

June 2005

Representations of the Body of the New Nation in *The Harder They Come* and *Rockers*

Ifeona Fulani

anthuriumcaribjournal@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium>

Recommended Citation

Fulani, Ifeona (2005) "Representations of the Body of the New Nation in *The Harder They Come* and *Rockers*," *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium/vol3/iss1/2>

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal by an authorized editor of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.

From the moment of its declaration of independence from Britain in 1962, the government of Jamaica assumed the challenge that confronted all post-slavery, postcolonial societies in the Americas, that of forging a nation from a population stratified and divided by race and color. At that time, Jamaica's population was 95% of African descent, 3% of Indian descent, 2% European and 1% Chinese. The state's chosen motto "out of many one people," far from representing the state of the new nation, encapsulated both a narrative of the state's colonial origins and the challenge of forging a nation from a racially diverse and unequal population.

Anti-colonial nationalist movements asserted the right to self-determination and sovereignty and demanded eradication of imposed colonial structures of racial inequality. It was assumed that the stages of modernization and development that the postcolonial state would implement, would also bring about equality within the nation, while raising the newly independent state to a position of equal status within the international community of sovereign states. This role, represented by the social elite as their responsibility, was one that justified their privilege. However, as Percy Hinzen explains, "If we accept the Marxist notion of the state as the institutional form in which the social power of the bourgeois class is constituted and exercised... then the sheer impossibility of a democratic postcolonial transformation becomes evident" (106).

In Jamaica, the initial effort at "imagining" the new nation was led by nationalist activists and intellectuals, influenced by Frantz Fanon's writings on the role of the intellectual and of culture in building national identity and national consciousness.¹ Academics, writers and filmmakers responded to Fanon's argument that source material for the cultural reconstruction of postcolonial nations was to be found in the struggles of the people and in their newest forms of creative and political expression. This translated into a renewed interest in the social conditions of the peasantry, the working class, and the urban poor and urban popular culture. This interest is evident in two films that were released in Jamaica in the post-independence period, *The Harder They Come* (1972) and *Rockers* (1977).

With the release of *The Harder They Come* in 1971, the Jamaican cinema was born. Directed and produced by Perry Henzell, a white Jamaican with a background in advertising, *The Harder They Come* is a realistic evocation of the grim struggle for survival in Kingston's ghettos. The making of the film was a conscious attempt to produce a commercially successful, authentically Jamaican film that represented working class Jamaican life.² The film targeted international audiences with what Henzell called a "tropical syllabus" (Marshall 101),³ but with the potential to "crossover" in its appeal to white, western audiences. A significant aspect of the film's appeal was the star status of its protagonist, reggae singer Jimmy Cliff, and the sound track of reggae songs, many of which have become classics.

Released six years after *The Harder They Come*, *Rockers* follows the adventures of a ghetto Rastaman. Written and directed by a New York based Greek filmmaker, Theodoros Bafaloukis, and financed by capital raised in the USA, the film's purpose was primarily to bring Rastafarian culture and music to an international audience, the same audience which *The Harder*

They Come targeted.⁴ However, aesthetically and discursively the two films differ so radically as to compel comparison. The highly polished cinematography *The Harder They Come* contrasts sharply with *Rockers*, which has the naturalistic look of a low budget documentary. The picaresque plot of *Rockers* is loosely constructed and semi-comedic, and its Rastafarian protagonist wholly lacking in glamor, in contrast with the stylized, star-driven, tense dramatic narrative of the earlier film.

The Harder They Come depicts the transformation of its protagonist Ivan from a naïve country boy, who comes to “town” to pursue his dream of wealth and stardom, to a gun toting *ruud bwai*, who at the close of the film is hunted down and shot by the police. David Scott notes that, “[i]n the late 1960s and early 1970s the *ruud bwai* was a paradigmatic Fanonian figure, the embodiment of an internalized colonial violence and the practitioner of alienated rituals of resistance” (195). In *The Harder They Come* the trajectory of Ivan’s story charts the stages of the *ruuddie*’s formation, from naïve ambition to disillusionment with the status quo and violent rebellion.

