groups, he recorded with Melodisc, the first British company to produce calypso records...He left Trinidad before the steel bands that are now so closely associated with calypso music really took hold, though he remembers as a child hearing the pans being played in the backyards of Charlotte Street, Port of Spain. (2002)

It is believed that calypso, dancehall, Reggae, rap, and other musical forms did assist in constructing a diversified society in Britain within which the people of different races could come together and understand their differences; a society in which the blackness of the colour black would not be considered as non-normative. Gerald Moore in his essay "If You Aint White You' Considered Black" analyses and refutes the beliefs which propose that music from the Caribbean constructed a society in which harmony and acceptance of the other were the norms. Moore says that the reality was completely anti-thetical to the idea of a mix society. He goes on to write; "Lord Kitchener's calypso has expressed the one irrefutable truth about the so-called "mixed" society (if only it would mix, the story might be different). And being considered black, from the cradle, the black man growing up in a white world is in a danger of accepting the world's estimate of what blackness entails." (49)

As it has already been mentioned that the immigrants from the Caribbean were constantly reminded of their race and colour by the whites. Words were not needed to communicate how the whites felt about the undesired presence of the so called others. A gaze was enough to convey the hostile emotions. When I use the words other/outsider, I do not intend to perceive the immigrants as outsiders as the first wave of people who came to Britain through Windrush were granted British citizenship. It is highly appalling to form one's identity on the basis of one's colour. It

is a fact that appearance became one of the facets to trace the existence of the Windrush generation. For instance, James Baldwin in *The Fire Next Time* (1963) looks into the helplessness of blacks in America. Before proceeding further, one must know that people of African lineage were treated in a derogatory and contemptuous fashion in both America and Britain. The book by Baldwin had a great impact not only on blacks and their lives but also on liberal whites. It has two essays titled; “My Dungeon shook – Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of Emancipation”, and “Down at Cross- Letter from a Region of My Mind” dealing with the problem of colour discrimination in America. In the first part of the essay, the protagonist writes to his nephew about the civil unrest in America and how the gap between the whites and the blacks is getting wider. The protagonist in the essay gazes upon the issue of the existence of blacks;

For when I tried to assess my capabilities, I realized that I had almost none. In order to achieve the life I wanted, I had been dealt, it seemed to me, the worst possible hand...Negroes in this country- and Negroes do not, strictly or legally speaking- exist in any other- are taught really to despise themselves from the moment their eyes open on the world. The world is white and they are black. White people hold the power, which means they are superior to blacks and the world has innumerable ways of making this difference known and felt and feared. Long before the Negro child perceives the difference, and even longer before he understands it, he has begun to react to it, he has begun to be controlled by it. Every effort made by the child's elders to prepare him from a fate from which they cannot protect him causes him secretly, in terror to begin to wait, without knowing that he is doing so, his mysterious and inexorable punishment. He does not know what the boundary is, and he can get no explanation of it, which is frightening enough, but the fear he hears in the voices of his elders is more frightening still. The fear that I heard in my father's voice, for example, when he realized that I really believed I could do anything a white boy could do, and had every intention of proving it, was not at all like the fear I heard...it was another fear, a fear that the child, in challenging the white world's assumptions, was putting himself in the path of destruction. A child cannot know how vast and how merciless is the nature of power, with what unbelievable cruelty people treat each other. (13-14)

It is important to understand that the subjective views and experience of the protagonist in the essay represent the larger black community. There is a sense of universality in this essay as it addresses the so called 'Negroes' both within and outside America. The primary theme of both the essays is of "Negro Problem". Even though the word Negro is considered to be derogatory at present however, many writers like Baldwin chose to use the term to highlight the trauma and shame associated with the terminology. While using the term 'Negro' in this section, I do not mean to vilify the black community in any way possible. The essay talks about the oppression and subjugation of the Negro race and the only way to bridge the gap between the whites and the blacks is through developing conviction. The African-Caribbean immigrants faced the similar suppression in Britain. Moreover, one needs to eradicate the fear which a black feels in the white world. The above mentioned lines from *The Fire Next Time* conveys a sense of fear which a black feels since the time of his/her birth and because of this fear a black feels constrained when it comes to the growth of his/her self.

Another point which Baldwin takes up for a discussion and negotiation is anger as many blacks felt that there was a need of a change to ameliorate the helpless nature of black lives. They were exhausted of breathing in a world which was full of racial prejudice. It is interesting to point out that the colour of the immigrants in Britain became a location of disputation while on the other hand their music became a site of negotiation. For instance, calypso, Reggae, soul, dancehall became widespread in Britain and eventually these forms were borrowed by many British youths as well. As far as the question of black lives and how much they matter is concerned, Judith Butler in one her interviews talks about the categorisation of lives which happens in our society at present. There is certainly a strong sagacity of hierarchy within which lives along with their values/worth are divided. If one goes through the pages of history then one will come across several accounts of how the life of blacks under the regime of European powers was consider to be of (in)significant nature. Significant because a black body was meant for labour and all kinds of toil and insignificant because black body was considered as just a body and nothing else. Butler talks about how racism prevails even now and she gives the example of several black lives which

have been targeted by the American state apparatuses. How a black person and his mere existence is perceived as a threat and his life is not viewed as worth preserving. As far as the question of whiteness and its placement within the module of race pyramid is concerned, Butler goes on to argue that whiteness is less of a property of skin and it is more of a social power which produces dominance and a sense of supremacy in both explicit and implicit ways. I agree with what Butler has to say about whiteness but when we talk and analyse blackness then it becomes more of a property of skin because within a racial discriminatory structure a black person's identity as it has been mentioned before is more of a threat. In the interview titled "What's Wrong with 'All Lives Matter', when Butler is asked about Black lives and if they matter at all? She replies;

Perhaps we can think about the phrase "black lives matter." What is implied by this statement, a statement that should be obviously true, but apparently is not? If black lives do not matter, then they are not really regarded as lives, since a life is supposed to matter. So what we see is that some lives matter more than others, that some lives matter so much that they need to be protected at all costs, and that other lives matter less, or not at all. And when that becomes the situation, then the lives do not matter so much, or do not matter at all, can be killed or lost, can be exposed to conditions of destitution, and there is no concern, or even worse, that is regarded as the way it is supposed to be...we have to remember that under slavery black lives were considered only a fraction of a human life, so the prevailing way of valuing lives assumed that some lives mattered more, were more human, more worthy, more deserving of life and freedom...One reason the chant "Black Lives Matter" is so important is that it states the obvious but the obvious has not yet been historically realized. So it is a statement of outrage and a demand for equality. (2015)

As it has been mentioned before, Reggae music both within and outside Jamaica has been a popular expression to claim and fight for equality. Nevertheless the 'Festival of Britain' in 1951 proved to be an important event in the history of Caribbean music. After the Second World War, when signs of sorrow and destruction

were everywhere in England, the British government came up with an idea of organising a festival to convey a sense of recovery amongst the common English people. Soon after the war, London was in a grave need of restoration, a big part of the city was destroyed. The festival which took place at London city had bands and musicians from the Caribbean islands. For instance Roaring King, a calypsonian from Trinidad achieved ample amount of public attention at the festival. Moreover, Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra was also brought in for the festival. During the 1950s apart from African-Caribbean music, the term 'Black British' too became highly prominent as it represented British people with African past or heritage including the African-Caribbeans.

