December 2005

“Everybody do the dance”: The Politics of Uniformity in Dancehall and Calypso

Kezia Page
anthuriumcaribjournal@gmail.com

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

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/anthurium/vol3/iss2/11
There is dancing in the calypso. Dance! If the words mourn the death of a neighbour, the music insists that you dance; if it tells the troubles of a brother, the music says dance. Dance to the hurt! Dance! If you catching hell, dance, and the government don’t care, dance! Your woman take your money and run away with another man, dance. Dance! Dance! Dance!

Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can’t Dance*

I cannot be the only Jamaican that is sick of this “Dance Craze.” What is happening to dancehall is what I hate most about soca. Don’t get me wrong I can deal wid di one an two “SWINGING ENGINE” or any wining song for that matter. But the “put u rag in the air and jump”—“do the iwer, butterfly, shadow, wave” … these are the songs that simply perpetuate a HERD MENTALITY. A mentality that has spilled over into dancehall …

Anika Smith, “Dancehall overhype … or more like over the hype”

The Earl Lovelace and Anika Smith epigraphs interpolate two different moments in Caribbean history, though both are critically concerned with how dance functions in specific sub-contexts: one as a form of resistance in 1960’s Trinidad and the other as a critique of hyper-similarity and banality four decades later in Calypso and Dancehall traditions of the last decade of the twentieth century and the first five years of the twenty first.

In the prologue to Lovelace’s *The Dragon Can’t Dance*, dance is a means to subvert myriad problems, losses, and challenges. Besides resistance, on Calvary Hill where the trinity of “Idleness, Laziness, and Waste” does not reign, but lime, dance offers mobilization, action to the inactive masses, and more than just action—art. Dance! In statement and exclamation dance is intimately connected with music/lyric. The narrator’s call to movement is resonant with a history Gordon Rohlehr traces in *Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad*; a movement which underscores that this call to dance was heard on the slave ship under command of the Captain’s whip where, “Africans were forced to dance for exercise” (2), and then in resistance and reclamation from the mouths of slaves in the New World:

Slave dances were viewed by the planters with a mixture of suspicion and tolerance. On the one hand they provided gatherings of black people with private space and the power of assembly, and had been known to lead to rebellious uprisings throughout the Antilles. On the other hand, they provided therapy for the enslaved trapped in the tedious ménage of plantation labour … (3)

Anika Smith might be surprised to note that as West African dance forms evolved into West Indian dances, the therapy/resistance duo continued, and that dances such as the Calinda,
the Jhouba, the Bel Air, and the Quadrille involved specific movements to specific rhythms, some more formalized than others, though Rohlehr points out in his discussion of the Calinda that, “[b]lack people retained, as ever, their own sound, sounds, style and distinctive aesthetic: atonality and kinesis, discord and ecstatic utterance under the power of the spirit” (Calypso & Society 12). Rohlehr’s description here suggests that while the Calinda was a community dance performed to specific music, the codes were understood without instruction, or didactic choreographing. Perhaps it is the latter that troubles Smith about this present dance moment, a moment that is similar yet for her disturbingly different from older forms of communal dancing even those beyond the Caribbean context to other dispensations of black culture. It is the instruction, “everybody do the dance,” the rapid rate of these instructions, move after move, and what for Anika Smith is most objectionable—the dances themselves, the “Scooby Doo,” the “flowers a bloom,” the “summer bounce,” the “chakka chakka,” dances that not only limit creativity and individuality, but shepherd the masses into dance after silly dance.

Rohlehr’s “Calypso and Identity” is empathetic to Smith’s concerns. In this article he traces the development of Calypso and suggests that the music has evolved under a form and function rule: the call and response, the war song, work songs, and celebration. Among Rohlehr’s criticisms of contemporary “celebration calypsos,” is that they become mere “action songs;” “there is also the question of involving the listeners, the people who are celebrating, in the music, so that you create lyrics which give them something to do. There are many action songs in which the singer is telling the listeners, the party goers, what they should do” (“Calypso and Identity” 69). Rohlehr attributes this trend to the influence of Jamaican practices popularized, for example, by Byron Lee.1

