# Postcolonial Metaphors, Symbolic Binarism, and the Caribbean Terrain

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## Abstract

It is hard to peg postcolonialism by a particular definition. As a matter of fact, there are differing views as to the classification of certain works as postcolonial or not. One of the generally acceptable thoughts about postcolonialism is that the works of Frantz Fanon laid a good foundation and eventual structure for postcolonial studies. Clearly, however, the postcolonial ideals have been further developed by scholars like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and even Homi Bhabha through their various contributions. This paper does not intend to spotlight the works of these great scholars but to apply some of their thoughts to the postcoloniality in contemporary reggae music that springs from the Caribbean.

Although with a solid foundation in roots reggae, contemporary reggae has advancing beyond the temporal restrictions of roots reggae, its antecedent, to heighten emphasis on social issue, spiritual longings and the personal in arresting postcolonial realities. The state of contemporary reggae as a socially conscious au/oral art thus begs sustained scholarship in examining how it rests on an established heritage to engage and reflect on topical 21st century postcolonial conditions in the Caribbean.

With its theoretical approach grounded in postcolonialism and its selection of Jah Cure's and Natty King's reggae songs—two contemporary reggae artists—the paper examines conception of unity, love, and equality as envisioned by the selected contemporary reggae artists. It engages representations of class consciousness, binary divides, spirituality, and coloniality within the song-texts. Exploring the thematisation of social tumult within the lyrics affords the study avenues to comment on the reactive approaches in contemporary reggae to postcolonial ordeals that signify a continuance of and foregrounding of politically reactive metaphors and motifs of social awareness typical of roots reggae, despite generational and temporal gap.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

A discourse on the Caribbean terrain requires a flip back into the how the large population of the Caribbean can to be in the first place. The history of the Caribbean rests on the concept of migration, especially forceful migration of people from other parts of the world, especially Asia and Africa.

The migrant's illusion of home does not square with the experience of going home, to the extent that 'home' seems to exist above and beyond either Trinidad or India, perpetually out of reach for the migrants. The indentured labourers have in Trinidad constructed a different, imaginary India which is discontinuous with the real location. It exists primarily in the mind, and no act of actual, physical return can facilitate it. Where do these migrant figures now belong, if both India and Trinidad have become more illusory than homely? Are such peoples forever going to be 'at sea', both literally and emotionally, bound to be restlessly on the move and devoid of a fixed or stable locus of belonging?<sup>1</sup>

The above excerpt is John McLeod's analysis of V.S. Naipaul's experience as recorded in his 1984 memoir titled *Prologue to an Autobiography*. He considers the illusion encountered by the migrant Indian who now lives in the Caribbean. For this category of people, India is no longer a home to return to, neither can the Caribbean be regarded as a permanent abode. Stuck in-between "nowhere", home becomes a myth for the migrant Caribbean, according to John McLeod.

For migrant and diasporic peoples in particular, 'home' is a particularly complex idea which impacts in central ways on their existence. The concept of 'home' often performs an important function in our lives. It can act as a valuable means of orientation by giving us a fixed, reliable sense of our place in the world. It is meant to tell us where we originated from and apparently where we legitimately belong. As an idea it stands for shelter, stability, security and comfort

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> McLeod, John. *Beginning postcolonialism*. Manchester University Press, 2020, 141.

(although actual experiences of home may well fail to deliver these promises). To be 'at home' is to occupy a location where we are welcome, where we can be with people we may regard very much like ourselves, where we are not at sea but have found safe harbour. But what happens to the idea of 'home' for those on the move who live far from the lands of their or their ancestors' birth?<sup>2</sup>

The experience of the Africans who were enslaved in Caribbean as captured by John McLeod above summarizes the hopelessness of the Afro-Caribbean. Home became an aspiration on one hand while s/he also reluctantly settles for the present habitation, even though it holds no connection to his/her roots. The trauma and calamity of the African diaspora in the Caribbean starts from here—the cluelessness and disillusionment leaves him confused as to his/her actual identity. This psychological state is further worsened by colonialism.