Ivan’s experience of urban life is punctuated by social and personal violence, but whereas the more nebulous violence of social, economic and political oppression shapes the backstory of *Rockers*, there is a significant absence of weapons and bloodshed as the protagonist mobilizes his community in collective forms of cultural resistance. The loose narrative of *Rockers* begins with the quest of the Rasta/trickster character Horsemouth for a self-sustaining livelihood. However, when a syndicate of lower middle class racketeers steals his motorbike, Horsemouth tirelessly organizes the Rastamen in his community to seek justice in the form of retrieving his bike and punishing the wrongdoers, Robin-Hood style. At the close of the film Horsemouth enjoys the reward of the righteous—a good night’s sleep.

My aim in this paper is to examine contrasting representations of “the people” offered in the two films. My critical analysis will be confined to representations of the emancipatory desires of working class and poor men. Looking first at *The Harder They Come* and secondly at *Rockers*, I will examine the emblematic figure of the *ruud bwai*, the challenge posed to his cultural and political significance by the figure of the Rastaman, and the changing political environment that enabled this challenge.

The Harder They Fall: Independence and the Dream of Freedom

Considered in the context of a national cultural initiative, Perry Henzell’s privileged socio-economic background and his career as maker of TV advertisements invites questions of cultural identity, questions of representation, or, what Stuart Hall calls “positions of *enunciation*” (220). Critic Paul Willemen has identified the potential for opportunism afforded by post-independence cultural movements, noting that, “the call for cinema rooted in national cultures has been repeated in a variety of ways, perhaps most vocally by national bourgeoisies invoking ‘national culture’ in order to get the state to help them monopolise the domestic market” (17).

Even though it was far beyond the scope of Jamaica's nascent film industry to attempt to compete in a domestic market dominated by Hollywood, the overt commercialism of *The Harder They Come* is a clear indication of its director's bid for at least a share of the domestic and international market.

The popularity of the cinema in Jamaica had been fed from the 1950s onwards by a steady inflow of Hollywood films that generated an enthusiastic local audience with tastes shaped by the western, a favored genre with this audience. The "outlaw" cowboy, the gun, the gunfight or shoot-out became iconic across the Caribbean, and reverberated throughout Jamaican popular music culture of 1969 and the 70s in song lyrics and in the names of singers and disc jockeys. Bob Marley's song, "I Shot The Sheriff," and the once popular DJ, Clint Eastwood, are only two of a host of examples.

Ivan, the protagonist of *The Harder They Come*, becomes fixated on the cinema, captivated by the bravado of the cowboy whose outsider status and refusal to surrender to the injustices of the social system provide a narrative for his days on the run as man wanted for murder. The closing scenes of the film present Ivan, gun in hand and cornered by a group of soldiers. The barrel of his gun is empty, but Ivan desperately feigns bravado, challenging "the fastest gun" to a gunfight. He draws his weapons and is shot down in a shower of bullets. He meets his death mimicking a mythic hero of the North American frontier.

Henzell's adaptation of the tropes of the western to his film project is profoundly ironic; as Robert Stam and Ella Shohat explain, the narrative embedded in the western is one of conquest, genocide and imperialism:

The myth of the frontier has its ideological roots in . . . the competitive laws of Social Darwinism, the hierarchy of the races and the sexes, the idea of progress. It gave exceptionalist form to the . . . general thrust of European expansion into Asia, Africa and the Americas . . . westerns usually place us at a historical moment . . . when the characters' point of origin is no longer Europe but Euro-America. (115)

While Ivan and an audience of poor Jamaicans watch a western in a Kingston cinema, the western enacts its metonymic significance as the means by which American products, cultural forms and consumer desires are absorbed into their imaginations and into their lives. The song with which *The Harder They Come* opens, "You can get it if you really want it," plays while Ivan stares out of the window of the bus which brings him from country to town, gazing longingly at a white convertible driven by a light-skinned youth. Later in the film, while Ivan is on the run, he car-jacks a similar white convertible and careens around a golf course in it, laughing euphorically to the now ironic strains of "You can get it." As Ivan pursues his dream of freedom via stardom, he becomes both a fantasy consumer and a consumable object, as do his songs, both within the film and in the international market for music and films. The international

audience for reggae music was itself a consequence of what Dick Hebdidge terms “Americanisation,” as the worldwide popularity and availability of African American music from the late 1950s onwards opened up new possibilities and access to international markets for Caribbean musicians.⁵ Thus the very possibility of the film *The Harder They Come* reaching an international audience was a consequence of the “Americanisation” of the film and music industries.