With this background in mind, my paper considers the following questions: How do we make sense of the shift from dance organized as rebellion, and the contemporary moment Smith/Rohlehr are concerned with, dance so organized and instructed that it generates uniformity/anti-rebellion—a herd mentality? How does this moment raise questions about artistes’ desire to provide access to both Calypso and Dancehall by making them appear less political, less localized, and as music more concerned with reaching a global audience through dance? In this paper I will focus on the calypso “Stranger” by Shadow and Elephant Man’s dancehall song “Signal de Plane” as evidence of the performative moment Smith is critical of. I want to suggest with careful analysis of the songs and important contextual evidence, that both songs and perhaps the moment they are apart of are more and do more than what Smith reduces them to in her critique. How do the songs “Stranger” and “Signal de Plane” capture an ethos that is at once concerned with making space for the outsider and marginalizing that same outsider? Is there in these dances another kind of dual moment—therapy/entertainment and resistance? Might these dances, in their invitation to uniformity, be a way of charting identity by using patriotic calls to assembly in a contemporary moment when identity is most easily defined around sameness?
Shadow’s “Stranger,” the winning 2001 road-march song, is the narrative of how he, Shadow, a kind Trinidadian man, teaches a white Australian woman how to dance and how to enjoy Carnival:

I’m a stranger said a pretty gal
I came down here for the Carnival
So this music, have me in a trance
Want to play mas’ teach me how to dance

Buy a little rag and put it in your pocket
Buy a little flag that’s the way you do it
Find yourself a band and find a good position
When the music blast, you’ll find out how to play mas’
When they say rag, pull yu rag (repeat)
When they say flag, pull you flag (repeat) an’ wave it
Do you ting—jump up jump up, wine up wine up (repeat)
When they say wine roll you waist (repeat)
Jump up jump up, wine up wine up.

In the first verse and the chorus the gist of the song is clear and so are the politics. It is the stranger who finds herself in Trinidad and who approaches Shadow for dance lessons. As part of this dance-class, Shadow instructs the visitor what to purchase—a flag and a rag, and then alerts her when to use the essential paraphernalia. Shadow’s “Stranger” is ironically not for strangers, but is a first place mobilizer for insiders who already know what to do when he shouts “rag” and “flag,” and find in his narrative a kind of power and pleasure, as revelers dance along with the fictional stranger—only better. It is useful to note here that Shadow’s “Stranger” is quite similar to Kitchener’s “Miss Tourist,” the 1968 road-march winner, save of course the lyrical genius of Lord Kitchener, and the fact that by stanza three “Miss Tourist” unlike the stranger, looks as though she were born in Trinidad, and by stanza four she “breaks away.” Kitchener and Shadow’s narratives of white tourist women in Trinidad at Carnival time desiring to be taught how to experience and enjoy Carnival together provide an important context for the follow-along lyrics of Shadow’s “Stranger.” Both songs use Carnival, more specifically dance in “Stranger,” to talk about tourism and sex. Implicit in the tourists’ search for a good time is a sexual experience with a local man. Indeed, both Kitchener and Shadow’s songs imply that the developing friendships and the exotic dance classes don’t all happen in public. Consistent also in both “Miss Tourist” and “Stranger,” its 2001 road-march winning reincarnation, is a power shift between tourist and local. While these women might have expected to take advantage of friendly and easy access into Caribbean entertainment, they are in fact the ones who are exploited as they are made into spectacle, and perhaps worse. Their stories inspire Calypso lyrics that poke fun at tourists while simultaneously moving natives to dance beyond any stranger’s learned reach. How might we use the purposefulness of Shadow’s instructions in “Stranger,” that is, the way the song grants access to outsiders and facilitates a kind of choreographed unity for insiders, as a way to
understand the shift from the unspoken intuited codes of community dance, to the overt speaking of these codes? Are some of these codes in effect non-transferable?

The song’s call and response quality, “when I say rag, show your rag,” et cetera, though undoubtedly a call to solidarity, operates on two levels because of the inclusion of the stranger. These levels might be more clearly understood in the call, “when I say wine, roll yu waist,” where the call might be expected to yield thousands of black people performing at various skill levels the sexualized waist rolling that continues to be spectacle on Black Entertainment Television and MTV Networks. However, with the presence of the first-timer “stranger,” that spectacle is reversed because waist rolling is not always as simple as it sounds. Here then is a song, apparently intent on including a white Australian visitor that might have as its result exclusion. While “Stranger” seems to extend solidarity beyond national lines by including the white Australian woman in the revelry, encouraging her to join a band, it is possible to read this invitation as poking-fun, as insiders are aware that these skills are not simply transferred by the instruction, “roll yu waist.” In effect, Shadow, by making a spectacle of the outsider strengthens the bonds of the insider community, for here, knowing the dance is the way one indicates her/his place in the community. In addition, the idea of community is reinforced as the community knowing how, responds to the calls together. At the same time “Stranger” does not simply reinforce community by speaking in the community lingo but also reinforces the community by drawing borders through what might be termed a choreographic map.

