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***The Spirituality of Reggae Dancehall Dance Vocabulary: a Spiritual, Corporeal  
Practice in Jamaican Dance***

**by**

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**Canterbury Christ Church University**

**Thesis submitted  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**2019**



## ***The Spirituality of Reggae Dancehall Dance Vocabulary: a Spiritual, Corporeal Practice in Jamaican Dance***

### **Abstract**

This research explores the genealogy of Jamaican dancehall, questioning whether dancehall is underscored by spirituality. Pulling focus on the performance of dancehall ‘corporeal dancing bodies’ to identify, describe and reveal the complex, hidden, embodied spirituality within dancehall dance vocabulary, through ethnographic and auto/ethnographic methodology, this study employs participant observation to foreground the issues and concerns of dancehall dancers presented through their own voices/bodies. Emerging from a history of intersectional socio-politico-economic forces of oppression and resistance, Jamaican reggae/dancehall has been established as a secular musical genre featuring slack (lewd, crude, sexually explicit) and violent lyrics within much reggae/dancehall scholarship, press and media coverage and electronic/social media platforms. Conversely, for many marginalised working class individuals occupying the lower strata of Jamaican society, dancehall not only represents a mode through which their concerns and needs are voiced, but crucially, a means for economic, physical and spiritual survival and upliftment. Through dancehall’s informal economy many disenfranchised individuals earn a living, affording them the chance to feed and send their children to school. Numerous dancehall dancers gain opportunities to develop their skills, profile and status, elevating themselves, their families and communities through their ‘God given’ artistic talents. Juxtaposing dancehall against Jamaican African/neo-African spiritual practices including Jonkonnu masquerade, Revivalism and Kumina, alongside Christianity and post-modern holistic spiritual approaches, this study identifies the performance and performative (behavioural actions) that may constitute spiritual ritual practices within dancehall dance. It delves beneath dancehall’s established paradoxical slackness and violence trope in establishing its existential/hermeneutic resources, dancehall’s ‘ritual paraphernalia’, through which dance practitioners organise and live their lives. The social spiritual functioning of dancehall is investigated regarding community cohesion, kinship, individual personhood and liberation, as precursors and facilitators to transformation and transcendence into the spiritual ‘myal possession state’, as corporeal dancing bodies become ‘spirit bodies’ within the dancehall space.

This thesis is dedicated to:

‘The Supreme Being’

My parents:

(Miss Tiny)

(Maasa, Mr P )

My wife and children:

Lynda Adeyomi Rosenior-Patten

Mawuena (Patten) Rankine

Kwesi Patten

Onayomi Rosenior-Patten

Omoyele Rosenior-Patten

My grandchildren:

Kweku Okyem Patten

‘Soon come’

Those that have gone ahead and those that are left to come!

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## **The Blessing – Illustrations/images, plates and video footage**

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## Introduction: Sanctification

### *I. The aim of the research: dancehall and spirituality*

When dancehall emerged as the focus of Jamaican popular culture, particularly within the black music scene in 1980s Britain, it was demonized and perceived as promoting ‘slackness’<sup>1</sup> and violence. Due to the frequently explicit, crude, retaliatory, and violent themes within its resistance lyrics, alongside its subversive, sexually suggestive movement vocabulary, dancehall events were often criminalized and viewed as deviant sites for drugs, violence, illegal, and indecent activity. This perception was not just that of the British tabloids fuelled by hysteria over the overwhelming numbers of black people, the ‘Windrush generation’,<sup>2</sup> arriving in response to the invitation of the colonial ‘Mother Country’ and the ensuing growth of black communities within Britain’s major cities, but unfortunately, it also represented the views of a significant number of Jamaican citizens in Jamaica.

Negative attitudes towards dancehall reflected the initial reaction of the Jamaican ‘uptown’<sup>3</sup> ruling classes, Christians, and Rastafarian members of society who rejected reggae/dancehall, also termed ‘raggamuffin’, ‘ragga’, and/or ‘bashment’ from its inception in the late 1970s as a distinct music and dance genre. The opposition to dancehall increased as its popularity began to supersede its precursors mento, ska, rocksteady, reggae, and dub across global music markets, positioning dancehall as the major representation of Jamaican popular music production and cultural identity in the post Bob Marley era.

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<sup>1</sup> Slackness is a figurative or metaphorical symbolism; slackness refers to overtly explicit sexual profanity, lewd, crude, outrageous conduct and is often directed at women in relation to overt public sexual deportment or dress. It also describes inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour towards a more senior individual or an individual’s failure to properly execute a task or keep themselves tidy, as well as a lack of personal hygiene.

<sup>2</sup> The SS Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury Dock, Essex, England, in June 1948. This has been used to mark the major influx of Caribbean migrants who voyaged to the ‘Mother Country’ to assist in filling Britain’s post-war labour shortage. See: Phillips, M. and Phillips, T. (1999).

<sup>3</sup> The Jamaican ‘uptown’ and ‘downtown’ distinction equates to class and colour, namely the ‘uptown’ (white and ‘brown’ light-skinned and varying levels of mixed heritage) ruling-class elites in opposition to the ‘downtown’ (black) lower/underclass poor. Annie Paul (2009) provides a detailed analysis problematizing Jamaican race and class structures.

Although reggae/dancehall is frequently charged, like most global forms of popular culture, with being indecent, unprincipled, and responsible for the moral decay of society by its opponents, whilst simultaneously argued as merely reflecting reality by its supporters (Detweiler and Taylor, 2003), reggae/dancehall has become Jamaica's most popular and established indigenous cultural expression. Elaine Graham (2007) contends, 'critical evaluation of one's own cultural practices sharpens one's creative awareness and serves as a glimpse into the spiritual dimensions of everyday, lived experience' (2007 p.81). Stated differently, a critical examination of dancehall as Jamaican indigenous popular culture provides a window into the spiritual worldviews enacted within the daily existence and survival approaches of Jamaica's lower-class African/neo-African (new-African) peoples.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, given that Jamaica has a highly religious populace<sup>5</sup> and spirituality seemingly underscores most aspects of Jamaican culture, what has escaped most reggae/dancehall scholarship, I suggest, is the possibility that reggae/dancehall has at its foundations an African/neo-African spiritual cosmology that manifests contemporary genealogical continuities within the corporeal dancing body, which facilitates 'smadditisation' (personhood/agency)<sup>6</sup> for its participants. Thus, despite the argument that dancehall is a deliberate ideological shift from the cultural and spiritual ethos of Rastafari and the associated '*roots rock reggae*' from which it emerged, as posed by some scholars (Stolzoff, 2000; Hebdige, 2007), I propose that reggae/dancehall as an indigenous cultural expression may convey a plethora of embodied spiritual references hidden within its dance. This, I further suggest, originates from Jamaican African/neo-African religious dance practices such as,

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'Black' is used earlier in relation to the British context, but in Jamaica's predominantly African society the term 'African/neo-African' is used as explained on p.28. The 'neo-African' term subsumes those Jamaicans who identify as Black but are resistant to the negative hegemonic/Western influenced perceptions of Africans. However, the contribution of non-African Jamaicans including Europeans, Syrians, Chinese and Indians are hereby acknowledged, particularly with regards to the recording side of the reggae/dancehall industry, although the focus of this research is on dance.

<sup>5</sup> According to Jamaican MP Lloyd B. Smith, '... it has been established via the Guinness Book of World Records that Jamaica has the most churches per square mile in the world' (Jamaica Observer March 25<sup>th</sup> 2014). <http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/columns/The-business-of-religion> Accessed 19.04.2014. However, earlier asserted by O'Brien Chang and Chen (1998 p.138) they further state, '(And, the joke goes, beside every church there's a horse race betting shop and rum bar)', but admit they have no irrefutable substantiating evidence, as does Egerton Chang, guest columnist at Gleaner Classifieds in a Gleaner article of July 17<sup>th</sup> 2011. <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20110717/cleisure/cleisure5.html> Accessed 26.03.2014

<sup>6</sup> See: Section i) on 'Smadditisation' below.

Jonkonnu masquerade, the African-derived Revival dance and the classical African Kumina dance ritual, as well as some aspects of Christianity.

## ***II. The importance of this area of research***

Although there are a number of key studies on dancehall culture that have produced multiple discourses, it is only in recent years that alternative, more complex academic analysis and assessment of reggae/dancehall has emerged. Studies on reggae have referenced dancehall as part of the historical development of Jamaican popular music in terms of space and place as a venue, and/or in relation to artist's biographies. Carolyn Cooper's (1993) seminal literary exploration of the deejay's (DJ's)<sup>7</sup> lyrical artistry in juxtaposing slackness and culture established dancehall as a significant and distinct genre worthy of serious study. The implementation of cultural studies and other disciplinary frameworks for reading dancehall culture has since revealed the growing range of meanings and experiences dancehall conveys amongst its practitioners and adherents. Dancehall scholarship has thus been presented through multiple disciplines including cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, gender studies, geography and ethnomusicology.

As the artistic expression of poor, 'downtown' (lower/working-class) inner-city youth identity, reggae/dancehall did not receive significant in-depth analysis until the millennial years. A growing number of key full-length texts, journal articles and chapters now contribute a nuanced broadening of dancehall discourses, including the historical development of the dancehall space, the sound systems and music industry (Stolzoff, 2000; Henriques, 2003; Manuel and Marshall, 2006; Hebdige, 2007; Veal, 2007; Joseph, 2012; Hitchins, 2014; Howard, 2016), lyrical content and female rituals, (Cooper, 1993; Wright, 2004; Laemmli, 2006; Noble, 2008; Fullerton, 2017), slackness, violence and culture (Cooper, 2004; Ryman, 2004; Charles, 2009; Stanley-Niaah, 2010a), social and political dynamics in Jamaican society and the dancehall space (Hope, 2006a; Pinnock, 2007; Jaffe, 2012; Galvin, 2014), the geographical mapping of the dancehall space (Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Wood, 2018), dancehall origins

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<sup>7</sup> The deejay, often abbreviated to DJ, is a recording vocal artist and should not be mistaken with the disc jockey whose role is to select, introduce and announce the artists' music on radio or in nightclubs.



(Mordecai and Mordecai, 2001; Seaga, 2004; Manuel, et al, 2006; Walker, 2008), fashion and corporeality (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Shaw, 2007; Philogene Heron, 2012), masculinity, gender, identity, sex and sexuality (Skelton, 1995; Sharpe, 2006; White, 2003; Gutzmore, 2004; Hope, 2010; Ellis, 2011; Skjelbo, 2015; Helber, 2015).

However, very little is written on reggae/dancehall in relation to religion besides Robert Beckford's (2006) musical interrogation 'deconstructing/reconstructing' or 'dubbing' religious doctrine in engaging dancehall and church hall in dialogue, Joseph Pereira's (1998) exploration of formal religion as Babylonian oppression through anti-Papal themes set against the African self-identity of Rastafari and African heritage expressions, and Lena Delgado De Torres's (2010a) investigation into dancehall's changing masculinities, dress, dance and spiritual cleansing. Opening a dialogue involving Richard H. Niebuhr's (1951) *Christ of culture*, *Christ above culture* and *Christ the transformer of culture* concepts, Reverend Annette Brown (2011) argues for a collaborative dancehall hermeneutic developing an inclusive, culturally expressive delivery of the doctrine to empower the marginalized.

Similarly, Anna Kasafi Perkins' (2012) exploration advocates for a real dialogue between the church and dancehall as 'important shapers of the values and attitudes of Jamaican society [which] can provide motivation towards action' (2012 p.11), whilst Melvin L. Butler juxtaposing dancehall and Konpa, Haiti's contemporary commercial music with Pentecostal church music, despite claims by Konpa musicians that Haitian lwas (spirits) sometimes manifest during their performances, maintains the sacred/secular distinction whilst acknowledging the African/neo-African spiritual influences dancehall and Konpa embody. Khytie K. Brown (2018) compares the movement of the body and the spirit within the dancehall and church hall space foregrounds a disconnection between the church's faith based approach and dancehall's praxis based opportunities relating to work, profile and healing. Thereby, extending my own exploration of dancehall through the lens of spirituality and dance (Patten, 2016; 2018) this research will potentially provide a new and important conception of dancehall relating to both spirituality and corporeality.

Thereby, this thesis aims to determine whether dancehall embodies hidden religious and spiritual meanings and symbolisms in the alternative histories conveyed through dance and the dancing body within the Jamaican dancehall genre. The

juxtaposition of dancehall and spirituality might be a leap too far for some, dancehall dissenters in particular, because religion and spirituality are generally conceptualized within institutional frameworks such as the church, and/or specific religious practices (Beckford, 2006). However, theology and cultural studies, alongside sociology and religious studies have stimulated a conception of religion and spirituality that goes beyond traditional institutional boundaries. This has moved explorative notions of the spiritual and the religious into the social world (Beaudoin and Cox, 1998; Forbes and Mahan, 2000; Lynch, 2005; Heelas, and Woodhead, 2005; Meyer and Moors, 2006; Rommen, 2006; St John, 2011; Douglas, 2012; Watson and Parker, 2014; Lynden and Mazur, 2015; Bain-Selbo and Sapp, 2016; Greenberg, 2018).

### ***III. Contribution to knowledge***

This, to my knowledge is the first time that both spirituality and the corporeal body are privileged and positioned centrally within the study of the dancehall phenomenon. Although previous scholars have touched upon spirituality, none have examined it in the depth that this research proposes. Similarly, others have referenced the corporeal body, but with a focus on its sartorial style (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Philogene Heron, 2012), or issues to do with skin bleaching<sup>8</sup>, and notions of ‘colourism’ and ‘blackness’ (Thomas, 2004; Charles, 2010a; Hope, 2011). The originality of this research will therefore be the provision of detailed readings of the dancehall body in motion and its hidden meanings and significations, facilitated through a cross-disciplinary approach combining the academic disciplines of theology and religious studies with dance studies, enabling the adoption of multiple methods within its methodological framework, focusing on the corporeal dancing body.