It is essential to highlight that the black experience in Britain or the British black culture gave a new-fangled dimension to the domain of race and identity in Britain. The arrival of blacks in Britain created a rupture as many of them were granted the official right to be acknowledged as British but yet the colour conflict always came in between when it came to the formation of a black person's identity. Even though blacks were allowed to cross the borders of Britain but for years many immigrants remained invisible in many spheres of life. Sukhdev Sandhu in his article to BBC titled "The First Black Britons" writes that black people have been staying in Britain for considerably a long time. There are records which show that black man and woman have lived in Britain since the 12th century. However, with the expansion of British Empire, the number of black people inhabiting in parts of Britain multiplied dramatically by the 17th and 18th century. Many African and African-Caribbean slaves were transported across for work purpose on British colonies. Sandhu goes on to articulate; "Others, in much smaller numbers, were ferried into the ports of London, Liverpool and Bristol- on the same ships that brought imperial products such as tea, sugar, cotton, coffee, rum, fruit, wine, tobacco and oil to enrich the national economy...For the traders of the 17th-18th century Britain, the African was literally a unit of currency" (2011)

It is a historical fact that Africa has contributed immensely in making what Europe is today. It is a paradox that Europe in the name of culture and civilisation has robbed many parts of the world. In the history of human civilization, Europe certainly has been one of the most violently assertive civilizations. Many nations and their

inhabitants were colonized against their will by Europe. Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* writes about the creation of Europe. It is true that Europe created the myth of the West and according to this myth the West was projected as everything which the colonised could never dream to be. Some believe that the idea of West was nothing but a figment of Europe's own imagination. Nevertheless, Fanon articulates that Europe exists because of the third world. He further explains;

The wealth of the imperialist nations is also our wealth. At a universal level, such a statement in no way means we feel implicated in the technical feats or artistic creations of the West. In concrete terms Europe has been bloated out of all proportions by the gold and raw materials from such colonial countries as Latin America, China, and Africa. Today Europe's tower of opulence faces these continents, for centuries the point of departure of their shipments of diamonds, oil, silk and cotton, timber, and exotic produce to this very same Europe. Europe is literally the creation of the third world. (58)

Nevertheless, the third world has indeed been a significant component of European history and its consciousness. The music from various colonies which came to the land of the colonizers cannot be obliterated and erased. Reggae is one such form of music which has a substantial presence in Britain today. From the time of Chris Blackwell and his Island Records Reggae has come a long way in Britain. Initially it was not perceived well and it didn't have any airplay but in 1969 things started to change when Reggae artists began to obtain a lot of more space through airtime broadcast. Reggae groups such as Dave and Ansell Collins, Ken Boothe, and John Holt could no longer be ignored. A new chapter was about to commence in the history of both Reggae as well as Britain.

However, before moving into the domain of Reggae, it is noteworthy to mention that when Africans or African-Caribbeans were brought to the various parts of Britain, they retained their culture, heritage, and of course music. As it has been mentioned earlier that racism was quite rampant all over Britain in both public and private spheres. Spaces such as clubs, pubs, and bingo halls treated blacks as outsiders. Therefore, blacks realised that there was a requirement to create spaces which could embrace black art, culture, and music without any prejudice. Since the

1930s and 40s London has had a vibrant jazz culture. There were many clubs and bars which would cater to jazz admirers. Considering the love for music and dance, soon many clubs owned by blacks came up all over the city. London's black population could finally enjoy music without being made to feel isolated. It is interesting to highlight that both in America and Britain, black culture was forced to be under the shadow of obliviousness for a long time. Black culture was considered to be of inferior nature.

Nonetheless, when African-Caribbeans settlers came to Britain, one of their first few possessions was a radiogram. In British English, radiogram is basically a big box or a piece of furniture that combines a radio and a record player. In the post-war era, radiogram which is a portmanteau of radio and gramophone became immensely popular in Britain. African-Caribbeans used this device from social gathering to weekend get-togethers. Simon Jones in his book *Black Culture, White Youth- The Reggae Tradition from JA to UK* writes; "Afro-Caribbean people used music especially as a way of filling the gap in their consciousness between the lives that they had left behind and the circumstances in which they found themselves in Britain." (34)

It were these social gatherings which established a feeling of integrity and unity within the blacks. Especially people from various Caribbean islands came in support of each other and embraced multiplicity of Caribbean identities. As far as the African-Caribbeans in Britain are concerned, a significant number of people came from Jamaica, the place which gave birth to Reggae. The first wave of Jamaican migrants were mostly the workers who belonged to the rural areas. However, by the mid-1950s a lot of working class Jamaicans from the urban spaces started to move to Britain and these were the people who brought the institution of sound system with them. Music is an indispensable part of a normal Jamaican life. For instance, one could hear music everywhere in the streets of Trench Town. The sound system facilitated to a great extent in organising music based parties which often held in private rented houses or the basements. The sound system helped in creating an alternative space which was away from the hostile gaze of the white man. By 1955, Notting Hill in London emerged as the centre of black culture and expression as many private houses were organising parties which were primarily dominated by blues.

Reggae was yet to find its voice in Britain at that time. The whole idea of organising such gatherings was quite subversive in its nature as these get-togethers would go on till quite late in the night. Soon these parties were perceived as a challenge to public order. The view that these congregations are a threat to urban life was prevalent. The British police took it upon itself to be the safeguard of British culture and started a crackdown on such events. The conflict between the police and the blacks assisted in starting a practice of black resistance.

By the end of 1950s, the British police became all the more assertive in its penetration of black cultural life. The alternative space which was created by the black migrants to gain a sense of normality turned into an awful nightmare. The policy of suppression was used by the English police to gain an access to black wedding receptions and other private festivities. The police intervention and imposition continued all throughout the 1960s too. The migrants were getting exhausted of this constant surveillance in the name of law and order. It is fascinating to observe that the so called representatives of law and order were creating a chaos and disruption in the name of law and order. It is a bitter reality that when the state sponsored agencies create disorder, it is not acknowledged as a form of disorder. By the late 1960s, the post war black community had realised that they had to do something substantial to stop the continual harassment. Soon the confrontations between the black and white racists came out in the open. The streets of Notting Hill and Nottingham were subjected to such conflicts. However, one incident which created a huge amount of uproar was the murder of a Caribbean immigrant worker named Kelso Cochrane in Notting Hill in 1959. Many believed it to be a racist attack but the British government denied such beliefs and claimed that the attack was not coloured with any form of racism. Such a reaction from the British government officials forced the African Caribbean community to form a defence mechanism by establishing the black society groups. Public racism needed to be curbed and private black spaces were to be protected. After the formation of black groups, the number of black cafes, eating joints, and clubs multiplied in London which added another dimension to the landscape of black culture. With the establishment of the bourgeoisie class, the demand for the Caribbean music increased within the black community of Britain. Suddenly, a lot of people wanted to purchase recorded music from Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean. The reception of Jamaican music in

Britain was marvellous and needless to say Reggae had an essential role to play in this. During the 1960s, Britain emerged as one of the promising markets for the Jamaican recording industry as Jamaica was exporting music records in a huge quantity to Britain.

As the demand for the Jamaican and Caribbean music was going up in Britain, many independent white record producers realised that it would be preposterous to ignore the emergence of these new sounds from one of the British colonies. Chris Blackwell soon understood the marketing prospective of Jamaican music in Britain and without much ado he collaborated with Jamaica's top recording producers. Signing deals with Jamaican recording production houses was a judicious decision for Blackwell because recording music in Jamaica was far economical in comparison to Britain. Blackwell's Island Records became one of the major outlets for the dissemination of Jamaican music in the 1960s. One more British record label which was seminal in the distribution of ska, rocksteady, Reggae, and dancehall was Trojan Records. It was founded in 1968 and by the early 1970s Trojan became the leading distributor of Reggae in Britain. Trojan worked with many Reggae artists such as; Bob Marley, Marcia Griffiths, Lee Perry's Upsetters, Desmond Dekker and so on. The music produced by Trojans became popular amidst the British youth subcultures such as mods, suedeheads, and skinheads.

As far as the phenomenon of mod subculture in UK is concerned, it started in the 1960s and soon disseminated across the country. The subculture was primarily based on fashion and music. The followers of mod were a group of young people who were overtly concerned about the way they would dress up and the kind of music they would listen to. The subculture had its roots in modern jazz which was followed closely by a lot of people during the late 1950s and the early 1960s. Initially mod was limited to men but eventually it included women as well under its rubric. With regard to mod fashion, men chose to wear tailor-made suits in different colours and women pushed the lines of conventionality as many of them wore clothes such as skirts and tops which were perceived to be outrageous amongst a section of British society. Apart from modern jazz, mods would also listen to soul, ska, and R&B. They would ride scooters oppose to bikes and mods were completely antithetical to another stream of subculture in Britain called rockers. As for the etymology of mod, it comes from

'modernist', a term which was used by many to refer to modern jazz in the 1950s and 1960s. The terminology mod should not be confused with modernism as during the 1960s, the media would often use mod to represent anything which was popular and stylish. Dick Hebdige in "The Meaning of Mod" which was included in Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson's *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* writes about the culture of mod;

The life style to which the mod ideally aspired revolved around night clubs and city centres which demanded a certain exquisiteness of dress. In order to cope with the unavoidable minute by minute harassments, the minutiae of highspeed interactions incumbent upon an active night-life in the city, the mod had to be on the ball at all times, functioning at an emotional and intellectual frequency high enough to pick up the slightest insult or joke or challenge or opportunity to make the most of the precious night. Thus speed was needed to keep the mind and body synchronised perfectly. His ideal model-mentor for the ideal style would be the Italian Mafiosi-type so frequently depicted in crime films shot in New York (one step above London in the mod hierarchy). (89)

On the other hand, the subculture of rockers was based on motorcycles, leather boots, leather jackets, denim and they followed rock n roll. Both mods and rockers had different views about each other. Mods were highly critical of rockers' obsession with masculinity. Rockers were outlandish in their appearance and fashion. While rockers thought mods fascination with sharp manner and style was effeminate in its nature. In short, mods and rockers didn't really appreciate each other's ways of life. These two groups met with conflicts at various occasion. Mods came from London and rockers belonged to the rural parts of England and there was hardly any communication between the two. Many believe that the nonexistence of communication was another cause of clash and disputation. However, one cannot erase the acrimonious history of riots between these two groups which took place in May 1964 on the south coast of England. Slings knives and bike chains were used as weapons by both the groups. Three young men were stabbed at Margate and seventy five rioting boys were arrested by the police at Brighton. After the riots, both the groups were labelled as

folk devils both by the society and media. Moreover, the English society was going through a sense of hysteria and frenzy at that time.