Shadow’s “Stranger” is part of a road-march tradition arguably begun in 1991, with Super Blue’s road-march winner “Get Something an’ Wave.” This call to solidarity, under the particular label of patriotism, is fueled by the failed Abu Bakr uprising of the old year, and uses performative sameness to respond to political difference and discord. “Get something an’ wave,” suggests that there is spiritual power in getting together, evidenced by mother Muriel who is ringing the Baptist bell and waving the flag. Paul Gilroy’s discussion on sameness and hypersimilarity in Against Race is particularly compelling here as we consider the effect/meaning of Super Blue’s song. The call to solidarity and unity around spiritually based nationalist terms, the employment of a figure such as Matriarch Muriel, whose Baptist hands now wave the flag in an effort to engender national pride and conversely to reject anti-national sentiment, and the fact that this would be encouraged and disseminated by rallying the masses to “get something an’ wave” might be exactly what Gilroy takes to task:

When we think about the tense relationship between sameness and difference analytically, the interplay of consciousness, territory, and place becomes a major theme. It affords insights into the core of conflicts over how democratic social and political life should be organized at the start of the twenty-first century. We should try to remember that the threshold between those two antagonistic conditions can be moved and that identity-making has a history even though its historical character is often systematically concealed. Focusing on identity helps
us to ask in what sense the recognition of sameness and differentiation is a premise for modern political culture … (Gilroy 100)

Gilroy’s discussion here is relevant to both the political and the popular: Super Blue’s response to a national crisis is to encourage solidarity through the instructions to sameness, for by encouraging sameness difference is immediately identified, and such is the case with the white Australian stranger who even with a good position in a band, with flag and rag in hand, seems destined to standout.

Gilroy’s discourse on hypersimilarity as it impacts the “great resonance” of the term identity is both confirmed and complicated by a figure such as Mother Muriel whose response to the nation-upsetting, radical position of Abu Bakr and his followers is specific to her religious-cultural experience. A discussion of why this unlikely Afro-Trinidadian figure and the artifacts of her African-based Protestant faith with providential force are able to mobilize Trinidadians to get something an’ wave and free the country from the grip of curfews might be connected to Gilroy’s position here:

Links can be established between political, cultural, psychological, and psychoanalytic concerns. We need to consider, for example, how the emotional and affective bonds that form the specific basis of raciological and ethnic sameness are composed, and how they become patterned social activities with elaborate cultural features. How are they able to induce conspicuous acts of altruism, violence, and courage? How do they motivate people toward social interconnection in which individuality is renounced or dissolved into the larger whole represented by a nation, a people, a “race,” or even an ethnic group? (Gilroy 101)

One might argue that if mother Muriel inspires Trinidadians to “get something an’ wave,” it is not because she is a figure with whom all Trinidadians can identify, nor because her bell and prophecies signify the political pull of the Spiritual Baptists in Trinidad, but instead it might be that if this old Baptist woman wants to jump up in Carnival it is clear that the political upheaval in Trinidad and the curfews in response have upset the patience of the very saints.

On the other hand, Super Blue’s employment of Mother Muriel might highlight for us the “affective bonds” that compose sameness in the Afro-Trinidadian context. What is it about Muriel that would win a Road March title or “motivate people to social interconnection”? There are at least two important factors that I wish to outline: 1) Muriel calls on a tradition of subversion that inspired the very roots of Carnival. Not only does she subvert the efforts of the coup makers by encouraging patriotic sameness by waving flags, she simultaneously subverts the authority of the government and the police by shouting with Super Blue “no curfew.” Here Muriel joins or leads the national critique of government that is arguably a Caribbean “pastime,” often drawing ordinary Trinidadians together as nationals. 2) In addition to these somehow
small, nation-unifying rebellions, Mother Muriel’s very presence in Carnival as a spiritual Baptist or religious woman unsettles (European based) notions that the spirit and the flesh are separate. To the “ting a ling” of Mother Muriel’s bell, Super Blue reclaims Carnival as seamlessly political, spiritual, and pleasurable. The weight of this 1991 call to sameness, though interestingly constructed around subversion interpolates a moment that is ripe for national compliance.