The history of most countries in Africa, Asia and even the Caribbean cannot be completely told without devoting a considerable discourse to the menace called colonialism in these regions, and consequently postcolonialism. Many studies and scholars have established the series of negative effects that colonialism had on the colonized. The biggest of these effects is psychological. Beyond physical and cultural colonization, the colonial powers subdued, sometimes subtly, their subjects mentally. Hence, even when an end had come to physical and cultural colonization, as it were, the colonized still suffer from mental colonization.

It should necessarily be established that contrary to the position postulated by certain scholars, colonialism was primarily to promote capitalism than it attempted to bring the colonized to civilization. In fact, it is arguable that most colonized communities had attained a reasonable level of civilization prior to colonization. For instance, some records have shown how developed the road system was in the Benin kingdom of precolonial Nigeria. The same way the administrative system of most of these colonizers needed the those artefacts, knowledge, interactions and more that came as a result of their encounter with the colonized to develop Europe. This explains the title behind Walter Rodney's 1972 seminal book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*!

What is really more important to the discourse on (anti-)colonialism, as earlier hinted, is the effect of this phenomenon on the psychology of the colonized. For the purpose of this paper, some light will be shed on some of Franz Fanon's that deal with the psychological effects on colonialism on the colonized. This becomes necessary as it partly aids in having a clue as to why the postcolonial Caribbean thinks, talks, writes and even sings the way he/she does. Being a Psychiatrist, Fanon tended to have a deeper interaction with the confused identity of the African wo/man, especially those of the Algerian stock.

Fanon notes how colonialism and indeed, imperialism, has wounded the African (wo)man's identity. So much so that s/he is torn between being an European and being an African. Judging from Fanon's point of view and of course supported by the views and beliefs of some of the proponents of Negritude, the African, especially those in the French colony were assimilated into the French culture with the hope and promise that they will be welcomed with arms wide open. Shockingly, when the native intellectuals from Africa had the privilege of going to France, they were met with a horrible reception. They were neither seen as a proper French nor were they accepted into the French culture as they were erroneously promised. What is worse is that these Africans, over time and colonial manipulation, had also lost touch with their roots—Africa. Hence, they existed in a middle state of neither being proper French or complete and proud African.

The case is worse for people in the Caribbean who were uprooted against their will from their homes in Africa and were forcefully "dumped" in the New World. They lived as slaves on the huge sugarcane plantation of their white masters and were made to take on the culture and beliefs of their masters, while not being recognized as equals but as second class citizens. This shaped the experience of the African in diaspora. While these African slaved away in the New World, one of the things that stayed with them was their music, which became more than a form of entertainment for most of them but also became a spiritual exercise. Among many other genres, Raggae music is one of the few that has evolved as a medium for expressing dissatisfaction against colonialism and its effects and more importantly against the shocking realities of life people have to face even after colonialism. This experience explains the thought behind Fanon's *Black Skin White Mask*. He explains that the African (wo)man no longer has confidence in her/himself. The African has been so battered mentally that s/he believes that the white man's culture and beliefs are superior to theirs. To this end, the African, especially the elites who have interacted with the white man, aspire to be like the European.

This becomes a bigger problem post colonialism. In the stead of heinous colonialism comes neocolonialism. Neo-colonialism is quite different from colonialism. While the end of colonialism meant that the colonial masters had no authority and control over their subjects and colony, at least legally and politically, neocolonialism perpetuated, through the middle intellectual cum political class, a subtly but noticeable influence of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid, 142.

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the former colonizers. In fact, this new class of rulers simply assumed the role of former colonizers. As Fanon espouses,

In an under-developed country an authentic national middle class ought to consider as its bounden duty to betray the calling fate has marked out for it, and to put itself to school with the people: in other words to put at the people's disposal the intellectual and technical capital that it has snatched when going through the colonial universities. But unhappily we shall see that very often the national middle class does not follow this heroic, positive, fruitful and just path; rather, it disappears with its soul set at peace into the shocking ways – shocking because anti-national – of a traditional bourgeoisie, of a bourgeoisie which is stupidly, contemptibly, cynically bourgeois.<sup>3</sup>

Hence, Raggae music can rightly be analysed, applying the tools of postcoloniality. The argument is therefore that postcolonial thoughts are not restricted to literary writings but also reflect virtually in all the outputs of the formerly colonized, including their music. Such is the case because the post-independence or postcolonial era of most formerly colonized countries is fraught with disappointment and disillusionment. Instead of economic development and equal treatment of citizens, the people are left at the mercy of bad leadership.