Kenneth Harris’ commentary in “Sex, Race Commodity, and Film Fetishism in *The Harder They Come*,” elaborates a reading of the film as a fetishized commodity that also fetishizes the black body of Ivan/Jimmy Cliff in order to sell itself to white audiences (212). The scene in which Ivan is tried and punished for cutting his tormentor Langa with a shard of broken glass, culminates with Ivan bound hand and foot and face down over a barrel while a policeman beats his bare buttocks with a tamarind switch, watched by a circle of spectators. Harris describes this scene as “little less than sadomasochistic, homosexual pornography” (214), and designates it the point of convergence of Marxian commodity fetishism and Freudian sexual fetishism. I would add that this is also a moment of historical convergence, that the beating of Ivan invokes the colonial disciplinary regime and the brutalities of the plantation system on which that regime was based; the abject body of Ivan recalls the abjection of the slave body. The black body that was the fetishized commodity in the slave market is similarly fetishized and commodified as cultural capital.

From another perspective, this scene reflects middle-class anxiety about a threat to the established social order posed by the “indiscipline” of the black masses, personified here in the *ruud bwai* Ivan. If, as David Scott has argued, freedom and citizenship were assured only to those whose readiness could be measured by a “norm of civilization” (86), the delinquency of Ivan and those like him excludes them from the ranks and rights of citizenship. This scene, and the film in its entirety, is a graphic reminder of the continuing subjugation of the poor black man in a nation that, even as it celebrates its independence from one colonial/imperial power—Great Britain—has become a site for cultural and economic conquest by another—the USA.

Immediately following the scene of Ivan’s subjection, he is seen recording the film’s title song “The Harder They Come” in the studio of Hilton, the record mogul who pays him \$20 dollars for the rights to the song. The song articulates Ivan’s disillusionment with “the pie up in the sky,” with dreams of “making it,” and the promises made by politicians of a better economic future for the nation. At this moment he resolves to get whatever “goods” he can by whatever means. As he sings the lyrics, “I’m going to get my share, what’s mine,” his body movements express tension, his facial muscles are taut, and his skin is glazed with perspiration; all of this is indicative of a rage barely contained. In this Fanonian instant, Ivan’s transformation into a *ruud bwai*, who acknowledges neither rule nor law, is complete. To quote David Scott, his body communicates “the sense of menace, threat, and imminent possibility of explosive violence” (212), a bodily communiqué that will call down upon him the full powers of the state’s disciplinary machinery. In a sense, Ivan’s body determines his fate.

Eventually, he is inducted into the protection arm of the ganga export trade by his neighbor José, but Ivan quickly realizes that he will never share in the profits of the ganga export trade. He realizes that, like the music industry, control and profits lie in the hands of petty bourgeois criminals. When his plan to take control of the protection racket that operates within the community in which he lives is betrayed by José, Ivan goes on the run, eluding capture by the police for long enough to achieve notoriety. Hilton, the record producer, exploits news reports of Ivan's escapades to make his record a hit. Locals fascinated by the glamor of the *ruudie* rush to buy his record, and the fetishization and the commodification of the *ruud bwai* figure take hold. Ultimately, the exploitation by capital of a sensationalized narrative of Ivan's defiance of the law, of the postcolonial order, and of capital itself, serves to feed the collective fetishization of the *ruud bwai* and to drain Ivan's rebellion of political significance.