As far as the suedehead and skinhead subcultures are concerned, the major difference between these two groups was that suedeheads kept their hair long and dressed formally while the skinheads were recognised by their cropped or shaven heads. The suedehead, was an offshoot of skinhead which began in the 1960s. During the early 1980s, the skinhead movement reached its pinnacle and in the 90s it was adopted by Neo-Nazi groups in East Germany. Both these groups had an interest in rocksteady, ska, and Reggae. However, early skinheads had a keen curiosity in Jamaican rude boy culture. Nonetheless, skinhead subculture basically emanated in two waves. First in the early 1960s, questioning the norms of the society and embracing the rude boy image, mod fashion, and black music. The second wave of skinhead began in early 1980s with people who were interested in punk culture. Many skinheads describe themselves as apolitical. However, in my opinion being a skinhead and associating oneself with the skinhead subculture is in itself a political act.

Nevertheless, both Island and Trojan records helped in establishing an indigenous Reggae industry for the West Indian immigrants. One of the reasons for the survival of British Reggae industry during the 1970s was the network which the blacks had developed amongst themselves. They had come to terms with the realisation that the only way they could survive in Britain was by helping each other out. The black community of Britain started to import records from Jamaica in order to distribute in Britain. Soon the term 'roots market' came into existence, it represented the struggle of Reggae against the mainstream British pop industry. It is essential to mention that many music shops in Britain refrained from keeping Reggae records, needless to say many of these shops were owned by the whites. Moreover, there was hardly any radio exposure for Reggae music. The terminology 'roots market' was used for the shops which would import Reggae records and sell within the black community. These shops apart from being a site of resistance also signified the cultural space for the West Indian immigrants. Since the late 1960s onwards, the young African-Caribbean community felt all the more displaced in Britain. They could not relate with the English education system. Unemployment was rampant and

it was a challenge for black youths to get a job. Moreover the relations with the British police was at all-time low. The ones who managed to get a job were constantly subjected to racism from their employers. Simon Jones goes on to articulate;

The recognition and experience of institutional racism and economic deprivation amongst young blacks had the effect of stimulating forms of cultural and political consciousness that had been in the process of emerging in the black community as whole over the 1960s...Accelerated by the impact of black liberation movements in Africa and America, the 1960s had witnessed the growth of a mass political consciousness based on a common 'black' identity which owed no allegiance to any one particular Caribbean nationality. By the early 1970s, this homogenisation of Caribbean identities was becoming increasingly noticeable amongst the young. (40-41)

Amongst all this, Chris Blackwell of Island Records was attempting to carve out a space for Reggae within both the blacks and the whites by promoting the Wailers. The band's tour of Britain in the early 1970s, gave a new voice to African-Caribbean community. The wailers performed songs dealing with political consciousness and Rastafari beliefs. The year 1973 witnessed the release of Bob Marley and The Wailers' two extremely popular albums; *Catch a Fire* and *Burnin*. The songs from these two albums such as; "Slave Driver", "400 Years", "Get Up, Stand Up", and "Burnin' and Lootin" etc. created a sense of inquisitiveness about Reggae in Britain. 1970s also saw a stark similarity with regard to the socio-political conditions of the poor Jamaicans and African-Caribbeans of Britain. Both Jamaicans and the British black community felt the need to condemn the abhorrent violence inflicted by the police in the name of safety and security. The premise of security and protection was nothing but a charade. The British youth could connect with the songs which were being composed and recorded in Jamaica. For instance, Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" was released internationally both in Jamaica and Britain in 1976. Murvin is a Reggae musician from Jamaica. The song "Police and Thieves" is about police brutality and ruthlessness. It was released by Island Records in UK and

soon after its release it became a huge success with most of the clubs in Britain. The lyrics of the song are;

Police and thieves in the street
Fighting the nation with their guns and ammunition
Police and thieves in the street
Scaring the nation with their guns and ammunition
From genesis to revelations
What the next generation will be, hear me
All the crimes committed, day by day
No-one tries to stop it anyway
All the peacemakers turned war officers
Hear when I say
Police and thieves in the streets. (1976)

Moreover, Reggae apart from being a political entity was also used as a form of cultural and leisure activity. When blacks were being barred from various clubs and balls in Britain then it was Reggae which functioned as a substitute for both power and leisure. Furthermore, by the mid-1970s, Rasta beliefs and ideologies had an effect on African-Caribbean community in Britain. Phrases like 'Babylon', 'pressure', 'dread', 'sufferer' etc. had become a part of British black youth's vocabulary.

One of the most momentous developments in the history of Reggae in Britain was the emergence of indigenous Reggae groups. For a long time, African-Caribbean musicians were the ones who were resisting against intolerance and discrimination. However, by the mid-1970s, a whole new generation was willing to carry forward the legacy of Reggae. British Reggae groups such as Misty, Steel Pulse, and Black Slate etc. emerged with a dream to ameliorate the lives of poor blacks by giving them a voice. Most of these groups were inspired by the popular Jamaican band 'The Wailers'. Out of these, Steel Pulse is a well-known roots Reggae band from

Handsworth, Birmingham, a place largely inhabited by the African-Caribbeans, Indians and other Migrants groups. During the Second World War, many West Indians had come to Handsworth as part of the colonial war struggle. Moreover, this place was basically for the factory workers. Steel Pulse sang about the predicament of the black urban youths as many of them were going through a state of existential crisis when the band recorded their album *Handsworth Revolution* in 1977. The title song from the album advocates the issue of justice which seems to betray the Black youths;

I say the people of Handsworth, know that
One hand wash the other so they say
So let's join hands my brethren
Make the way for our children
And their children
Ensuring that they get life's fair share of equality
Doesn't justice stand for all?
Doesn't justice stand for all?
We find society putting us down
Crowning us, crowing us
A place of evil
Handsworth means us the black people
We are taking now. Speaking Jah Jah Language
Dread we are for a cause
Deprived of many things
Experienced phoney laws
Hatred Babylon brings
We know what you have got to offer

We know what's going on
Don't want no favours
Cause there is still hunger
Innocent convicted
Poor wage, hard labour
Only Babylon prospers
One Black represent all, all over the world
Can't bear it no longer
Blessed with the power
Of Jah creator
We will get stronger
And we will conquer
And forward ever and backward never
Handsworth Revolution. (1977)

While the British Reggae singers were singing and writing about the need for a revolution to change the gloomy and dismal state of existence, a new movement was emerging in the mid-1970s in Britain called "Lover's Rock Movement". For a long time, British Reggae followed the political views of The Wailers along with Rastafari ideologies but for the first time a new-fangled genre of Reggae tradition was shaping up in Britain. Lover's rock was a departure from the kind of Reggae style which had been followed so far in many parts of Britain. Lover's rock is a style of Reggae which is known for its melodious and romantic sound. It became immensely popular in London. The roots of the movement basically lies in the last days of rocksteady. This form of music was an apolitical counterpart to the conscious Reggae. Lover's rock soon became popular in America as well. American Reggae singer and song-writer Johnny Nash is considered to be one of the significant representatives of Lover's rock. Born in Texas, Johnny Nash began as a pop singer in the 1950s. He travelled to Jamaica in 1968 and little did he know that his journey to Jamaica will have quite an

influence on his own music. In Jamaica, Nash was introduced to Bob Marley and other band members who helped by introducing him to the recording studios. Other singers who are associated with Lover's rock are Ken Boothe and John Holt.

