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Calypso music : identity and social influence : the Trinidadian experience

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Chapter 2

Defining Calypso

In the absence of conclusive evidence that points to a singular ethnic source of origin, analysis is launched from the premise that calypso music is a product of the ethno-cultural mosaics found within the boundaries in which it emerged, was developed, and exists as various strains with features that are characteristic, sometimes unique to its host mosaic.

Etymology and Anthropology

So far efforts by researchers to establish the origin of calypso music as a definite song type have been inconclusive. The etymology of the term ‘calypso’ in reference to that song type has proven to be as equally mysterious and speculation remains divided among contributors. This chapter of the study will touch upon literature that speculates about these issues relative to the emergence and development of the song type on the island of Trinidad.

At one end of the discussion about origin Lamson (1957, p. 60) has reported the use of French melodic material in calypso, and Raphael De Leon aka The Roaring Lion (1987) has argued in *Calypsos from France to Trinidad: 800 Years of History*, that the genre was given the pseudonym ‘calypso’ some time in 1900, and derives from French ‘ballade’ created in 1295. He has also publicly asserted that, there is no evidence to support the claim that it is either a variant of African folk songs or that it was invented by African slaves in Trinidad. Having dismissed this belief as purely speculative he [De Leon] has further suggested that only since Trinidad’s Black Power revolt in 1970 has there been a desire to stress calypso music’s African roots (anonymous informants).

In the verses of *Land of Calypso*, he discusses ambiguity concerning the origin of the song genre, in the words of Gordon Rohlehr (1990), “with wry sarcasm and mezzo-comedic wit.”

Land of Calypso

*People are interested
To know where calypso originated
People are interested
To know where calypso originated
Some say it came from Cuba
Some say British Guyana
Some contend seriously
It was sung by Moses*

Crossing the Red Sea

*It was a serious contention
That was causing some real confusion
Some said it's Japanese
Or the folksong of ancient Chinese
A fellow said he is certain
Delilah used to sing calypso to Sampson
One said he heard when Nero
Was burning Rome he sang calypso*

*Excitement reached such a tempo
When I said that the calypso
Is an ancient French ballad
That was adapted by Trinidad
A fellow said if you please,
it was sung by Espinosa and Socrates
And Hannibal sang a calypso
When crossing the Alps to meet Scipio...*

*One said that in India
They sung calypso when charming cobra
Another said that Elijah
Sang calypso in the chariot of fire
They argued with one another
Trying to find out the owner
They mention every country
All but the land of La Trinity*

*But Ah told them...
No, no, oh no,
Trinidad is the land of Calypso (Repeat)*

The Roaring Lion

Mathews (1942, p. 91-93), cited by Crowley (1959), also located the roots of calypso in medieval French chansons and has pointed to the etymology of the French word 'carouse' – to debauch, and its Creole derivatives cariso, calyso, cayiso to refer to topical pillard⁶ songs of French Martinique (p. 59). Such song types are mentioned as well in the works of Lafcadio Hearn and of Cable in reference to Creole Louisiana and the West Indies. Krehbiel (1914) has informed us that,

On the plantations where Latin influences were dominant, in New Orleans and the urban communities of the Antilles, the satirical song was greatly in vogue. It might be said that the

⁶ Pillard (Cr. Piya) - topical songs of Martinique and New Orleans rendered in Creole. Like calypsos, they were piquant, malicious, and satirical and also believed to have derived from French medieval chansons.

use of the song for purposes of satire cannot be said to be peculiar to any one race or people or time. (p. 140)

Krehbiel (1914) has cited Henry T. Fowler who intimates the possibility of a parallel between the “taunt songs” of primitive peoples, triumph songs of the Israelites, Fescennine verses of the early Romans, and the satirical songs of the Negroes of the West Indies. In opposition to De Leon, Krehbiel has stated that,

There is scarcely a doubt in my mind, but that the penchant for musical lampooning which is marked among the black creoles of the Antilles is more a survival of a primitive practice brought by their ancestors from Africa than a custom borrowed from their masters. What was borrowed was the occasion which gave the practice license. This was the carnival; which fact explains the circumstance that the Creole songs of satire are much more numerous in the French West Indies than in Louisiana. The songs are not only more numerous, but their performance is more public and more malicious in intent. (p. 144)

At yet another tangent of the discussion, musicologists are agreed that musical aspects of modern calypso derive in large part from Spain and Spanish-American sources. As informed by Crowley (1959, p. 59), the word *calipso*, “an old Venezuelan/Spanish term for a topical song in the highlands along the Spanish Main,” has been ascribed to refer to the genre.

Errol Hill (1972) has pointed to songs of praise and derision akin to commentary calypsos and extant among contemporary Hausa populations in northern Nigeria. Since a significantly large number of Hausa-speaking Africans were part of West Indian slave traffic he has presented support for the likelihood of an African root.

Hausa is the language of the largest tribal group in Nigeria, and is prevalent in the northern region of the country. It is also, very probably, the most widely used West African language, since it is spoken by various tribes throughout the interior regions of coastal states from Nigeria to Senegal. (p. 61)

Hill (1972) has additionally cited the dictionary definition presented by Bargery that locates the words *kaito* and *kaico* in the Hausa language.

An exclamation expressing great feeling on hearing distressing news: Alas! What a pity! Ba ka da kaito, you will get no sympathy; you deserve no pity; it serves you right. (Cited by Hill, p. 61)

The French equivalent of the Hausa words *kaito* and *kaico*, ‘sans humanité’ meaning without pity, first appeared in the calypso *1900 Masquerade Calipso* published in the Feb. 27th *Port of Spain Gazette*. During its transition from French to Creole the phrase ‘sans humanité’ degenerated phonetically to ‘sanimanité’, a typical occurrence during the transformation of words from ‘mother tongue’ to syncretic language, or from one syncretic language to another.

Along with the terms extempore (truncated to extempo by the man in the street) and picong, sans humanité has come to be the name associated with a specific genre of bravado and heckling calypso developed from the boastful calinda songs that accompanied stick fighting. Further discussion about the sans humanité calypso strain is continued later on in this chapter.

It appears quite likely that the word kaiso as it has come to be used in Trinidad could have also been the result of phonetic mutation during transmission by oral tradition. It could have undergone as well an alteration in connotation caused by substitution or translation as the term meandered between ethnicities from one language to another.

Hill (1967, p. 360) has cited the *Port of Spain Gazette* of January 20th 1900 as the earliest published source of the word 'kaiso' and has reported alternate spellings used in the press. Included among those spellings are callypsos in 1902, callyso(e)s in 1911, and cariso and careso in 1912. He has additionally cited Raymond Quevedo's (1962, 1964) manuscript in which Quevedo (Atilla the Hun) wrote,

Kaiso was used to describe the song when sung as well as a means of expressing ecstatic satisfaction over what was in the opinion of the audience a particular excellent kaiso... Throughout the years I have heard the word kaiso, caliso, rouso and wouso, and finally, calypso in that order. (ibid., p. 359-367)

Citing Krehbiel (1914, p. 143), and Van Dam (1954, p. 7), Crowley (1959) has referenced the following statement,

Regardless of the origin of the word calypso, there can be little doubt that the aspects of topicality, allusion, and improvisation in calypso derive from Africa. (Cited by Crowley, p. 59)

He has additionally cited Herskovits (1947, p. 317) who stated that: "This musical complex can be regarded as nothing less than a retention of the purest type."

Hill informs about West African influences on the ritual and popular music of Trinidad through connections between Afro-Caribbean rituals and the development of popular culture:

These rituals are a playing out of ethnic heritages, social norms, and class and caste relationships through the act of ritual behavior itself. The partial secularization of these ideals into Creole celebrations took place in the development of eighteenth-century belairs in Carriacou, in the rise of the middle-class carnival in Trinidad beginning in the late nineteenth-century, and in the commercial recordings of a whole array of popular music and dances in Cuba early in the twentieth-century. Today, many Creoles in the Caribbean define themselves through the sometimes island wide festivals that in part are metamorphosed from the Afro-Caribbean rituals. And the process is ongoing from the afrocubanismo movement in the 1920s to the creolization of some of the people of Asian Indian decent in Trinidad through their participation in Carnival. (Hill, 1998, p. 199)

Pearse (1955) investigated the transmissions of musical norms on the group of islands including Trinidad, Tobago, Grenada and Carriacou. The numbers and corresponding song categories were gathered from his 1948-1954 fieldwork titled *Folk Music Types of Trinidad and Tobago*. It has drawn a picture of the folk music of Trinidad and appears in the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* (7, 1955, p. 29-36). It was used as a source of reference against which the strains of calypso analyzed were compared in order to uncover instances of transmission. The reader is encouraged to browse it for further enlightenment. As informed by Elder, Pearse wrote,

Having excluded East Indian, and purely super structural music, Pearse et. al. listed thirty-one different kinds of music in the area, calling them by local name, and the conditions of execution shared by participants in social institutions. (Cited by Elder, 1969, p. 2)

As Calypso became established in connection with the Port of Spain Carnival, first as a nightly pre-Carnival rehearsal of the masqueraders of individual bands with their Chantwells, and later as a public performance on a commercial basis, it drew upon the musical content of a variety of rural social institutions (5, 7, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 23) [Kalenda-Trinidad (Tr.) & Grenada (Gr.), Bele-Grenada, Bongo-Tobago (T.), Pass-Play-Cuba (C.), Tr., T., & Gr., Reel Dance-Tobago, Sankeys and Trumpets-C., Tr., T., & Gr., Fandang-Trinidad, and Reel Engage-Cuba, respectively], setting the melodic schemes of these items in its own basic rhythm. (Pearse, 1955, p. 35)

Parallel chronological research for possible sources of influence first led to the native Amerindians, for a long time believed to be Caribs, but now thought to be Arawaks. In an attempt to resolve the matter of mistaken identity Elder has advanced the following argument and has cited information reported by Rouse (1951, p. 11):

In keeping on the side of those best qualified to speak upon the question of the identity of Trinidad's first inhabitants, we should realize that whether Columbus did encounter Caribs in Trinidad or not, the finds from several kitchen-middens in Trinidad would lead us to conclude that while Trinidad's first people were Amerindians, they were some tribe other than Carib. In conclusion I quote Rouse on this matter. (Elder, 1969, p. 3)

Dudley and his captain, Wyatt, both recorded brief vocabularies on Trinidad in 1594-5 which Warner has identified as Arawak (Dudley and others, 1899, p. 65; 78- 79). Brinton (1871, p. 435), lists another short vocabulary "obtained by Belgian explorers" in 1598 and similarly identified it as Arawak...the local Indians resemble culturally those of the adjacent mainland rather than the insular Carib. Las Casas states specifically (1951/3, p. 186) *that they cannot be considered Carib*.

Summarizing, we may conclude that none of the Indian tribes of Trinidad was Carib in any of the senses in which that term has been used. On the other hand, none except the south-western tribe was Arawak either. If, however, we admit any of the European meanings of the term, then all of the Indians on the island have to be considered Arawak. (Cited by Elder, 1963, p. 3)

Elder (1969) has additionally related that Alan Lomax's 1940s Caribbean-wide research project to document indigenous folk musics "has not unearthed any such strains in Trinidad

repertoires” (p. 3). In support of his own statement that “the loss of native culture outran the decline of the Indian population,” Elder has cited the following commentary by Harry Dow:

During the years 1600 to 1800 their (the Aroucas) natural spirit faded away and their arts became lost to them. By 1783, the Indian population numbered only 2,000, while in 1797 it had declined by half; today, there cannot be more than a handful. (Cited by Elder, 1969, p. 3)

The decline of the Amerindian population in Trinidad and the Caribbean in general is mainly attributed to “reduction”, the systematic decimation of indigenous peoples by colonizers who, in this case were mainly the Spaniards. According to Elder (1969),

These arguments are mentioned not only to establish the identity of the first Trinidadians, but also to clear up the doubt in the minds of scholars about the extent to which the folk music of Trinidad contains elements of Carib music...it seems very unlikely that Trinidad’s traditional music as it stands today has retained any but the slightest trace of aboriginal Indian music let alone Carib music. (p. 3)

In the absence of Amerindian musical artifacts, the second ethnic group encountered on the island of Trinidad comes into view. The figures in the following table reflect the place of birth of Hispanic immigrants in Trinidad and in the British Caribbean at the time of the British West Indian Census of 1946. According to Elder however,

These figures do not include people of Spanish descent born in Trinidad and maintaining Spanish or neo-Hispanic cultural customs. There was possible addition of 1,532 persons to the white population who brought with them to Trinidad a total of 33, 322 slaves, these figures according to Carr (1964, p. 36-56), were calculated in the absence of accurate figures. (1969, p. 5)

Place of Birth	British Caribbean	Trinidad & Tobago
Brazil	266	67
Other South America	168	96
Venezuela	3,729	3,146
Cuba	285	60
Panama and Canal Zone	1,475	301

Fig. 14: Persons enumerated at the British West Indian Census of 1946 (Aol.com/aol.image)

As can be readily seen, the Venezuelan contingent by far outnumbered the other contingents. However, the figures do not suggest that the numbers among the contingents is the standard by which Venezuelan musical influence on the island has been measured. It has been

generally accepted though that Hispanic musical influence in early Trinidad folksong was injected by Venezuelan laborers and by Negro migrants traveling between Trinidad and other countries along the Spanish Main during the early nineteenth century. Elder (1969) has reiterated however that,

The folk music of predominantly Latin type in Trinidad may be deemed absolutely to have been contributed by Venezuelans. In fact, analysis of this music and its comparison with Venezuelan music carried out by Lomax with Cantometric measurement traits have shown that the Trinidad type of Latin music is definitely a part of the larger South American Latin musical cycle which stretches into Central America. (p. 5)

The two most defining rhythmic features that have been identified among duple-metered musical examples of music of Latin persuasion in Trinidad and several other islands of the Caribbean are the *tresillo* and the *cinquillo*. The *tresillo* (from Sp. *tres*), is the more basic form of the *habanera* and refers to a rhythmic grouping of three accents. It often appears in melodies but is more commonly used as a bass line. In the figure 16 transcription it serves both functions. The *cinquillo* (from Sp. *cinco*) or as it is commonly called the *clave* is the main pulse of Salsa and many other genres of Latin music. It refers to a rhythmic grouping of five accents. It appears both as melodic rhythm and as rhythmic pulse.