Rastafari and the Healing of the Nation

In the eight years between the release of *The Harder They Come* and *Rockers*, the Jamaican state's efforts to establish and maintain political and economic independence gradually collapsed. With the signing of the IMF Agreement by Prime Minister Michael Manley in 1978, the gateway was opened for the inflow of global and US multinational capital with disastrous consequences for Jamaica's agricultural and small-scale manufacturing economies. Thousands of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers were unemployed and fed the stream of migrants to the USA and Canada. Arguably, the pressures of unemployment and poverty and the failure of the state to implement remedial measures fed individual rebelliousness. In the country and in the towns, poor people preyed upon one another and minor crimes such as petty theft and praedial larceny proliferated. Okpiko Grey defines these behaviors as "small, persistent and cumulative acts of individual and group empowerment" (221). However, he argues that the gradual effect of these small acts of rebellion was, on the one hand, to alter power relations between classes and, on the other hand, to refashion the social identity of the urban lower classes ("Rethinking Power" 221-22). The figure of the *ruud bwai* is emblematic of this form of agency. The deteriorated moral culture engendered by such self-seeking and individualist behaviors bred aggression and violence as a means of securing advantages, and fostered consumer materialism and a pre-occupation with social status. Grey associates this period with an orientation to short-run advantage in preference to sustained effort towards social or political change, and with a profound ambivalence towards discourses of black consciousness and black liberation ("Rethinking Power" 211).

Grey attributes the proliferation and persistence of lower class rebelliousness to the fluctuating morality of the state itself and to the erosion of democracy in Jamaica: "Evidence from the past thirty years confirms an erosion of democratic practices in Jamaica as the state has increasingly resorted to political victimization, violence and illegality as methods of political rule" ("Rethinking Power" 215). Grey describes this erosion of democracy as parasitism: "Parasitic rule in Jamaica is the form that state power takes as dominant classes attempt to extend their political power, control a fragmented society, manage dependence in the world system, and

expunge rebellious challenges from below” (“Rethinking Power” 217). The cumulative effect of “parasitic rule” is a breakdown of civility and the collapse the already fragile structures of social cohesion, resulting in a yawning gulf that separates lower class blacks from the black, mulatto and white bourgeoisie.

Fanon has argued that culture functions as a site of resistance against colonial oppression and as a site from which oppressed peoples have struggled for freedom. In the midst of the social, economic and political crises of the 1970s, a revitalized African cultural nationalist discourse among sections of the lower classes influenced by Rastafarian ideology and the radical intelligentsia, a revitalized African cultural nationalist discourse restated the call for the emancipation of black people from racist domination. For Jamaica’s lower classes, the promise of independence had been the promise of both freedom from colonial rule and racial equality; however, equality as conceptualized in the Jamaican nationalism of the racially diverse ruling elite was measured in terms of access to the rights and privileges of the former colonial ruling class, and not in terms of equal rights and justice for the marginalized and exploited black majority. In fact, the quest for racial equality served to conceal the actual constitution of social power and to leave structures of exploitation and repression unchallenged.

The Rastafarian movement had consistently challenged the hegemony of Europeans and European culture from the late 1930s onwards, calling for greater racial consciousness among poor and black Jamaicans. Leonard Howell, an early leader of the movement, advocated greater attention to affairs on the African continent, and rallied support for the Ethiopian King who was battling against fascist Italian forces of invasion. It was the support—and later reverence—for the Ethiopian Monarch, Ras Tafari Selassie I, that earned the movement its name. When the anti-colonial struggle exploded in Kenya, Howell’s followers began to wear their hair long and matted in identification with the Mau Mau, the “dread locks” which have ever since been associated with Rastafarians.⁶

The Rastafarians envisioned freedom as the absence of all forms of state oppression, the absence of “isms and schisms.”⁷ Although repatriation to a decolonized Africa later became an ideological objective, Rastafarians worked to create a community bound by race pride and an Afro-Jamaican culture founded on principles of co-operation and self-reliance. I argue that the movement was apolitical in that it remained detached from the power mongering of the two main political parties and from electoral politics in general. It was understood that a separation of the nation from the parasitism of the state was essential for the survival of black people who were understood to be the “true” Jamaican nation. As Horace Campbell explains in *Rasta and Resistance* (1987), a prime objective of the movement was to spread seeds of self-reliance among the rural poor, and to counteract the widespread pettiness and covetousness that were a legacy of plantation culture, with a spirit of co-operation.⁸ The Rastafarians aimed to supplant the trickster-style individualism of the *ruud bwai* with a sense of fraternity and the spirit of peace and love. In this spirit, Howell and 1600 of his followers established a commune at Pinnacle, a short distance from Kingston, with the aim of setting up a cooperative, self-sustaining

agricultural enterprise. For the Rastas, a reconstructed African-centered cultural realm was the site of resistance, creativity and the expression of the uniqueness and vitality of the Afro-Jamaican inheritance.