Reggae was male-dominated during its formative years in Britain just like it was in Jamaica. There were hardly any female Reggae singers. However, the style of Lover's rock was popular amongst women and the popularity of the form led to the foundation of a new generation of black British female Reggae artists. Black women who had been at the periphery of the social order were now gaining a financial independence and artistic creativity. They felt that roots Reggae never attempted to address their experiences. To fill up this gap, a number of female Reggae groups came into existence during the end of 1970s. Some of the groups were; 'Brown Sugar', '15, 16, 17', 'Sister Love', 'Carroll Thompson', 'Black Harmony', and 'Simplicity' etc. The women who had been quite and passive were now raising concerns about the issue of black womanhood. It is fascinating that Lover's rock was admired and appreciated by both men and women. Carroll Thompson's album *Hopelessly in Love* which was released in 1981 was well received. By the early 1980s, Lover's rock was playing everywhere from dance halls, clubs to blues parties and it was a great change from the roots Reggae which dominated the charts from the early 1970s. Lover's rock had an impact on the sound system industry as well. The domain of Reggae was engulfed not only with female singers and musicians, but also DJs, label owners, record producers, and sound system owners. It conveyed a sense of liberation in the true sense of the term. Lover's rock success and acceptance also strengthened the British Reggae industry which was heavily depended on Jamaica.

It is true that the West Indian immigrants and the music which they brought with them were seen with an eye of suspicion by the whites in Britain. During the time of post-war black settlement there was hardly any communication between the whites and the blacks. As the sound of African-Caribbean community moved to a few London night-clubs, a possibility of an interaction between the people of different races emerged on the surface. This section of the chapter will briefly explore the possibilities of socio-cultural communication between the immigrants and the British nationals.

The exchange of music and sound between the early Afro-Caribbean migrants and Britain dates back to the Second World War. As it has already been discussed that after the war, many migrants chose to live in England and this choice was going to transform the whole music scenario in England for ever. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, African tunes became prominent in many clubs of London. The white people were pleased to accommodate African music but not Africans. By the late 1960s, the traces of African-Caribbean sound could be felt within the white neighbourhoods which were closely located to the black settlements and ghettos. Spaces like black clubs, shebeens, and record shops provided that common ground where the people of different races could mingle and socialise. It is important to mention that places like record shops and shebeens would cater to a different class of people in comparison to night clubs. A shebeen was basically an illegal bar where alcohol would be sold without a license. In South Africa, during the apartheid regime, shebeen became an alternative to pubs and bars as indigenous Africans were not allowed to access taverns. Moreover, shebeen was used as an excuse by the British police to raid parts of the city which were primarily inhabited by the immigrants.

Many believe that one necessarily didn't have to live close to the black ghettos to be able to listen to African-Caribbean music as record shops would serve the purpose. Throughout the 1960s, Jamaican music didn't have a strong presence in the UK mainstream music industry. It in fact more or less remained underground. Mostly the consumption of Jamaican music by the whites took place within the boundaries of the clubs and a few incidents of musical success like Millie Small's "My Boy Lollipop" was nothing but a cultural anomaly as the British white culture was yet to accept the beats from Jamaica in their entirety. However, by the late 1960s, Jamaican rude boy culture had started to generate a dialogue and curiosity within the young whites. Reggae songs which were composed on the rude boy phenomenon further added to its popularity. Some of the features of rude boy culture such as; cropped hair and narrow trousers were imitated as well as appropriated by the young whites. Moreover, there were stark similarities between the rude boy and skinhead culture of UK. One artist who managed to penetrate British pop culture was Desmond Dekker. He was a Jamaican ska and Reggae musician, song-writer, and singer. His song "Israelites" became immensely popular in Both Britain and America after its release in 1968. The song delves into the concerns of rude boy and Rastafari. The

skinheads of UK could relate with the song as the life they were living wasn't any different than the one portrayed by Dekker in this song. The song highlights a state of despair and poverty;

Get up in the morning slaving for bread, sir

So that every mouth can be fed

Poor me Israelites. (1968)

Between 1969 and 1971, Reggae received a substantial amount of attention outside Jamaica. Apart from lyrics, the discourse of beats had contributed immensely to Reggae's desirability and attraction. The form of Reggae was finally getting some volume of love and acceptance. Furthermore, this reception translated into the success of Dave and Ansell Collins's "Double Barrel". Dave Barker and Ansell Collins both belong to Kingston and their song "Double Barrel" reached the top of the charts in UK soon after its release in 1971. At a later stage the song was covered by the famous ska band The Specials as well. The success of "Double Barrel" was a sign that whites were interested in the consumption of Jamaican music but with a reluctance. As black culture and art were on a rise in Britain, the white youths primarily in London were feeling threatened and insecure. British young boys wanted to enjoy Jamaican music but they didn't want to compromise on their space. For instance, most of the clubs and bars in London would have a majoritarian white population but by the early 1970s African-Caribbeans had started to enter these spaces. The black youths could no longer suppress their desire to access clubs of the capital city of England. Soon white youngsters were being outnumbered by the black community and whites certainly were not at all pleased with this sudden change. If this was not enough, many youth clubs stopped playing Reggae music to keep the black population at a distance. Reggae records were being discarded by numerous clubs. One could analyse that racism was still a strong part of white psyche. Simon Jones goes on to articulate that;

The realities of racism, together with ideological and political shifts inside the black community, served to exclude the skinheads from the leisure spaces they had earlier shared with young blacks. The sound system and blues scene recoiled into a more compact and exclusively black cultural sphere in order to

preserve itself from the white interest and intrusion which threatened its autonomy. (92)

The outcome of the clash between the blacks and the whites proved to be disadvantageous for the artistic and cultural freedom. Race and the need to maintain its purity led to the disappearance of white youths from the Reggae record shops, blues parties, and roots clubs etc. Overnight these spaces became black centric. At least the white society in general started to avoid these places consciously. It is a fact that music cannot be confined within a rigid structure and one of the qualities of music is that it is amorphous in its nature. Music can cross fences, borders, and boundaries. When music of Bob Marley came to Britain, it indeed pushed the boundaries of racial resentment. Many white youths could relate with his songs and the message his music conveyed. After Marley's incorporation into the mainstream music industry of Britain, Jamaican popular music had a visible effect on youth culture during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Bob Marley's British tour which was organised by Island Records in 1975 worked as a great device to break the ice between the people of different racial backdrops. Marley performed to a diversified Reggae aficionados in London, Birmingham, and Manchester. After the tour, it seemed like white youths had found a new hero. They could relate with the anti-establishment persona of Marley. With the arrival of Marley and his music, many white youths embarked on a journey to explore the Rastafari religion and its teachings. Moreover, recording producers projected Reggae as 'rebel music' which too contributed to the popularity of the genre. Mods, skinheads, and the follower of punk in UK have had a history of being dissident and nonconformist as they were not delighted with their surroundings and with the way things were unravelling in British society. The individualistic and rebellious nature of Reggae was admired by both mods and skinheads and Bob Marley was not an alien figure for them as his teachings and songs echoed the challenges which British youths were facing.

The punk movement began in 1976 and it was completely anti-thetical to the sophistication of other forms of music. Many punks chose to identify with the political and spontaneous nature of Reggae. The concerns of everyday life and sorrow which were addressed by Marley and other Reggae artists made punks sit back and

take a serious note of Jamaican music. Just like Reggae musicians, punks too didn't want to succumb to mainstream morality and culture. Furthermore, punks had to face discrimination on the basis of their appearance, the way Rastafari believers had to in Jamaica. One could clearly observe multiple similarities between these two forms of music. In fact, Bob Marley's song "Punky Reggae Party" recognised the resemblances which punk and Reggae movements shared. Marley sings;

New wave

New wave, new craze

Let me tell you

We are going to the party

And I hope you are hardy

So please don't be naughty

For it's a punky Reggae party.

It take a joyful sound

To make a world go round

Come with your heart and soul

Come and rock your boat

Cause it's a punky Reggae party.

Rejected by society

Treated with impunity

Protected by their dignity

I face reality.