Still there is more to be made of this moment that understands sameness in dance, and sameness with a dance-teacher-to-boot, than as simply limiting access to distinct localized communities and identities and instead as a method of also allowing access to individuals outside of Caribbean and Caribbean Diaspora communities. Calypso and Dancehall artistes have contended that “action songs” present another way to effectively take their wares to the global market, and that this means might appear less confrontational, less exclusionary (particularly with reference to homophobia) and therefore more suitable for international consumption.

The implications of seeming to include the stranger are numerous. Indeed, the narrative of Shadow’s welcome and invitation to learn the codes of playing mas’ is the very moment that demonstrates Shadow’s (Calypso and dancehall artistes) global consciousness and market savvy. His willingness to at least gesture toward extending the community of revelers is appropriately configured around consumption, in this case the Australian is told what to purchase, “buy a rag,” and “buy a flag,” secure or purchase a place in a band; anything it seems, even access to the community can be had at a price. In fact, Shadow’s posturing as the kind native, and more specifically the available and friendly native culture guide, is facilitated by the ease with which instructions can be given to become part of the community and by extension how narrowly this community seems to be defined. On the surface, Caribbean music is fun and accessible, and Caribbean artists are friendly to tourist-strangers. Songs such as “Stranger” with dance instructions included are certainly more exportable, more global in their reach.

Many of these same questions raised in the Calypso tradition intersect with questions about hypersimilarity in dancehall music. Elephant Man’s “Signal de Plane” is one of the first in this new wave of dancehall songs to have contributed to the “everybody do the dance,” follow-the-instruction ethos. Elie’s “dancehall nice again” vibe like Shadow’s “Stranger” is couched in patriotic terms: “dancing a Jamaica middle name.” Then, to solidify the bonds of what he terms the “dancehall fraternity,” he instructs (John, Bogle, Keeva, Stacy) his audience, on the codes of how to be good citizens: “Visa fi go a Englan a strain / immigration a call out yu name / nuh mek yu fren get buss/signal de plane.” The call to “signal de plane,” that is, to do the dance is simultaneously a call to caution when there is danger ahead. The dance move actually mimics hand movements of ground crew agents or taxi agents (with added waist movement of course) as they guide airplanes in and out of parking spaces. This rhythmic warning certainly offers resistance to draconian US/UK anti-other immigration policies as well as includes dancers outside of the specific community (who can follow along and do the dance but don’t know what they are doing), in the gesture of resistance.
Like Shadow, Elephant Man plays with the layers of insider/outsider as he creates resistance and access in the same lyrical brew. Unlike Shadow however, Elephant Man’s resistance may not be about exclusion but inclusion; as he mobilizes both insiders and outsiders to “do the dance,” outsiders are included in the symbolic signaling against immigration laws. While the outsider in “Stranger” is quite clearly the white tourist and perhaps tacitly those who are on the outskirts of Carnival culture, in “Signal de Plane” insiders and outsiders are not always easily defined. At the center is the dancehall fraternity, the ostensible party community who along with Elephant man beckons to the rest of Jamaica to claim their national birthright (“dancing a Jamaica middle name”), and use dance as a national unifying element. The “dancehall nice again” vibe intended for those in the dancehalls and those outside is a call to stop the fighting and “the segregation whey a gwaan.” Still, it is understood that despite Elephant Man’s desire to dance unity into national policy, fractious behavior in the dancehalls continues, and some Jamaicans will not participate in dance as anti-immigration plane signaling, or in dancing even for dancing sake. Jamaican culture maintains a strong puritanical strand in keeping with a protestant ethic that for many has meant a religious subculture that frowns on dance and most certainly the kind of dancing found in dancehalls. In addition, for many their particular protestant subculture has been their entryway to middle class society. The insiders—Jamaicans, might not have both feet inside as Elephant Man generalizes inside. In fact, Elie’s call to dance/unity upsets an imbricated socio-cultural history that maintains to the present. The outsider category might include Jamaicans, who choose not to participate in this kind of dance as resistance and as unification, and it might include the numbers of non-Jamaicans in dancehalls all over the world who follow the “energy god” move after move but do not understand what he is saying and the symbolic resistance this move making implies.