Fig. 15a: Example 1 The Tresillo



Fig. 15b: Example 2 The Cinquillo, both transcribed by the author.

Matilda

Fig. 16: Example 3, transcribed by the author.

The transcription in figure 17 below is an illustration of *palo de mayo* music. The main rhythmic features that are readily noticeable in the example are based on the *cinquillo*.

They appear as functions of the percussion and are also present in the melody line in the fourth measure and repeatedly between measures 9 through 16.

Ay Si, Ay No

The musical score for 'Ay Si, Ay No' consists of four systems, each with a Guitar (Gtr.) staff in treble clef and a Percussion (Perc.) staff in a simplified notation. The lyrics are written below the guitar staff.

System 1:
 Gtr.: Ay si, Ay no, La pi - ta que tengo yo. Ay
 Perc.: [Percussion notation]

System 2:
 Gtr.: si, Ay no, La pi ta que tengo yo. Con la se - re - na en la
 Perc.: [Percussion notation]

System 3:
 Gtr.: noche La pi tase me que - do. Con la se - re - na en la noche La pi
 Perc.: [Percussion notation]

System 4:
 Gtr.: ta - que ten go yo.
 Perc.: [Percussion notation]

Fig. 17: Example 4, transcribed by the author.

Palo de Mayo music and its accompanying dance have been part of the Afro-Caribbean cultural heritage of Nicaragua, Belize, Honduras and Panama. The dance was originally intended to welcome rain but has over time, become increasingly sensual.

The cinquillo is also featured in the melody of a popular Trinidadian folksong *Bring Bach Meh Coverlet*, and is demonstrated by the iambic pentameter of that title and more so by the lyric “Go down to Scarborough” that outlines the chorus.

Other features (nasal vocal texture, vocal and instrumental performing style, instrumentation and language) are still present in music of Latin persuasion that has survived in Trinidad in rural districts such as Lopinot, Tamana and Blanchisseuse. Those districts had been established as main agricultural regions before British intervention, and were planter communities made up predominantly of Spanish and French-speaking laborers from Venezuela and Santo Domingo (present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic).

Musical examples can be referenced in the *aguinaldos*, like *Sereno-Sereno* for example, of Daisy Voisin, and in the repertoires of *parang* ensembles such as Las Estrellas and The Penta Serenaders. *O Belen*, popular during the 1950's and 1960's is another example. Both *aguinaldos* and *parang* are performed around Christmas time in several Latin-American countries.

The strong dominant 6/8 feel perceived upon listening to songs of these genres is emphasized by the Venezuelan *cuatro* which traditionally supplies the main rhythmic and harmonic pulse. *parang* (*parranda*) songs are of Venezuelan origin and are usually rendered unaltered but are often blended with calypso rhythms and so sometimes exhibit more of a duple than triple meter pulse. Scunther's *Ah Want a Piece of Pork* falls under the latter category. Others, like *Tire La* found in the repertoire of Olive Walk's choral group La Petite Musicale, have worked their way into the pantheon of Trinidad folksongs.

Among other popular Latin music forms and dance styles that had been assimilated into Trinidadian culture were the bolero, the Venezuelan waltz (*castillan*), and the *joropo*.

The *joropo*, like the *aguinaldo*, is performed in triple meter, but in keeping with the polyrhythmic feature of African influenced rhythms, it has retained a more frenetic rhythmic feel. Renditions such as *Mi Burrito Sabanero*, *Garifuna Nuguya*, *Pa Maite*, the meringues of Juan Louis Guerra *La Travesia* and *Bilirrubina*, and some of the songs recorded by Strings on two audiocassettes titled Tropical Moods, are also representative of the music style and sound under discussion.

The music of the Venezuelan harpist Hugo Blanco had been quite popular as dance music in Trinidad during the late 1950's and 1960's. It sounds similar to music of the *parranda* and Garifuna variety; music recorded several decades later by the Haitian ensemble, Strings; music used to accompany *maypole* or *palo de mayo* dancing; and many other music forms belonging to the *musica criollo* strand.

Additional features of Latin influence can be observed in calypsos such as *Maria*, *Gloria* and *Slave*, calypso ballads that were influenced by the bolero and cha-cha-cha styles that had come into vogue in Trinidad during the 1920's.

In *Maria*, constant repetition of staccato trumpet lines accompanied by an obvious bass line and insistent percussive accents by the bongos outline the rhythmic pulse of the cha-cha-cha style. Call and response structure is established between the lead vocal and the trumpet and so traces of African influence are also retained.

Maria

Line 1-Introduction and Link between Chorus and Verse

B♭ Trumpet

Staccato

B♭ Tpt.

Fig. 18a: Example 5 Introduction - Trumpet Line # 1, transcribed by the author.

Maria

Line 3 Da Capo

B♭ Tpt.

Gtr.

Oh----- Ma ri a-----

Oh-o--Oh-o--o

Fig. 18b: Example 6 Response - Trumpet Line # 2, transcribed by the author.

Maria

Line 2- Responsive staccato phrase

B♭ Tpt.

Gtr.

Verse: Ma ri a darling I must go we must part

but remember girl I love you so, girl you doh know how it breaks my heart. Unfortunately Oh-o Oh-o--o

Fig. 18c: Example 7 Response - Trumpet Line # 3, transcribed by the author.

Gloria is a plaintive melody written in a minor key but the band chorus separating the chorus from the verse is written in its relative major key. This is established by the dominant chord outlined by the melody in the last measure of the band chorus.

Gloria

The image shows a musical score for two trumpet parts. The top staff is labeled 'Trumpet in B♭' and the bottom staff is labeled 'B♭ Tpt.'. Both staves are in a key with two flats (B♭ major or D minor) and a 4/4 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests, creating a rhythmic melody.

Fig. 19a: Example 8 Band Chorus, transcribed by the author.

Gloria

The image shows a piano accompaniment for the song 'Gloria'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B♭ major or D minor). Chord symbols are written above the treble staff: Cm, G7, Cm, Cm, G7, Cm, Fm, Cm, G7, Cm, Fm, Cm, G7, Cm. The lyrics are written below the treble staff: 'Don't leave me and go darling no, darling no. Don't leave meand go darling no, darling no, My love for you is hon.....est and true, I know, I know you don't believe me but I love you.'

Fig. 19b: Example 9 Verse, transcribed by the author.

Slave, like *Gloria*, is a plaintive minor key calypso. In the original rendition its melody is embedded in Afro/Bolero rhythms and the saxophone passages are mournfully and languidly rendered matching the lead voice and echoed by the male background chorus. In similar fashion to *Gloria*, there is a temporary key shift from tonic minor to relative major and back again to tonic minor i.e. from the key of A minor via its lowered VII 7 (G 7) which constitutes the dominant seventh (V7) chord of C major, the key of temporary destination before returning to A minor via its dominant chord E 7. This harmonic device occurs in measures 4 through 9. Whether it was a style of arranging peculiar to a particular arranger or era or whether it was a preference of the artiste or songwriter requires further investigation.

Further analysis of this composition reveals a subtle i-V7 (D minor to A7) chordal accompaniment during its verses and a bridge constructed from a melodic couplet leading to

the chorus via an (a-b) progression: (a) iv-i-V7-i I7, (b) iv-i V7- i V7. Also, the stanzas which are grouped in pairs are separated by the popular Andalusian harmonic retrograde (i-bVII-VI-V7) making the rendition reminiscent of a subdued interpretation of the dramatic flamenco.

Slave

The musical score for 'Slave' is presented in two systems. The first system shows the introduction and the beginning of the verse. The second system continues the verse with lyrics.

System 1:

- Guitar:** Am Am Am G7
- Tenor Sax:** Melodic line in G major, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth and quarter notes.
- Gtr. (Guitar):** C F C C D D#7 E7
- T. Sx. (Tenor Sax):** Melodic line with triplets and a final note marked 'I'm a'.

System 2:

- Gtr. (Guitar):** Am Dm Am E7
- T. Sx. (Tenor Sax):** Lyrics: "slave from a land so far, I was"
- Gtr. (Guitar):** Am E7 Am G F E7
- T. Sx. (Tenor Sax):** Lyrics: "caught and I was brought here from Af ri ca"

Fig. 20a: Example 10 Introduction and Partial Verse, transcribed by the author.

Upon listening to audio recordings of the songs during scrutiny of the transcriptions, it became quite evident that *Gloria* and *Slave* exhibit some of the nuances of African retention discussed by Gibbons (1994) and referenced below on page 86 of this work. Such nuances are reflected by the mood created by the vocal rendition and instrumental style, and particularly by the tonality of the minor key and resonance of the melodies, especially those that outline the laments.

Slave

The musical score for 'Slave' is presented in three systems. Each system includes a Guitar staff and a Saxophone staff (Soprano Sax in the first system, S. Sax in the second and third systems). The music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Chord symbols (Dm, Am, E7, G, F6) are placed above the guitar staves. The lyrics are written below the saxophone staves.

System 1:

- Guitar: Dm Am E7 Am
- Soprano Sax: I'm cry----- ing, I'm

System 2:

- Gtr.: dy----- ing Oh--o---o Oh o o o
- S. Sax: dy----- ing Oh--o---o Oh o o o

System 3:

- Gtr.: E7 Am G F6 E7
- S. Sax: Oh o Oh, Good Lord, Lord I want to be free

Fig. 20b: Example 11 Lament, transcribed by the author.

Aural scrutiny of the music forms perused revealed similarities in terms of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic structure, instrumentation, and sound between the music forms of Trinidad and those extant in several countries throughout the Caribbean and the Americas.

The foregoing commonalities suggest then that the depository of music forms extant in those regions had been an amalgam of musical artifacts of arrivants to the 'New World' from the period after the arrival of the first foreign settlers in the latter part of the fifteenth century onward. Analysis has further indicated that in general the dominant ingredients were of African, Hispanic, and to a lesser degree, French influence.

Because of the lack of evidence of musical artifacts of the indigenous Amerindians, the discussion so far has focused on syncretism of music forms of European and African persuasion. As noted by Elder (1969) and referenced on preceding pages of this study, no evidence of aboriginal musical artifacts has been found. Further inquiry about music of earlier Caribbean influences pertinent to the island of Trinidad has not been made either.

However, the lack of evidence of music or musical artifacts pertaining to the Amerindians should not necessarily discount them as being a source of musical influence on the earlier music of Trinidad. The history and culture of the Garifuna people for instance, may well provide possible evidence of some musical linkage in regard to Amerindian influence.

The Garifuna or Black Caribs as they have come to be known were escaped African slaves who had survived a 1635 shipwreck, and had intermarried within the Caribs and Arawaks tribes of the upper (Northern) Lesser Antilles. The fact that intermarriage between the two contingents did not take place in the southern islands of Trinidad, Dominica or St. Vincent does not necessarily preclude the possibility of transmission of Carib musical or linguistic influence on those islands either. Exiled from the region by the British around 1796 and sent further south to the island of Roatan, the Garifuna later settled along coastal Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala. As indicated earlier in this discussion, the music forms of those Central American countries represent a vast repository of Afro-Caribbean cultural heritage. The features that link the music of that region to other genres of the *musica criollo* pantheon are quite evident - rhythm, sound, performing style, dance movements, ethnicity, instrumentation, topicality, jargon and language.