New wave, new craze

New wave, new craze. (1977)

During the mid-1970s, at many punk events and gigs, Reggae was played quite often as a filler during the interval between bands. Many punk artists openly declared their love and admiration for Reggae. For instance, The Clash, an English punk rock band which was formed in 1976 did a cover of Junior Murvin's popular roots song "Police and Thieves". It is believed that Reggae was incorporated by the punk movement because of its potentiality to represent, the struggle of youths to gain political power and a freedom of cultural expression which was undoubtedly denied to them. The cultural exchange and the political alliance of the white and the black was a sign to form a collective group against the racist and fascist forces. Even though, this alliance have had its own history of disruption but eventually the white and black youths must have realised that they had to negotiate their differences in order to make their voice of dissent stronger.

However, the path to achieve the voice of dissent was not easy as the far right groups of Britain were highly critical of the cultural and music-oriented collaborations/conversations which were taking place between the young working class black and white youths. In fact organisations such as 'Anti-Paki League' and 'Rock against Communism' treated youth culture as a battle ground by disseminating detestation and violence. According to these organisations, the white culture was being destroyed by the Paki³ culture of Asia and the followers of Rastafari/Reggae. At this stage Bob Marley requested both white and black youths to stay united against such fascist groups.

The unity of black and white youths culminated into the origin of a few Reggae bands from the United Kingdom. For instance, Black Slate is one of the popular Reggae bands which originated in London in 1974. The band performed extensively in and around London and the band members were quite vocal in their support of Jamaican musicians such as Dennis Brown, Ken Boothe, and Delroy Wilson. Dennis Brown was one of the seminal representatives of Lover's rock, a

³ The term 'Paki' is a racial slur and it is used for people who belong to South Asia. It is believed that the term came into existence during the mid-1960s, the time when immigrants of multiple nationalities were moving to the United Kingdom. During the 1970s and 1980s, various gangs attacked South Asians as the gangs were not in support of immigration/immigrants. These incidents of attack were known as 'Paki-bashing'.

subgenre of Reggae. The group Black Slate had musicians from Jamaica, England, and Anguilla. Interestingly, The Clash too mentioned Ken Boothe and Delroy Wilson in a song titled “White Man in Hammersmith Palais⁴”.

Before Black Slate, one more ska and Reggae band originated in the United Kingdom during the 1960s called Symarip. The band was also known by many other titles such as The Bees, The Pyramids, Seven letters, and Zubaba. Most of the members of Symarip belonged to West Indian descent and from the very beginning, the band targeted skinhead audience. In fact Symarip went on to compose a number of songs such as; “Skinhead Girl”, “Skinhead Jamboree”, and “Skinhead Moonstomp”.

Reggae in India

It is an established reality that Reggae and ska outside the boundaries of Jamaica share a sense of intimacy and familiarity with two nation-states specifically; England and America. The history of the Caribbean islands shares a close alliance with these two countries. With immigrants, music came and it never left. During the course of writing this research, I was highly curious to explore the terrain of Reggae music in India. As I had mentioned in the very beginning of the chapter that during the period of colonization, the British Empire had taken Indians to the Caribbean islands for work purpose on sugar plantations. This act of relocation gave birth to chutney music, an amalgamation of two different cultures. On the other hand, Caribbean culture or music hardly touched the shores of India. With regard to Reggae music, Indians for a very long time spoke only of Bob Marley or Apache Indian.

One of the countries where Reggae music is creating an ample amount of interest amongst youths at present is India. Reggae is evolving and the interest in this form of music is constantly growing. Many believe that Reggae Rajahs is the primary reason for this change. A lot more people are paying attention to the legacy of Reggae

⁴ Hammersmith Palais was a ballroom in London and it contributed significantly in the dissemination and proliferation of jazz culture in the United Kingdom. It operated from 1919 to 2007. The Palais has played host to many bands and artists such as; The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Sex Pistols, The Police, and U2 etc.

music through the performances of this group. Reggae Rajahs is considered to be India's first Reggae sound system and it is from the capital city, New Delhi. During the first half of the decade of 2000, there were a few DJs in India, who were playing Reggae music in clubs and pubs. There weren't any Reggae bands so to say. Moreover, people didn't know much about Reggae at that time in India. Reggae and Jamaican music in general were limited to a very small group of people. In early 2009, Reggae Rajahs' group members Diggy Dang (Raghav Dang), Mr. Herbalist (Zorawar Shukla), and DJ MoCity (Mohammed S. Abood) came together for their love for Reggae. They wanted to introduce Reggae rhythms to the music lovers of India. Interestingly Mohammed S. Abood is the first soundboy from Iraq. All the group members met at a Bob Marley tribute event in Delhi and decided to do something concrete in order to bring the sound of Jamaica to India. Reggae Rajahs after its formation started playing roots Reggae, Lovers rock, dancehall, and ska across Delhi and by 2010 the group moved to other big cities of India. Initially, Reggae Rajahs had to face a big problem with training the Indian audience for Reggae as this form of music doesn't have an aggressive beat pattern something which the Indian club goers were not at all used to. Reggae Rajahs has emerged as the pioneer of Reggae in India and the group has been able to get international Reggae artists to perform in various parts of India. For Instance, the group managed to get Bob Marley's son Julien Ricardo Marley to perform in Goa in 2012.

In an interview titled "Reggae in India: Meet Reggae Rajahs" when the group is asked about how does it feel to play in India when the people here aren't familiar with Reggae? The group member General Zooz who joined Reggae Rajahs after its formation articulates;

It has been a very interesting experience. It was very difficult and it still is quite difficult, but at the same time is something new and people appreciate that we are doing something new and different. People till now have responded well to our shows and to the sound system style of entertainment, but probably in the future we'll have to do some more original stuff: right now we are writing, doing a bit of recording but not enough, it will make a big difference when we'll have our own music or own productions or

if we'll manage to combine some Hindi or Punjabi music with dancehall and Reggae that would be fantastic.⁵ (2013)

One of the reasons why Reggae took so long to come to India is because music from mainstream Hindi cinema dominates Indian audience. This act of domination leaves a little space for other forms of music to make their presence felt amongst the music lovers of India. The first wave of Reggae music came to India through Steven Kapur who is better known by his stage name Apache Indian. He is known for his experimentation and fusion of cultural elements of Jamaica, India, and England. While growing up in Handsworth, Birmingham Apache Indian was influenced by many Reggae record systems of his neighbourhood. He was a follower of Steel Pulse and during the 1980s, he started working with local sound systems. At this point of his life, Apache kept deadlocks like many Reggae artists who were the believers of Rastafari ideologies and principles. Moreover, he introduced the world to the hybrid sound of bhangra and ragga⁶ known as 'bhangramuffin' through his album *No Reservations* which was recorded in Jamaica in 1993. Apache Indian has also raised his voice for socially conscious issues such as; the institution of arranged marriage, Aids warning etc. through his music. Even though, Apache Indian's music was commercially viable but its impact didn't last too long.

On the other hand, Reggae Rajahs impact has been growing even since its inception. Apart from playing other people's music, the group also plays its own dubplates. While playing, Reggae Rajahs tries to build a connection between the audience and music by interacting with the crowd so that people don't feel alienated. Many don't understand the lyrics so the group while voicing over apart from entertaining also engages with the issues about society, corruption, violence and a need to respect women in India. Reggae Rajahs has composed songs such as "Make up your Mind", "Far Away", "One Love Nepal" and "Ram up Di Dance" etc. The song "One Love Nepal" was composed after the massive earthquake which occurred in Nepal on 25th April, 2015. The lyrics of the song are;

⁵ http://jamaicansmusic.com/news/Interviews/Reggae_In_India_MeetReggae_Rajahs

⁶ Ragga is a subgenre of dancehall and reggae.

This one goes out for the people of Nepal,
Stay strong my brothers and sisters
Nepal I can feel your pain
Everything is gonna be okay
Tomorrow will be a brighter day
I had a bad dream
Turned out it was a reality
Mother Nature's fury
Struck a place that's close to me. (2015)

Apart from Reggae Rajahs, there are other Reggae sound systems too which are emerging in India such as; Dakta Dub from Hyderabad, Low Rhyderz from Goa, and Bass Foundation from Delhi which includes raggamuffin Delhi Sultanate. There is India's first ska and rocksteady band as well named The Ska Vengers which comprises of Diggy Dang from Reggae Rajahs on guitar and Delhi Sultanate on vocals. It is heartening to see how different bands are coming together to circulate the sound of Reggae and ska collectively without any sense of rivalry. Reggae Rajahs believes that their group is all about life and music and they aren't very political unlike Delhi Sultanate.