Reggae has overtime been constructed in the public mind as having distinct metaphors that render its socio-political concerns in trademark terms. Roots reggae's communicative elements form what Tracy calls a structure of feeling and form<sup>4</sup>, which essentially denote thoughtful ways reggae artists identify oppressors or downpressors<sup>5</sup>. The usual metaphors are: Jah (God), Zion, Downpressor, Babylon, Downpression. These usual metaphors often appear in pairs or carry traces of binary opposition in their renditions; they also espouse themes that characterize the post-colonial Caribbean Terrain. These themes have been identified in reggae music: Dirk Gibson extensively worked on Bob Marley's and the Wailers' songs to derive five recurring themes<sup>6</sup>: (God), Downpression/Babylon, War/ Peace, Poverty and Unity<sup>7</sup>. Other thematic pairs identified by King and Jensen: "God/Devil, Oppression/Freedom, **War** and Unity<sup>8</sup>. These metaphors and their associating political significances are well deployed in the selected texts.

Before diving deeper into the selected texts, it is worth considering that the postcolonial writers and artists in general not only counter-reacted to the oppressor's way but also rejected oppression through language. Not always a direct rejection but an obvious rebellion through a re-engineering of the language. John McLeod seems to articulate this very well. They note concerning postcolonial writers, which also applies to the Caribbean, thus:

inserting untranslatable words into their texts; by glossing seemingly obscure terms; by refusing to follow standard English syntax and using structures derived from other languages; of incorporating many different creolised versions of English into their texts. Each of these strategies was demonstrated as operating in a variety of postcolonial texts, and in each the emphasis was on the writer's attempt to subvert and refashion standard English into

<sup>6</sup> The continuous reference to Bob Marley owes to his influences on the genre itself and its global reception, and his stance as the face of the music. He was a standout reggae artist, and as such (has been) could be used in a broad-spectrum sense in making assumptions.

<sup>7</sup> Dirk Gibson, "I & I Downpressor Man: Reggae as an Instrument of Social Change," Intercultural and International Communication Conference, Miami, Feb. **1990.** 

<sup>8</sup> James "Popular Communication," 22

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Fanon, Frantz, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 120,121

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> James "Popular Communication,"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> King's and Jensen's use of the downpressor is borne off the logic that a downpressor holds the victim and prey down, which pictorially and symbolic projects the processes and state of repression. While unusual, it represents some of the unique linguistic peculiarities associable with reggae, as it is almost distinctively reggae, used by them and appearing in discourses on reggae forms.

various new forms of 'english', as a way of jettisoning the colonialist values which standard English housed.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly, the creolized version of the European's language developed firstly because their earliest interactions with the natives posed a communication problem; the natives had difficulty speaking the oppressors' language appropriately. As time passed by, the natives began to pick a word or two from their oppressors. This informal use of language was mixed with the native tongue. This birthed the Pidgin English in a place like Nigeria. In fact, many have argued that the Pidgin English has become an unofficial national language in Nigeria. A similar case can be made in places like South Africa, Jamaica and other places where the white oppressor has had a stay.

However, the "abusive" use of the colonialist's language by the native has transformed from a case of struggling to use the language to an obvious tool to fight their former masters. The postcolonial attempt to write back to the center is really not complete without reference to how the natives manipulate their former colonial master's language as a fight-back weapon.

#### Jah/Downpressor and Babylon/Zion

In Natty King's "No Guns to Town", the aspect of Rastafari/Jah as a force of fortitude is presented in the line: "And seek Rastafri strength". Natty King projects Jah as all powerful with words like 'omnipotent', 'good' and 'love', which are all usual tenors within the representative gamut of Jah in reggae. Natty King's reference to Jah's strength is his way of calling attention to the indispensability of Haile Selassie to the progress of the Rastafarian and indeed the Caribbean people. It comes after lines like "Time to show that you care", which being a part of a song that promotes peace and unity where discord and oppression is rife. Jah adopts reggae's clever way of selling the necessity of Jah to a life that seeks to steer away from the usual patterns of postcolonial existence.