A close relationship between the rhythmic and melodic features exhibited in the Trinidad calypso and other music forms that have been identified as belonging to the *musica criollo* variety has already been demonstrated. On further cursory analysis, the Garifuna music strain *punta* is perceived to be a sped up version of the *aguinaldo* and *parranda*. Such connections may provide links and are indications for future research. The Garifuna have retained ancestral Amerindian and Central and West African socio-cultural roots, among them food preparation, language, and certain aspects of music and dance performance. Perhaps musical features of Carib influence could be traced through comparison between their vocabulary and speech and dance patterns, and those of other existing Carib settlements throughout the Caribbean.

In regard to the impact of immigration by other ethnic groups on Trinidadian society, it has been chronicled that the influx of English-speaking settlers, begun in 1797 once Trinidad had become a British colony, had impacted society on various levels. Discussion about Anglo-linguistic influences relative to music production is initiated in chapter 1, beginning on page 52. The 1845 exodus of Asiatics, resulting from the refusal by Negroes to work on the plantations after Emancipation in 1838, did introduce yet another wave of assimilation. However, although the East Indians and Chinese had been present in significant numbers

they did not initially engage in mainstream musical exchange directly upon arrival or for a long period of time afterward. Due to on-going exodus among ethnicities, and social intercourse between ethnic contingents, syncretism and assimilation had been simultaneously in process at several junctions along the slave route. It stands to reason therefore that the socio-cultural landscape of the region would have been in a process of constant change and that there would be similarities among the cultural artifacts deposited at several junctions. This is evidenced by the similarities among the various music strains and dances found in the region discussed, the region which includes the Caribbean, New Orleans, and Central and South America. Donald R. Hill (1998) has reported on the impact of the arrival of vast numbers of foreign settlers and on the demography and socio-cultural landscape of the island of Trinidad, stating that,

During the last decades of the Spanish era, two decrees enabled Catholic Creoles...to settle in Trinidad with their slaves in such numbers that they established what was to be the rural culture of the island, at least until the arrival of Asian Indians after full Emancipation in 1838. Thus, in the nineteenth century, the British ruled over a heterogeneous society whose dominant culture was Afro-French. (p. 189)

The table in figure 21 below lists the dominant nation groups that have inhabited Trinidad and the approximate time of their arrival. It facilitates a chronology of possible sources of ethnic influence that may have further impacted assimilation and syncretism during the period discussed.

Ethnicity	Approximate time of entry
Spanish	Late fifteenth century 1498
African	Late fifteenth century 1501
French	Late eighteenth century 1783
British	Late eighteenth century 1797
East Indian	Middle nineteenth century 1845

Fig. 21: Predominant ethnicities and time of arrival to Trinidad (Compiled by the author from historical documentation)

Acquired from Elder (1969, p. 7), the following table reflects the ethnic makeup in Trinidad just over a century later.

Race	Male	Female
-------------	-------------	---------------

Negro	176,380	182,208
White	7,873	7,845
East Indian	153,043	48,903
Chinese	4,709	3,652
Lebanese, Syrians	824	766
Mixed	65,178	69,571
Other	3,404	3,310
Race not stated	169	122

Fig. 22: The 1960 population of Trinidad and Tobago (The 1960 Central Statistical Office-CSO Report)

After Emancipation, on-going arrival of significant numbers of various ethnic contingents enhanced retention, as was the case with arrivants from the coastal areas of West Africa and India.

Certainly, several factors other than place of origin and the number of arrivants among contingents would have contributed to the degree to which assimilation and syncretism was being impacted then. For instance: the length of time the arrivants resided at locations before arrival in Trinidad and the impact of external influences they assimilated in those places; the date or dates of entry along the chronology; their demographic distribution upon arrival in Trinidad; the socio-political schema in place during their residence on the island; and participation by significant numbers of individual members and/or entire ethnic groups in mainstream music exchange. The fact that African immigration to Trinidad continued after slavery had been abolished presents a strong case for cultural persistence and transmission in the Caribbean, where retentions such as the ghouba, bamboula and calinda had been at the center of syncretism.

The emergence of calypso rhythms in the Caribbean can be traced back to the arrival of the first African slaves. Links have been made between calypso production and performance among Afro-West Indians throughout the Caribbean and earlier Afro-centric music genres that are explored within the scope of this study. Lamson (1957) for instance has stated that, “This music existed and does exist throughout the West Indies” (p. 12), and according to Van

Dam (1954), the calypso genre has been propagated within boundaries that “range from the Bahamas to the mainland of South America” (p. 7).

The calypsonian’s use of calypsos to give information has been linked to the African griot’s art of storytelling through music. The stories too that have been communicated by the calypsonian have provided means of transmission among Afro-Caribbean communities, and so the texts of calypsos and folksongs are in fact oral documents that have enabled transmission.

Liverpool (1990) has informed us that,

The roots of the political calypso go back to the West African tradition of criticizing their leaders openly, through song and poetry. West African elders permitted that as a way of stabilizing the society, and as a result slaves on the plantation used songs mercilessly as a form of protest. (p. 41)

Quevedo (1983) has pointed to one of the earliest examples of song sung in African dialect and transmitted from the days of slavery. He writes, “Though having a religious slant it bears a resemblance in tempo and rhythm with what was known as the calinda or song used during the stick dance.” The calinda, he informs, “was transported almost bodily into the kaiso and calinda melodies have been used for kaiso even without modification” (p. 6).

A few additional sources have been cited in order to support the above claims pertaining to retention of African traits in calypso music. Patton (1994) has pinpointed retention in *picong*, a “dimension of performance” that “can be traced back to the Trinidadian practice of calinda or dueling song” (p. 65). Also, he has cited Elder (1966), who described the development of calinda in relation to the game called by the French, *bois-bataille* (stick fight). By Elder’s account,

The Negroes engaged in stick fighting games, either during the rest periods on the estates, at evenings at the backyard, or publicly on holidays like Easter and Christmas day. Calinda singing was performed in the traditional African “call-chorus” style under a leader, to the accompaniment of drums and shac-shac. (Cited by Patton, *ibid.*)

Stick fighting itself was not unique to Africans or Afro-Trinidadians, but the singing of calinda songs during competition was. The songs were used to bolster and deride combatants during the event and their performance encompassed the transmission of African musical traits such as singing style, instrumentation, musical accompaniment and its accompanying dance style.

Gibbons (1994) has identified additional nuances of African retention in the singing style of the Growling Tiger. In his biography of the calypsonian he wrote,

The mournful tone of the minor reaches beyond the 19th century kaiso to a nostalgia, a yearning that is at the root of the experience of the New World African. It is the same visceral loss that finds voice in black blues, in the wailing of Marley, in the pleas of the possessed asphyxiating between drums. Beyond the war-chants of the baytone [Fr. Batonierre-stick-fighter] and gayape [system of collective assistance practiced by African slaves] songs of the slaves Tiger's tone recall the despair of the passage. Looking back, it mourned the rupture from the homeland and looking ahead, it feared the worst. (p. 2)

The mournful minor tone and longing referred to by Gibbons find quintessential expression in several calypsos, particularly in *The Gold in Africa* (1936) sung by the Growling Tiger in response to Mussolini's 1935 invasion of Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia), and in the Mighty Sparrow's renditions of *Gloria* and *Slave*.

Crowley (1959), Fermor (1950) and others, as reported by Hill (1967, p. 359-367), have spoken of the "pervasive influence" of West African improvised songs of praise and derision on the development of calypso.

As informed by Rohlehr (1990, p. 1-2), the work of Epstein (2003 [1977]) has corroborated reports of pioneer researchers that have identified West African retentions in West Indian music forms. Included among those retentions are; the singing of impromptu, often satirical praise/blame and ridicule/insult songs in responsorial style consisting of a couplet in recitative form followed by a chorus; 'woman' and 'love-intrigue' themes; improvisation; reliance on rhythmic accompaniment mainly supplied by the drum; the interrelatedness between song and dance; and of course melodic and rhythmic syncopation (not mentioned), a main feature of African speech patterns and musical structure.

The task of measuring the contribution of African tradition to music forms that have emerged in the New World exceeds the scope of this dissertation. Tracing traits however is quite within reach, and has been tackled in several studies in anthropology and musicology.

In order to arrive at an even clearer definition of 'authentic' calypso music as it has evolved in Trinidad, the focus of this study will temporarily be shifted to material that has been considered 'calypso-like', i.e. music imitating but not belonging to the calypso strains that have been identified as intrinsically Trinidadian.

Daniel J. Crowley (1959) has referred to five 'calypso-like' song types outside of Trinidad given the characteristics observed at the time.

Calypso-Like Music

Crowley (1959, p. 118) has said that the examples cited by Van Dam (1954) and transcribed by Lamson (1957, p. 110) are similar to early two-line litany-form calypsos collected by Bullbrook (1954) in Trinidad.

1. *The Virgin Islands “careso,” a two-line topical song sometimes improvised by a “Queen” of a secret “Bamboula Dance” in the nineteenth century (Van Dam, 1954, p. 21; 1955, p. 5).*

He has reported that the careso from St. John, *Give Her the Number One* transcribed below, was collected by Lamson (1957, p. 124-128).

Give Her the Number One (Drive it Home)

The musical score is written for Acoustic Guitar (Ac. Gtr.) and includes lyrics. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The score consists of four staves. The first staff is for the Acoustic Guitar, with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The second staff is for the vocal line, with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: "When I give her number one and I drove it home, (drive it home) When I give her number one...and drove it home, (drive it....home) When I give". The third staff is for the Acoustic Guitar, with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: ".... her number one she said the fun has just begun.... Put your lips close to mine". The fourth staff is for the Acoustic Guitar, with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: ".....and drive it home....". The score includes various chords: Db, Db7, Gb, A7, and Db.

Fig. 23: Example 12 Virgin Islands Careso, transcribed by the author.

The song, according to Crowley, had been simultaneously reported as a current favorite in Panama by Hawkins, in Jamaica by White, and in British Guiana by Romanow. He additionally said that Easton had reported that “Trinidadians remembered that it was already popular in the late ‘40’s in its present calypso form.” (ibid)

For quite some time a diligent search for *Give Her the Number One* referenced by Crowley yielded no results. It was a long-time Bahamian friend and music colleague Bradley Brown who, when asked about the song, sang it in part and directed me to recordings by Ronnie

Butler. The song was found on an LP titled *The Best of Ronnie Butler* but it was listed under two alternative titles, *Drive it Home* and *Bungy on Fire*. The lyric remained basically unchanged among the three versions. The text is repetitive as well as suggestive. It is conceptually designed to convey increasing degrees of sexual gratification experienced by the female counterpart of the chauvinistic male protagonist. This is conveyed from verse to verse by numerical escalation which is representative of his sexual prowess, therefore,

*When I give her number **one** and I drove it home,
drive it home*” is followed by
*When I give her number **two**...**three**...**four*** respectively,

Ronnie Butler

Analysis done during this study revealed extremely close similarities to the oratorical strain of calypsos from Trinidad in regard to phrasing, topicality and harmonic structure, as did most of the songs listened to from Butler’s repertoire. The chord progression that supports the melody also appears in the other example of Bahamian calypsos transcribed in figure 25 on page 85, and its features are further discussed on page 89.

2. *Topical “caliso” songs of rural St. Lucia sung in Creole. They usually have 6 or 8 lines and a frequently repeated chorus, and are similar to the Bamboula song text referenced by Van Dam (1955, p. 5).*

Crowley (1959), pinpointing similarities between pseudo-like calypsos and authentic Trinidadian calypsos, noted that,

The chorus of *Roll, Isabella, Roll* is strikingly similar to the St. Lucian caliso *Wule, Gloria, Wule* but unlike Trinidad calypso. Some of the Creole calisos of St. Lucia and Dominica copy the form of Trinidad calypsos, as in *Ave, C. D. C.* (Cited by Crowley, 1959, p. 12-13)

I found the snippets of Patois caliso melodies that had been shared by Dave and Jennifer Defoe of Dominica during our informal encounters in the Netherlands to be quite similar to some of the authentic Trinidadian calypsos among the corpus examined in this study, and also to those referred to above by Crowley.

He had additionally indicated that examples collected in Martinique by Patterson and Belasco (1943) also revealed similarities to calypsos from Trinidad. However, neither recordings nor transcriptions of the songs cited above by Crowley were available. In the absence of both, a transcription of *L’Annee Passée*, adapted by Belasco from a Haitian folk song *Chacoun*, was made available.