By the 1950s, the colonial state perceived the spreading influence of Rastafarian beliefs as a threat to its control of the black masses. As Campbell explains, “what scared the State was how such a sense of unity and community could persist among the brethren and sistren despite the lack of central organization and fixed lines of communication” (103). Rastas were routinely arrested for possession of ganja, or for “vagrancy,” or placed in mental asylums for alleged insanity. The police raided Howell’s commune in 1954, arrested many of the brethren and committed Howell to Bellevue, Jamaica’s largest insane asylum.

During the 1970s, the populism of Prime Minister Michael Manley’s People’s National Party created a space for the emergence of reggae music as a vehicle for Rastafari demands for equality and social justice. Both Manley and his political opponent Edward Seaga fostered such culturally based demands for change, harnessing their power for their own political ends.⁹ The profile of the Rastafarians peaked nationally and internationally as a consequence of the commercialization and export of two important aspects of the culture: ganja and reggae music. It was widely believed that Jamaica’s multi-million dollar ganja industry was controlled by Rastas, a misapprehension that diminished Rastafarian culture. Actually, the ganja export industry and its profits were controlled by members of the bourgeoisie—professionals, officers in the police force and the military, and government officials—who used their yachts, private planes and private airstrips to export the product. As illustrated in *The Harder They Come*, the music industry was also controlled by the bourgeoisie who were, however, invisible to the audience for reggae music. The association of Rastafarians with two highly commercialized products—one of them also illegal, nationally and internationally—undermined public respect for the movement and its political impact.

Although it was obviously a commercial project, according to Avrom Robin, one of the objectives of the film *Rockers* was to inform the international public about Rastafarian culture and the origins of reggae.¹⁰ Like *The Harder They Come* the film focuses on reggae music and musicians in the context of a poor Kingston community. However, *Rockers* shows reggae as an outgrowth and an expression of the Rastafarian spirit of collaboration within that community. Unlike *The Harder They Come*, where music making is confined to and defined either by the church or the recording studio, *Rockers* shows music being made by many groups in many different corners of the ghetto. Furthermore, the actor/musicians in the film are real-life musicians playing themselves, which challenges the tragic fiction of *The Harder They Come*, specifically the fact that Jimmy Cliff, the singer who plays Ivan, found international fame and fortune as a reggae singer of the kind that Ivan dreamed of.

Where *The Harder They Come* shows music as a means to achieve stardom and wealth, *Rockers* presents music as a force for healing, for unity and resistance. Several scenes in

the film show the people of the ghetto coming together to share the pleasure of good music and to forget their cares temporarily. In one scene, a dancehall gathering is dispersed by police allegedly searching out ganga smokers, but apparently they are responding to the potential threat posed by a gathering of Rastafarians and other disaffected blacks. On leaving the dancehall, Horsemouth, the protagonist, discovers that his precious motorbike has been stolen. Meanwhile, the soundtrack plays the song “Police and Thieves,” the lyrics of which underscore the significance of the scene:

Police and thieves in the street
Fighting the nation
With their guns and ammunition . . .

After searching the streets, Horsemouth visits his friend Burning Spear to tell him about the theft and to share his distress. Burning Spear takes Horsemouth to the riverside, to the ruins of an old colonial jailhouse, a symbol of the fall of the British Empire and of the mutability of things. Here the men share a spliff, and Burning Spear comforts Horsemouth with the song, “Jah No Dead.” The lyrics of the song remind that just as God lives, the possibility of justice also lives; and also that a just struggle must be rooted in a system of religious and spiritual values.