Ultimately, “Signal de Plane” does what “Stranger” does: it makes insiders and outsiders of people around dance. Both Elephant Man and Shadow seem invested in solidifying identity around culture and nation, choreographing borders in Shadow’s case by adding currency to the art form by introducing a foreign body that needs to be instructed on the codes of participation, and thus creating an insider community by virtue of the stranger. The white Australian’s presence also adds to the complexity of the carnivalesque as the stranger becomes the spectacle and not the locals. Similarly, Elephant Man uses dance to inspire national pride and unity, and to engender in those willing to dance and enjoy themselves the symbolic and covert powers of community dancing. Elephant Man seems to be saying to those of the community audience that Jamaican dancing is a powerful thing with relevance beyond the dancehalls. In the same way that Shadow encourages Trinidad and Tobago unity in the face of an encroaching tourist participation in Carnival, Elephant Man proposes dance as a way to reclaim the violence-ridden dancehalls and by extension to stay national troubles with unified coordinated movement, while at the same time layering the meaning of the song with ironic symbolisms and the politics of borders.

These trends around inclusion and exclusion are consistent in the Calypso and Dancehall of the early 1990’s, and are certainly popularized again in music of the first five years of the
twenty first century, specifically in songs focused thematically around dance and dance instruction. It is noteworthy that Colin Lucas’ “Dolla Wine” released in 1991, a song whose popularity has maintained in the Caribbean though primarily as easy dance instruction for tourists, raises similar questions as it relates to market access facilitated through access to dance moves. The “she” in Lucas’ song who calls him “Mr. Trini” and wants to learn how he moves his body is the implied outsider or stranger. The “big money wine” when compared to the other low currency gyrations, mimics the wining of more accomplished dancers and is decidedly sexualized and consumer oriented. Though the international success of Lucas’ instructions is evidently related to the simplicity of his instructions, the big money wine when converted to local currency is clearly too simple to be worth as much to locals.

Lucas’ hit seems to have influenced the next few years of Calypso and Dancehall and it reveals a dialectic between both music forms with politics that should move beyond who spoke first. Buju Banton’s “Bogle” and Beenie Man’s “World Dance” released in 1992 and 1994 respectively, both describe popular dances that are a little more complicated than the “Dolla Wine,” inspired by the dexterous Bogle of the Black Roses Crew. Though both Buju and Beenie suggest these dances are for everyone (in Jamaica), people from uptown and downtown, both men and women with various skill levels, the songs by no means garnered the kind of international attention as “Dolla Wine,” as is the case with Burning Flames’ “Swing Engine” and Colin Lucas’ “Iwer/Butterfly/Shadow/Wave” both released in 1995. There seems to be in this early version of the dance instruction trend a relationship between the complexity of the dance move(s) and the market itself. In more recent dance songs the question of inclusion and exclusion is not only drawn along national lines, though patriotism is certainly part of the creation of dance communities.

Richie Feelings’ Dancehall successes “Dancin’ Class Part 2” and his collaboration with Tony Matterhorn in “All About Dancing,” both released in 2004, are songs primarily about finding and performing dance even in the banality and triteness of everyday life. In “Dancing Class Part 2” he begins with the mad walk dance—“Bellevue,” then moves to the “Cut off yu head.” The dance class includes the “call down the rain” and the “umbrella.” The song ends, presumably after creating a dance community, with a call to everyone in the dancehall who does not “bow,” that is, take part in oral sex to do the final move the “Zagga zow.” The community created by using specific local references and choreographing them into dances, is solidified with the call to the adherence of a sexual standard that is considered morally right. The implication is that everyone in the dance is in agreement with this standard and that dancers who do not comply cannot be included as members of the insider community. Destra Garcia and Machel Montano’s 2003 “Carnival” constructs a community of revelers as people infected with a kind of madness and dance frenzy around Carnival. This community will “take a jump,” start to wave and wine inspiring a version of the oneness Destra and Machel see as Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago. The lyrics of “Carnival” say little more than this and besides the presumption of heterosexuality
from the description of the interaction between bodies, insiders of this community must know how to dance and enjoy dancing.