L'Année Passée

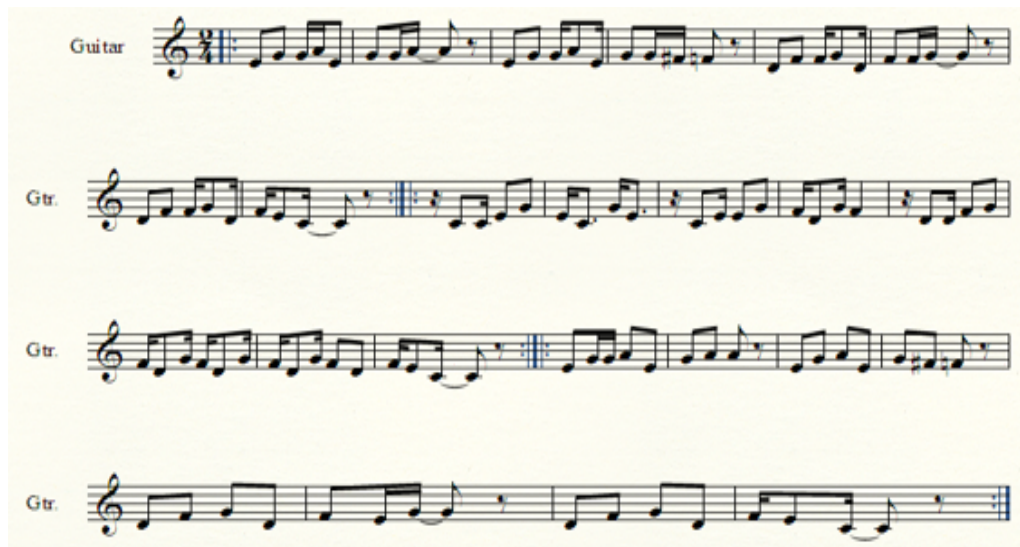


Fig. 24: Example 13 Martinican caliso, transcribed by the author.

3. *Commercial compositions that carefully copy the characteristics of Trinidad calypso but, unlike song type number 4, were composed and more likely performed by a West Indian.*

A list of compositions of this type compiled by Crowley includes Bill Rogers' Guyanese *shantos* *B. G. Bargee* and *Daddy Gone*, the Bahamian "calypsos" of Blind Blake and George Symonette, *Conch Ain't Got No Bone*, the Dominican text recorded by Fermor (1950, p. 128-130), St. Lucian calisos in English, some of the songs sung by Sam Manning, the St. Thomians Mac Cleverty, Maureen du Valleira and Lloyd Thomas, and some Panamanian calypsos sung in English.

According to Crowley (p. 118), some of these songs are very close to the Trinidad form.

His observations are borne out by *Mama Don't Want No Rum, No Coconut Oil*, also included in his list, and presented on the following page. The metric flow of the melody and the text are similar to many Trinidadian calypsos, and the chord progression outlining the composition is exactly the same as that of Roaring Lion's *Caroline* and numerous other calypsos from Trinidad. It is one of the most popular stock progressions still employed in contemporary calypso composition, and is very common among calypsos belonging to the oratorical strain.

Mama Don't Want No Rum, No Coconut Oil

The musical score is written for guitar in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves, each labeled 'Guitar' or 'Gtr.'. The lyrics are written below the staves. The chords indicated above the notes are G, G7, C, Cm, G, E7, Am7, and D7.

Lyrics:
 No meh Mama don't want no rum, no co-co-nut oil,
 No meh Mama don't want no rum no co - co - nut oil, No meh
 Mama don't want no rum and co-co-nut o.....i.....l, All she want is candy bran
 dy all the time. No meh

Fig. 25: Example 14 Bahamian calypso, transcribed by the author.

B.G. Bargee (Bhagi) on the other hand is simplistic and not in keeping with the caliber or compositional style of calypsos from Trinidad. but the topic however, is familiar.

Bhagi is an edible plant and a main ingredient of a popular and delicious East Indian dish bhagi, salt fish and rice. The delicacy has been assimilated into the Caribbean cuisine across ethnicities and had been a main staple among low income Afro and Indo contingents in Trinidad, Suriname, formerly British Guyana, and Guyana, formerly British Guyana.

B.G. Bargee

The musical score is written for acoustic guitar in Bb major (two flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves, each labeled 'Acoustic Guitar' or 'Ac.Gtr.'. The lyrics are written below the staves. The chords indicated above the notes are Bb, F7, and Bb.

Lyrics:
 Ladies and gents I hope you realize, these are the days to e.....con..omize, so
 listen attent...ively to B. G. Bhagi. It's based..
 on the subject of..... e.....con..o.my. The name
 of Guyana will live... in his..to....ry, Why? because we're the founder of Bha..gi.

Fig. 26: Example 15, Guyanese shanto: *B.G. Bargee [Bhagi]*, transcribed by the author.

Songs from the next category have been popularized in Hollywood movies and by artistes such as Josephine Baker, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Jordan, Mary Bryant, Jeri Southern, Gracie Barrie, Miss Calypso (Maya Angelou) and Robert Mitchum. Crowley has included Frank Parker's Always Marry a Rich-Itch-Itchy Woman and Nat King Cole's Calypso Blues describing them as "so-called calypsos" which "can be detected by easy comprehensibility, false accent, and lack of specific references" (p. 119).

4. *Commercial songs composed in the calypso manner by a non-West Indian and "designed for British or American ears (New Yorker, 1957 i: p. 34).*

Songs in this vein like the two examples that follow retain an element of sexual innuendo in order to attract specific targeted audiences. Their titles alone accomplish this goal while their texts transmit verbal cues that further conjure up visceral images familiar to specific audiences. In the true sense of double *entendre* the names of the fruits mentioned in the text suggestively refer to erogenous parts of a woman's body. The setting and sultry performing style in which the songs are rendered (the jargon and pseudo-West Indian accent used), the suggestive body language incorporated, and the flavor of the accompanying music accomplishes the intent of the author and performer. These features confuse the association of the genre with authentic Trinidadian calypsos.

The first example, *Please Mister Don't Touch Me Tomato*, was popularized by Mary Bryant, and the second example, *Fire Down Below* performed by Jeri Southern, was featured in a 1957 movie by the same name which was filmed in Trinidad and Tobago. Both songs enjoyed an enormous amount of international popularity that may have rivaled that attained by *Rum and Coca Cola* and some of the folksongs performed by Harry Belafonte.

Please Mister Don't Touch Me Tomato

Guitar: G C D7 G G
 Touch me this you touch me that, touch me every-thing I got. Touch me plum and me
 Gtr: C D7 G G D7
 apple too, Here's one thing you just can't do. All you do is feel up feel up,
 Gtr: G D7 G D7 G
 Ain't you tired of feel up feel up? All you do is squeeze up squeeze up, Boy ain't you tired of
 Gtr: D7 G C G D7
 squeeze up squeeze up? Please Mister don't touch me tomato, Please don't you touch me tomato
 Gtr: G C D7
 Touch me yam, me pum.....kin, po-ta-to but Please Mis-ter don't touch me to-ma-to.

Fig. 27: Example 16 Commercial type calypso, transcribed by the author.

Fire Down Below

Guitar: Cm7 F7 Bb Gm
 Cm7 F7 Bb Bb A Ab G7
 Cm7 F7 Bb A Ab G7 Cm7
 Cm7 F7 Bb F9 Bb Gm
 F9 Cm7 F7 Bb

Fig. 28: Example 17 Commercial type calypso, transcribed by the author.

5. *The local folk songs of the individual islands of the Caribbean similar to the Careso and Caliso, and having generic names such as the Mento of Jamaica, the Shantos of British Guyana, Haitian Pinyique and Meringue, and perhaps the Venezuelan Joropo, Puerto Rican Plena (Van Dam, 1954, p. 21) and the New Orleans Pillard (Krehbiel, 1914, p. 141).*

The number of examples belonging to this category of songs alone and the distribution of the five song types across such an expansive region is testimony to the popularity, commercial success, and influence of the calypso genre and the degree of borrowing that had been taking place at the time. The popular Jamaican mento *Linstead Market*, referenced below, is a product of melody sharing that became common practice in the Caribbean Basin during the era. One version of the melody surfaced in Trinidad with a different text as the calypso *Not a Cent*. Another, subtitled *La Chomba*, surfaced in Central America as a calypso-cumbia hybrid. The three versions are included in the corpus of songs reviewed.

Linstead Market

Piano

The musical score for 'Linstead Market' is presented in three systems. The first system contains five measures with chords D, Em, A7, D, and D. The second system contains six measures with chords Em, A7, D, D, G, and A7. The third system contains five measures with chords D, D, G, A7, and D. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef.

Fig. 29: Example 18 Mento, transcribed by the author.

Another instance of melody sharing has been etched into the annals of calypso history because of plagiarism and copyright infringement. It involves the calypso which became popularized as *Rum and Coca Cola*. By way of an article dated Sunday, Sept. 1, 2013, and edited by Azizi Powell, we are informed that, in 1905 Lionel Belasco and Massey Patterson composed *L'Année Passée* (transcribed on page 91); the song was based on a Martinican folk

song and its lyrics were written in Patois; in 1906 Rupert Grant (Lord Invader) penned *Rum and Coca Cola* using the same melody; and that he song was then copyrighted with different lyrics in the United States by Morey Amsterdam and became a hit song for the Andrew Sisters in 1945 (see <http://pancocojams.blogspot.nl/2013/09/lannee-passee-calypso-song-that-became.html>).

The observation made by Crowley, Van Dam, Lamson and others in the 1950's, that calypso music was based on perhaps fifty traditional melodies which were constantly being revised and reworked to fit new verbal material offers a plausible explanation for multiplicity in regard to defining the genre. Both Elder (1964) and Rohlehr (1990) have corroborated reports of a "high degree of borrowing." Elder (1964), commenting on the post-World War II atmosphere in Trinidad, wrote, "It is important to note that the old calinda tunes were still in use except the texts were new" (p. 133).

Upon analysis of the collection of calypso reviewed during this study it was discovered that Houdini's *Mama, Call the Fire Brigade* was sung to the tune of the calinda *Ten Thousand to Bar Me One*. Other examples of borrowing or melody sharing, include Phil Madison's *Caroni Swamp* and Lord Beginner's *Run Your Run Hitler*, Mentor's *Cipriani* and the folksong *Amba Cai La* recorded by Sam Manning, the stick fighting chant *When I Dead Bury Me Clothes* and the popular Road March *Fire Brigade Water the Road* by Atilla, and *Sponger Monkey* sung to the tune of *Sly Mongoose*. Rohlehr (1990) has informed that *Sly Mongoose* was the tune sung most regularly on the road in 1923, and that according to Quevedo (Atilla the Hun), the song had come to Trinidad from Jamaica in 1911, resurfaced in 1919 and was sung by Houdini in 1921 (p. 117).

Rohlehr, citing Lord Beginner's recollection of that period has recounted that,

The 'Sly Mongoose' tune caused Invader to sing 'Bring back the ole time cat-o-nine' and there was even a circus in Trinidad in 1944 that used the same tune as its theme, which was called 'Blow Kangaroo.' Most islands, even Guadeloupe, claimed the tune 'Sly Mongoose.' (Cited by Rohlehr, 1990, p. 102)

Rohlehr (1990) has additionally pointed to the early 1900's indicating that it was a period of melodic exchange between islands. He has stated that,

This was a period when folk-song melodies from all over the West Indies - Martinique, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Tobago, Jamaica, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Barbados and the Grenadines - contributed to the development of Trinidad's calypso. (p. 60)

The fact that Crowley (1959) could describe five types of 'calypso-like' song-styles produced outside of Trinidad suggests that,

- There were multiple viewpoints as to defining the genre owing to its simultaneous development in Trinidad and in various other Caribbean islands.
- There had been some notion at that time of the characteristics of what was being called ‘authentic’ Trinidad calypso music.
- Since melody sharing had been common practice a high occurrence of plagiarism was possible.

It is easy to understand therefore how ambiguity as to the definition and source of origin of the calypso genre could have ensued, and why several islands have laid claim as to its ownership. Other factors have also contributed to the cause of such ambiguity and proprietorship. The following paragraph paraphrased from Part 4 of Louis Regis’ 2008 radio series “The History of Calypso”, broadcast on Wack Radio 109 FM in Trinidad, provides a plausible explanation for the varied perception as to the definition of the calypso:

Calypso had impacted the popular consciousness of the United States as evidenced by involvement by Paul Robeson, Ella Fitzgerald, Maya Angelou [Calypso Princess], Louis Farrakhan [The Mighty Charmer], Robert Mitchum and Hollywood movie producers. The islands of the Caribbean, especially the British West Indies, had been perceived as one unit from which the calypso emerged, therefore Caribbean folk music with nuances of calypso rhythms and topicality became popularized and labeled as calypso... Corporate America established an image perpetrated by Harry Belafonte, and defenders of that status quo deliberately set out to suppress the voice of political commentary in calypso in favor of the salacious calypso with its spicy lyrics, sexual topicality, intelligible jargon and simplistic rhythmic and harmonic structure. (Louis Regis, 2008)

Mary Bryant’s *Please Mister Don’t Touch My Tomato*, Amsterdam’s lyrical conversion of Lord Invader’s *Rum and Coca Cola* (originally a social commentary about prostitution and the predilection of local ‘working girls’ for US currency) performed by the Andrew Sisters, *Fire Down Below* performed by Jeri Southern, and Sonny Rollins’ *St. Thomas* come to mind.