At the outset of this research a paucity of studies seriously considering dancehall to be remotely spiritually encoded existed. The few exceptions included the obvious spiritual connections implicit within the conception of dancehall as female fertility and communication rituals (Cooper, 2004; Wright, 2004), and Beckford’s (2006) exploration of church hall and dancehall’s transformation of Christian thought

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<sup>8</sup> Skin bleaching is the process of skin lightening using products and chemical agents in the process many regard as ‘self-hate’ (Charles, 2010a). See: Charles (2010a), Hope (2011), and Hall (2013) for a more detailed analysis of this syndrome.

through music, as mentioned above. Connecting reggae/dancehall and spirituality was a revelation that took place on one of my many trips home<sup>9</sup> to Jamaica. In my late thirties, as I stood downtown in Kingston's renowned Rae Town Sunday-night street dance session, reggae/dancehall music pumped through my bones. Its sonic dominance (Henriques, 2011) subsumed me, like the hundreds of other participants commandeering the street transformed into a dancehall space. With friends close by, I felt relaxed and comfortable enjoying the vibe (atmosphere and energy) of the dance. Yes! I was home again!

Suddenly, my mind jumped, transporting me back to Ghana, my African ancestral home. I was in Anloga, the Volta region. I was back at the Hogbetsotso Festival I had attended in 1983. I again stood in the midst of the fishermen's dance. Ghanaian men in deep trance danced before me. They – *stabbed and sliced themselves with daggers and cutlasses. But no wounds! No cuts! No blood appeared!* – The weapons bounced off their chests under the dark tent. – *Golden sand flashed from their feet as spiritually possessed dancers intermittently lunged towards the fearful crowd.*<sup>10</sup> *Screams and panicked running ensued.* – Then, just as sudden as it had started, I was wrenched back to the present and the Jamaican dancehall space, by a touch on the arm. Patsy and Monika ask, “Yu (are you) alright? What happen to you? Weh yu did go? (Where did you go?) Yu (your) mind left for a while!”<sup>11</sup> I looked around and joined my friends and fellow artists, dancing within the crowd, enjoying the night air, the vibe, and the music.

This auto/ethnographic experience underscores the basis of this thesis, as it raises the issue of spiritual ritual in relation to dancehall, the underlying premise of this thesis. It also demonstrates the idea of corporeality and dance forming a catalyst for psychological ‘transcendence’<sup>12</sup> within African/neo-African cultural expression by

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<sup>9</sup> Home references the locations invested by my ancestral/African forebears. This includes sub-Saharan Africa generally and Jamaica specifically in terms of a physical location or place, but it also refers to an ideological place or space that connects me spiritually (the physical, emotional, ideological connection) to my African forebears and ultimately the Supreme Being.

<sup>10</sup> Italics indicate where dance movement descriptions and/or my written fieldnote passages occur.

<sup>11</sup> Where the Jamaican language termed ‘patwa’, ‘patois’ or ‘creole’ is used, my personal spelling is adopted derived from the numerous spellings/interpretations that currently exist due to the fact that the Jamaican language has not yet been standardised, but remains resistant to orthodox linguistic dictates, as exemplified by its multiple names. See also ‘retention of the flow of the Jamaican language’ (p.148).

<sup>12</sup> Transcendence in this study references a transformative, altered state of consciousness leading to ‘myal possession’ by an ancestral or divine spirit for communication between the spirit and material

connecting alternative places and spaces through time. Significantly, notions of the sacred and the profane are blurred by my psychological transference between the perceived secular dancehall space and the sacred Ghanaian African dance ritual. A number of scholars writing on theology and popular culture acknowledge that distinctions between the sacred and profane are unhelpful (Lynch, 2007), whilst many scholars writing on African/neo-African spiritual practices note the erasure of the sacred and profane dichotomy within most African cultural contexts (Goody, 1961; Mbiti, 1969; Brathwaite, 1981a; Stuckey in Ramdhanie, 2005).

Similarly to the sacred and the profane, the boundaries between religion and spirituality are often indistinct, as will be explored in chapter three. Addressing religion and spiritual practices, Malcolm Hamilton (2001) highlights William Robertson Smith's contention that, '[p]eople are not so much concerned about doctrine but with rituals and observances' (Hamilton, 2001 p.109). Thus, with Smith's contention in mind and considering the juxtaposition of the sacred and the secular contained within the anecdote, this thesis attempts to reveal reggae/dancehall's 'rituals and observances'. By investigating what dancers believe they are doing whilst dancing and reading the hidden meanings within their performance and 'performative'<sup>13</sup> (behavioural) actions (Butler, 1988; 2002; Nash, 2000) in the dancehall space I seek to uncover whether dancehall embodies a spiritual religiosity. This reflects the Durkheimian tradition in which religion is constructed and conceptualized as the 'collective representations of the society' (in Hamilton, 2001 p.109), thus moving beyond the bounds of religious institutions and the need for a supernatural deity.

Cultural activist and theologian Michael Eric Dyson provides an example of society's postmodern 'collective representations' through the artistry of Michael Jackson, which he argues represents, '[a] secular spirituality that is primarily televisual and performance oriented in its medium of expression' (Dyson, 2004 p.444). Jackson's artistry, he asserts, 'wrestles in a poignant fashion with moral themes that reflect black cultural and religious consciousness' (ibid). Dyson

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worlds, facilitating teaching, guidance and the restoration of harmony between the spirits, humanity, and nature.

<sup>13</sup> The Performative or performativity refers to the fact that behaviour is performed and prescribed in relation to the 'normative' (agreed/established) behaviours and socialisation within society. Therefore, Judith Butler (1988) and Nash (2000) argue that gender is performative rather than merely biological.

concludes, 'Above all else that he [Jackson] may symbolize, central to Jackson's career is an abiding spiritual and religious consciousness that is expressed in his body of work as a performer' (ibid). Likewise, this research proposes that despite the varied perceptions of dancehall and its dance artists, an alternative 'abiding spiritual and religious consciousness' (ibid) is manifested through dancehall dancing bodies.

This research therefore identifies with Robert Beckford's (2006) call for a conception of black religion outside of the religious institutions, through the prism of community. This demands a dialogue between dancehall and theology, which Beckford references as 'church hall' in relation to black liberation praxis. Simply articulated by the founder of black liberation studies, James Cone, '[t]he purpose of black theology is to make sense of black experience' (2010 p.25). From a popular culture perspective dancehall expresses and reflects ghetto 'livivity' (way of living life), the experiences inscribed on the corporeality of the marginalised Jamaican masses of African ancestry, their negotiation, resistance, and attempts at liberating themselves from the hegemonic structures that confine them.

This research therefore makes an original contribution to academic knowledge as an outworking and analysis through which spirituality/religion and popular culture are engaged in dialogue for the sake of black liberation, smadditisation, and African/neo-African survival through dancehall cultural expression. Thus, whatever the outcome relating to the issues raised in relation to dancehall and spirituality, as the earlier auto/ethnographic experience and the Bible references below demonstrate, historically dance has served a central function within both African/neo-African and Christian spiritual worship.

#### ***IV. Key research questions***

In the auto/ethnographic experience above, not only do I transcend between two separate dance spaces, but the Hogbetsotso Festival and the fishermen's dance as an African spiritual ritual, serves to simultaneously reinforce the African foundation of Jamaican culture and that of dancehall cultural expression in particular. Importantly, it also foregrounds the centrality of dance within African spiritual practices, as I was transported to a spiritual dance ritual, rather than one of the many ceremonial, or

recreational and social dance events I have attended across Africa and the Caribbean since my initial artistic training in 1982.

The fact that the fisherman's dance highlights the significance of male dancing must not be overlooked. This is particularly pertinent in the Jamaican context where hegemonic values established upon Eurocentric ideals position dance as a feminised aesthetic (Nettleford, 2003; Burt, 2005). Conversely, numerous dance practices within the context of African/neo-African cultural expression either have a good male dance presence, are equally populated by dancers of both genders, or as in the case of secret society and masquerade practices, are male dominated and stigma free. Thereby dancehall occupies an in-between (Bhabha, 1994) position in which, although being a contemporary artistic form, it also represents a significant indigenous Jamaican cultural expression akin to Jamaican spiritual and ceremonial dance practices.

Importantly, dance features as a means of praise and worship to the Creator in many instances within the Christian Bible, as exemplified by God's instruction to Israel, stating, 'Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets [timbrels], and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry' (Jeremiah KJV 31:4). Similarly at the dedication of the house of David it is written, 'Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing' (Psalms KJV 30:11). In Jeremiah (KJV 31:13) it is recorded, 'the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together', whilst the prophetess Miriam and all the women went out 'with timbrels and with dances' (Exodus KJV 30:20). Most famously King David 'danced before the LORD with all [his] might; and David [was] girded with a linen ephod. {6:15} So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet' (2 Samuel 6:14-15). These biblical passages all demonstrate the spiritual importance of dance as praise and worship. Conversely, in Lamentations (5:15) dance is withheld as punishment, reinforcing its spiritual significance.

Thereby the juxtaposition of issues to do with Jamaican and African cultural expression, the sacred and profane, dance and gender, not to mention individual and group/community/or cultural identity, all become intertwined and inextricably woven together within the above auto/ethnographic experience, raising a number of

questions. This thesis will seek to address these questions through three key research questions:

- *Is the spiritual worldview of African forbears reimagined within the dancehall space?*
- *Is the dancing body a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space?*
- *What spiritualities are emerging from dancehall?*

In doing so it will consider the implications of a dancehall spirituality for diaspora religion, African spiritual religious practices and for Christianity. Through my personal journey I am well placed to investigate dancehall employing the prism of spirituality. For the past thirty-six years I have been a dance professional in black African/neo-African practices and spaces in Africa, the Caribbean, Britain and Europe. This has provided me with a unique insight into African and Caribbean dance generally. As a Jamaican born twenty days after my mother's arrival in the UK I have grown up with and through both the reggae/dancehall genre, and dancehall dance movement vocabulary. I have inhabited the dancehall space as a practitioner, as a fan and also as somebody who is a Christian. Having grown up occupying the church hall space as a worshipper and the dancehall space as a dance practitioner this research embodies my interest in both spirituality and dance, focusing on the corporeal dancing body.<sup>14</sup>

## ***V. An overview of dancehall culture***

As outlined in *'Feel De Riddim, Feel De Vibes'* (Patten, 2016) and *'Dancehall: A Continuity of Spiritual, Corporeal Practice in Jamaican Dance'* (Patten, 2018), contemporary reggae/dancehall emerged out of the poor, urban, inner-city areas of

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<sup>14</sup> See: (Patten, 2018a).

Kingston, Jamaica. Transcending the dance hall venues from which it derives its name, dancehall cultural expression has become a global business (Stolzoff, 2000; Cooper, 2004; Hope, 2006b; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Henriques, 2011; Howard, 2016). Dancehall developed from a long history of Jamaican resistance and spiritual African/neo-African music and dance expressions, including Jonkonnu Masquerade, Revivalism, and Kumina. The genealogical continuities of these practices are evident in Mento, Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae, dancehall's chronological forerunners. Together these expressions form part of the unification and survival tactics employed by marginalised African/Jamaicans against an historical context of enslavement,<sup>15</sup> colonialism, and hegemonic oppression, translated through dancehall into a modern strategy of subversive resistance through social practice.

As a distinct music and dance genre emerging from late 1970s reggae, dancehall is also termed ragga, ragamuffin or bashment in Britain and other parts of the Jamaican diaspora.<sup>16</sup> Dancehall was and still is performed in spaces where lower-class African/neo-African Jamaicans exhibit cultural expression in performances that display strong continuities with their African antecedence. Dancehall has since expanded into a language, fashion, style, space, attitude, community, ideology, ritual, creative economy, a cultural expression and phenomenon, as well as a cultural identity through which dancehall participants gain smadditisation. Additionally, dancehall culture supports an expansive informal economy, from recording studios, sound engineers and technicians to visual artists, drinks/food vendors,<sup>17</sup> tailors/dressmakers, nail-technicians and so on (Stolzoff 2000; Cooper 2004; Hope 2006a; Bakare-Yusuf 2006; Stanley-Niaah 2010; Howard, 2016; Fullerton, 2017).

The dancehall space is where the political, religious and socio-economic conditions of its participants are both reflected and acted out (Stanley-Niaah 2010).

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<sup>15</sup> The term enslavement is used as it signifies that African people were forcibly subjected to the dehumanising condition of enslavement, a role they played, as opposed to them being slaves, which implies a naturalized embodied condition, which reduces individuals to a 'thing', which can then be owned, bought and sold freely, as chattel slavery attempted to transform Africans into. Thereby, the term enslavement enables the retention of personhood, smadditisation and dignity. See: Rogers', (1849 p.15-21) reproduction of the '*Constitutionality of Slavery*'.

<sup>16</sup> The Jamaican dancehall diaspora includes those countries with large Jamaican populations or where dancehall culture has been established and/or assimilated, such as Japan.

<sup>17</sup> Winnifred Brown-Glaude's (2011) in-depth investigation into female informal vendors, officially termed 'informal commercial importers' (ICI), commonly called 'higglers', outlines the role of ICIs. As in the African context, the role of an ICI is generally perceived as a female area of commerce, but an increasing number of male ICIs exist and are not excluded.



Nevertheless, Errol ‘Flabba’ Holt, musical director of the Roots Radics Band declares, ‘[t]here is nothing in the world named “dancehall music”. Dancehall is just like a yard – you put a sound [system] there, that’s dancehall’ (Holt in Lesser 2008 p.9). This demonstrates dancehall’s capacity to transform, creating both a cultural phenomenon linked to space, place, and the cultural expressions operating within them (Rhiney and Cruse, 2019), whilst simultaneously remaining a discrete genre within reggae music. Robert Beckford (2006) argues that dancehall also facilitates the manifestation of the spiritual, physical and emotional agency of African/Caribbean people through cultural and artistic expression. This is particularly true in terms of dance and ‘performativity’ (social and cultural behavioural actions).