While “Stranger” and “Signal de Plane” certainly perpetuate what Anika Smith calls a “herd mentality,” using their repetitive “action song” gimmicks to create communities around the dangerous hypersimilar that Gilroy is critical of, these songs are but the edge of the question as far as follow-fashion lyrics go. Still we see in this mid ground trends in Calypso and Dancehall that can’t simply be dismissed: 1) There is a willingness to consider questions of exclusion and inclusion as these artistes create, protect, and define community, sometimes “renouncing individuality in favor of community,” or supporting the troublingly narrow spirit that, as Gilroy argues, such calls to uniformity engender. Indeed, when songs such as “Get Some Thing and Wave,” “Stranger,” and “Signal de Plane” are analyzed they share a common concern with nation building. These “action songs” together offer choreography as an alternative means of nation building and resonate with, contradict, and exert tensions against the more established modes that take place in the political arena. One might consider then that if these shifting movements in dance, though perhaps conceived with comparable motives, have the same effect as monuments, uniforms, and laws. 2) While these songs encourage sameness, this sameness is often organized around resistance. For example, waving flags simultaneously against anti-government radicals and government imposed curfews, upsetting power dynamics associated with race and reestablishing authority around traditional knowledges, subverting the power of immigration laws and speaking against community violence, all complicate notions of sameness by encouraging subversion. 3) Along with sameness and subversion, many of these songs are clearly concerned with marketing music for consumers of Caribbean culture. The follow-along lyrics, with dance instructions included, on one hand seem to extend the dance community and thus the consumer community in an ingeniously welcoming gesture; they on first read are shamelessly tourist oriented at the risk of compromising lyrics and art in these creative communities. However, while the above is true, these same lyrics by making fun of outsiders and making unsuspecting insiders of people along just for the dance are clearly more than just welcoming. 4) Finally these songs are parody. They make fun of specific experiences and the everydayness of the world by mimicking anything and making a dance of everything; making fun of the music form itself, and making fun of themselves and those who dance along. Parody then functions as the recourse of the disadvantaged, choreographing out of hurt and hell an art in coordination that can be taken to market abroad and that makes the top of the charts at home. Dance to the hurt? Dance if you catching hell? Dance if the government don’t care? Dance? Dance?
Notes

1 Rohlehr argues that Byron Lee and the Dragonaires, a Jamaican band, began this trend: “I can remember as early as the 1960’s in Jamaica that Lee’s band created songs telling people to “put your hand in the air” and “put your foot and jump up higher, higher, higher,” and so on” (69). Both Rohler’s statement about the Jamaican influence on these Calypso “action songs” and Anika Smith’s 20 recent commentary on the “herd mentality” Trinidad and Tobago calypsos have inspired in dancehall music make for useful parallel critiques, perhaps proving nothing but the cross fertilization in Caribbean music forms.

2 The first and last verses of Kitchener’s “Miss Tourist” as well as the chorus offer a noteworthy parallel to the Shadow’s lyrics in “Stranger:” “A tourist dame I met her the night she came / well she curiously asking about my country/she said I hear about bacchanal and the Trinidad Carnival / So I want to jump in the fun, and I want you to show me how it is done / I said to her. (Chorus) Come in town j’ouvert morning, find yourself in a band / Watch the way the natives moving, have a time with a man/Sing along with the tunes they playing, and now and again you shouting / Play mas bacchanal, Miss Tourist, that is Carnival. (Last verse) She turn and say now I feel to break away / she said come on man and grabbed in front the band/Mama when we reached Independence Square / She kicked and she raised she dress in the air/Bawling bacchanal, bacchanal, I am the queen of the Carnival / I said baby.”

3 I include here the words to the second verse and chorus of Super Blue’s “Get Something an’ Wave” so that we understand the contextual importance of Mother Muriel and her mourning ground as they connect to that political moment in Trinidad. “Prime Minister, Abu Bakr / no curfew, no curfew / Baptist woman, get a vision / no curfew, no curfew / while she was on the mourning ground / she saw a monkey and two pigeon / true my son she sey we will rise/ if police lock me up in a band / a wining to the station / Trinidad and Tobago I’m hearing … Cho. Break away! Carnival is plenty action / Break away! 91’ is wheels in action / Break away! I want to see some bottoms rolling / Break away! I want to see my culture rising / Break away! I want to be free/ Get something an wave, get something an wave.”

4 In Elephant Man’s previous album “Log On,” he refers to himself as the energy god. It seems that this moniker has caught on.

5 Bogle or Gerald Levy was a popular dancehall personality and the leader of the Black Roses Crew in Kingston, Jamaica. Bogle made his fame as a leading dancehall choreographer and an international dancer
Works Cited