Jah as omnipotent here is a converse of the unstated but pervading downpressor/negative force. Immediately after the line of the omnipotent, what follows is, "Don't take dem bad influence / With dem nuclear and violence". The metaphoric reference here is palpable. Natty King's downpressive force is first the West, with its nuclear power and promotion of physical violence and engineering of mortality for capital gains. King cleverly compares Jah and postcolonial multi-nationals and western governments. Downpressors are those whose actions betray greed, prejudice or jealously<sup>10</sup>--the aforementioned category, although not mentioned expressly, falls into this class. This disembodied and unspoken force is engineered into Natty's lyrical world through express symbols like 'guns' and 'nuclears', which are metonymic representations of those who create and deal in them. In the second verse, Natty King sings "Don't bring no guns to town, yeah / You will shoot your wholeself down". There is a perceptible emphasis on the destruction of the soul, body, and spirit by the downpressor through the gun symbol. Either the downpressor or his merchandize will destroy the Caribbean people, a metaphor for the continued decry of western influence on the Third World, physically, through policies, and through material products. Natty King's metaphors are potent enough to evoke in the mind the binaries he is working with. By employing the second person pronominal signifier, "You", King implicates the Caribbean downpressors, making it all the more personal. 'Town' refers to the Caribbean region, which means that King's idea about downpressors turning the Caribbean into Babylon is made without him using those words explicitly.

Downpressors are known for the 'evil' they are 'locked in': they are filled with 'negativity', they claim to be 'badder', 'slew people', and they 'make people cry every day'. These are qualities of downpressors: they essentially fail to spread love. Still, like many reggae artists who are deeply religious and act like prophets, King proclaims the assured end of these Babylonian princes. "If you make people cry every day /Bow down fi your crying time come". Mourning and Babylon are not strange bed fellows. The Biblical story confirms this. King, as a Rastafarian knowledgeable of the range and meanings of Rastafarian metaphors knows this and deploys them appropriately. Downpressors, like the Babylonian King, will meet their waterloo. He seems to address downpressors that like biblical Babylonian King Darius 'no one is gonna help you out. So, rather than continue in their evil ways, he beseeches them to seek the Rastafari strength and promote love. It is evident here, just as have been deduced in older modernist reggae of those like Bob Marley<sup>11</sup>, that downpressors are also Babylonian people. In that case, they refer to people with power and means. The power structure in the Caribbean is maintained along class lines, where materiality and Western mode of force are employed in maintained power

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> McLeod, John. *Beginning postcolonialism*. Manchester University Press, 2020, 28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Gibson, "I & I Downpressor Man,"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See King and Jensen.

lines. Nuclear weapons and guns are enforcing mechanisms, and the Caribbean is being locked in oppression, even though these things are said to destroy conscience and the mortal body.

The Jah/downpressor binary is also invoked in Jah Cure's song. In his song, the downpressors are 'hypocrites' and 'greedy ones' who are all out to bring him down. Zion for Cure is not some physical paradisal place—it doesn't always have to be—but his existence within Jah's army, which provides him the confidence he requires to outdo his enemies who seek to end him. The qualities of the downpressor here work well with those identified by Natty, although different in peculiarities: their greed is evident; they are loud, lazy and opportunistic. Their opportunism is reflected in the following lines: What gives them the feelings / They don't have to hunt to eat their food". These ones, like many political leaders and aristocrats, cash in on the efforts of those like Cure, who 'put in...hard work and pay...dues'.

By virtue of residing and finding strength in Jah's army, his spiritual solace, Cure pronounces his invincibility to the downpressors. Categorically stating he is 'the lion in the jungle', he believes "None a dem can't bring me down". In the protest spirit of reggae, where contemporary issues are identified, evil doers are presented and solution is described, Cure identifies the oppressive force as coming from both uptown and downtown. Uptown and downtown refer to the social divide manifested in the material divisions of the town, the separation of resources, living quarters, and economic power, as seen in the Trenchtown and Kingston binary: You could a come from uptown or downtown / None a dem can't take me crown". Jah's army and the Caribbean terrain are juxtaposed by Cure, even if this level of comparison is implicit. The repetitive use of 'Dem can't', 'can't take me crown', and 'Selassie's I soldiers' continue to reinforce the Babylon/Zion binary in reggae.