This thesis seeks to argue that both social and spiritual expression are important aspects within dancehall’s role as part of the birth to death life-cycle celebrations incorporated within the African/neo-African Jamaican practices it embodies (Cooper 1993; Stanley-Niaah 2010). Thereby, dancehall genealogically contains symbolic ‘ancestral data’ (Stines 2005 p.45),<sup>18</sup> and encoded ‘cultural knowledge’ (Sklar 1991 p.6), which I shall argue, makes it both a sacred and secular phenomenon.

Dancehall’s development and growth outernationally<sup>19</sup> (beyond Jamaican shores), particularly in the UK, follows a parallel path to that in Jamaica, albeit less high profile. Thereby, as a hybrid African/Caribbean dance practice dancehall is often linked outernationally to the globalised commercial classification of contemporary urban expression, alongside the practices it has influenced including: Hip-hop, Grime, Drum ‘n’ Bass, Jungle, Garage, Punk Rock, Afrobeat, Tropical House, Trap-Dancehall, alongside Reggaeton (South America), Kwaito/Di Gong (Southern Africa), Hip-Life and Ajegunle Raga amongst others (West Africa), and J-reggae (Japan) (Chude-Sokei, 1994; Samponaro, 2009; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Sterling, 2010; Charry, 2012; Cooper, 2012; Ogunbowale, 2012).

## ***VI. Key terminology***

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<sup>18</sup> Ancestral data incorporates ‘cultural knowledge’ (Sklar, 1991), and the symbolic codes and gestures shared between members of a particular community, but also include those shared between a community and the ancestral spirits with whom they commune with through dance. See: (Mbiti, 1985; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005).

<sup>19</sup> The term ‘outernational’ was coined by Rastafarians to better reflect the idea that travel involves moving/looking out from one’s present location/perspective. The term has since been adopted as part of the Jamaican language. See: (Henry, 2002).

In order to address the research questions above it is important to clarify and define some key terms.

***a) 'Reggae/dancehall'***

The term 'Reggae/dancehall' signals dancehall as a phenomenon and historical space, incorporating the long genealogical history of Jamaican African/neo-African resistance and spiritual dance and music expression. It therefore maps the dances created by free and enslaved African forebears from the recreational activities within their living quarters (Stolzoff, 2000), to the movements performed on ship decks during the trans-Atlantic trading of enslaved Africans (Stanley-Niaah, 2010), right back to those within formal and recreational spaces on the African continent. The genealogical continuities of these practices are evident in Jamaican popular culture and the chronological forerunners to dancehall.<sup>20</sup> 'Reggae/dancehall' also signifies 'dancehall' as the distinct contemporary form (see below), although the terms 'reggae' and 'dancehall' are often used interchangeably. Having acknowledged this relationship for the sake of clarity, the term 'reggae/dancehall' will be used in this thesis to reference the total cultural phenomenon, including the space, the genealogical history from Africa to the present, incorporating its genealogical forerunners and African/neo-African antecedence, and the discrete music and dance genre emerging from the late 1970s onward. Occasionally reggae/dancehall will also be used as an inclusive term to reference both reggae and dancehall as autonomous forms.

***b) 'Dancehall'***

I use the term 'dancehall' in relation to the discrete music and dance genre emerging from the late 1970s, early 1980s onward, maintaining the comprehension of the term by the majority of Jamaican participants. 'Dancehall' therefore references the dominant branch of reggae described by Marvin, D. Sterling as, 'patois-based toasting to digitized beats, and the subcultures associated with it' (2010 p.8). Dancehall is

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<sup>20</sup> Chapter 2 provides a detailed history of dancehall's genealogy.

rightly perceived as Jamaica's most popular indigenous cultural expression, as highlighted by leading dancehall scholars including Norman Stolzoff (2003), Carolyn Cooper (2004), Donna P. Hope (2006a) and Sonjah Stanley-Niaah (2010) amongst others.

***c) 'Reggae'***

'Reggae' is used in reference to the Rastafarian influenced, socio-politically conscious music often regarded as spiritually uplifting and also termed 'culture music,' 'roots music' or 'roots rock reggae'. As highlighted above, in some instances reggae/dancehall will be used inclusively to reference both reggae and dancehall as autonomous forms.

***d) 'Neo-African'***

The term 'neo-African', meaning 'new African' (Ryman 1984) is used in the Jamaican context to negate the negative connotations attached to the colonial terms traditional or folk as a legacy from enslavement. As I indicate elsewhere (Patten, 2016), in Britain these terms carry similarly negative associations, hence my preference for the neo-African terminology. African/neo-African cultural expression serve in referencing both 'classical' (ancient) African practices direct from the African continent, the unifying cultural expressions developed by Jamaican African practitioners (as in the case of Kumina specialists), and those developed and cultivated as survival strategies by marginalised neo-African/Jamaicans, against an historical context of enslavement, colonial and racial oppression.

***e) 'Corporeal dancing body'***

The 'corporeal dancing body' is central to dance, as it is through corporeality, the boundary of the body, that communication and knowledge transfer takes place through language, the senses, symbolic gestures and kinesthetic action, enabling the possibility of meaning-making. I coin the term 'corporeal dancing body' to emphasise intentionally the fleshly physicality of the black African dancing body and its corpse-like existence, which is symbolically reanimated and regains visibility through the sustaining spirit embodied within African/neo-African dance.

This draws on Thomas Fuchs' (2003) conception in which corporeal movement incorporates the 'lived body', the phenomenological pre-reflective integration of the senses and the kinesthetic actions of the physical limbs, with the 'corporeal body', which signals a reflective engagement that manifests emotion. According to Fuchs (2003), it is when the automatic functioning of the 'lived body' is interrupted and one becomes conscious of the body and its objectification under the gaze of others that it becomes 'corporealized' (Fuchs, 2003, p. 225) and feelings of shame, guilt and/or performance are felt.

I extend Fuchs' conception by combining the 'lived body' and the 'corporeal body' as the 'corporeal dancing body'. This not only re-unites the physical body, reason and emotion, additionally, it incorporates the spiritual coding embodied and mapped within African dancing bodies. L'Antoinette Stines (2005) refers to this spiritual coding as 'ancestral data', namely, knowledge passed down via departed ancestors, which resonates with Carolyn Cooper's (1993) notion of *Noises In The Blood*. The 'corporeal dancing body' also includes historical cultural continuities Diedre Sklar terms 'cultural knowledge' (1991), which form both sacred and secular constructs.

The 'corporeal dancing body' triggers the 'cultural memory' of a people linking the socio-political, historical, and economic values embodied in their physical and cultural expression, in this instance, that of formerly enslaved Africans manifesting in contemporary dancehall spaces (Buckland 2001; Taylor 2003; Hua, 2005; Meusburger, Heffernan and Wunder 2011). As an embodied idiom, dance is therefore part of a signifying system, symbolically communicating 'ancestral data' (Stines, 2005) encoded with 'cultural knowledge' (Sklar, 1991). This provides dancers with a

consciousness of self that reaches way beyond ‘outsider’ (those not part of the culture) readings of the physicality of the ‘corporeal dancing body’.

Thereby, ‘corporeal dancing bodies’ facilitate a movement beyond the exotic gaze. As I explain elsewhere (Patten, 2016; 2018), this signals the African/neo-African body as being invested with historical references of ‘otherness’ (difference) connected to enslavement, oppression and inferiority mapped on it by the white gaze, which renders African bodies as animated corpses. Frantz Fanon’s notion of ‘epidermalization’, illustrates the negative fixing of Black bodies, ‘in relation to whites ... [positioning the body as the] site where blackness and inferiority – and blackness as inferiority – was visualized’, as argued by Winnifred Brown-Glaude (2007 p.36). The black ‘corporeal dancing body’ signals a counteractive, reflective, spiritual, and physical reanimation in the performance of an African/neo-African embodied genealogy. However, the alternative histories hidden within the vocabulary of reggae/dancehall’s ‘corporeal dancing body’, the main focus of this research, have been substantially overlooked within the paucity of written data on dance in dancehall scholarship until now.

#### *f) ‘Spirituality’*

A comprehensive, all-inclusive definition of spirituality does not exist, as each human being has their-own nuanced interpretation of spirituality (Braffi, 1990). Spirituality is considered to convey life itself by Christians and non-Christians alike. Thereby, within the African context John Mbiti states, ‘[w]herever the African is, there is his religion’ (Mbiti, 1969 p.2), which facilitates the conception of dance as, I shall argue, as being ‘collective worship’. As will be explored in chapter three, religion and spirituality are regarded as synonymous in most African/neo-African spiritual practices. From a Christian perspective spirituality is the belief system that guides how individuals live their life, whilst religion is the institutional framework through which spirituality is structured to establish the societal moral coding through which individuals engage each other.

Spirituality provides the existential/hermeneutic resources through which individuals live and organise their lives (Lynch, 2005). Spirituality therefore consists

of a ‘Supreme Being’ or God<sup>21</sup>; the dual spirit and mortal/material worlds; a spirit community; humankind, responsible for maintaining harmony between the spirit world, humanity, and nature (animals, plant-life and inanimate objects).

Within most African cultures dance plays an important role within spiritual practices and is both perceived and used as a central mode of communication between the spirit and material worlds. I thereby approach dance as ‘collective worship’ extending the notion of ‘collective prayer’ (Nii-Yartey, 2013). Spirituality is therefore a lived experience in which humanity is responsible for maintaining unity and balance between the material and spiritual worlds through rituals, performative actions, objects and symbols. These elements are structured by formal religions such as Christianity, although the naming of individual elements and/or categories may vary.

### **g) ‘Wining’**

‘Whining’ or ‘wining’ is a signature female dancehall movement that involves – *circling or rotating the pelvis, whilst rocking it back and forth to produce a ‘bubbling’ quality* (Stines, 2009),<sup>22</sup> *or what I term a ‘tumbling’ action*. Wining is performed with varying degrees of dynamic athleticism including whilst in the splits, or the ‘head top’ dance, balancing upside-down in a handstand, as may be observed in almost every dancehall event. Wining is not generally performed by Jamaican ‘man dem’ (see below) independently, but whilst ‘coupling up’ (partner dancing) or whilst performing in masquerade costume. An example is Jonkonnu masquerade’s ‘Belly Woman’ character (conventionally a male dressed as a pregnant woman) wining and bouncing the belly up and down. Male independent wining is a feature in other Caribbean countries linked to Calypso and Soca music, both connected to carnival, a possible continuity from the masquerade genre.

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<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed context of the African/neo-African use of terms for the Supreme Being see: ‘Maasa God’ (Chevannes, 1994, p. 22 – 23), ‘King Zambi’ (Lewin, 2000 p.224). Although I have not accessed any recorded Jonkonnu terms for God directly, its incorporation of myal and Gumbay makes it highly likely that Jonkonnu practitioners would adopt ‘Maasa God’ or even ‘King Zambi’ in solidarity with their local African brothers and sisters in reference to God.

<sup>22</sup> Bubbling is described by L’Antoinette Stines as ‘resembl[ing] fertility steps found in African dances and has a strong sexual connotation ... [t]he basic ‘bubble’ uses circular movement of the hips. The dancer fluidly moves the hips while lowering herself with bent knees to the ground ... N.B: Men do not bubble’ (2009, p.297).

#### ***h) ‘Man dem’***

The term ‘man dem’ is often used within dancehall in preference to the term ‘males’ which is commonly used within the high art presentation of male dancers and therefore at the outset of this research carried some stigma relating to homosexuality, which has been relaxed in more recent times.<sup>23</sup>

#### ***i) ‘Smadditisation’***

‘Smaddification’ or ‘smadditisation’ also termed ‘smadditizin’ is a Jamaican term for the process of being recognised, gaining agency and self-actualisation in order to avoid invisibility. Charles Mills (in Heron, 2003) theorises this process as ‘smaddification’, the need to be recognised as ‘smaddy’ (somebody) to become somebody of worth. Rex Nettleford (in Scott, 2006 p.227), generally recognised as having popularised the concept, corrects the term to ‘smadditisation’, which was originally coined by Tony Laing as ‘smaddityzin’ (Stanley-Niaah, 2013), the process through which individuals gain agency ‘as an equal human being’ (Herron, 2003 p.3). Whether as smaddification, smadditisation, or smadditizin the concept enables individuals to achieve ‘personhood’ despite the denial of access due to race (Nettleford in Scott, 2006; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Mills, 1997).

#### ***j) ‘Myal Obeah’***

Obeah and Myal have historically been presented as diametrically opposed religious practices. ‘Myal’, also termed ‘mial’ (Cassidy, 2007), ‘mayaal’, ‘myaala’ (Warner-Lewis, 2003), or ‘mayâla’ (Stewart, 2005) is associated with ‘Obeah’ also called ‘ubio’, ‘obia’, ‘obi’, and ‘obeah’ (Cassidy, 2007), ‘obiya’ (Warner-Lewis, 2003), ‘obeye’ ‘obayifo’ or ‘bayi’ (Stewart, 2005).<sup>24</sup> Myal was perceived as good and Obeah

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<sup>23</sup> The term male is contested as within informal interviews conducted for this research dancehall dancers of both sexes used the term freely.