Taru Dalmia, the stage name of Delhi Sultanate is a Delhi based poet and he has been spreading the sound of Jamaica like ska, dancehall, rocksteady, and Reggae in India. He is also an academic historian and social activist. Delhi Sultanate is someone who believes in speaking against the oppressive forces and he also likes to delve into the discourses which raise a political and social consciousness. Perhaps this is the reason he collaborated on 'Bant Singh Project'. Bant Singh is a Punjabi Dalit singer and a political activist from Jhabar Village in Mansa district, Punjab, India and he has been protesting against the power of the landowners who continue to exploit the landless poor workers and labourers. In 2006, he lost both his arms and his left leg in an attack performed by the upper caste neighbours who didn't want him to raise his

voice against the powerful men who had raped his minor daughter in 2000. It was the first time a Dalit from his region and village had protested against the upper-caste atrocities and violence. Even after losing his limbs, Bant Singh has not lost his voice as he continues to sing for various socio-political issues. When Delhi Sultanate got to know about this, he decided to visit Mansa with his friends for a project on the singer. The project finally culminated into a short film titled 'Word Sound Power – The Bant Singh Project' which documents the message his music conveys. In the short film, Bant Singh's song is mixed with dancehall beats. Bant Singh sings;

We have broken the chains of slavery
And have endured a lot of suffering
We want this government to know
That we will not let them sell out our nation
Capitalists today are eating into our nation's wealth
Yet, their obsession with money will not last
Let our sunlight not be eclipsed by their darkness
We want this government to know
That we will not let them sell out our nation.⁷ (2011)

Delhi Sultanate wants to connect with local traditions and the music which flows from rural, far off places of India. While growing up in California, Taru Dalmia before he took up the identity of Delhi Sultanate, got exposed to the dark side of America which was full of drug abuse, murder, and violence. He was highly uncomfortable with his surroundings. He wasn't pleased with American capitalist structure in which human life had no value what so ever. While I am writing this section of my thesis, America continues to go through a great socio-political crisis because of the senseless and brutal killing of many blacks. America really affected the way Taru perceives things. When he came to Delhi, he realised that it was no

⁷ These lyrics have been translated into English from Punjabi.

different from America. According to him, there is something obscene and violent about the consumer culture of Delhi. People in Delhi are lost in their own world and care the least about what is happening outside the big city they live in. On being asked if there is a bigger agenda behind his work? Delhi Sultanate in one his interviews titled “Activist/MC Delhi Sultanate: The new rich kids are ignorant, selfish, and crude” articulates;

A large section of urban India has benefited immensely from exploitation and destruction in the periphery of the country. In Orissa or Chhattisgarh, the government is fighting an internal war to control land that is very rich in natural resources. What’s happening there is no different from what is happening in parts of South America and Africa. It’s a continuation of the colonial scramble for resources and labor, except that the stakes are a lot higher now in terms of human and environment cost.

But if one is well fed, has access to the consumer paradise that modern cities are fast becoming, and does not experience discrimination or brutality on one’s own body, why would one question the things? In my mind this can only happen if either your parents, the people who surround you, or the art and culture that is around you encourage you to have a critical attitude and not be a passive human being. (2011)

Delhi Sultanate has composed songs like “No Capitalist Shall Escape”, “Rocking Time”, “Criss & Shine”, “War Dance”, “India-2-Africa”, and “Today not Tomorrow” etc. Furthermore, Delhi Sultanate through his sound system wants to take music to an open community from the confined spaces of clubs and pubs. If music is played outside in public then it can also be accessed by people who can’t afford to visit private spaces of clubs. Delhi Sultanate has also performed at places where a band normally would not even think of performing. For instance, he performed at a juvenile detention centre in East Los Angeles and along with The Ska Vengers he performed for the inmates of Delhi’s Tihar Jail. After the performance at Tihar, record label Universal Music India approached the band for a contract. After going

through the political content of the lyrics the record label expressed the desire to rewrite the songs but the band simply refused. Universal Music India was not comfortable with recording songs dealing with the issues of corrupt politicians and oppressed villagers. Delhi Sultanate has also worked on 'Blood Earth Project' which basically focuses upon the plight of Khonda tribe of South Odisha. The people of this tribe have been struggling to protect their land from the powerful mining companies. The project explores the connection between music and protest/revolution. Blood Earth project is a fusion of revolutionary songs in Oriya and Kui tribal languages with dub poetry and beats of Jamaica.

To conclude, one could remark that Reggae music has come a long way from the streets of Trench Town. Only a few must have imagined that the beats which represented a section of poor people of a Jamaican ghetto, one day will take over the world. What is really fascinating about Reggae is that even today it is perceived as a form of protest music and Reggae singers both in Britain and India have used this form of music to fight the tyrannical and repressive apparatuses of the social order. At present, Reggae has become an essential component of British society. On the other hand, artists like Reggae Rajahs and Delhi Sultanate with Ska Vengers continue to introduce the beats and music of Jamaica to Indian audience. Unfortunately, there are no Reggae stores in Delhi hence procuring records at times becomes problematic for the artists. Despite this hurdle, Reggae music has been gaining popularity in India. Perhaps as long as oppression, poverty, exploitation of poor people, violence and struggle exist, music will always be present to act as a site of resistance and protest.

Conclusion: Reggae at Present

This work has primarily concentrated on Reggae music of Jamaica. However, while writing this thesis other forms of music such as Ska, Jazz, and Calypso and many forms of subculture have also been analysed, as it is difficult to define Reggae in isolation. During the course of writing this research project, there was an attempt to define the genre of Reggae as coherently as possible. One can identify Reggae by paying attention to the pattern of beats it follows. For instance Reggae uses a very thick and heavy bass sound and the chords are played on the off beat of guitar. Before I started writing the thesis, there were many questions in my mind about Reggae and a lot was yet to be explored. Some of the key questions have been raised in the introduction of this research work and attempted to be answered in the course of it. For instance, the struggle and resistance which Reggae artists unremittingly had to deal with usually goes unchallenged. One of the reasons why Reggae is so political in its nature is possibly because of the conflict the act of singing and performing Reggae created. Before some of the Reggae artists became well-known, they were simply singing about their lives and the kind of difficulties they had been facing in the ghettos. The Jamaican government cared the least for the people singing and

performing Reggae as the artists couldn't contribute to the Jamaican economy during the formative years of Reggae. When performers like Bob Marley and The Wailers, Burning Spear, Peter Tosh etc. became popular outside Jamaica, the Jamaican government realised the worth of these artists. The government stood with Reggae artists to meet its own needs. For instance, it wasn't an uncommon practice for the political parties to approach Reggae groups to compose songs for their campaigns during the time of election in Jamaica. It was a clear sign of the kind of hypocrisy which the political parties would treat Reggae with.

Nevertheless, the inception of Reggae was an outcome of an artistic and cultural process including various music traditions of Jamaica. I have attempted to be coherent and selective in my approach so that a productive outcome could be achieved during the course of this research. At present, Reggae is viewed as an art which obliterates lines and boundaries across nations to unite people. For instance, during the Second World War, Reggae could form a sense of association between the poor people of Jamaica and the working class of UK as people in both the nations were suffering. It is also fascinating that when Reggae performers were being ostracised everywhere, they continued to sing songs of love, peace and equality. It was a common practice to construct a fallacious image of the Reggae artists by fabrication. Perhaps which is why it is believed that Reggae is for sufferers. At present, there are Jamaican Reggae singers who are going back to the Roots Reggae which is a subgenre of Reggae. Roots Reggae deals with the events and accounts of the everyday life. As it has been discussed that roots Reggae apart from dealing with the Rastafari beliefs, also recognises the life of a ghetto sufferer. Perhaps it was this eternal suffering which coerced many Jamaican youths to take up guns because guns could promise money and a sense of achievement no matter how frivolous and hollow the sagacity of achievement is. Most of the boys who chose to be with gangs were very young boys, completely disillusioned with the government and the society. One of the reasons why so many boys aspired to be with gangs was because somewhere they had realised that the people who made rules in the ghetto were the leader of gangs. This research looks into the history of gang culture in Jamaica too. The phenomenon of gangs in Jamaica was so strong that even the police and drug squads were frightened to visit the ghettos. Bounty Killer, a contemporary Jamaican Reggae

singer and dancehall deejay in his song “Sufferer” highlights the predicament of people who suffer all throughout their lives. Bounty Killer sings;