Conclusively, while these essentially are reggae metaphors, their use also reflect the long-standing opinions that Babylon and Zion are defined and made manifest in songs loosely, although, they have major points of intersection.

#### **Oppression/Freedom and War/Unity**

If the downpressors are the oppressive forces (capital and material) in the Caribbean, who have made a Babylon out of the place, and salvation rests within, where Jah resides, then the ruinous postcolonial reality is a consequence of the absence of unity and freedom in the region. Reggae thematic focuses rests on a binary arrangement; preoccupations often carry comparative tones. Postcolonial Caribbean is almost run as a neo-colonial state. The whites and black divide is clear, with divisions across economic and political lines. Othering of blacks manifests in access to resources and continual subjection to police brutality and other forces of social ordering. Capitalist orientations have pervaded the Caribbean, which is known for its tourist attractions, such that Western powers and their vested interest control economy and culture, harnessing the divides to their advantages.

Natty King's emphasis on the reliance and use of gun to perpetuate evil, to "boast on your brothers' is evidence of a needless strife and a performance to the dictates of the West, which King identifies as 'bad influence'. It is a needless war being fought amongst the middle class, which promotes the interests of the powers-that-be, because, in King's words, those who capitulate to this western arrangement '...won't reach nowhere'. The absence of love and unity is demonstrated by the collective penchant to survive by all odds, a symptom of the consequences of coloniality on the indigenous psyche. Survival at all costs induces situation of collective division or inner schism. Experiences of police brutality against the Rastafarian as well as public scorn from those with which they share a history of colonial oppression is expressed by Cure in his lyrics when he expresses his lack of fear against both 'uptown' and 'downtown' oppressors.

King and Cure are expressive in their censor on western influence in administering the Caribbean through material means. King identifies this, and in the protest spirit of reggae, communicates the futility of inferiority complex which incites a man into feeling superior to his colleague because of western association. This is a form of westocentricism, which is fundamentally building on a legacy of neo-colonialism to the detriment of the native identity or the peace of the home population. King goes ahead to show these by accusing some of his brothers as 'proven' themselves; the reason for this he says he 'don't know' but vocally judges it a 'wrong road', one whose end is bloodshed. The claim is to be 'badder', which is a colloquial phrasing for the black man who sees himself as stronger and brutal and in possession of the wiles and street smarts to outdo his fellow man. These are often the realities of the Third World peoples. They resort to violence, gang wars, drug pushing, and gun-battles to carve space for themselves within the grime and slums white oppression has left to them. All are consequences of material oppression, where the oppressed represses any beneath him in a horizontal oppressive fashion, continuing the chain of downpression.

The war in the Caribbean is both psychological and physical. Frantz Fanon identifies this as a condition of coloniality, in which the previously colonized is made to continue the legacies of the colonizer by existing for

the colonizer<sup>12</sup>. How? King identifies the reliance on guns, the use of a decolonial strategy where violence is chief, not against the oppressive upper class but against fellow strugglers like him, and the continued 'slewing', through the white man's machinery, of his kin and kith. The condition of coloniality is further highlighted by Cure when he sings about his inability to have peace since others are out for the proceeds of his struggle because of greed. They idea behind Cure's oppressors being unable to 'hunt for their food' purposely to take from the other person is reminiscent of the political and social oppression witnessed by the proletariat of the Caribbean who toil for the upper class and their international allies, whose greed is characterized by a culture of taking.

The above-discussed points to internal schism between members of the same class and disunity within the Caribbean, that is, between the upper class and lower class, within the lower class, and between the whites and blacks. Neither of King nor Cure mentions who the oppressors are directly, a point translated by King and Jensen as the inability of protest songs to "present formally constructed logical arguments"<sup>13</sup> or their penchant to "thrive on ambiguities, sweeping assertions, and panoramic criticism...<sup>14</sup> Music is not essay; music is poetry, and it thrives on the economy of words and the evocation of the most powerful emotions through imagery and apt metaphors. Reggae does not need to spoon-feed its audience its messages before it can be deduced; neither does it need to name-drop its subjects before their outline can be seen across its lyrics.

Like other metaphors and thematicizations of recurrent motifs, war in reggae is expressed and deployed as a trope in an expansive sense. To King and Cure, the war is strife between the oppressed and the oppressor and within a group of oppressed fellows.