<sup>24</sup> Space does not allow for a full etymology of Myal and Obeah here, as the focus of this study is the use of myal in relation to dance and the body, rather than linguistic. Monica Schuler (1980; 2015),

as evil, nonetheless, practitioners of one practice were usually skilled in the other to protect themselves and their community from the opposing form (Barrett, 1976; Chevannes, 1994). It is only within recent times that Dianne M. Stewart (2005) has established that pre-emancipation Myal and Obeah were one entity, as supported by Edward Long's (1889b, p.416) reference to, 'execrable wretches [Obeah-men] in Jamaica, introduce[ing] what they call the *myal dance*', and establishing a Myal society. This indicates Myal and Obeah are polar ends of one spectrum, rather than autonomous practices. Together, they formed the strongest and most enduring African religious ritual during enslavement.<sup>25</sup> However, Myal emerged as oppositional to Obeah in 1842, following the moral criminalisation of Obeah by Euro-Christian theology (Stewart, 2005), later reinforced by the 1898 Obeah Law (Seaga, 1982).<sup>26</sup> This led to Myal's transformation into an autonomous spiritual dance practice in its own right. It was later subsumed as part of the transcendental possession state within most Jamaican African/neo-African ritual practices (Barrett, 1979; Schuler, 1980; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005; Ryman, 2010).

## VII. Key scholars

In piecing together some of the theoretical frameworks underscoring this thesis, the conceptualization of dancehall in relation to spirituality raises issues of power in relation to dancehall's functioning as a subversive site of resistance and opposition, in line with De Certeau (1980) and Burton's (1997) notion of resistance. Drawing on Stewart's (2005) approach to negating the negative connotations of terms such as 'traditional', developing the use of the term African/neo-African facilitates my referencing of dancehall's shifting genealogical position, both as a venue space with a trajectory reaching back beyond enslavement to the African continent, and as a

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Fredrick Cassidy (2007), Maureen Warner-Lewis (2003) and Dianne M. Stewart (2005), all provide excellent explorations into Myal and Obeah, their etymologies and historical development.

<sup>25</sup> Wedenoja and Anderson (2014 p.129) detail the connection between Obeah, Myal and Revivalism with the complimentary use of 'biomedical and ethnomedical systems', whereby individuals visit both medical doctors and spiritual healers, the former for physical illness and injuries and the latter for psychological attention, viewed as spiritually induced.

<sup>26</sup> The Western criminalization of spiritual practices was also used as a strategy across Africa. Holly Hanson (2002 p.220) notes its use in stemming the power of the Queen Mothers and spiritual practitioners through, 'institutions that expressed a gendered division of political power include[ing] women's title societies, women's councils, market associations, age-set organizations, and forms of spirit mediumship'.



distinct contemporary genre, which some scholars argue makes it representative of this postmodern age of hybridity.

John Mbiti's conception of African spiritual and religious philosophy as being, 'ultimately a study of the people themselves' (1985 p.1) is crucial to this research, because as he rightly holds, '[w]herever the African is, there is his religion' (Mbiti, 1985 p.2). This, alongside Lynch's (2005) functionalist approach will guide my establishment of the spiritual parameters of dancehall spirituality. This will enable the mixing of Jamaican spirituality's African/neo-African foundational core, with Christianity's structure, and the postmodern individualized focus on self-affirmation that facilitates the 'smadditisation' (Mills, 1997) and braggadocio of dancehall participants. The importance of smadditisation reflects the historic resistance against enslavement, which Hutton articulates as, '[the] most wanton, savage, barbarous and gruesome acts of cruelty' (2015 p.238) suffered by dehumanized and disenfranchised African/neo-African peoples within the Caribbean.

Victor Turner's (1969) 'communitas' will be employed in exploring material and spiritual kinship within the dancehall space. Drawing on the African referencing of God as the 'Supreme Being' by Mbiti (1985), Paul Tillich's (1980) notions of 'ultimate concern' and the 'Divine' will be adopted in relation to the spiritual experience, where the use of God, Jah, the Almighty all maintain a more Christian specific religious connotation.

Elochukwu E. Uzukwu's (1997) concept of 'gesture' will be employed alongside Ferdinand de Saussure's (1959) 'signifying practice' as a means through which to read meaning into the dance vocabulary of dancehall dancers and practitioners. Francis Nii-Yartey (2013) and Alphonse Tiérou (1992) will be drawn upon to provide insight into the African cosmological worldviews manifesting through dance. Thomas Fuchs' (2003) notion of the 'lived' and the 'corporeal body', combine to facilitate my conception of dancehall bodies as 'corporeal dancing bodies' throughout this research as earlier outlined.

### ***VIII. Thesis Outline***

This research focuses on dancehall in relation to spirituality and dance. As the earlier auto/ethnographic passages and Bible references demonstrate, historically dance has served a central function within both African/neo-African and Christian spiritual worship. To my knowledge, very little dancehall research has privileged the corporeal dancing body, let alone focused on spirituality and the dancehall phenomenon, although some authors may loosely gesture towards it. This thesis aims to fill this gap within dancehall literature.

In chapter one I discuss dancehall as a resistance practice (De Certeau et al, 1980; Burton, 1997) within which African/neo-African Jamaicans strive for smadditisation and recognition. In doing so I aim to demonstrate how dancehall studies cohere around discourses to do with the historical socio-politico-economic development of the dancehall space, sound system culture and the music industry, female liberation rituals, dancehall's geographical and spatial mapping, the subversion of Jamaican hegemony, and the creation of counter- hegemonic structures through fashion, the corporeal body, transgressive masculinities, gender, identity, sex and sexuality, slackness, violence, and culture, particularly in relation to dance. Furthermore, I will show that spirituality does not feature explicitly within dancehall scholarship, although Cooper (1993; 2004), White (2003), and Wright's (2004) erotic female fertility rituals contain a spiritual element, as does Delgado De Torres's (2010a) investigation into the modification of attitudes towards gender, fashion, and dance in the 'clashes over the body' (2010a p.iv), through which she argues dancehall dance may be perceived as spiritual cleansing.

Chapter two provides a contextual overview of Jamaican dance history. In order to develop a real comprehension of the potential emergence of a dancehall spirituality, I will necessarily explore the historical relationship between dance and spirituality from the African/neo-African perspective. In critically mapping and analysing the social, ceremonial, and religious classifications of dance on the Africa continent, I attempt to establish, (1) how an African genealogy of spirituality and resistance may have transferred to Jamaica to produce spiritual continuities within African/neo-African Jamaican practices generally. (2) I will also explore what spiritual and cultural underpinnings may be emerging within the dancehall genre specifically.

Chapter three attempts to provide the spiritual parameters against which dancehall potentially may be read. In critically examining both historical and postmodern, formal and non-Western approaches to spirituality I attempt to define more clearly what may be understood as spirituality. Furthermore, I seek to identify what Jamaican spirituality consists of in order to begin to identify what spirituality within dancehall may incorporate.

As the methodology chapter, in chapter four, I examine dancehall in relation to the ideas emerging from the dance history and spirituality chapters, identifying the explicit and implicit ideas. Importantly, ethnographic methodology including participant observation, and informal interviews, is the main approach adopted, supported by case study, thus implementing a mixed methods approach towards capturing the dancehall experience. Auto/ethnographic reflexivity and thick description are used in discussing both the explicit and implicit ideas gained from the informal interviews and participant observation. This establishes the lens through which I interrogate dancehall in the four empirical chapters to determine how religious and spiritual experiences may present within the dancehall genre. Furthermore I critically explore ways in which spiritual knowledge may manifest both explicitly and implicitly through the corporeal dancing bodies of dancehall dance practitioners.

The empirical chapters five - eight provide an analysis of the dancehall space and the gender relationships that both reflect and challenge the patriarchal structures within the wider Jamaican society. In chapter five a comparative examination of the dancehall space alongside the African/neo-African ritual space will enable the framework within which dancehall may be read as a ritual ground to be determined. Chapter six focuses on dancehall masculinity and the notion of both the mortal and spiritual kinship and community relations facilitated by dance. This, it is hoped, will reveal the role and nature of social cohesion as part of the survival mechanisms operating within the dancehall space. The female corporeal body is explored in chapter seven in terms of transformation and transcendence. Based on the genealogical connections between dancehall and African/neo-African practices, gendered approaches to dancehall are interrogated in establishing whether and how gender differences may affect the manifestation of spirituality within dancehall.

Chapter eight develops on the structures and approaches to spirituality and dance established in chapters five, six, and seven. Investigating the male and female corporeal engagement within dancehall dance, it explores the challenge of the moral and aesthetic codes set by Jamaica's 'uptown' ruling-classes and formal religions by dancehall participants in instigating their own alternative moral codes through cultural expression. In chapter nine, a framework for a dancehall spirituality will be advanced building on that established in the empirical chapters. This will provide a praxis based epistemological/hermeneutic approach through which dancehall participants may structure the way they live their lives as a future survival strategy. Thereby, this research seeks to present the embodied, lived experience of dancehall participants from an 'insider' dance practitioner perspective, to establish whether spirituality exists within the perceived secular Jamaican dancehall dance practice.

## **Chapter 1. Warm up: *Dancehall literature review***

### ***Introduction***

This chapter presents a critical scrutiny of reggae/dancehall literature. For most dancehall practitioners dance is a central aspect of life. This chapter examines the seminal and key full-length dancehall texts in order to ascertain: Firstly, how scholars and researchers have interpreted Jamaican dance practices in relation to spirituality and the dancing body; and secondly, how resistance and liberation themes manifest spiritual and corporeal genealogical continuities within reggae/dancehall scholarship that impacts notions of identity. This will demonstrate how themes of resistance and liberation dominant within the Jamaican psyche might assist in ascertaining the nature of any potential dancehall spirituality.

In this chapter I therefore explore the key works of Carolyn Cooper (1993; 2004), Norman Stolzoff (2000), Donna P. Hope (2006a; 2010), Sonjah Stanley-Niaah (2010), Julian Henriques (2011), and Dennis O. Howard (2012; 2016). Between them, supported by journal articles and chapters that broaden the field, they outline the key discourses underscoring contemporary dancehall practice. In surveying the literature this chapter seeks to show that most scholars either fully omit or pay little attention to spirituality and the corporeal dancing body.

### ***1.1 Dancehall, a reggae appendage or voice of the people?***

Early written accounts on reggae/dancehall position dancehall as an appendage to reggae, thereby its main discourses are summed up in a chapter, or section within reggae texts. Many writers rightly assert that reggae created the space for blackness and marginality to become visible (Thomas, 2002; Farley, 2009; Brodber, 2012). Most suggest that reggae provides an ideological social and political voice for the oppressed whilst conversely, as the opening statement in Salewicz and Boot's (2001) dancehall chapter suggests dancehall is regarded as 'the marriage of digital beats and slackness ... [a] tough and very upfront style of street reggae music' (2001 p.173).

Positioned as an appendage to reggae, dancehall's complex and nuanced discourses frequently foster contradictory views concerning its artistic content and function.

Dancehall's presentation devoid of its own discourses, often enables the DJs' lyrical challenge to hegemonic value systems that work against society's poor to be easily dismissed. For example, O'Brien Chang and Chen in stating that, 'many big-name deejays are illiterate' (1998 p.79) plays into the negative perceptions that 'uptown',<sup>27</sup> ruling-class Jamaicans already hold, pertaining to dancehall and its participants. However, the contradictory representation of the dancehall DJ is clear as O'Brien Chang and Chen continue to describe DJing as 'a surprisingly versatile art form ... Deejays are almost "street newspapers" ... giving commentary on almost every topic' (ibid). The DJs representation as the voice of the people is not only established here, but inherently, elevated to that of modern day Griot (historian/storyteller/praise-singer/poet/musician)<sup>28</sup>.

Lloyd Bradley supports the conception of dancehall as the voice of the people arguing it represents a 'ghetto reaction' (2000 p.502), meaning a rejection of roots reggae music as being, he argues, 'underlined by Bob Marley's massive overseas success, [where] it [roots reggae] was being defined by influences other than its immediate environment' (ibid). The Jamaican concern with controlling an authentic, cultural expression is what is raised here, a theme that runs throughout the whole development of Jamaican popular culture. Bradley's assertion that dancehall was 'quite literally, a retreat into Jamaicanness: [as DJ] toasting can't happen without a deep yard-style accent' (2000 p.504), reinforces the issue of Jamaican peoples' ownership of their cultural expression, their voice, and inherently, their identity and sense of spiritual being as a post-enslavement and post-colonial society.

Scholars writing about dancehall acknowledge that dancehall expression voices the concerns and harsh realities that marginalised lower and working-class Jamaicans experience through the DJ's lyrical voice. Salewicz and Boot quote veteran DJ Buju Banton who declares, 'Inspiration for songs is a everyday thing from what happen

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<sup>27</sup> See: Jamaica's uptown/downtown social class structure (*Introduction chapter*, note 3, p.15).

<sup>28</sup> Philip M. Peek and Kwesi Yankah (2005) provide a detailed and in-depth delineation of the Griot practice.

around me ... things that you see that no one else seems to see' (2001 p.198). Jahn and Weber, similarly quote DJ Cutty Ranks who affirms:

Most of the lyrics guys like me talkin' about right now is reality, understand? Is REAL reality ... My message is that the people have the power.

Cutty Ranks in Jahn and Weber, 1998 p.42

Yet it is in the dancehall focused or full-length texts that in-depth analysis of the DJ's lyrics occur. Carolyn Cooper in discussing poor peoples' reality privileges the words of veteran DJ Bounty Killer's '*Sufferah*' ('*Sufferer*') anthem, proclaiming:

Mama she (is) a sufferah (sufferer)

Papa im (is) a sufferah (sufferer)

Can't mek mi (allow my) children [to] grow up [and] turn sufferah (sufferer).

Bounty Killer, in Cooper, 2002 p.183

Although, as Cooper argues, DJs aptly demonstrate their role as ideological spokespersons for Jamaica's impoverished poor, 'whom, nevertheless, ambitiously strive to improve their circumstances' (2002 p.183), I contend that marginalised African/Jamaicans also speak for themselves through dance. Jamaican dancehall corporeal dancing bodies not only articulate their present concerns, but also simultaneously offer access to the historical and spiritual (en)coding they embody. Dance scholar Halifu Osumare describes dance as the rhythm, space, shape, and dynamics through which society, 'create[s] a choreography of life itself' (2018 p.3). Thus, as this chapter will demonstrate, due to the predominant focus on dancehall lyrical content and the socio-politico-economic issues surrounding dancehall culture, dance and the corporeal dancing body are frequently neglected. Yet, African/neo-African practitioners both consciously and subconsciously approach dance as a spiritual practice. Whereas dancehall lyrics may be argued as demonstrating

‘illiteracy’ by some, dancehall corporeal dancing bodies may better be conceived as what I call a ‘performoliteracy’, collapsing spiritual, historical, performance and performative knowledge into a corporeal literacy.