Leaders listen to these words I’m uttering’
Firmly, I am not stuttering
Look around can’t you see my people suffering
The future is weak and it’s guttering.
Born as a sufferer, grew up as a sufferer
Struggle as a sufferer, make it as a sufferer
Fight as a sufferer, survive as a sufferer
Youths in the ghetto, well, the most of them a sufferer.
Politicians get the guns and give it to the sufferer
Sufferer go get the gun and shoot another sufferer
Who full up the prison you know, see a pure sufferer
Who full up a dozen hospital a pure sufferer? (2006)

Bounty killer has been a sufferer too as at the age of fourteen, a stray bullet hit him during a gunfight between the political gangs. So many children in Jamaica grow up with violence all around. It is quite tragic to state that Reggae singers even now have to take highlight the issue of ‘suffering’ through their music. There hasn’t been any constructive change in lives of poor Jamaicans. Violence is still the norm of the day in ghettos. Criminal elements and gangs are still functional and they continue to be influential. This thesis analyses the fabric of political and gang violence too in Jamaica. The gang culture could subsist only because of the corrupt politicians as it has been stated earlier that there was a close alliance between the gangs and the politicians. Bob Marley and his band members too were attacked once and it is believed that one of the political parties was behind the attack. Even after the attack,

Bob Marley and the Wailers continued to criticise the presence of violence in Jamaica.

Reggae which connects today was detested and abhorred by many during the 1960s and 1970s in Jamaica. One can find similarities between Reggae and blues. As both blues and Reggae artists believed that they sing to express pain and a state of hopelessness. In Jamaica, it was very difficult for people of Trench Town to even dream of a better future as they lived in the state of impoverishment for years and years while the government failed to provide even the basic facilities. One can say that in the vicious cycle of power and money, the people who belonged to the lowest strata of Jamaican society were further marginalised. Very little resources were available which could improve the lives of poor people. In the midst of despair and agony, Reggae emerged as a great medium to express one's discomfort with the society and the government in general. During the 1960s, many Jamaican youths had started to sing and compose Reggae music and Bob Marley was one among them. Some of these youths were so poor that they couldn't even afford music instruments. Many invented their own indigenous instruments. Hence, one could argue that Reggae is not just a form of music but it is an experience.

In this research, I have attempted to establish that Reggae came across as a form of resistance against the oppression of Jamaican society which was based on class segregation. There was no communication across class. Poor people were avoided by the affluent ones. In fact, amongst the people from the middle and prosperous class there was a strong inclination towards the western culture and tradition. Reggae in this chapter apart from questioning the white cultural hegemony which always tried to project the non-white culture as the culture of the other also demolishes the stereotypes which were associated with Rastafarians. Many people from the upper class in Jamaica believed that Reggae could create chaos and disruption in society hence it was needed to be overlooked. This research paid attention to the role of Rastafarians in spreading the message of love and peace. It is an irony that the followers of Rasta beliefs were perceived as criminals in Jamaican society. Rastafarians despite harsh criticism from the society, continued to question the norm. Both Reggae and Rastafarians tried relentlessly to create a space for dissent beyond class binaries. The inception of Reggae is without a doubt one of the major

events in the history of Jamaica. In fact, Bob Marley in his song “You Can’t Blame the Youth” questions history which is normalized. He sings;

You can’t blame the youth

You can’t fool the youth

You teach the youth Christopher Columbus¹

And you said he was a very great man

You teach the youth about Marco Polo²

And you said he was a very great man

You teach the youth about the Pirate Hawkins³

And you said he was a very great man

You teach the youth about the Pirate Morgan⁴

And you said he was a very great man

All these great men were doing

Robbing, raping, kidnaping, and killing

So-called great men were doing

Robbing, raping, kidnaping, and killing. (1991)

Moreover, the issues of gender and race too are addressed in this project. Female Reggae artists have hardly been spoken and written about. During my research, I came across the reality that while there is an abundance of material on

¹ An Italian explorer, navigator, and colonizer.

² A Venetian merchant traveller.

³ John Hawkins was an English naval commander, administrator, navigator, merchant and a slave trader.

⁴ Henry Morgan was a Welsh privateer and an admiral of the royal navy.

Reggae music in general which mainly accommodates the male Reggae artists, there were a very few books highlighting the role of female artists in the growth of Reggae. Jamaica is a highly male dominated society and this research looks into the lives of those few selective women who dared to question the norm and conventions of the patriarchal structure of the social order. Millie Small, Rita Marley, Marcia Griffiths, Judy Mowatt, Sonia Pottinger are some of the women who interrogated the whole canon of male supremacy. The primary reason of writing an entire chapter on gender and Reggae was to provide a sense of visibility to a few courageous female Reggae singers and record producers. It is true that societies which are governed and ruled by men often feel threatened by the presence and voice of powerful women. Jamaican patriarchal society tried its best to shame female Reggae/ska artists by giving derogatory titles to those who chose to step out of their homes. The otherization of women was a common phenomenon in Jamaica. Interestingly Cedella Marley, the first born child of Bob and Rita Marley too got into the Jamaican music industry. She became a part of the family group titled 'Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers'. It consisted of Ziggy Marley, Sharon Marley, Stephen, and Cedella Marley. The group came into existence at Bob Marley's request as he wanted the Marley siblings to unite people through their music. At present, Brick & Lace, a Jamaican and R&B band consisting of sisters Nyanda and Nailah Thorbourne continue to sing. Brick & Lace released their first album in 2007 titled *Love is Wicked*. The group has performed in many African countries such as; Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and so on. This group continues to subsist in the world which is dominated by the male artists.

After discussing gender and Reggae, this research moves into the discourse of race and its representation. I questioned Marcus Garvey and his beliefs with reference to Black race and refuted the claims made by Garvey whereby he endorses the policy of creating a nation only for Africans. In my opinion, there are serious problems with such an approach as the creation of a separate nation particularly for blacks might be detrimental to the dialogue of race and racial synchronisation. It is essential for people from diverse racial backgrounds to come together and communicate in order to establish a racial harmonization. Moreover, I endeavour to establish that one cannot impose a collective identity on Africans as Africa in itself represents a multiplicity of cultures and dialects. Moreover, I found Garvey's principles about

race and Jamaican identity to be an extension of the oppressive views of the European colonial empire. I attempt to assert that hatred and violence cannot be the tools to achieve a sense of identity. Furthermore, the domain of identity is always in the process of becoming. Thus, a reductionist understanding of identity can be threatening to a social order. This research challenges any authoritarian lens to view race. For instance, there are substantial numbers of creoles in Jamaica and their existence represent interculturality and hybridity. The formation of identity isn't as simple as perhaps Garvey imagined or understood.

A part of this research looks into the legacy of Bob Marley. Marley of course is not the sole representative of Reggae but he is certainly the most popular Reggae artist ever. Over the years Marley has been perceived as a symbol of dissent who struggled against the opinionated Jamaican society. His belief in love, freedom, peace, and equality somewhere made him the timeless artist. His songs have been covered by many artists and even now Marley and his words continue to haunt any oppressive system. The political violence almost killed Bob Marley and The Wailers. However, the bullet marks made Marley and the other bands even stronger to continue their journey of music. I felt there was a great need to read the persona of Bob Marley as a component of this thesis as it was him who made the people of Trench Town believe that one could think of a better world. While reading Bob Marley, the unpleasant and fraudulent underbelly of Jamaica is also highlighted in this research.

Towards, the end of the thesis, I analyse how the African-Caribbean community in Britain strikes back to the colonial empire by influencing the white culture of England through their art and music. Many English youths had started to record and perform Reggae after the establishment of Caribbean communities in England. Initially, I wanted to focus upon Reggae and its influence in America as well. While writing the project I realised that a lot had already been written about the cultural exchange which took place between Jamaica and America. Thus, a decision was made to focus upon Britain given the history the white nation has had with the islands of the Caribbean. While glancing upon the socio-political reality of the Caribbean immigrants in the post Second World War England, the research articulates the impact of black art on forms of British Subculture. To contextualise the

relevance of the genre of Reggae in India, bands such as Delhi Sultanate and Reggae Rajahs are analysed to form an understanding of the reasons why Reggae is gaining popularity in India.