In contrast to Ivan, who is the naïve victim of Hilton, the record producer and distributor who robs him of the rights to his record, Horsemouth seeks to undermine the monopoly of the music industry by a cadre of wealthy men by making distribution deals with a few small-scale record manufacturers. Horsemouth reads the threat to reggae music sales posed by imported American records as both a cultural issue and a commercial concern. Acting on this understanding, with his friend Dirty Harry, Horsemouth stages a “cultural revolution” in a nightclub where Dirty Harry ousts the resident disc jockey, who has been playing only American records, and blasts reggae over the sound system to the surprise and eventual pleasure of the audience. The club manager calls the police the “bredrin,” but the audience protests the police interference and joins the Rastaman on the dancefloor.

This scene, like the entire film, is an obviously idealized representation of the influence and power of reggae, yet the spread and popularity of reggae during the 1970s, throughout Jamaica and the world, attest to the power of the message. As Kwame Dawes has noted, reggae songs are “songs of defiance that invoke resistance every time they are played” (179). The music communicates an Africanist rhetoric and Afro-Caribbean cosmology that achieves its effect through the emotions as much as through intellectual appreciation of the ideas and sentiments expressed. In this way, reggae music became a primary vehicle for the spread of Rastafarian ideology.

The main plot of *Rockers* deals with questions of the abuse of power and justice for the black man in a racially exploitative society. When Horsemouth discovers that his bike has been stolen and warehoused by the henchman of an organized criminal gang, he does not go to the

police, knowing that the police would not intervene on behalf of a Rastafarian. Instead, Horsemouth organizes a group of brethren to raid the criminal's warehouse and retrieve his bike. The raid is successful; the men load the contents of the warehouse—stolen TVs, washing machines, furniture, and the like—into a fleet of borrowed vehicles and distribute the goods amongst people in the ghetto. The heist is accomplished without fighting or bloodshed, thus offering a representation of black masculine agency uncontaminated by violence.

Even taking into account generic differences between the two films, the absence from *Rockers* of weapons and masculinist displays of bravado challenges the representation of black masculine agency—the figure of the *ruud bwai*—offered in *The Harder They Come*. In the latter film, the Rastaman is stereotypically portrayed by Ivan's neighbor Pedro, as moral but passive, a sufferer who barely survives by eking out a living on the fringes of the ganga trade. In response, *Rockers* challenges *The Harder They Come*'s celebration of the individualistic, self-destructive and ultimately unproductive rebelliousness of the gun-loving *ruud bwai* with multiple representations of Rastafarian masculinity. In a long sequence showing the Rastas gathering in preparation for their heist, the camera follows eight men as they leave their homes and head for the meeting place, focusing on differences of gait, comportment, expression and style of dress. None of the men is aggressive in demeanor, but the song “Stepping Razor” that plays during the sequence offers a warning:

Don't you watch my style
 Don't you watch my size
 I'm dangerous
 Like a stepping razor . . .

The razor metaphorically invokes associations of mental sharpness, of skill and dexterity very different to that of the gunman. The scene emphasizes the plurality of personal identities, encompassed by the collectivity of Rastamen. It shows the Rastaman as individually non-violent, but empowered by community and therefore with the potential to act as a force for social justice.

The profound impact of Rastafarian music on the world, epitomized in the international fame of Bob Marley, virtually ensured the commercialization of both the music and the figure of the Rastaman by the Jamaican music industry. Marley's phenomenal success was followed by droves of pseudo-Rastas pursuing individualistic dreams of wealth and affluence. Not to be excluded, by the 1990s the state was capitalizing on the popularity of Rastafarian culture, adopting Bob Marley's song “One Love” as the signature song for Jamaica Tourist Board advertisements. That this song, which expresses the Rasta's message of peace and love, is used to dupe unsuspecting tourists into believing that the cultural values expressed in the song are those of present-day Jamaica, confirms David Scott's assessment of a decline in hegemonic bourgeois values in Jamaica (193). In the moral void between the middle and lower classes, the Rastafarians appear to be a community with a coherent and recognizable code of ethics and values. However, the co-optation and exploitation of Rastafarian culture by the state, and the

dilution of the movement by pseudo-Rastas, have weakened both the movement's political thrust and public perception of it (Campbell 150). Reggae music and the symbols of the Rastafari such as dreadlocks and the colors red, green, and gold, have become instruments by which the state invokes Jamaica and the Jamaican nation, the very nation within which Rastafarians and the poor black continue to be exploited and repressed.