### ***1.2 Dancehall’s emergence within Jamaican popular music***

Whilst a comprehensive historical mapping of reggae/dancehall is beyond the scope of this thesis, some comprehension of the historical context it evolves from, as a contemporary indigenous Jamaican form, is crucial. Reggae/dancehall represents an alternative genealogy of Jamaican dance practice to the often derogative and racist perspectives offered in early Euro-historical writings. The 1707 account by British medical doctor Sir Hans Sloane, reads:

... Negroes are much given to Venery, and although hard wrought, will at nights, or on Feast days Dance and Sing: their songs are all bawdy ... [t]heir Dances consist in great activity and strength of Body, and keeping time, if it can be.

Sloane in Ramdhanie, 2005 p. 84.

These early colonial records, often dismissed Caribbean African/neo-African dances as being, according to Bob Ramdhanie, “‘savage in nature”, “simple” and “indecent”, through ... lack of understanding of what [they] w[ere] witnessing’ (2005 p.87). Racism and ignorance were major contributors to the lack of insight shown within early scholarship, as exemplified by a number of accounts collated by Abrahams and Szwed (1983). Nonetheless, some examples of early Jamaican African/neo-African dance practices may be excavated, by discerning researchers with some knowledge of Jamaica’s dance heritage.<sup>29</sup>

Conversely, a number of texts have more reliably charted the broad roots of Jamaican indigenous cultural practices (Beckwith, 1929; Baxter, 1970; Barrett, 1976; Ryman, 1980; Coester, and Bender, 2015). Others present Jamaican dance within the

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<sup>29</sup> George Eaton Simpson (1978) for example provides short descriptions of a number of dance practices across the Caribbean region.



context of dance in the wider Caribbean (Sloat, 2002; Manuel, et al, 2006; Sloat, 2010), and yet others provide detailed explorations of individual African/neo-African dance and spiritual practices, including Jonkonnu masquerade (Barnett, 1979; Ryman, 1984a), Kumina (Warner-Lewis, 1977; Schuler, 1980; Ryman, 1984; Lewin, 2000), Revivalism (Seaga, 1982; Lewin, 2000; Smith, 2006), Rastafari (Lewin, 2000), Myalism, Etti, Dinki Mini and others (Coester and Bender, 2015). Authors have also mapped Jamaican popular culture from the nineteenth century to the present (Clarke, 1980; White, 1984; O'Brien Chang and Chen, 1998; Jahn and Weber, 1998; Foster, 1999; Bradley, 2000; Salewicz and Boot, 2001; Katz, 2003; Barrow and Dalton, 2004; Seaga, 2004; Veal, 2007; McCarthy, 2007; Gooden, 2014; Hitchins, 2014).

Garth White's (1984; 1998) early history of the development of sound system culture and the Jamaican recording industry offers an enlightened foundation that later reggae/dancehall scholarship builds upon. He provides an in-depth delineation of the urbanization of Jamaican popular music from mento, to ska, rocksteady, and reggae, albeit expressly focusing on social 'dances [that] are [performed] for pleasure and not for ritual purposes' (White, 1984 p.47). White's focus therefore centres on Mento dance. Subsequent studies by O'Brien Chang and Chen (1998), Bradley (2000; 2002); Katz (2003), Barrow and Dalton (2004), and Seaga (2004) all provide further comprehensive histories of sound system's contested and at times conflicting interpretations, but most only briefly address dance, and few discuss the corporeal dancing body.

Lloyd Bradley's (2000; 2002) studies usefully parallel the historic development of Jamaican popular music both in Jamaica and the UK, employing the voices of artists and engineers. Although dancehall's emergence as a distinct dance and musical genre is debated, Bradley holds, 'the 1985 hit single by Wayne Smith "Under Mi Sleng Teng" ... was the first to have no bass-line, and is, therefore, dancehall's clearest line in the sand' (2000 p.517). Most scholars concur that Smith's hit, 'whose riddim was generated entirely on digital keyboards ... [a rumoured] adaptation of a pre-packaged rhythm on a Casio' (Manuel and Marshal, 2006 p.452), marks dancehall's digital emergence. David Katz (2003) deliberately uses interview statements and personal observations to enable reggae/dancehall pioneers to 'use their own voices to tell its tale' (2003 p.ix), which gives his study a greater authenticity. As

Katz remarks, 'dub music has taught us that what is absent from a mix is as important as what stays in' (2003 p.xi), the same applies to reggae/dancehall history.

Prior to Cooper (1993), and Stolzoff (2000), Jamaican dancehall as an appendage to reggae, rather than a subject in its own right, meant academic discourses focused on dancehall DJ artists and the analysis of their lyrical content (Cooper, 1993; 2004; Hippolyte, 2004; Henry, 2006). Alternatively, scholars focused on the socio-politico-economic conditions of dancehall participants and Jamaican society at large (Stolzoff, 2000; Hope, 2006a; Charles, 2013). Consequently, dance, the dancing body and their potential embodiment of spiritual symbolism have either been neglected, or receive little attention from most academics. A significant issue is the fact that few dancehall scholars or researchers have the necessary dance training or expertise to analyse corporeal dancing bodies. Nonetheless, the subversive resistance messages prominently evidenced within dancehall lyrics, have not until now been fully explored through the alternative histories inscribed on and projected by dancehall corporeal dancing bodies.

### ***1.3 Dance and resistance***

Dances within reggae/dancehall and its genealogical line both implicitly and explicitly perform and represent different forms of resistance. In Michel De Certeau's (1980 pp.5-10) conception, resistance manifests in two distinct but related modes, as 'tactics and strategies', which are applied by Richard E. Burton (1997 pp.47-89) as 'opposition and resistance' respectively. Strategies, or full resistance employ radical external 'Power' including armed rebellion in challenging oppression and hegemonic authority. Conversely, tactics or oppositional 'power' operate internally within an established institution employing subversive and formalized systems to affect change.

Cultural expression is an important mode through which both overt resistance and inherent opposition have been used within the survival strategies of African/Jamaicans. This is exemplified in Burton's (1997) study in which he questions whether enslaved Africans: 1) Arrived in the Caribbean stripped and devoid of their own culture, and merely adopted the culture of their European enslavers. 2) Started to formulate creole culture during the 'Middle Passage' Atlantic crossing, or '[when] the

very first migrants set foot on Caribbean soil from the Old Worlds of Europe and Africa and started to become “new beings” on the Planet’ (Nettleford, 2002, p.85). 3) Arrived with their cultural practices intact (Burton, Herskovits, and Leslie in Burton, 1997). Underscored by resistance strategies, scholars have shown that all three scenarios took place (Beckwith, 1929; Baxter, 1970; Barrett, 1976; Ryman, 1984; Coester, and Bender, 2015).

Records show that Africans adopted and adapted European cultural traditions, such as Quadrille and Maypole, to secretly ridicule their enslavers as a form of oppositional resistance, but later Africanised them to suit their own purposes (Beckwith, 1929; Baxter, 1970; Ryman, 1980). Some scholars argue the development of the Limbo dance reflects an oppositional resistance to the enforced ‘exercise’ by slave ship crews (Rediker, 2008; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Equally, many history and dancehall scholars document the use of African cultural practices as part of Jamaica’s armed resistance strategies from the Maroon wars (1690-1796) led by Cudjoe and Nanny, to the uprisings forming the Baptist wars led by Sam Sharpe (1831) and Paul Bogle (1865) against British oppression, during and post enslavement. The violent elections of the late 1970s and early 1980s have also been acknowledged as part of Jamaica’s continuity of resistance, of which contemporary dancehall is the most recent manifestation (Beckwith, 1929; Abrahams and Szwed, 1983; Burton, 1997; Stolzoff, 2000; Stewart, 2005; Hope, 2006a; Hutton, 2015).

The crucial contribution of danced resistance is foregrounded in Clinton Hutton’s (2015) insightful study into the cosmological, social, and ideological, cultural strategies employed by Baptist minister Paul Bogle and other African-forebears as part of the deeply symbolic ‘oath swearing’ and spiritual rituals incorporated into their physical and psychological preparations for the 1865 Morant Bay uprising. Similarly, Sylvanus Kwashie Kuwor (2013 p.41) holds that dances performed at the Hogbetsotso Festival, described in the introduction, exemplify the Anlo-Ewe’s (en)coding of their experiences of resistance and escape from enslavement in Notsie (Togo) by embodying them within the Atrikpui, Agbadza, Agbekor and Atsia dances.<sup>30</sup> Thereby, like the Anlo-Ewes, Jamaican African-

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<sup>30</sup> The Ghanaian Atrikpui military dance is the predecessor to Agbadza dance particularly performed during death observances, whilst Atsia is a female dance and the Agbekor is commonly known as a war

forebears (en)coded their Morant Bay and diverse resistance experiences within Kumina, Revivalism, Jonkonnu and other African/neo-African practices, which frequently re-appear within the dancehall space.

Hutton and Kuwor both demonstrate how dance facilitates resistance strategies, and importantly, as Hutton rightly contends, that the worldview of African-forebears ‘exists today as the principal basis of the world view of the Jamaican folk’ (2015 p.xv). This is exhibited within dancehall’s dance culture. Yet, whilst historical resistance within Jamaican culture has been recognised and genealogically connected to dancehall by many authors, the potential transference of spiritual (en)coding has been missed by most. Nevertheless, White’s assertion that, ‘far from being a mere regurgitator of European styles [Jamaica] has become a consistent exporter of culture’ (1998 p.6) is apt, especially considered in relation to Burton’s questions above.

Dance is shown to be a key and important factor at the major intersections of the development of Jamaican popular culture by many scholars, most focusing on music, therefore overlooking crucial dance continuities. Hence, few detailed descriptions of early Jamaican dances or corporeal dancing bodies exist. White (1984), O’Brien Chang and Chen (1998), Bradley (2000), Salewicz and Boot (2001), Katz, (2003), Barrow and Dalton (2004) and Seaga (2004), all cite Mento as a central influence on Jamaican popular music, contributing a ‘blend of music and dance, with songs mixing narrative and topical commentary’ (O’Brien Chang and Chen, 1998 p.14). As Jamaica’s first indigenous popular form, Mento groups are acknowledged by most as creatively bridging African, neo-African, and popular cultural practices, which is clearly articulated in relation to the proto-Ska era (White, 1998; Chang and Chen, 1998; Bradley, 2002).

Echoing written observations by others, punctuating Jamaican independence, as anthropologist and former Prime Minister Edward Seaga remarks, ‘[Ska was] very popular, particularly since it was both song and dance’ (2004 p.9). Bradley (2000) perceptively notes Revivalism’s oral underpinning of Ska declaring, ‘Spiritually, ska’s lyricists were on the case, too. The Maytals ... came on with all the fervour of a particularly lively revival meeting’ (2000 p.96). He continues, ‘Lead singer Toots

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dance. These are all ceremonial dances performed by the Ewe nation as part of the Hogbetsotso Festival.

Hibbert's gospel-based hollering was backed up by equally raucous harmonies and showed a spiritual bent' (ibid). Whilst dance practitioners such as Ryman (2003; 2010) and Walker (2008) may articulate the Revivalist movement vocabulary that underpin Ska, unaware of its dance continuities most scholars remain focused on Ska's musical nuances (White, 1998; O'Brien Chang and Chen, 1998; Bradley, 2000; Salewicz and Boot, 2001; Barrow and Dalton, 2004).

Contrarily, following on from Ska, the Rocksteady dance preceded the official naming of the musical genre, as Bradley (2000), Hebdige (2007) and McCarthy (2007) all reference the fact that Rocksteady music developed in response to the 'rude boy' (gang/gangster) dancers' request for a slower, and more mellow riddim. Rocksteady also facilitated the reintroduction of the 'rent-a-tile' dance style, and stylistically projected the rude boys' 'cool and deadly' fashion aesthetic internationally (Ryman, 2003; Hebdige, 2007; Bradley, 2002).<sup>31</sup>

Many scholars easily connect reggae with the spiritual ideology of the Rastafarian movement (Campbell, 1987; Chevannes, 1994; Nettleford and Salter, 2008; Sterling, 2010; Barnett, 2012). Most concur that the early introduction of Rastafarian influences within Jamaican popular music began with Oswald 'Count Ossie' Williams and Mystic Revelation of Rastafari's drumming on Ska recordings. Katz (2003) states, 'placing Ossie's drums on "Oh Carolina", Prince Buster brought the sound of Rastafari into Jamaica's popular consciousness' (2003 p.33). However, reggae's incorporation of Kumina, Burru, Revival and Nyabingi movement and musical influences discussed by Bilby and Leib (1986), Barry Chevannes (1994), and Olive Lewin (2000), has been missed and/or overlooked by many scholars.

Ironically, beyond Jamaican shores reggae became synonymous with Bob Marley and the Wailers, but Marley's Nyabingi dance performed by him in numerous videos and that of dancehall artists including Capleton, Sizzla, and Anthony B, have also received little or no attention (Farley, 2009; Sterling, 2010; Huisman, 2011; Koehlings and Lilly, 2012). Nonetheless, many marginalized and disenfranchised peoples have adopted reggae and Rastafari globally, as 'the religion

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<sup>31</sup> Perry Hensel's film, 'The Harder They Come' (1972) assisted in popularizing Jamaica and the rude boy style, which was later adopted by British '2-Tone' bands including 'the Beat, Madness, Selector and Bodysnatchers' (Walker, 2005 p.138).

of the oppressed, the dispossessed, and the falsely accused' (Farley, 2009 p.122).<sup>32</sup> Sterling (2010) and Huisman (2011) writing on reggae/dancehall in Japan and academics writing on dancehall's diasporic migration report that many reggae followers adopt dancehall as a subversive, praxis-based (action-driven) mode of personal liberation. Thus, from this foundational body of knowledge dancehall's main socio-politico-economic and spiritual themes may be extrapolated.