Regis, citing Atilla has stated,

As Atilla put it the American initiative helped financially but created havoc in the local evolution. Folk songs such as *Yellow Bird*, *Matilda*, *Brown Skin Girl*, *Linstead Market*, *Hold Him Joe*, *Don’t Stop the Carnival*, *Coconut Woman* and *Lisa* became as synonymous with the status quo and identified internationally as calypso as emergent from the West Indies. (Cited in Regis, 2000)

The evidence has shown that two strains of songs had been perceived as calypso; ‘authentic Trinidadian calypsos’ and ‘calypso-like songs’ composed elsewhere by non-Trinidadians.

Crowley, quoting others, had called for a clear distinction between the two perceived ‘strains’, as he corroborated reports of the financial triumph of items from the general West Indian folk song corpus over traditional Trinidad calypsos. He wrote,

The popularity of such songs as “*Day-O*” [*Banana Boat Song*] and “*Jamaica Farewell*” sung in pseudo-West Indian dialect and called “calypso” requires a fresh investigation into this traditional Trinidadian musical form. The recent “calypso craze” which accounted for one fourth of popular record sales (Time, 1957, p. 55) and wherein one Belafonte album sold nearly a million copies (Cappon, 1957) is not the first to occur in the United States. (Cited in Crowley, 1959, p. 57)

Upon comparison of calypsos from the two strains it was found that they sounded quite similar but that there were differences in regard to syncopation, pulse, inflection, vocabulary (hence jargon), dialect, topicality, singing and instrument performance style, harmonic structure, form, and instrumentation (use of the banjo in the Bahamas for instance).

In order to enlighten the reader, features common to the authentic Trinidadian strain of calypsos will now be highlighted. As reported by Crowley (1959, p. 60-61), Mitto Sampson, in tracing a legend, has supplied information that takes us as far back as 1790. According to Crowley, Sampson (1956, p. 253) reported that the songs of that period,

Were usually sung extemporare and were of a flattering nature, or satirical, or directed against unpopular neighbors or members of the plantation community, or else they were...a war of insults between two or more expert singers. (Cited by Crowley, 1959, p. 60-61)

Based on the definitions and examples perused so far in this chapter the following composite of some of the individual definitions I have come across emerges:

The calypso is a genre of West Indian ballad with roots in West African praise-singing and music traditions of various other ethnic groups. It has a syncopated beat, a repeated melody sung in call-and-response style, a witty and satirical text whose subject is usually a local and topical event of a political and social import, and whose tone is one of allusion, mockery, double *entendre* or challenge.

This brings us to Crowley’s generally accepted definition of calypso outlined below:

Calypso...may be defined as the Carnival songs of Trinidad, composed and sung by... calypsonians... during the Carnival season. Subjects are usually topical, about local events or local attitudes towards foreign events; derision, allusion, and double entendre are often employed. Calypsos may also function as tributes to famous people, as blackmail, as political engineering, as ‘singing commercials,’ and as love songs. The words tend to take precedence over the music, and employ local lower-class idiom, a Creole vocabulary, and an exaggeration of local stress patterns. Calypsos usually have four verses of eight lines each, except that the first two lines of the first verse are repeated. Verses are separated from one another by a 4-line chorus, and the rhyme scheme is simple...calypso music is based on perhaps fifty traditional melodies which are revised and reworked constantly to fit new verbal material. They are played in 2/4 or 4/4 time with offbeat phrasing by a small band of ordinary string and wind instruments and skak-shak...when used in a ballroom; the ‘calypso dance’ is similar to a fast rhumba. (1958, p. 112-115)

Authentic Trinidadian Calypso Music

Based partially on the generally accepted characteristics above, advanced by Crowley and corroborated by observers and other researchers this study will now embark upon scrutiny of the music strains that have been identified as extant in Trinidad before and during the emergence of the calypso. Such scrutiny may be helpful in leading to the source or sources of origin of 'authentic' genres of calypso that became extant in Trinidad.

The Bel Air (Belair, Belaire, Bélé)

Hill (1998) has reported that the bel air (belair or belaire), a French-Creole song genre, has been accepted and substantiated by Breen (1844, p. 193), and others as the direct antecedent of the modern calypso. Errol Hill (1967, p. 365), however, has described the bel air, as "a song of praise or satire", as "plaintive" and as "melancholy," a description which, by Rohlehr's (1990) criticism, "in the light of the great variety of belair songs...seems somewhat inadequate" (p. 22).

According to Rohlehr, Hill (1972) based his acceptance of the bel air as the direct antecedent of the modern calypso on Breen's 1844 account of the bel air songs "which used to be composed by chanterelles, or female lead singers of the La Rose and La Margeurite societies of nineteenth century St. Lucia". Breen had described the bel air as,

A sort of pastoral in blank verse, adapted to a particular tune or air. Many of these airs are of a plaintive and melancholy character, and some are exquisitely melodious." (Cited by Hill, 1972, p. 57)

Rohlehr's argument is supported by an analysis of the example of a La Rose belair cited by Breen which revealed that it was not in blank verse. He has informed us that the lyrics of the St. Lucian *chanterelle* were not improvised, and had realized the possibility of assistance being received by the chanterelle from literate friends; "for though the majority of society members came from the lower class, members of all classes were enrolled in both societies" (Rohlehr, 1990, p. 22).

There was also an assumption of such assistance in Breen's account when he reported that,

Some indeed, are of a higher order than one would be entitled to look for from untutored Negroes: and it is but as natural to suppose that they are assisted by their friends among the educated classes. (Breen, 1844, p. 71)

That this strain was an invention of the slaves, had been performed alongside the calinda and jhouba, and had sometimes received literary input from members of the literate sector of society has been reported by Borde (1882, p. 313) and confirmed by several scholars.

Rohlehr has reported on the genre's relationship to calypso music. The following passage is paraphrased from statements he made during the program "Calypso Roots": "The belair was a poetic form of French verse whose accompanying music was originally that of the minuet. It was taken over by Afro-Trinidadians and put to drums becoming one of the root forms that had contributed to the narrative form of calypso" ("Calypso Roots", <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdxQ-457GVI>>.).

Pearse (1955) has identified three belair strains as extant in Trinidad, each having several subtypes and distinct functions. According to Pearse's summary of musical "types" in Trinidad, Congo music of nineteenth century immigrants has been appropriated in these three strains of bélé. As inferred from Pearse, one of the types propagated in Trinidad, bélé I was French Creole in origin resembled the Bouquet dances that were organized for festive occasions, and was accompanied by drums and shack-shack. Rohlehr (1990, p. 20) has informed that the jhouba (juba, giuba) was also named among the dances named by Borde as having derived directly from Africa, and that there was a possible link between the juba and the "Bouquet dances" described by de Verteuil (1987).

As informed by Pearse (ibid), the bélé II which evolved in Grenada was also of French Creole origin and served not only a secular function, but a religious function as well, which was associated with Saraka or ancestral sacrifice. The third type, bélé III, was propagated in Trinidad and performed in English. It functioned as a pleasure dance and was used in the working of magic involving possession. A bass drum beaten with sticks, a keg drum, tambourines and shack-shacks supplied the accompaniment for a chantwel and chorus. (Pearse 1955, p. 29-36). His summary in its entirety can be accessed in Elder (1969, p. 8-10).

The bel air (belair or bélé) also has roots in African ritual dances pertaining to mating and fertility, and had been popular in Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada, and in Trinidad and Tobago. During bélé soirées (parties) the main singer (*la vwa* – from Fr. *la voix* meaning the voice) would sing songs hinting at sexuality, and backed in responsorial style by a choral group (*la reponde*). At least two musicians, a drummer (*le tambouye*), and an assistant (*le bwate*) who regulated the rhythm by beating the side of the drum with two sticks would accompany the singers. A male dancer (*le kavalye*) would display his sexual prowess in dance and his female partner (*la danm*) would reciprocate. Like all the other African dances of the mating and

fertility pantheon the performance would escalate into wild explicit eroticism. Illustrations of the performance layout, and a transcription that facilitates analysis and comparison with subsequent genres of calypsos illustrated by examples 15 and 16 are provided below

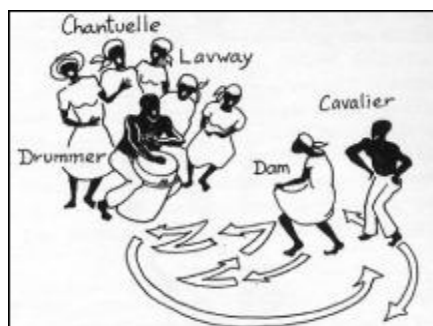


Fig. 30a: Bélé performance layout (AvirtualDominica.com).



Fig. 30b: Bélé performance layout (Source)



Fig. 30c: Bélé performance (www.bouzaiproductions.com)

Bélé Melody & Rhythm

Figure 31 shows two musical transcriptions for Bélé or belair. The first transcription is for Guitar and Percussion. The second transcription is for Gtr. and Perc.

Guitar

Em Am Em Am

Percussion

Gtr.

Em Am Em B7 Em

Perc.

Fig. 31: Example 19 Bélé or belair, transcribed by the author.

Melodic syncopation and rhythmic pulse are among features that have continued to appear throughout the evolution of the calypso. Such transmission is evident in the calypsos *Sly*

Mongoose and *Limbo like Me*, and is sometimes disguised, perhaps intentionally or perhaps by innovation as a result of shifts in function among instruments. For example, reassignment of the *tresillo* in *Matilda* from percussive pulse to bass and lead melody (see p. 70), and the appearance of the melodic rhythms in measures 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 respectively in example 19 as vocabulary of percussion family, and the comping style of keyboard instruments.

Sly Mongoose

The musical score for 'Sly Mongoose' consists of two staves. The top staff is for Guitar, with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains five measures of music with the following lyrics: 'Mongoose went in the White man kitchen take up one of he big fat chicken, Everybody was'. The bottom staff is for Gtr. (Guitar), also with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains three measures of music with the following lyrics: 'searching for Sly Mon...goose'. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: C, Dm, G7, C, C for the Guitar staff, and F, C, G, C for the Gtr. staff.

Fig. 32: Example 20, transcribed by the author.

Limbo Like Me

The musical score for 'Limbo Like Me' consists of two staves. The top staff is for Acoustic Guitar, with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F-sharp). It contains four measures of music with the following lyrics: 'Ah want somebo...dy to limbo like me, limbo..... lim...'. The bottom staff is for Ac. Gtr. (Acoustic Guitar), also with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It contains four measures of music with the following lyrics: '.....bo like me. Ah'. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G, C, G for the Acoustic Guitar staff, and D7, G for the Ac. Gtr. staff.

Fig. 33: Example 21, transcribed by the author.

The *bélé* as performed in Trinidad was a trio of African or Afro-influenced dances that served ritual and social functions of both a secular and a religious nature. When it functioned as song it was rendered in both French Creole and English, and incorporated praise, satire and traces of ridicule, features also detected in the *belairs* of the *chanterelles* of St. Lucia, Dominica and Grenada. Among the 'literate' sectors of the Trinidadian community nineteenth Century calypsos, (as distinct from the *calinda* songs), were synonymous with and referred to as *belair*. This attitude of the 'literate' sector however, has pointed to division and bias along class, ethnic, and religious lines in relation to calypso song pedigree.

The form of bélé song that came to be accepted by ‘respectable’ Trinidadian society, had obviously retained milder doses of satire and ridicule and its accompanying dance did not as explicitly exhibit the tabooed features (discussed on the following pages) that are found in other lascivious Afro-Caribbean dances such as the bamboula.

The tone in which Gustave Borde (1882) had reported about the genre alludes to this in so far as his description could equally be applied to the waltz but for one feature of course, its meter. He wrote,

...the bel air is a song, a ballad; it is also the dance step that one executes to the tune. This name applies equally to occasions that give rise to dancing: one goes to the bel air as one goes to a ball. (p. 306-307)

According to the sources cited, the bélé and the calinda were two distinct dance forms with similar African influences, music form, and to some degree, function. This is congruous with information that has been supplied by Cable (1969) who, although his reports were based on oral and written testimonies, has provided one of the most complete descriptions of the calinda. Cable informed that,

The Calinda was a dance of the multitude, a sort of vehement cotillion. The contortions of the encircling crowd were strange and terrible; the din was hideous. One Calinda is still familiar to Creole ears; it has long been a vehicle for the white Creole’s satire; for generations the man of municipal politics was fortunate who escaped entirely a lampooning set to its air. (p. 42)

According to Rohlehr (1990),

Cable’s exaggerated horror at a dance he had more heard and read about than seen, matches the terms in which respectable Trinidadians wrote about Canboulay, Calinda and “Jamette Carnival” in the post-Emancipation period. (p. 12)

The horror of respectable locals was often corroborated by the testimony of Puritanical visitors such as Reverend Underhill who, while he viewed the African psyche as a sort of *tabula rasa* on which the European could inscribe any traits of character he chose, reacted with disdain to the African settlements of the East Dry River, and particular to the “dance halls”, large sheds, “devoted to night dances and to the noisy music of the banjo and drum”... the struggle by the “respectable” and “decent” class of people to impose what they considered to be a “proper” on what they termed the fanaticism, noise, or discord - the Afro-based style-of the lumpen-proletariat, was a constant feature of nineteenth-century colonial society, and affected the shape of both Carnival and Calypso well into the twentieth century. (p. 12-13)

Calinda performance in Congo Square (Place Congo) had received adverse reports that referred to “hot sweaty, nearly-naked bodies gyrating in time with the beat of the bamboulas, gourds, and banjos” (Latrobe, 1819). But the semi-nudity that offended Latrobe and others had been condoned by slave owners because of unbearably high temperatures. One must remember also that under French rule, New Orleans law had been less repressive toward the

slave population. A similar dispensation had been granted to slaves in the French West Indies.