However, at present Reggae within the paradigm of popular culture is turning into a commodity. Bob Marley, dreadlocks of Reggae artists, and Rasta colours are being appropriated into products of consumption within the consumerist structure of society. There are Rasta shoes, t-shirts, caps, bags, headphones, energy drink etc. available in the market. Many consumers of these products are completely unaware of the philosophy of Rastafarians. Moreover, it is highly disturbing to witness the continued commodification of Bob Marley in today's time. Sometimes I contemplate, is Bob Marley just an image which has been reduced to a mere merchandise? Marley himself was a staunch believer of anti-capitalism. According to him the biggest possession one can have is certainly not money but life.

The Jamaican government earns a colossal amount of money every year by projecting Marley as an object of significance to the masses. What is the reason that stars and iconic figures can't escape from being commodities in the present world which is dominated by the consumer culture? In my opinion, the answer to this question lies in the necessity of senseless possession which cannot be overlooked by the consumers. It is true that record companies in Kingston such as Studio One and VP Records were making a huge profit by selling the records of Wailers. However, one also needs to understand that it wasn't just music which was being bought by people but it was Marley's persona/image too which was constantly being sold and bought. At present, it is not an uncommon site to come across the posters of Bob Marley in marketplaces and some of his iconic images are produced and reproduced all the time.

Jean Baudrillard in his essay titled "Hypermarket⁵ and hypercommodity" states that the objects we own are no longer mere commodities as they start to dominate our lives. Baudrillard articulates that we live in the world of images and apart from informing and communicating the images are becoming an integral part of commodity culture. Moreover, objects lose their 'specific reality' within the

⁵ Baudrillard by 'hypermarket' means the hyperspace of commodity.

boundaries of hypermarket and hypercommodity. (77) For instance, Bob Marley doesn't remain the representative of the oppressed and the third world within the commodity culture. He rather becomes a collection of images which might or might not have any relevance with his past and struggle.

Furthermore, Theodor W. Adorno in his seminal work *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* writes about the phenomenon of mass culture and how it manipulates society into passivity. Adorno articulates that as cultural objects become more substitutable they deteriorate in significance. Moreover, the culture industry might encourage a fallacious need for consumption. It's essential to maintain a sense of objectivity with any culture in general. Adorno in his essay "The schema of mass culture" remarks; "Mass culture is incompatible with its own objectivity." (68). He goes on to say that art is often devalued under the rubric of mass culture. Furthermore, Adorno writes; "If mass culture has already become one great exhibition, then everyone who stumbles into it feels as lonely as a stranger on an exhibition site." (71)

It seems with endless consumption of Reggae and its various aspects, objectivity is getting lost somewhere. At present Bob Marley has become a site of exhibition. The culture of exhibitionism is certainly damaging the legacy of Reggae and Rastafarianism. Moreover, the act of transforming Reggae into an entity of commodification somewhere defies the principles upon which the whole Reggae movement was established. Bob Marley who didn't believe in the philosophy of possession and exhibition in his song titled "Redemption Song" sings;

Old pirates, yes, they rob I

Sold I to the merchant ships,

Minutes after they took I

From the bottomless pit.

Won't you help to sing?

These songs of freedom?

Cause all I ever have,

Redemption songs,

Redemption songs. (1980)

I have come to the conclusion that Reggae still remains a site of resistance despite it becoming a consumable commodity deviated from the primary purpose of its inception. In fact, Reggae at present has become a global phenomenon. As far as the nature of Reggae is concerned, it is so vast that it was not probable to encompass all the facets of this art in the present research. For instance, the question of Jamaican lyricists and their obliviousness still remains a subject which hasn't been explored much. There are many Jamaican poets who write Reggae songs too but there is no representation of these people because they are often overshadowed by the singers and the marketing strategies of the record producers.

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Appendix

Interview

Artist- Reggae Rajahs

(July, 2016)

The primary reason to take this interview was to gain a perspective from the people/bands who interact with reggae music on an everyday basis. Some of the questions which I have raised in my research project find an echo in this interview. Reggae Rajahs is an upcoming reggae band from India and the band hopes to disseminate the rhythm of reggae all over India.

1) How did the group “Reggae Rajahs” come into existence?

Reggae Rajahs started as a tool to promote reggae music in India. The three founding members, Diggy Dang, DJ MoCity and General Zooz started weekly reggae nights in New Delhi in 2009. We started DJing and Mcing, slowly progressing to perform in a traditional Jamaican sound system style.

2) Why did you choose reggae as a mode of artistic and cultural expression? Does your music follow the legacy of Jamaican political reggae in any manner?

We all have a strong passion for reggae music. It is positive, uplifting music with heavy basslines and captivating melodies. Our music reflects many aspects of reggae – the political/ social side, the uplifting/ inspiring side and the overwhelming vibe of unity and love.

3) What do you have to say about the reception of reggae in India? Are there a lot of people listening to reggae?

Reggae music in India is still in its infancy. It is not popular music by any means although people are slowly starting to open up to it. There are many Indian artists working hard to make more and more people in the country open their ears to reggae music.

4) What has been the response so far to the kind of music Reggae Rajahs is playing and producing?

I think in the beginning people were a little unsure about Reggae Rajahs but now we have reached a place where we have a little following. The main thing is that we enjoy the music we play and I think that energy is reflected into the crowd. I would say most people leave a Reggae Rajahs show very entertained.

5) What do you have to say about the stereotypes which are commonly associated with reggae such as ‘reggae is all about Bob Marley and Marijuana’?

Reggae music is fortunate to have an immensely talented icon like Bob Marley as it's most famous exponent. I think Bob Marley is an excellent introduction into reggae music – almost every reggae fan I know has been introduced to the genre by him! Of course people need to explore more - reggae is a genre of music with a surprisingly large number of subgenres within it. As for marijuana use, it will always be associated with reggae because reggae artists speak very openly about legalization. Whereas, rappers and rock stars probably smoke as much as reggae artists, the reggae community embraces it and chooses to normalize it.

6) In Jamaica reggae started with the poor ghetto youths hence the tag of low art however, in India reggae is assumed to be limited to a niche crowd who frequent clubs that endorse reggae. What do you have to say about this paradox/contradiction?

It is a contradiction that we have debated over a lot! Reggae music is something that has been brought to India from the outside. It is not a local, indigenous

movement. Therefore, at its inception, it is important for people who have travelled to other places where reggae is popular to set the vibe. The way I see it, the current generation of reggae artists are simply laying down the foundation blocks for reggae in India. The real growth will happen when people take it to the streets, like what has happened with hip hop in India. Hip hop started in posh clubs in Delhi and Mumbai in the late 90s and now it has been taken to the streets by rappers, graffiti artists and break dancers. We are hoping that the same thing happens with reggae.

7) Who is Bob Marley to reggae? According to you what are the reasons of his popularity?

He is the godfather. The single, most important reggae artist ever. His infectious melodies, simple but powerful lyrics and unforgettable voice make him unique not just in reggae but across all musical genres. He combines the idea of protest with the idea of love perfectly, a global icon.

8) Would you like to comment upon female reggae artists from India in general?

We have a few upcoming females in the reggae scene. Miss Samara C/ Begum X from The Ska Vengers/ Bass Foundation Roots was not brought up singing reggae but has developed her style to include a strong reggae feel to it. Syncroshakti from Bangalore is another female singer to watch out for. She composes her own songs and they often have strong lyrical content. There are also a number of female dancers that are popularizing the dancehall style in Mumbai (Jahnavi Sheriff) and Chennai (Afrontal).

9) Your favorite reggae bands/groups which you play often?

This is an unanswerable question! We have so many. But from the current crop of artists, we like Chronixx, Protoje, Kabaka Pyramid, Popcaan, Busy Signal and of course Damian Marley.

10) What are your current and future projects?

We are working on more original music. We also have a built a 10k watt sound system (10,000 Lions) with some Italians in Goa which we will be touring around the country in October. And of course the second edition of our reggae festival, Goa Sunsplash will be happening in mid-January 2017.

11) Do you think reggae is here to stay in India?

Of course, there are so many people working so hard to make sure it stays.

12) Any comments on the trend of dreadlocks and Rasta colours?

Rasta colours traditionally symbolize the blood spilled by people fighting for freedom (red), the earth (green) and warmth and sunshine (yellow). Of course it has now become fashionable to wear these colours and I think a lot of people associate them with a laid back, relaxed “reggae” way of life. Dreadlocks are a protest against the system, a sign that an individual won’t necessarily live as is expected of them in a society. This is true for Sadhus and Rastas alike. I guess now it is not necessarily always the case, with some people again growing dreadlocks purely for fashion!