#### ***1.4 Jamaican dance and popular culture interpreted by dancehall scholarship***

##### ***1.4.1 Slackness***

Most studies date dancehall's ascendancy to the early 1980s, often citing the death of Bob Marley as the moment when DJ music started gaining prevalence over 'roots rock reggae'. However, Dillinger's *'War is Over'* (1978), General Echo's *'International Year of the Child'*, Michigan and Smiley's *'Rub a Dub Style'* or *'Nice Up the Dance'* (1979) have been recorded as exemplifying dancehall's early years (Barrow and Dalton, 2004; O'Brien Chang and Chen, 1998). William 'Lez' Henry (2002) notes that General Echo (aka Rankin Slackness) 'revolutionised the genre of dancehall deejaying in "1976"' (2002 p.103), which dates dancehall's autonomous development from the mid 1970s and slackness as an early theme since dancehall's inception.<sup>33</sup>

Literary scholar Carolyn Cooper's (1993) groundbreaking exploration of dancehall positions slackness as 'the erotic working itself out in dancehall culture' (Cooper in conversation, 2019). This raises the major slackness and violence theme within academic discourse. She does an excellent job contextualizing dancehall within Jamaica's lyrical bloodline. Cooper examines 'the scribal/oral literary continuum in Jamaica' (1993 p.117) from the works of popular dancehall artists such as Yellowman, Josey Wales and others, to the neo-African folk practice of Mento and writers such as Louise Bennett, through to African/neo-African practices such as Revivalism. Cooper's

<sup>32</sup> Many scholars have written about the adoption, adaption and assimilation of reggae and Rastafari in the establishing and growth of Jamaican popular music in numerous countries on multiple continents, laying the foundation for dancehall culture's glocal appeal (Sterling, 2010; Huisman, 2011; Koehlings and Lilly, 2012; Márquez, 2013; Patten, 2016).

<sup>33</sup> Count Lasher's 'Water the Garden' (1954) Mento was risqué. Max Romeo, 'Wet Dream' (1968), Prince Buster's, 'Wreck a Pum Pum'/ Soul Sisters', 'Wreck a Buddy' (1969) were lyrically explicit.

(2004) book-length text focuses on dancehall slackness as a subversive metaphoric challenge to hegemonic codes of decency. She explores slackness by examining the use of violence and explicit sexual themes within DJ lyrics.

Analyzing dancehall's objectification of the female form by employing the lens of African fertility rituals and sexual play, Cooper controversially pronounces the dancehall space as representing, 'an erogenous zone in which the celebration of female sexuality and fertility is ritualized' (2000 p.1). She therefore institutes African continuities between dancehall, slackness, and culture, skillfully juxtaposing Marion 'Lady Saw' Hall's DJ persona with the Yoruba deities Oya and Òshun. This establishes dancehall as a female liberation ritual and space. Beth-Sarah White (2003), also known as Beth-Sarah Wright (2004), echoes Cooper in her conception of female 'communication rituals', involving the explicit exposure of female body parts to video-camera, known as 'skinnin' and/or 'brukkin' out sessions, frequently accompanied by dynamic personal monologues. In arguing that 'skinnin' and/or 'brukkin' out sessions signify back to enslaved female bodies on the auction block, and ancient African male shaming rituals, White (2003), Wright (2004) and Cooper (2004) strengthen the argument for dancehall's female engagement to be perceived as contemporary female liberation rituals. As such, dancehall's female rituals assist in breaking the 'circular situation of persistent trauma, created by slavery' (Smith, 2011 p.1). Thereby, dancehall signals a disruption and subversive oppositional rebuttal of Eurocentric patriarchal values of decency and sexual propriety.

Many scholars recognize that hegemonic patriarchal values work against the ideological worldview of dancehall practitioners, and Jamaica's majority African descent population (Cooper 1993; Nettleford, 2003; Pinnock, 2007; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). However, Idara Hippolyte (2006) argues that female ritual dances signify as 'self-denigrating practices of competition and soliciting' (2006 p.191). Similarly, Obiagele Lake (in Cooper, 2004) attacks dancehall females for their braggadocio, styling, and support of performative and lyrical slackness, whereas Dick Hebdige, referencing dancehall as 'slack style reggae' (2007 p.124), brands it as delivering explicit and pornographic 'insults to women' (ibid). Senior journalist Barbara Gloudon condemns academics for legitimating dancehall culture, pronouncing '[t]he deejay slackness, the bend down and spread out of dance hall, [is] now being elevated

to academic classicism' (in Stolzoff, 2000 p.230). Whilst many may indict dancehall for the perceived decline of morality within Jamaican society, the numerous charges against it exposes Jamaica's social divisions.

Sonjah Stanley-Niaah, quotes Dancehall Queen Stacey who suitably conveys the sentiments of many dancehall practitioners asserting, 'Look pon carnival. Dem [uptown people] lick out pon Dancehall an dem do worse than Dancehall' (in Stanley-Niaah, 2005 p.60). Cooper succinctly articulates Jamaica's ideological contestations as being, 'between up-town and down-town, between high culture and low, between literacy and oracy' (1993 p.171). Jamaica's hierarchical inequalities are blatantly obvious in the condemnation of slackness within the confines of dancehall, whilst condoning uptown carnival revelers who freely and publicly 'get on bad'<sup>34</sup> in broad daylight.

Dancehall slackness as the metaphoric subversion of hegemonic morality, law and order, speaks to the resilience of Jamaica's poor, implementing a survival 'ideology of social change' (Brodber and Green in Cooper, 1993 p.121). As earlier established, General Echo's introduction of slackness lyrics (Henry, 2002), represents a long historical trajectory of slackness as a resistance strategy in Jamaican cultural expression. Sonjah Stanley-Niaah correctly affirms, '[a] look at songs since the 1950's illustrates that slackness - or more accurately - songs about women's body parts, sex and sexuality - existed in mento' (2005 p.59). Likewise, Dennis O. Howard asserts, 'Slackness and risqué songs have always been a part of the music [and dance] whether it is mento, ska, calypso, rock steady, reggae or dancehall' (2012 p.23). Thereby, it is dancehall's resistance to hegemony that possibly causes Denise Noble's (2000) ambivalence towards dancehall's celebration and confinement of multiple modes in which female corporeal dancing 'vulgar bodies' (Cooper, 1993), are potentially empowered to regain 'smadditisation' (Nettleford, in Scott, 2006 p.227),<sup>35</sup> agency and visibility.

Scholars such as Bakare-Yusuf identify female eroticism as embodying a form of 'masking', where 'dancehall women show femininity to be a masquerade' (2006

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<sup>34</sup> 'Get on bad' is a Caribbean expression for misbehavior, risqué, or inappropriate behavior, usually within a fun context.

<sup>35</sup> For details on 'Smadditisation' see: (*Introduction chapter*, section 1.6.9; Scott, 2006 p.227).



p.12). This manifests through movement, coupled with revealing sartorial fashion, bling bling<sup>36</sup> jewellery and other excesses. Thus, White (2003), Wright (2004) and Bakare-Yusuf (2006) intensify the fertility and liberation discourse Cooper (1993; 2004) initiated to the extent that it is now widely accepted as a discourse, particularly from womanist and feminist perspectives.<sup>37</sup> However, although spirituality is implicitly hinted at in the masquerade, fertility, and ritual aspects of these scholars' works, unfortunately they do not explicitly provide more than a cursory acknowledgement of dancehall's spiritual potential, despite its requirement for spiritual healing and the re-establishment of smadditisation or personhood.

Whilst a number of scholars present convincing arguments to legitimate dancehall's explicit corporeal healing rituals as being a response to, as Wright highlights, 'the history of dispossession, disenfranchisement, historical use and abuse of the female body' (Wright, 2004 p.20), dancehall scholarship needs to progress beyond the discourse of sex and sexuality. The Western gaze has inscribed the discourse of sex and sexuality on African/neo-African bodies from pre-enslavement up until the present. Therefore, this thesis seeks to advance African/neo-African bodies through a spiritual discourse. If slackness is the discourse used predominantly to address female involvement in dancehall, violence is the discourse repeatedly adopted relating to the male involvement, to which I now turn.

#### ***1.4.2 Violence***

Violence is a significant theme within Jamaican history as both a post-enslavement and post-colonial society. Marcus Rediker (2008) judiciously reports African cultural resistance dating back to slave-ship 'Middle Passage' uprisings. As mentioned above, others document uprisings from the Maroon wars, whilst campaigners against Western and hegemonic domination including Alexander Bedward, Marcus Garvey, and the Rastafarian movement leaders such as Leonard Howell, Robert Hinds, Teacher Hibbert and Archibald Dunkley, have been well

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<sup>36</sup> 'Bling' is a term derived from 'bling-bling', meaning conspicuous consumption and diamond lifestyle. The term was popularised by Cash Money's hit '*Millionaire-Bling Bling*', which dancehall artist Kent 'Dansa Bling' Robinson references in relation to how he got his stage name.

<sup>37</sup> Martin-Kerr (2016 p.2) highlights the use of dancehall to mask sexual preference by some 'women who love women' due to Jamaica's 'homonegativity' at the outset of her same-sex study.

documented (Austin-Broos, 1984; Campbell, 1987; Chevannes, 1994; Barnett, 2012). A number of scholars writing on dancehall concede that this represents a part of Jamaican and reggae/dancehall's long genealogy of resistance.

Stolzoff's (2000) ethnographic study adopts the 'border clash'<sup>38</sup> concept as metaphor, using the prism of Jamaica's music production industry and sound system crews to interrogate the multiple tensions within Jamaican society. Stolzoff concurs with most scholars that the 'border clash'<sup>39</sup> between the Michael Manley led People's National Party (PNP) and Edward Seaga's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the bloody 1980 general election marks the extremely volatile chapter of Jamaican political unrest from which dancehall emerged (Stolzoff, 2000; Katz, 2003; Hope, 2006a; Hebdige, 2007; Paul, 2007; Johnson and Soeters, 2008; Charles 2009; Jaffe, 2012; Lesser, 2012).

However Stolzoff, positioning dancehall as 'different forms of violence (performative, lyrical, collective, and state violence)' (1998 p.55), usefully details the performative growth and socio-politico-economic transformations Jamaica and dancehall culture have endured. However, he overlooks some important developments. The violence of the sound system clash was already in decline by the time he was completing his study. 'Juggling' or 'mixing' parties, as Stolzoff describes, involving 'sound system selector[s] weav[ing] together a number of tunes on the same riddim [rhythm] to create a continuous dance groove' (2000 p.109) were increasingly popular. Thus dance was regaining centrality within the dancehall space.

Despite Stolzoff's criticism of scholars who disregard 'forms of performance, such as dance and other bodily practices' (2000 p.19), sparking the 'border clash' between local and Western scholarship (Cooper, 2004), Stolzoff himself neglects the hidden symbolisms within dancehall corporeal dancing bodies. Similarly, having stated that the body is 'where the most significant symbols and practices of the dancehall circulate' (2000 p.2), Stolzoff misses the significance of his brief endnote

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<sup>38</sup> The border clash is an extension of the clash, but with the term border added, extends it to reference the ideological crossing of turf boundaries or differences. See: (Stolzoff 2000; Cooper, 2004).

<sup>39</sup> Carolyn Cooper (2004) provides a detailed description of the term 'border clash' which refers to the challenge, feud or battle between rival opponents whether: political (as regards the ruling and opposition government parties); gangs; sound systems (mobile/roving discotheque style music systems); state authorities v electorate; male v female; ruling-class v underclass; black skinned v browning (as elaborated in the section on morality).

regarding L’Antoinette Stines’ tracing of dancehall ‘back to ... Kumina, mento, bruckins and Rastafari’ (2000 p.271), which similarly to Cooper’s ‘thematic repertoire’ (1993), signals dancehall’s genealogical spiritual embodiment.

Crucially, Stolzoff (2000) all but excludes dancehall’s contemporary male engagement in dance, though his research coincides with the rise of dance icon Gerald ‘Bogle’ Levy in the 1990s.<sup>40</sup> He effectively criminalizes Bogle and the Black Roses Crew, referencing them in relation to gang activity and drug laundering, yet reducing their dance expertise to footnotes. Nevertheless, within dancehall literature the clash remains a central theme exemplified by the highly prized DJ clash prevalent within major stage shows like *Sting*, or *Reggae Sumfest*, and in contestations between dancehall dancers, dancehall queens, selectors, and adherents, etc. (Cooper, 1994; Hope, 2004; Seaga, 2004; Stanley-Niaah, 2004; Pinnock, 2007; Patten, 2016; Rhiney and Cruse, 2019).

Linked to the development of sound system culture, scholars present dancehall as an oppositional, resistant, and rebellious subversion of normative<sup>41</sup> hegemonic social structures (Stolzoff, 2000, Seaga, 2004; Hope, 2006; Charles, 2009). Christopher Charles, (2002), Colin Clarke (2006), Hume N. Johnson and Joseph L. Soeters (2008), and Rivke Jaffe (2012) all outline Jamaica’s militarized law enforcement as facilitating the transformation of ‘key ghetto constituencies into garrison communities’ (Clarke, 2006, p.421). Charles (2002) describes garrisons as ‘counter societies’ run by ‘community dons’ (area leaders), most heading up the gangs that both threaten and secure garrison residents (Charles, 2002; Hope, 2006b).