The fact that two strains of music that might have been the antecedents of the calypso had been extant in Trinidad during that period has been corroborated by Elder, Rohlehr, Borde, Hill and others.

Donald Hill (1998) reported that during the plantation festivities, centering on Christmas (especially on British estates) and carnival (especially on French estates), the associated outdoor music “consisted of Creole belairs and calindas” (p. 189).

Borde’s (1882) account of the festivities of slaves in the 1800’s identified three distinct dances that were performed. He reported that,

Like the free people of colour, the slaves also had their feasts and rejoicings. On Saturday and on Sundays after Mass, they gave vent to their passions for dancing and music. For long hours and without rest they performed the dances called the “calinda” and the “jhouba”, which had come down from their ancestors, and also the dance “bel air” which was their own invention. All these were carried out to the sound of their voices and the African drum. (p. 313)

One of the main types of drum referred to that supplied accompaniment was the bamboo drum called the *bamboula*, referenced earlier on page 38 of this study. A dance by the same name was known throughout the French colonies including New Orleans. Versions have survived in the Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, St. Lucia by the same name, and as well in Puerto Rico, as the *bomba*.

According to Rohlehr (1990), the term *bamboula* “was frequently used in the nineteenth century to describe Trinidad music” (p. 23). He has also informed us that nineteenth century batonniers in Trinidad are recorded as having employed the “Bamboula! Bamboula!” refrain to invoke a demonic, diabolic quality in their stick fighting (p. 24).

As informed by Breen (1844), “Bamboula” was a general term applied to most dances (p. 195-196), among which were the *semba* and *zamba* evolutions of the bamboula, calinda and the *chica*. Along with *bruckins* dance of Jamaica, the *tambu* of Curacao, the *merengue* of the Dominican Republic, the *mabelo* of Martinique, and the Cuban *rumba*, these dances were among the pantheon of lascivious, indecent and scoffed-at African dances.

Lascivious African dances had been characterized by features which were enacted in five phases by a male dancer and his female counterpart in alternation: a display of physical prowess by the male dancer; teasing by his female counterpart; pursuit with intent to touch with sexual implicity; feigned flight and surrender; and union. More explicitly the main

features of the dances were tabooed gestures which include the clasping and rubbing together of the thighs (grinding) of partners of the opposite sex, embracing from behind or in front while sensuously gyrating the hips (wining), and delivering pelvic thrusts (jooking) in simulation of the sex act. One can easily conceive how such ‘hedonistic’ cultural practices could have offended the ears and eyes of the Catholic church and ‘respectable’ citizens of the upper and middle classes, the ‘puritan’ sector of society.

The depiction below is Kemble’s 1886 interpretation of a late 1700s bamboula performance. Bamboula drummers can be seen crouched over their instruments on the right.



Fig. 34: The bamboula dance (www.Streetswing.com)

Additional information has been supplied by Lamson (1957) who has traced the bamboula to the Virgin Islands and has reported that the function it performed there was similar to the function performed by the calinda in Trinidad. In her report, Lamson described the dance from its status as being embraced among ‘respectable’ society to its degeneration into the demi-world of the Jamette. The following citation is a paraphrased version of that report.

As developed in the Virgin Islands the Bamboula functioned as the eyes and ears of society... It served as the local tabloid ad scandal sheet rolled into one... The Queen composed verses extemporaneously; she would sing the verses and the rest of the dancers and participants would repeat them in a call-and-response pattern... However, after a time the drum dances became the terror of the coloured and white population alike... the Bamboula dances degenerated into one of the most effective weapons of the demimonde to heap personal abuse, vituperation, scandal and blackmail upon all and sundry. (Lamson, p. 21)

The 1819 commentary by the visiting architect Benjamin Latrobe appears to corroborate such degeneration in Place Congo slave celebrations in New Orleans. He described them as “savage” and noted that male participants covered themselves only with a sash, and except for that “went naked.”

Having perused the foregoing accounts, and several others, one of the positions taken by this study is that the music that came to be associated with the dance known as the bel air or bélé,

which according to Borde was invented by the slaves, was the eventual synthesis of African, French Creole and European art forms that had been in existence along the slave route from Louisiana to the bottom of the Caribbean. It fed the evolution of the calypso, but was a poetic, served a narrative function, and was designed to suit its upper-class patrons. Also upheld by this study is the position that, the calinda was a significant contributor too, but that of these two Afro-Caribbean sources from which the modern day calypso was fed, the calinda was more consistent with grassroots sentiment and lifestyle. That is to say that it was more significant in terms of redress and resistance to colonial ideology. These posits are supported by the overwhelming amount of evidence confirming:

- the linkage in function between the bamboula and the calinda;
- the association between calinda chant and calypso, particularly the Road March strain, and resultantly by proxy, between bamboula and calypso;
- the centrality of both the dance and music within the grass roots community in maintaining cohesion among the ‘masses’ that sought to resist and attack the ‘establishment’, and in addition, confirming that:
- the Trinidad calypso, stick fighting, and certain dance styles and their accompanying drum rhythms became political targets and remained a bone of contention during the long battle between the upper-classes and the Jamette sector of society;
- the belair incorporated satire and ridicule also, but its ‘offensive’ features were tempered in order to suit its patrons and the environment (courtyard balls) where it originated and in which it was practiced.

The belair remained ‘refined and respectable’ whereas the calinda as performance art, was part and parcel of the stick fighting arena. It represented secularism, was a source of phobia among ‘respectable’ members of society, and presented a threat to the authorities because of its capacity to encourage assembly and its potential to incite anarchy.

Calinda Chant

As a musical voice the calinda was the epoxy that maintained cohesion among the repressed masses, and the engine that kept them surging forward; as cultural expression it never permitted the lower-class masses to lose consciousness or connectedness to their roots as, according to Rohlehr (1990), “it remained raw, rowdy and aggressive, never divorcing itself from *mépris* (Fr.) or losing its sense of satire or rebellion – the dance never losing its lasciviousness – in keeping with Jamette tradition”. The calinda chants with litany-like call-and-response structure expressed threats of defiance or boasting. These features have been transmitted to the calypso. Both the function and the structure of calinda chants are alluded to by Waterman (1943), as can be interpreted from his work. He writes,

The chants were sung in Creole or English to the accompaniment of drum rhythms that paced the stick-fighting duels. The function of these 2-line and sometimes 4-line or 8-line chants was to praise and to bolster the courage of fighters and also to insult and intimidate their rivals. (p. 215)



Fig. 35a: Stick fighting stance - the Carray-Posturing (Guardian.co.tt)



Fig. 35b: Charging a Blow-Attacking (Darkroom.baltimoresun.com)

Donald Hill (1998) has provided a concise but in-depth account of the evolution of the genre.

The roots of the Calinda lie in the Afro-Trinidadian stick fighting songs, and drum dance songs and other traditions. These songs were sung in French Creole, the vernacular language of the majority of Africans in Trinidad during the 19th Century. The songs often had two line stanzas, sung by a chantuelle and chorus in a call-and-response fashion, accompanied by tamboo bamboo. After the insistence of English as the spoken language calypsos with four or eight line stanzas began to appear, accompanied by stringed instruments, associated with the musical traditions of nearby Venezuela. Calypso melodies were shaped both by speech rhythms and by patterns of syncopation characteristic of Afro-Trinidadian music. French was the basis of Patois or Creole lyrics throughout the 19th Century.

The following example, rendered in English, is one of the more popular calinda chants.

Ten Thousand to Bar Me One



Fig. 36: Example 22 Calinda chant, transcribed by the author.

Ten Thousand to Bar Me One

*Thousand, thousand to bar me one
 Ah want them to know
 Thousand, ten thousand to bar me one
 Ah go beat them so*

Lord Invader

In spite of the odds stacked against him the protagonist (the *batonnier*) shows no fear. The refrain is established by the background chorus and repeated in alternation with the improvised calls of the chantwel. The *batonnier*'s strong sense of bravado and commitment is conveyed as well by the respective lyrics of *Carnival Celebration*, *Me Alone* and *Mooma Mooma*

Carnival Celebration

*Well Ah waiting for this Carnival
 Is to jump up with these criminals
 I'm going to arm myself with a big stick
 And any man Ah meet in Town that is real licks
 'cause Ah done tell Mammy already
 Mammy Dous Dous tie up yuh belly
 'cause is murder, federation with war and rebellion
 When they bar me by the junction (Ah gone down)*

*Monday morning Ah waking early
 To drink a Vat (Vat 19 rum) to steam up meh body
 And Ah jumping up like Ah crazy
 I alone go'n collapse the city
 With meh razor tie on to meh poui
 Ah like a Bajan in the nineteenth Century
 And with meh stick in meh waist Ah chipping in space*

Is to spit in old nigger face (And Ah gone down)
Small Island Pride

Me Alone

*Me alone, me alone
Me alone like a man
I will face hell-battalion,
Only me alone!*

Traditional

Mooma Mooma

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Trombone and Tbn. (Trombone). The music is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/meter is marked 'e' (common time). The lyrics are written below the staves. The Trombone staff has a 'F' chord marking above the first measure and a 'C7' chord marking above the eighth measure. The Tbn. staff has a 'C7' chord marking above the first measure and another 'C7' chord marking above the eighth measure. The lyrics are: 'Mooma, Mooma, when you hear Ah dead doh cry, when you hear Ah dead doh cry, when you hear Ah dead bu.....ry I.'

Fig. 37: Example 23 Calinda chant, transcribed by the author.

The melodies, boasting and reference to stickmen became transmissions that would be passed on as features of early twentieth century calypsos and beyond. Rohlehr (1990) has commented on the bravado customarily expressed by the lyric of calinda songs:

By boasting of his invincibility, he [the batonnier] sought immunity to his opponent's blows. His rhetoric was a serious one, a formalized verbal prelude to a game in which manhood, status, identity within the group and on rare occasions, life itself was at stake. (p. 53)

Language for the chantwel who reinforced the stick fighter's boast and would himself sometimes actively participate in stickplay, was power; the word was magic, its form, incantation, its purpose inspiration and celebration. This aspect of language would remain in the Calypso for two decades, and would see a revival in the late thirties, when singers would recall and revamp old Calinda fragments. (p. 53-54)

The following dirge-like slogan in Creole, "*Coule, sang moen ka coule*," as explained by an old stickman was usually sung in order to bolster courage among supporters after a leader had fallen (Rohlehr 1990, p. 53). Literally translated it means "I am shedding blood," but "I" is used figuratively to represent "We" and alludes to the spiritual and physical unity of the contingent. It must be remembered that stick fighters fought in defense of 'yards' or *gayapes*, organized groups or societies equivalent to samba schools of Brazil or *cabildos* of Cuba. The demonstration of solidarity and cohesion among stick fighters in days of slavery is exemplified by the deliberate burning of cane fields. This act served two functions: the first was sanctioned by plantation owners as part of the process of harvesting the sugar cane crop;

the second was an act of sabotage during rebellion, at which times the perpetrators sang calinda songs of defiance and paraded.

The song *Joe Talmana* eulogized the leader of the 1881 insurrection against Captain Baker, the then-chief of police, and the authorities. The battalions that participated, like the ones that had challenged the authorities during similar uprisings in the Bahamas, had been comprised of both male and female stick fighters. Both sets of events and the figurative “I” demonstrate the degree of unity among the combatants and the function of the music form and its rhetoric as part of the arsenal that had persistently challenged British Crown Colony.

Epstein (1977), reporting on the immoral aspects of the calinda described it as a “sport brought from the coast of Guinea.” He writes that the calinda was “attended with gestures which are not entirely consistent with modesty, whence it is forbidden by the public laws of the islands” (p. 32).