Notes

¹Of course, agitation for independence began long before Fanon's works widely known. For example, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, first published in 1952, was published in translation (Charles Lan Markmann) by Grove Press, New York in 1967; and *The Wretched of the Earth* first published in 1961, was published in translation (Constance Farrington) by Grove in 1968.

²*The Harder They Come* was not the first film to be made in Jamaica; the island was a favorite location for Hollywood directors during the 1940s and 50s. However, neither Kingston nor the Jamaican people were ever foregrounded in these films.

³Henzell used this term in preference to the more common "third world" or "underdeveloped." See Victoria Marshall, "Filmmaking in Jamaica," where she explains Henzell's use of "tropical syllabus" as "a reference to people who share similar climactic conditions and social outlook" (101).

⁴This is the view of the film's associate producer Avrom Robin, given in an unpublished interview with the author, November 4, 2001.

⁵See Dick Hebdidge, *Hiding In The Light*, especially "Towards a Cartography of Taste, 1935-1962" (45-76).

⁶For more detailed commentary on the history of the Rastafari, see: Joseph Owen, *Dread: The Rastafarians of Jamaica*, and Dennis Forsythe, *Rastafari: for the Healing of the Nation*.

⁷See Horace Campbell, *Rasta and Resistance* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press 1987), for an extensive discussion on Rastafarian philosophy and ideals.

⁸See, for example, Chapter Five: Rasta, Reggae and Cultural Resistance (121-174).

⁹See Obika Grey's discussion of Manley's and Seaga's appropriation of the vernacular culture and the protests of Jamaica's black poor "Predation Politics and the Political Impasse in Jamaica."

¹⁰In an unpublished interview with the author, November 4, 2001.

Works Cited

- Campbell, Horace. *Rasta and Resistance*. Trenton, NJ: Africa New World Press, 1987.
- Dawes, Kwame. *Natural Mysticism: Towards a New Reggae Aesthetic in Caribbean Writing*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 1999.
- Fanon, Franz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York; Grove Press, 1963.
- Forsythe, Dennis. *Rastafari: for the Healing of the Nation*. New York: One Drop Books, 1996.
- Grey, Obiko. "Rethinking Power: Political Subordination in Jamaica." *New Caribbean Thought: a Reader*. Eds. Meeks, B. and Lindahl, F. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001. 210-222.
- . "Predation Politics and the Political Impasse in Jamaica." *Small Axe* 13. March 2003: 72-94.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation." *Black British Cultural Studies*. Eds. Houston A. Baker, Manthia Diawara, and Ruth H. Lindeborg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 222-236.
- Harris, Kenneth. "Sex, Race Commodity, and Film Fetishism in *The Harder They Come*." *Ex-iles: Essays on Caribbean Cinema*. Ed. Mbaye B. Cham. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1992. 211-219.
- Hebdidge, Dick. *Hiding in the Light: On Images and Things*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Hintzen, Percy C. "Rethinking Democracy in the Postnationalist State." *New Caribbean Thought: a Reader*. Eds. Meeks, B. and Lindahl, F. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001. 104-126.
- Marshall, Victoria. "Filmmaking in Jamaica: "Likkle but Tallawah." *Ex-iles: Essays on Caribbean Cinema*. Ed. Mbaye B. Cham. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1992. 98-105.
- Owen, Joseph. *Dread: the Rastafarians*. London: Heinemann. 1982.
- Scott, David. *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Shohat, Ella & Stam, Robert. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Willeman, Paul. "The Third Cinema Question: Notes and Reflections." *Questions of Third Cinema*. Eds. J. Pines & P. Willeman. London: British Film Institute, 1989. 1-30.