#### Love as Solution

If there is any one solution to the ills besetting the postcolonial world, it is love. Love has been offered by Rastafarians and reggae artists as the antidote to the problem with postcolonial Caribbean, and the world in general. King and Natty, continuing in this Caribbean spirit, hold this belief dear to heart. Cure's "Love Is" preaches love as the cure to the postcolonial tumult and social tension. The strife between brothers, the bringing of guns to town to outdo the other, the slewing and causing of tears, the reliance of western means of domination and nuclear powers, greed, intolerance, complexes, and other strains of postcolonial and material oppression can be eradicated with love. Cure says this unequivocally: 'Love is the answer my friend / love is the only way". His emphasis on love as the key is also manifest in his choice of title: 'Love is'. By leaving the title open-ended, Cure encourages members of the society to see it as the solution or panacea for whatever ails them without being overly prescriptive. And this is why reggae is seen as a combination of communicative elements. It is a dialogue with the society; hence, they are the invisible participants of the dialogue Cure is having.

Cure, in the prophetic sense of the Caribbean reggae, following in the steps of Bob Marley and his hit song "One Love", says "True love you can find yourself /And call a true identities / Love your brother, love your sister." In these lines, Cure plays on word by saying 'true love' when he could have meant through love, or true love as opposed to fake love. This brings to the fore of the discussion the ineffectiveness of material love or a love that comes attached with benefits or gains, which is what is often expressed by those who see others as in possession of a thing beneficial. Furthermore, Cure advises that love is beneficial to everybody—the true one. The one who acts out true love will find himself, away from the portraits crafted by colonial powers and conditions of coloniality, which is one thing Caribbean people seem to be incapable of escaping.

Cure's description of love in the hook, 'Love is much more to life than just words... / Love is call on me brother' goes on to describe what love is: the key, answer to every question, the compass, the shareable thing, love is unity and everything that binds and holds people together. These manifestations of love are offered by Cure; he proffers them as solutions to current social problems. When doors are closed, a metaphor for withheld opportunities, love provides alternatives; it opens those doors. Amidst the strife and disunity, the only thing postcolonial people suffering from the invincible demons of colonialism can rely on is love. This is why King in his song "No Guns to Town" continues to decry the use of violence and guns in achieving things, and advises that his brethren should have 'brought love to town' and 'spread the joy around'.

Only love can bring about Joy. Love is contrasted with guns, which promotes commotion and tears. Love spreads joy. And to the Rastafarian, it is one necessary and principal panacea.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Markmann. New York: Grove Press, 1997.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> King and Jensen "Bob Marley's," 20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ralph E. Knupp, "A Time for Every Purpose under Heaven: Rhetorical Dimensions of Protest Music." *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 46 (1981), 384-85: 377-89.

# **II. CONCLUSION**

As already established in the expose above, postcolonial thoughts are not only expressed in literary texts. In fact, as Ashcroft aptly describes it, literature is only a part of the expressiveness of postcolonialism, as the whole body of cultural studies has embraced the idea of postcolonialism in most places where colonialism existed.

The discourse above shows indeed how music, and in this case, Raggae, is used as a tool by the postcolonial man both to express the hurt/pain perpetuated by colonialism and deconstruct the myth of superiority established by the same colonialism. It is important to note, as explained in the writing above, that the problem of the diasporic Caribbean started the moment s/he was uprooted from a familiar terrain and was dumped on Islands that had no connection to her/his origin. Raggae therefore becomes a vital way in which the Caribbean wo/man uses to relief the colonial experience and more importantly to speak against the disillusion of post-independence.

As the textual analysis above show, there is a recourse to the spiritual, in particular a Supreme Being through the Raggae music. This is both a strategy to stay in touch with their African and Asian roots, which is predominatly religious in orientation and to project their hope for salvation to One that is believed to be greater and capable to rescuing them for their predicament. Hence, the Christian believe in the second coming of a Messiah who would take away their sufferings and secure a better life for them has a welcoming reception with them.

Finally, the paper has been able to highlight and analyze some of the symbolic and metaphoric representations in selected Raggae texts in a bid to discussing the thematic preoccupation of these songs and how they present the socio-economic and political reality of the people.

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