Such criticism and opposition extended to the calinda spanned the region from the Caribbean to New Orleans and had led to its eventual suppression, which had been almost complete, extending to its function as a dance as well. Cable (1969) has reported that,

The tune Calinda was bad enough. In Louisiana, at least, its song was always a grossly personal satirical ballad, and it was the favorite dance all the way from there to Trinidad. To dance it publicly is not allowed this side of the West Indies. All this Congo Square business was suppressed at one time; 1843 says tradition. (p. 42)

Father Labat’s criticism of the calinda dates back to 1698 and incorporates terms that describe it as a dance “contrary to all modesty” and “with absolutely lascivious gestures” (Sueiro, 1994, p. 1-2).

In Trinidad, African cultural expression of this nature was also frowned upon with similar discontent. The taking over of carnival by the Jamette sector of society had been established by 1860 and protests against obscenity had been constant. Objectionable obscenity constituted the participation of prostitutes, cross-dressing among men, explicitly sexual themes, and rampant skirmishes between masquerading groups. The Canboulay festivities, part and parcel of the carnival celebrations, had also been a cause for growing concern by the authorities whose fears had been realized by the 1881 Canboulay Riot.

In 1883 a bill prohibiting drumming between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. except with police permission, was introduced. The Music Bill as it was called, was withdrawn and replaced in the same year by Ordinance II, an expansion on its counterpart which retained the ban on drumming. Canboulay was banned the following year but the Lavway or Road March was

retained as the musical impetus of street parading. This new calypso strain that emerged then and became the new vogue is the subject of the next installment.

The Lavway or Road March

Lavways or road marches were the traditional calypso music form associated with the masquerade processions of Afro-Trinidadians. Like in the calinda strain, responsorial style singing is one of its main characteristics. As related by Donald Hill (1993),

Costumed revelers, led by a chantwel, would sing rowdy call-and-response chants...such processions often came to be accompanied by a tamboo-bamboo (tambour-bamboo) ensemble of bamboo tubes struck with sticks. (p.187)

The following calypso *Ten to One Is Murder* sung in 1960 is a classic example. Analyzed, it is a fusion of two single tone couplets and single-line calinda chants delivered in litanic style alternating with the refrain, ‘*Ten to one is murder*’, and outlined entirely by a repeated IV- I – V7 – I progression.

Ten to One Is Murder

*Well, they playing bad;
they have me feeling sad* (Single tone couplet)
*Well, they playing beast;
why they run for police,* (Single tone couplet)

*Ten criminals attack me outside ah Miramar... *Ten to one is murder*
*About ten in the night on the fifth of October... **
*Way down Henry Street, up by HGM Walker... **
*Well, the leader of the gang was hot like a pepper... **
*And every man in the gang had a white-handle razor... **
*They say ah push they gal from Grenada... **
*Well, ah back back until ah nearly fall in the gutter... **
*You could imagine my position, not a police in the area... **
The Mighty Sparrow

A variant of the IV- I - V7 - I progression, I - IV - I - V7, has remained the most popular chord progression appearing both in lavways and in the oratorical strain. *Don't Stop the Carnival* recorded in 1946 by the Duke of Iron is one of the more familiar examples of this harmonic construction often replaced by embellished substitutions like the progression in measures 1 through 4 of *Tan Tan* in figure 42. The i - iv - i - V7 progression, a minor key counterpart, appears in the chorus of *Carnival Celebration* in which fictitious metaphoric challenges are issued to two notorious Bad Johns and master stick fighters of yesteryear; ironically both men belonged to different eras.

Carnival Celebration

Trombone

Am Dm E7 Am

Masti...fay, Mas...ti...fay, meet me out by the Croisee.

Am Dm E7 Am

Cut...out...er, Cut...out...er, meet me down by Green Cor...ner.

Fig. 38: Example 24 Lavway: *i - iv - V7 - i* harmonic structure, transcribed by the author.

Zingay

Acoustic Guitar

Dm Gm Dm

Zin...gay ta...la...la mettez la main a...

Ac. Gtr.

A7 Dm Gm Dm A7

...su mo...i.

Fig. 39: Example 25 Lavway: *i - iv - i - V7* harmonic structure, transcribed by the author.

A few other lavway-type progressions are included for the reader's perusal. As can be observed, lavways exhibit more harmonic variations than any of the other calypso genres reviewed so far.

Trouble in Arima

Guitar

Bb Gm Cm7 F7

Trouble - in A...ri...ma, Trouble - round the cor...ner,

Gtr.

Bb Gm Cm7 F7

Trouble - if dey touch me, Trouble - Ah go beat dem.

Fig. 40: Example 26 Lavway: *I - vi - ii - V7* harmonic structure, transcribed by the author.

Tan Tan

The musical score for 'Tan Tan' is written for guitar and guitar (Gtr.). It features four staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Guitar' and the second 'Gtr.'. The third and fourth staves are also labeled 'Gtr.'. The music is in 4/4 time and key of D major. The chords and notes are as follows:

- Staff 1 (Guitar): G, Bm, C, C#dim Bm/D, E7, Am7, D7.
- Staff 2 (Gtr.): Bm, E7, Am7, D7, G, Em, Am7, D7, G, Em.
- Staff 3 (Gtr.): Am7, D7, G, Em, Am7, D7, G, Em.
- Staff 4 (Gtr.): Am7, D7, Bm, E7, Am7, D7, Am7, D7, G, Em, Am7, D7. The staff is divided into two sections: '1st. Ending' and '2nd. Ending'.

Fig. 41: Example 27 Lavway, transcribed by the author.

Fire Brigade Water the Road

The musical score for 'Fire Brigade Water the Road' is written for Trombone and Tbn. It features two staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Trombone' and the second 'Tbn.'. The music is in 4/4 time and key of D major. The lyrics are as follows:

Fire Brigade water the road, George street burning down

Fire Brigade water the road, George street burn down to the ground. Fire Bri

The chords and notes are as follows:

- Staff 1 (Trombone): D, D.
- Staff 2 (Tbn.): A7, A7, D.

Fig. 42: Example 28 Lavway, transcribed by the author.

Fire Brigade Water the Road and an earlier calinda chant *When Ah Dead Bury Meh Clothes* share the same melody and their titles and refrains share the same iambic pentameter. A similar melodic and harmonic resemblance is extant between *Zingay* and *J'ouvert Barrio*.

The calypso genres perused have been presented in chronological order and under close scrutiny an unbroken succession of transmission can be detected. The next calypso strain also retained features detected in earlier genres. At this point the discussion previously introduced on page 67 about the sans humanité strain of calypso can now be resumed.

Sans Humanité or Oratorical Calypso

Informing us about this strain as a transmission of the ancient calinda chants, Rohlehr (1990) has stated that,

This form of the Calypso, which was popular between 1900 and 1925, retained a number of elements of the earlier Calinda chants. They have always been performed extemporaneously in minor keys. Their lyric portrays a tone of boastfulness and ridicule and therefore functions as verbal sorties in rhyming duels in song called ‘Calypso War’. (p. 60)

The word *sanimanite* is a phonetic mutation of *sans humanité* (Fr.) meaning ‘without pity’ and was almost always interjected at the end of each sortie. In light of the intent of the sorties leveled at one’s rival, it is evident that the term was meant to convey some degree of contempt and disregard toward one’s opponent. Crowley (1959) has informed us that,

The musical accompaniment to calypso was originally the kalenda drum rhythms, plus the skak-shak (maracas) and the bottle-and-spoon (or stones), and that many, such as the didactic “oration” calypsos of Lord Executor (Philip Garcia) were dirge-like, in what Western musicians call the minor mode, and each verse ended with “*Sanimanite*” (French: *sans humanité*), deriving directly from kalenda songs. (p. 63)

However, Houdini (Wilmoth Hendricks), billed as ‘The Calypso King of New York’ in the early 1920’s, popularized a substitution ‘every one and all’ which coincided with his efforts to make calypso more appealing to a more affluent public. Other substitutions have appeared. Lord Executor for example often sang ‘in the colony’ and Atilla would sometimes interject ‘master mi minor’. In the Bahamas the phrase ‘*sans humanité*’ was replaced by ‘sunday morning too’.

The following sorties cited by Liverpool (1987) showcase the textual styles of three giants of the art form, and exemplify how they were used during engagements of verbal war. Houdini attacks, and Atilla retaliates to the taunting:

*In the dungeons of Hell, Where I did not know
I commanded Lucifer to open the do (door)
He said what kind of brave human can it be?
I said it is me Houdini, master mystery.
I come with the intention here to rebel
And I proclaim ‘Tonight fire catching hell’.
Look at me, my diplomacy, I must trample enemy,
Sans humanité.*

Houdini

*From the very first day that I was born,
Men like Houdini started to mourn.
Monarchs wept and Princes cried
When they saw this new star in the sky
Astronomers in my horoscope state
He’ll be proud, illustrious and great
And they named me Atilla, the terror, the brutal conqueror
Sans humanité.*

Atilla the Hun

Another master batonnier Chinee Patrick (Patrick Jones), confronts Executor:

*To lament is too late
For my laws now you violate
You must try the stars now and make your home
You'll tremble in space and be left alone.
Unless you should take a trip to the moon
Not even you re-enter your mother's womb
You can't escape
Ah barricade the gate, so you bound to supplicate,
Sans humanité.*

Chinee Patrick

Patrick was an anti-colonialist and he used the extempo idiom to address inconsistencies and vent indignation toward Crown Colony Government. He narrowly escaped being charged with sedition in keeping with the censorship campaign when he sang the following classic:

Class Legislation

*Class legislation is the order of the land
We are ruled by an iron hand,
Class legislation is the order of the land
We are ruled by an iron hand,
Britain boasts of democracy
Brotherly love and fraternity
But British colonies have been ruled in perpetual misery
Sans humanité*

Chinee Patrick

Rum Glorious Rum

The musical score for 'Rum Glorious Rum' is presented in four systems. Each system includes a guitar line (Gtr.) and a vocal line (Vocal) with lyrics. Chords are indicated above the notes.

System 1:
 Guitar: Am E7 Am
 Rum glorious rum when I call you you bound to come.

System 2:
 Gtr.: Am E7 Am A7
 Rum glorious rum when I call you you bound to come. You was made from Caro...ni,

System 3:
 Gtr.: Dm G7 C F Bm7 b5
 cane, Youis the best ting in Port of Spain, Ah goin'to bring meh scorpion to bite yuh ce..ti..pede,

System 4:
 Gtr.: E7 Am
 Sa..... ni..... ma..... nite. Ah tell

Fig. 43: Example 29 Sans humanité calypso, transcribed by the author.

The texts and transcriptions are presented so as to facilitate perusal and analysis of the genre's lyrical style and its melodic and harmonic structure. All of the preceding calypsos are based on the following stock template.

Stock Sans humanité melody

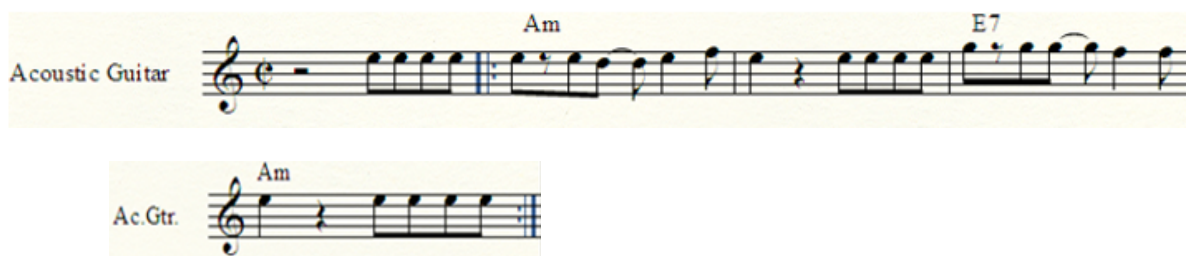


Fig. 44: Example 30 Stock Sans humanité calypso, transcribed by the author.

Rum Glorious Rum is somewhat of an exception, for although it was constructed in sans humanité style, its text has been customarily used as a drinking song by revelers during house to house serenading at Christmas time. In its own peculiar way however, its text embodies self-promotion: the chantwel's boasts of being successful at getting another drink, encouragement: the compliment he pays to the Caroni crop of sugar cane, and bravado: the threat he makes in the closing line. Analysis of the stock melody and accompanying harmony illustrated in example 24 and the transcription illustrated in example 25 reveals that two compositional devices were used. A chromatic embellishment (melisma) around the fifth pitch of the pure minor scale outlining the first two measures is answered in the fourth and fifth measures by a symmetric rhythmic phrase utilizing stepwise movement from the seventh pitch of the scale to the beginning fifth pitch. Further comparison between the two transcriptions reveals that the melody stated in the first eight measures of both examples is constructed around the fifth pitch of the minor scale employed and that a common motif is used to conclude the second part of both melodies; it is outlined by measures 9 through 16 of example 25. Through the years, only a few generic variations have been popular and recurrent.