Agostinho M. N. Pinnock (2007 p.55) proposes that most marginalized dancehall youths confront and challenge poverty, racism, and violence through metaphorical symbolism, such as aggressive sexual posturing, rather than with real violence. Yet the brutal gunning down of premier dancer Gerald ‘Bogle’ Levy in 2005 and David ‘ICE’ Smith in 2008, alongside the murder conviction of prominent DJs Adidja ‘Vybz Kartel’ Palmer along with Shawn ‘Storm’ Campbell (The Gleaner, April 3, 2014)<sup>42</sup> and more recently Desmond ‘Ninjaman’ Ballentine (The Observer,

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<sup>40</sup> See: Gender and identity section 1.4.3 below and chapter 6 for details on male dancing.

<sup>41</sup> The term 'normative' is used in the sense that normality is not a fixed given, but the result of shared or agreed values, which are part of the social conditioning of a community or society.

<sup>42</sup> <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/latest/article.php?id=52072> Accessed 26.04.2014

December 18, 2017),<sup>43</sup> all fuel the perception that dancehall culture instigates real violence.

The lines between dancehall performance, performativity, and reality appear to blur at times. Fredrick Hickling declares that, '[b]y the early 2000s Jamaica had become the murder capital of the world' (2009 p.28). Some may argue that Anne Paul (2007) and Hope's (2010a) exploration of the advent of 'bling/dancehall funerals', where funeral directors, termed 'grief therapists' (Paul, 2007) assist the delivery of dancehall designer funerals indicates increasing mortality levels within dancehall.<sup>44</sup> Equally, it signals dancehall's full integration within the birth to death life-cycle celebrations, whilst simultaneously reflecting a rebuttal of Western religious orthodoxy.

Incorporating the prerequisite 'nine night', 'set up' (wake keeping) observances (Hope, 2010a p.255-257), bling/dancehall funerals demonstrate a subconscious incorporation of cultural and spiritual symbolism within dancehall culture. As highlighted at the beginning of this section, violence is part of the Jamaican continuum of 'strategies' (De Certeau, 1980) and 'resistance' (Burton, 1997), which has spiritual associations dating back to the Baptist wars, enslavement and colonialism (Campbell, 1987; Hutton, 2015), right through to continental African war dance practices (Kuwor, 2013), as chapter 2 explores.

### ***1.4.3 Gender and identity***

Scholars have approached female gender and sexuality predominantly through discourses of slackness and respectability, whereas debates around masculinity have been more complex. Masculinity has been linked to homophobia (Larcher, 2009), race, sex and sexuality (Skelton, 1995; Sharpe, 2003; White, 2003; Skjelbo, 2015), hetero-normativity and the conflation of homosexuality and paedophilia (Gutzmore, 2004), sartorial and transgressive style, class, and status (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Ellis,

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<sup>43</sup> [http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/Ninjaman\\_gets\\_life\\_25\\_years\\_before\\_parole](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/Ninjaman_gets_life_25_years_before_parole) Accessed 26.02.2019

<sup>44</sup> The funerals of Willie Haggart and Bogle are two high-profile examples of 'bling/dancehall funerals'.

2011; Hope, 2011; Philogene Heron, 2012), identity, sexual prowess, power, and cultural expression (Brown, 1999; Pinnock, 2007; Hope, 2010; Zips, 2011).

Donna P. Hope (2006a) touches upon many gender issues in her broad delineation of the socio-politico-economic context dancehall fits within. Hope discerningly foregrounds the hierarchical power, gender, and identity relationships dancehall participants negotiate in engaging with the dancehall space. She clearly outlines the categories and roles dancehall's main players occupy as: song creators (the DJ and song-jay artists); sound system selectors; sound system operators; promoters/producers; dynamic hype creators (models, dancers [Dancehall Queens] and slang creators); visual creators (videographers/filmmakers, photographers, illustrators and graphic designers). This corresponds with the observations of most scholarship (Stolzoff, 2000; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). However, she omits the Dancehall Queens, who most certainly fit within the 'dynamic hype creators', alongside the dancers.

Although Hope acknowledges dance as a 'theatrical stage' (2006a p.128) where dancehall participants 'indulge in frenetic, spiritual rituals of self-affirmation and renewal' (ibid), she maintains dancehall to be a secular space. This limits her recognition of dancehall's genealogical embodiment of spiritual symbolisms. Hope foregrounds the themes of 'identity, legitimacy and freedom' (2006a p.128). However, in contrast to Cooper's (1993; 2004) concept of fertility rituals, Hope argues that female bodies are dis/respected and commoditized within dancehall's dis/place,<sup>45</sup> whereas male bodies challenge hegemonic ideologies concerning politics, power and gender roles on one hand, whilst maintaining Jamaica's Western patriarchal masculinity on the other.

Amongst studies examining dancehall masculinity, Hope's *'Man Vibes'* (2010) remains the most comprehensive analysis, interrogating dancehall's complex and contradictory construction of masculine performativity (Butler, 1988; 2002) amongst lower and working-class African/Jamaican males. Approaching masculinity as

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<sup>45</sup> Hope coins the term dis/place in describing dancehall as 'this disrespectful place where we have been placed ... disrespected and mistreated ... denied our legitimate human rights ... [and] are forced to re-create and claim our resources, identities, personhood, and self-esteem by any means necessary' (2006a p.26). The dis/ therefore references how dancehall participants and the form are both viewed and treated.

heterocorporeal displays, Hope offers five variants: *promiscuous heterosexuality*; the *gun violence* or *badman/gangsta*; the *anti-male homosexuality* or *anti-battyman* (homophobic) masculinity; *conspicuous consumption* (feminized or materialistic 'bling bling' masculinity); and *fashion ova style* masculinity. Historically *promiscuous heterosexuality* and the *shotta/badman* have been the most common forms of masculinity within the dancehall space.<sup>46</sup> This is exemplified by the existence of 'Community dances', Christopher A. Charles describes as sound system dances 'held regularly by the dons and their crews who display the dancehall lifestyle' (2009 p.57), dating from Jamaica's rude boy era until the present (Bradley, 2000; Hebdige, 2007).

Hope explains the enigma of 'fashion ova style' as being the embodiment of 'spectacular dancing and a focus on bodily aesthetics and clothing styles by hardcore men' (2010 p.146). This resonates with Bakare-Yusuf's (2006 p.9) reworking of Pierre Bourdieu's 'distinction-making', the disruption and destabilizing of class distinctions, through Jonathan Friedman's employment of the Congolese sapeurs' adoption of haute couture fashion by poor disenfranchised males, 'undermin[ing] the commodity fetishism and prestige value with which exclusive European clothing was previously invested' (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006 p.10). Transferred to dancehall this signals a reconstruction of gender ideologies through the blurring of sartorial dress, gender roles and performativity in Jamaica, as chapters 6-8 further explore.

Significantly, Hope (2006b; 2010) attributes the development of *fashion ova style* in part to the late 'Master dancer' Bogle, as scholars such as Paul (2007) and Stanley-Niaah (2010) affirm. The term 'Master dancer' signals another of dancehall's many African continuities, as lead dancers and musicians are commonly conferred the title 'Master' in most African societies indicating their superior knowledge and skill (Kuwor, 2013 p.17, 90).<sup>47</sup> Bogle's emergence in the 1990s highlights the 'double conscious' (Du Bois, 1994) tensions, contradictions, and clashes within dancehall culture. Dance is constructed as a feminised aesthetic from a Western perspective (Burt, 2005; Jackson, 2006), whereas it represents hardcore masculinity within African/neo-African practices, especially masquerade and secret society dances, which are frequently spiritual (Kuwor, 2013; Hutton, 2015). Hence, Hope (2010)

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<sup>46</sup> Georgette McGlashen (2013) details the nuances within the badman persona and term.

<sup>47</sup> Kuwor (2013) provides a number of explanations of what the term 'master' dancer or musician may entail, which together provides a comprehensive overview. See also: (Primus, 1998).

rightly contends that Bogle's presence on the dance scene, emerging from within the Black Roses Crew (respected as both a hardcore garrison gang and male dance group), ensured Bogle's masculinity and that of his fellow dancers was unquestionable.

As most dancehall literature concurs, Bogle created the space in which dancehall's "man dem" could freely dance and gain smadditisation and stardom. However, some broader studies have foregrounded how social construction creates 'distinction[s] between hegemonic masculinity and other subordinated forms of masculinity' (Brown, 1999 pp.4-5). Noble (2000) suggests that corporeally, dancehall's male dancing bodies transgress homophobic discourses by foregrounding 'phallocentric heterosexuality as the only way to be a "True man"' (2000 p.163). Masculinity is therefore constructed in opposition to femininity, which excludes non-patriarchal masculinities and female eroticism (Martin-Kerr, 2016). Ellis (2011 p.8) raises questions to do with the transgressive, the transnational and 'the development of a queer hermeneutic for popular [dancehall] performance'. In so doing, she highlights dancehall's inadvertent provision of space for 'nonnormative sexual expression' (Ellis, 2011 p.19).

Progressing dancehall's transgressive aesthetic, Philogene Heron (2012) adopts a 'hermeneutic of play' (Manning in Philogene Heron, 2012) in researching the ambiguity and flamboyance of male dance within dancehall's heavily policed conceptions of masculinity. Like Bakare-Yusuf (2006), he suitably utilizes Jamaican masquerade practices as a lens for reading both masculinity and femininity as unfixed, fluid states of becoming. Fredrick Hickling (2009) contends that lower-class African/Jamaicans employ cultural expression to construct, nurture, and maintain aggrandized identities to attain stardom and celebrity. This reinforces notions of masculinity for lower-class males in particular, whilst offering the potential for their gaining of psychological, economic, and socio-political freedom.

Tangentially, Pinnock (2007) astutely argues that African male bodies are constructed against white racist ideologies within Jamaican society, where hegemonic masculinity is inaccessible to the disenfranchised majority. He identifies a strong correlation between economic disadvantage, violence, and masculinity, which is arguably underscored by the hegemonic male 'provider' (Hope, 2006a p.46), or main

income-earner model denied many marginalized young males. Hence, cultural expression offers an alternative to violence as a means of survival and the demonstration of masculinity.<sup>48</sup>

Despite Hope's (2010) focus on masculinity, power and identity, the spiritual potential encoded in dancehall's performance of male dance escapes her. Dancehall's male dance vocabulary maintains strong continuities with both Jamaican spiritual and ceremonial dance practices, alongside African secret society and masquerade movement patterns, which are also male dominated and frequently spiritual (Nthala, 2009). This has not until now been explored within dancehall. I suggest that through Bogle and the Black Roses Crew, dancehall masculinity represents an amalgamation of the *fashion ova style*, *promiscuous heterosexuality*, and *shotta/badman* masculinities. My references to masculinity will therefore focus around these three variants as they necessarily subsume Hope's (2010) remaining two masculinities.

Male prowess and masculinity is embodied in the dance expression called '*dagging*', involving dynamic male and female pelvic thrusts against each other. Pinnock argues that the black penis signifies 'as a tool of liberation' (2007 p.55), thus, metaphorically, he continues, 'the nation's rebirth is signified by aggressive sexual intercourse between men and women' (ibid). Conversely, Randolph Hyman's (2012) philosophical dance study describes '*dagging*' as 'misogynistic' (2012 p.3). He asserts, 'dagging—[is] a live representation of "madness" ... images of explicit sexual misconduct, violence, death and destruction' (ibid). Like many outsiders to dancehall, Hyman pathologises the performance of '*dagging*'.

Hyman adopts Kierkegaard's conceptualization of subjectivity, in which the objective self is believed to deflect attention from subjective truth, whilst the inward-focused subjective self, can reveal truth as a relationship with God.<sup>49</sup> Additionally adopting Nietzsche's Dionysus, encapsulating chaos and madness, ecstasy and fertility applied as a spirit, he projects the Dionysus spirit and therefore madness onto *dagging*. This potentially links with Revivalism's Pukkumina branch,<sup>50</sup> known also as pukkumerian (Beckwith, 1929), poko (Cassidy, 2007), 'pocomania' which Lewin

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<sup>48</sup> Many male dancers interviewed during this research have said that dance has rescued them from crime. See: male interviews appendix 1-9.

<sup>49</sup> The objective and subjective self, I equate to the soul or inner spirit. See: Hyman, (2012).

<sup>50</sup> See: Chapter 2, section 2.6.1 on Revivalism for further details on Pukkumina.



clarifies is ‘taken to mean “a little madness”. [sic] However, Cassidy says in *Jamaica Talk* that this supposed Spanish link “is by no means likely”’ (2000 p.189). Many dancers refer to the small hours of the morning as being when the “madness starts”, meaning when daggering is performed, the climax of the dancehall session.

Through participant observation Hyman seemingly shifts ideologically, recognising *daggering* to be ‘linked to a complex set of intentions and references to slavery’ (2012 p.51). Nevertheless, despite acknowledging the release of energy, oppression, sexual tension and history the spirit of daggering represents, Hyman cannot move beyond his perception of daggering as an objective, misogynistic, and violent masculinity. His inward searching subjectivity, ironically translates as oppositional to daggering, causing Hyman to miss the spiritually transformative, resistant subversion daggering also represents. As Jamaican African/neo-African corporeality is inscribed with the historical trauma and oppression of enslavement (Smith, 2011), dancehall masculinity may be perceived as representing a healing process. Thereby, I attempt to demonstrate the need for researchers to recognise and focus on dancehall masculinity, as a potential corporeal spiritual healing process.