As can be seen from a perusal of the previously presented sorties, in addition to bravado and grandiose speech, knowledge of a wide range of topics and the use of metaphor were necessary attributes of masters of sans humanité calypso. These skills were attributes of the Pierrot Grenade too, a masquerade character that appeared in Trinidad soon after 1900 and impacted the Oratorical calypso in terms of eloquence, timing, and delivery.

The appearance of the Pierrot Grenade coincided with the changeover from French Creole to English and both he and the calypsonian of the sans humanité era meandered between the two

idioms when rendering their rhetoric. In his tributary work *Kaissonian to Remember* (1987), Liverpool reported that Lord Executor is celebrated as the calypsonian who “championed the change to English made by Norman Le Blanc and Senior Inventor,” and “cemented the eight-line minor key”. Liverpool (1987) has also noted that,

With the possible exception of the just mentioned Senior Inventor, Executor was considered by his peers and by enthusiasts as being “the greatest extempore singer”. (p. 1-8)

Rohlehr (1990, p. 68) citing Breen (p. 195-196) tells us that the rhetoric of the traditional Pierrot “dealt with his own aristocracy and invincibility, and was adorned with information about great kings and warriors, or quotations from the classics of English literature”.

Pompous rhetoric and the characteristics of boasting and ‘grand-charging’ (threatening) appeared later in the orations of the ‘Bad John’ (local bad man) and the masquerade character the ‘Midnight Robber.’ Both features eventually became formalized in Trinidadian society:

Bad Johns

I am Christopher son of Lucifer
I ent boasting but
I ent fraid to dead
I was born in a graveyard
Ask Riggin and Mackie Scott
Even big nose Zigily
One time in Sipari
They see me beat the whole a Red Army
The Mighty Sparrow

During the 1905 exodus from Port of Spain some calypsonians migrated to the United States and England. Lord Invader’s *Me One Alone* was among the first calypsos that helped to keep ancient bones of contention alive among migrant calypsonians alive in England:

Me One Alone

<i>Yes, me one alone back in Britain...</i> <i>Invader de master of calypsonian...</i> <i>Dey could bring de lord Kitchener from Manchester...</i> <i>Or de Mighty Terror who gone to Africa...</i> <i>De Lord Invader, born Trinidadian...</i> <i>Tell dem I am a master calypsonian...</i> <i>Ah want dem to know</i> <i>I am the Ambassador of Calypso...</i> <i>Tell dem de Lord Invader ent making no fun...</i> <i>Because I am de conqueror of Britain...</i> <i>Lord Inventor will never surrender...</i> <i>Because I am de High Priest of mi minor...</i>	<i>Me one alone (Response)</i>
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Lord Invader

There is evidence of similar rivalry in England between Trinidadian calypsonians and Jamaican mento singers. Given the confrontational history of calinda songs and the ability of the Trinidadian calypsonians to deliver impromptu renditions, it is quite understandable how such rivalry could ensue. Furthermore, rivalry would have been fueled naturally by basic survival instincts: competition for turf, jealousy, and feelings of patriotism proprietorship, and superiority. Mighty Terror's *Calypso War* below outlines those instincts and shows the rivalry between the two groups of performers:

Calypso War

Yes, rebellion and war

War, war

Rebellion and war

The Terror wants war, war

Now I come to the conclusion

To expose the secret of mock calypsonian

If you're not Trinidadian you're not a calypsonian

Here in Great Britain. (Substituted for Sanimanite)

Is only Terror, Lion and Lord Kitchener

In Britain are real calypso singers

All the rest you hear they from Jamaica

Each and every one there is an imposter

To make a calypso they can't make a line

They either sing Kitch songs or they singing mine

So they better run back Jamaica and plant the banana

And leave me and Kitchener (Substituted for 'Sanimanite')

If you want to see what I say is true

Just call a Jamaican singer to you

And ask him to sing extemporaneously

You will see that he hasn't the ability

But if you call up me or Lord Kitchener

We could sing from January to December

For we are born Trinidadians and real calypsonians

Here in Great Britain.

The Mighty Terror

The calypso also brilliantly demonstrates some of the most salient features of the sans humanité genre; the utilization of stock melody, harmonic structure, ridicule, bravado, simple and straightforward piquant jargon, confrontation, and the ability to articulate.

Sans humanité calypsos fell into disuse in the 1950's but were revived in the 1970's with their melodic and harmonic structures and other features of old intact. They have since remained unchanged surviving as a main feature of the annual Calypso War competitions.

The submergence of the *sans humanité* or oratorical calypso has been attributed mainly to the persistence of the majority of post-1905 calypsonians in using plain and ordinary speech, leading to the emergence in the 1920's of the ballad calypso.

The Ballad Calypso

The Ballad calypso has always been more suited to storytelling than the strains previously discussed, and has its origin in the 'barrack-yard'. Barrack-yards were slum yards consisting of long sheds that were divided into small rooms by wooden partitions and constructed against the back walls of adjacent buildings. The sheds encompassed the yards, so that the front of the rooms were within plain view from the yards that housed shared toilet and laundry facilities, consisting of a single water tap and a latrine.

The repertory of this argot of calypsos is vast and the song texts report on everyday occurrences that took place in and around these yards concerning the life of the lower-class citizenry (several calypsonians included) who inhabited them. Popular themes include trickery, mamagism (cajoling), local scandal and love in the context of the calypsonian's own self-celebration as 'sweet man', and can be referenced in calypsos of the 1920's such as *Why Mih Neighbor Vex with Me*, a 1927 favorite by Railway Douglas, and in calypsos beyond the 1950's such as Panther's *Barrack Room Scandal*, and the Mighty Sparrow's *Carlton the Peeping Tom* presented on the following pages.

Two devices intrinsic to calypsos in general are implemented in the examples that exemplify the strain, and are representative of traits that had become formalized in Trinidadian society. The first, the 'double standard', is employed in lines 3 to 6 of the verse of *Why Mih Neighbor Vex with Me* wherein both participants are revealed as victim/perpetrator of the same 'crime':

Why Mih Neighbor Vex with Me

*Can you tell me if this is right
What me neighbor done me the other night
There was a hole in the partition
Which I kept for observation
And as you know, the partition was low
And she climb up and peep and saw
This morning she had the whole yard hot
With all that she saw and the devil knows what*

Railway Douglas

The second device, the 'grand charge' or bluff, is employed in the fifth and sixth lines of the verse of *Carlton the Peeping Tom* below. In reality the victim does not intend to leave, due to

her status of barrack yard tenant at the bottom end of the impoverished sector of the community. Additionally, her ranting and raving would have been characteristically a boisterous demonstration intended for, and well attended by, an audience of gossip-mongers:

Carlton the Peeping Tom

*Murder, murder, help save me
This girl start to cry
A man in the key hole peeping
Look ah see he eye
Well I ain't staying here no longer
I am going away
I got no privacy here,
Ayeyayae Carlton move from dey*

Chorus

*Carlton is a peeping tom
*Carlton peeping at me
Way he get this habit from
*Carlton peeping at me
I come inside to rest,
ah take off me shoes and me dress
But when ah peep through the jalousie
Who ah see
Carlton peeping at me

The Mighty Sparrow

Note that the chorus of this calypso too is rendered in the call-and-response style retained from the calindas and lavways. Rohlehr (1990) has analyzed the period between 1920 and 1940 during the emergence of ballad calypsos as a period that,

involved a certain domestication of the heroic persona, in that the perceived arena of encounter within the fictional world of the Calypso, which had once been the stickfighter's *gayelle* or the road, and had between 1900 and 1920 been the bamboo and cocoyea tent now also became the barrack-room, and would later with a few singers become the bedroom... The shift in locus of encounter from *gayelle* and road to barrack-room, was accompanied by a transformation in the form of Calypso, from the litanic Calinda which formally incorporated the tension and shared reciprocity between individual and group, through *Sans Humanité* whose fixed formulaic melody made it possible for singers to concentrate on the improvisation of *picong*, to the Ballad from where at last the Calypso became the vehicle for narratives about the everyday lives of ordinary Trinidadians. (p. 214-215)

According to Rohlehr (1990), because of this strain of calypso,

Calypsonians were now confronted with the challenge to create fictions from observed domestic situations, current events read of in the newspapers, and rumors. Scandals from the lives of the ruling élite or burgeoning middle class provided a particularly choice source of calypso fiction; one that was fed by gossip-mongers from among the very middle class who enjoyed the indecent exposure of their own group to public scrutiny.

In the process of fictionalizing domestic lower class situations, calypsonians brought into focus the confrontation of males and females, in a context where both were battling for economic survival. Never before had this confrontation received such close, varied and extensive scrutiny as in the post 1920's period. (p. 215-216)

They tell these stories not only as observers, but as participants in a life which had many facets and dimensions. This does not, of course, mean that these calypsos are autobiographical. Like the emerging novels and short stories of the period, they were a fictionalizing of observed or imagined social reality. (p. 216)

The next strain of calypsos brings us to the end of the list of genres that are categorized under the heading Authentic Trinidadian Calypso Music. It is a combination of some of the most salient features of all the strains previously mentioned. It employs the narrative and scandal of the ballad calypso, the piquant lashing of the *sans humanité* strain, the fluid eloquence and timing of the oratorical calypso, and the combative delivery as well as the mocking and ridicule of the calinda strain.

The Rhetorical Calypso

Rhetorical calypsos are more superfluous than the other strains and for that reason are usually performed at slower tempos in order to facilitate comprehension. Additionally, they are not as heavily dependent on rhyme, *lavway* or *litany*. The song title is traditionally reiterated as the second half of a two-line litanic chant only at the end of each chorus.

Both the ballad (as in *Carlton the Peeping Tom* on the preceding pages) and the rhetorical strains incorporate combined aspects of form, style and melodic and harmonic features belonging to the other strains. These two genres host the lengthiest compositions, usually have no fixed harmonic structure, and are performed at various tempos along a range between the slowest dirges to the jumpiest road marches.

Sometimes the first line of calypsos belonging to both strains is repeated and often supported by the following harmonic progression:

| I ii | iii b iii | ii V 7 | I |
| C D m | E m Eb m | D m G 7 | C |

The following progression:

| I I 7 | IV iv | I vi | ii V 7 |
| D D 7 | G G m | D B m | E m A 7 |

is sometimes used to support the last four measures of the narrative or more commonly, as the basic harmonic structure of lavways. *Don't Stop the Carnival* below is presented as an example:

Don't Stop the Carnival



Fig. 45: Example 31 Typical ballad progression, transcribed by the author.

Having now surveyed both strains: calypso-related music and calypsos considered belonging to the pantheon of authentic Trinidadian calypsos, the distinction between them should be evident to the reader. Focus can now be shifted to the sources of external influences that have had an impact on the Trinidadian calypso.

It has been generally accepted that contemporary Trinidad calypso, having developed as a syncretic music form, has ingredients which include: Venezuelan melodies, rhythms and instrumentation introduced by way of the 'pasillo' or 'paseo' in the early twentieth century; melodic and harmonic material of French, Irish and English origin; Patois or Creole lyrics through the nineteenth century; English and local Afro-Trinidadian vernacular beginning at the turn of the century; thematic material and melodic, rhythmic and linguistic nuances from Asian Indian cultural tradition; and various elements from music forms extant in other parts of the Caribbean and North, South and Central America during the middle and latter part of the twentieth century and beyond.

Although contributions by other ethnicities are important their significance is not relevant at this time because of their late entry into the chronology of events that had initially guided the early evolution of the calypso genre in Trinidad. As reported by Hill (1976) the whites and educated colored classes looked to Europe for their cultural heritage,

Their contribution to native Trinidad culture would for years continue to be coincidental rather than fundamental; they did not need a native culture and sought often to obstruct its development. The black slaves were mere spectators [of the Carnival festivities], and the dwindling number of Amerindians kept aloof. The Asiatics, when they arrived, retained their language and customs, they remained spiritually a part of India or China, not Trinidad. (p. 60)

The African slave however, forced to postpone or abandon dreams of repatriation, made an identity shift, a shift during which music retained its centrality. Improvisation by the contingent and its individual members had led to incorporation of new and foreign ingredients relative to instrumentation, linguistic features, performing style, and musical traits. The 'brew,' calypso music, became one of the main mediums by which a 'new' identity was established and by which cultural superiority was achieved and maintained. The commencement of these two processes coincides with Emancipation, has been introduced earlier, and is the topic of subsequent discussion.

As a boy, when I misplaced a toy and inquired of my father as to its whereabouts he would often make a gesture with his hands, as if pointing to its location, while saying "Look where it is". It took several repetitions of this prank and many moments of anxiety and frustration before I learned to 'look where it was'. Perhaps in our search for missing links in the relationship between culture and identity we have not looked 'where it is'. It is therefore time to widen the range of the lenses through which the relationship has been scrutinized. The study will now focus on identity theory with the aim of correlating aspects of posits advanced on the functions of calypso music strains in Trinidadian society.