#### ***1.4.4 Dancehall, geographical mapping of space and dance***

Stanley-Niaah’s (2010) perceptive investigation into dancehall as a geographical ritual ground foregrounds its extension and transformation of private, unorthodox, and alternative spaces. She argues that the identity and survival strategies of social beings are embodied within performance and performative action, described in space, but recorded by history. According to Tim Cresswell, within cultural geography space and place are both ‘real and imagined ... produced within social, cultural and, most importantly, geographical contexts’ (2006 p.56).<sup>51</sup> Stanley-Niaah also contends, ‘[e]veryday spaces, even uninhabited ones, are transformed into ritual spaces through events that are ultimately celebrations of life and death’ (2010 p.38). This is consistent with African/neo-African literature, which identifies dance as historically situating

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<sup>51</sup> Space and place are used in the sense that Cresswell applies it, but additionally time and the performance or performativity of social beings are the determining factor that situate and ascribe meaning. See: (Cresswell, 2006; Stanley-Niaah 2010).

place and space, linking them to life's celebratory activities (Opoku, 1970; Ajayi, 1998; Ryman, 2010),

Scholars recognize dancehall spaces as 'creating cultural counterworlds' (Erlmann, in Stolzoff, 2000)<sup>52</sup> or 'counter-cultural spaces' (Beckford, 2006), where participants occupy Homi Bhabha's (1994 p.1) 'in-between' or 'beyond' space, and are thus, 'living on the borderline of the "present"' (ibid). This is reflected in the spaces Stanley-Niaah maps as dancehall venues:

[C]ommunity-based venues (street venues, gully banks, Lodge Halls, rented playout venues and sound system bases) ... [alongside] commercial venues (clubs, schoolrooms and theatres).<sup>53</sup>

Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.76

However, Stanley-Niaah's (2004; 2008 and 2010) charting of reggae/dancehall venue spaces begins earlier in history, brokered through the prism of the Limbo dance as a ritual of survival and renewal during enslavement and the "exercising"<sup>54</sup> of Africans on slave-ship 'floating dungeon[s]' (Rediker, 2008 pp.155-156)<sup>55</sup>. She transfers this intersection between geography, history and performance to the dancehall space employing Victor Turner's (1969) notion of 'liminality', the transitional space through which individuals graduate from one level of being to another. The body's 'passage'<sup>56</sup> between the ground and the limbo pole signifies for Stanley-Niaah the 'triumph of life over death' (2010 p.36) through successful negotiation of the dancehall event.

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<sup>52</sup> Counterworlds are presumed here to be alternative ideological spaces.

<sup>53</sup> The venues where dancehall sessions were originally held were termed 'lawns', which founder of the Merritone Sound system Winston Blake states 'lawns, like Jubilee Tile Gardens and Chocomo Lawn, [were] big places that were either concrete slab or wire fence, and you'd have a dance in that area, either at the back or side of a building - a space where you could put up music' (Blake, in Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.54). Lodge halls were buildings owned by fraternities, registered friendly societies or mutual benefit societies, which had large enough spaces for dancehall sessions to be held in. Stanley-Niaah usefully categorizes the different venues. See: (Stanley-Niaah, 2010 pp.57, 77).

<sup>54</sup> Forced dance was used as part of the exercising of enslaved Africans. This is not considered dance within many African societies. Ivoirian dancer Alphonse Tiérou clarifies, 'the dancer must be free to dance or not and any dance performed under duress is not regarded as dance by Africans (1992, p.11).

<sup>55</sup> The journey across the Atlantic Ocean is termed 'the middle passage' being the transition from Africa to the New World for enslaved Africans (Burton, 1997; Opoku-Agyeman, Lovejoy and Trotman, 2008).

<sup>56</sup> 'Passage' here refers to the space below the pole, which the body must pass through, and notions of the 'middle passage' with all the history, emotions and resistance strategies it signifies as Stanley-Niaah (2008 pp.163-187; 2010) illustrates.

Yet, Limbo is not indigenous to Jamaica and does not feature in Cheryl Ryman's (1980) seminal mapping of African/neo-African dance practices across Jamaica. Stanley-Niaah's argument would have been greatly strengthened by the use of a Jamaican core form such as Jonkonnu,<sup>57</sup> which is part of dancehall's direct genealogy. Moreover, Jonkonnu steps re-emerge within many aspects of dancehall, from dance movements like '*World Dance*'<sup>58</sup> and others, to the call and response (antiphonal) and instructional approach to dance and song akin to Soca (Page, 2005), where 'the relevant body language must be learned' (Leu, 2000 p.49), alongside the masquerade styling of dancehall's sartorial fashion (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Walker, 2008; Torres, 2010; Philogene Heron, 2012).

Surprisingly, focusing on the birth to death celebrations dancehall facilitates, Stanley-Niaah does not pursue dancehall as 'a call to Spirit and the ancestors' (2010 p.90). Although referencing Malidoma Somé (1999) in delineating the dancehall space as a ritual ground, she chooses to locate ritual as, 'action wrapped in webs of significance' (Kertzer in Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.90). This conceptualizes dancehall rituals as historic set behavioural patterns, shared by a specific group or community. This corresponds with the notion of dance representing the 'cultural memory' of a people (Buckland, 2001; Meusburger, Heffernan and Wunder, 2011).

Nonetheless, Stanley-Niaah provides a comprehensive overview of dancehall and its historical extension into marginal and liminal geographical spaces that is consistent with others (Stolzoff, 2000; Beckford, 2006; Patten, 2016; Rhiney and Cruse, 2019). She usefully maps a chronology of the main dancehall movements, their names and year of emergence from 1986-2009, additionally documenting the names of dance artists themselves (Stanley-Niaah, 2010 pp.143-144).<sup>59</sup> Conceptually, performance geography offers an engagement of the body in space, which clearly provides scope for the extension of the dancehall environment, physically, ideologically and importantly for this research, spiritually. Adopting liminality and *communitas* (Turner, 1969), Stanley-Niaah's description of dancehall queen Stacey

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<sup>57</sup> As a Jamaican core form, a number of traditional practices such as Burru, Mento or Bruckins Party etc., are placed under the Jonkonnu core type, as Cheryl Ryman's (1980 pp.2-13) African/neo-African grid/mapping displays. See: Appendix 21 and 24.

<sup>58</sup> Dancehall dancer Tippa verbally demonstrates the kinesthetic connection between Jonkonnu's 'Police Man' dance and 'Worl a Dance'. See: Appendix 2.

<sup>59</sup> See: Appendix 22.

highlights spatial dynamics within embodied dance performances. She explains:

Hanging from the roof by both hands and both feet, she [DHQ Stacey] proceeded to show the crowd the 'body basics of dancehall,' confirming her position as a popular dancehall queen.

Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.113

Whilst Stanley-Niaah's description clearly illustrates the oppositional resistance of the dancer's physical and conceptual extension of the dancehall space by intruding into new territories normally left uncharted, including truck tops (lorry cabins), tree and rooftops, she gives little detail of the phenomenological, kinesthetic mechanics of the movement vocabulary. Yet, the resonances with African/neo-African spiritual practices are apparent. Stanley-Niaah misses the opportunity to explore dancehall's spiritual resonances with dancers in the 'myal'<sup>60</sup> (possession) state, who similarly invade unconventional spaces, as historically recorded (Ryman, 1984; Alleyne 1989; Austin-Broos, 1997; Lewin, 2000). The pushing of geographical and potentially spiritual boundaries by corporeal dancing bodies is demonstrated in Stacey's performance, reinterpreting sacred and secular cultural continuities within dancehall's African/neo-African genealogy.

Christopher A. Walker (2008) approaches dancehall as urban versions of African/neo-African rural dance expressions, in his explorative tracing of dancehall's dance vocabulary from enslavement. Walker recalls a rural 'nine night' ceremony as being, 'a fusion of Jonkonnu, dinki mini, kumina, gerreh, tambu, and other folk movements, all being done to dancehall music' (2008 p.52). This reinforces dancehall's cultural continuity as earlier shown. I agree with Walker's assessment that dancehall's 'evolutionary fusion of ska, rocksteady, and rhythm and blues, [could only have] came out of Kingston' (ibid). As Jamaica's capital, Kingston attracted citizens from island-wide who benefitted from the mixing of their diverse African/neo-African practices and exposure to 'farrin' (foreign) influences.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Myal is outlined in detail in: (*Introduction chapter*, section j).

<sup>61</sup> The term 'farrin' or 'foreign' indicates any overseas country, therefore somebody or something may be referenced as coming from or going to 'foreign', as in Baby Cham's (2006) hit single '*Ghetto Story*'

Walker's chapter, for perhaps the first time, provides detailed descriptions of dancehall dance vocabulary. An example being the '*Bogle*' dance described as:

... a body wave with alternating arms reaching upward and over, slicing the space. The arms react to the melodic wave in the body that is initiated by a forward thrust of the pelvis. The leading arm sometimes mirrors this thrust in a percussive reach into a suspended slice as the movement travels up the spine, creating body waves in the torso. The stance is parallel feet flat on the ground, wide apart, with a slight bend in the knees.

Walker 2008 p.53

The contrast between Stanley-Niaah's (2010) descriptions and Walker's rests in the former's focus on the space the body articulates and extends, whereas the latter focuses on the body in space, noting the action of the various limbs. Walker's study provides detailed accounts of dancehall dances and the artists/DJs responsible for their popularity. The charting of dancehall dances Walker compiles with Neila Ebanks,<sup>62</sup> coupled with Stanley-Niaah's (2010),<sup>63</sup> provides a good foundation for those researching the dancehall field. However, like Stanley-Niaah, Walker does not pursue the spiritual connections within dancehall in any depth.

Nonetheless, Walker demonstrates ethnomusicologist Doris Green's assertion that 'African dances all have purpose and meaning' (Green in Hyman, 2012 p.213), reinforcing dancehall's incorporation of both function, as a place to dance, socialise, and communicate corporeally, alongside its purpose, as a space where identity and community is constructed and negotiated. Thereby, this research seeks to demonstrate dancehall's 'call to Spirit and the ancestors' (Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.90) and the manifestation of ancestral knowledge as a route to experiencing the Divine.

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when he declares, 'But, Mickey go to foreign and go tun Al Capone' (But, Mickey went abroad and turned into a gangsta - Al Capone).

<sup>62</sup> Ebanks was a former judge on *TVJ's 'Dancin' Dynamites'* dance competition, started in 2006 an annual competition which has launched the careers of numerous dancers both nationally and internationally. See: <http://www.dancindynamites.com/>

<sup>63</sup> See: Appendices 22 and 23.

#### ***1. 4.5 Sound systems, the music and dance industry***

Channel One sound system operator Mikey Dread aptly sums up the dancehall experience, declaring, ‘you have to feel soundsystem to know what soundsystem is about’ (in Woods, 2018 p.3). Julian Henriques’ *Sonic bodies* (2011), is a detailed and technical analysis of dancehall ‘sounding’ and ‘vibration’, investigating how music affects the body, manipulating the body’s internal and external structure in transforming corporeality into an ‘echo chamber’. Henriques (2011) coins the term ‘sonic dominance’ to describe the musical penetration and invasion of the body by dancehall’s high wattage, heavy bass, ‘multi-media apparatus’ (2011 p.4), which simultaneously permeates most areas of Jamaican society, despite the fact ‘the elite found it offensive’ (Bakare Yusuf 2006 p.4). Dancehall’s bound/lessness is reinforced by visual ‘artifacts’ (Stolzoff, 2000), re-presented on ‘countless billboards and nearly every telephone pole and every wall of public buildings [that] are plastered with posters advertising dancehall events’ (Stolzoff, 2000 p.2).<sup>64</sup> Thereby, by marking Jamaica’s public spaces through sonic dominance and visual artifacts (including corporeal dancing and sartorially adorned performative bodies), the African/neo-African identity of Jamaica’s African decent majority members of society, is inscribed in no uncertain terms, on Jamaica’s land and soundscapes.

Despite Henriques’ (2011) title ‘*Sonic Bodies*’, the sonic interaction with the body it suggests is not fully realized. He leaves unexplored the transcendent reverberation of corporeal dancing bodies, thus missing the sonic and spatial possibilities that may have facilitated a connection between the material and spiritual worlds. Exploring sonic affectivity, Orlando Woods argues that each individual has a latent spiritual potential, which may be triggered ‘through the affective experience of the roots reggae soundsystem’ (2018 p.11), facilitating a meditative state. This opens up spiritual possibilities within dancehall, although Wood’s focus remains on the musical sensory experience of roots reggae. Although he incorporates movement through skanking, which he describes as enabling, ‘audiences being “lost in their own thoughts”’ (ibid), unfortunately, whilst Woods recognizes the spiritual potential of sound system culture, his exploration of sensory musical experience does not go beyond the Rastafarian inspired reggae genre. This research will go much further in

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<sup>64</sup> Maxine Walters, J. C. Gabel and Vivien Goldman (2016) provide vivid examples of the dancehall signs Stolzoff terms ‘visual artifacts’.

exploring the kinesthetic, sensory and semiotic spiritual symbolisms within dancehall dances and performativity.

Adopting a holistic approach, Dennis O. Howard's (2016) study positions dancehall within Jamaican contemporary popular music production. Whereas Henriques (2008; 2011) sites the body as the 'creative echo chamber', Howard (2016) identifies Kingston as the locational 'Creative Echo Chamber' and hub from which the impact of Jamaica's music industry, its artists, technicians and innovations, emerge, profiling Jamaica highly within the global music market. As a scholar and Grammy-nominated producer Howard's suggestion that Jamaica has entered into a post-dancehall phase offers a rich area for research and debate that has serious implications for the present direction of Jamaican popular music, as discussed in chapter 5. It also raises questions of authenticity and ownership in addressing whether change within dancehall dancing is emerging from within or outside of the genre, indicative of attempted influences on dancehall's lyrical themes (Cooper, 1994). Sadly, dance is noticeably absent from Howard's study, perhaps due to his focus on dancehall musical production and its impact as a social and political economy on Jamaica society. The simple fact remains that the growing area of 'dancehall dance tourism' (Sterling, 2010; Braun, 2011),<sup>65</sup> reflecting its emotional and spiritual impact on individuals has been neglected and under researched, therefore dancehall's full social, political, and economic power remains unknown, unrecorded and unrecognised.

#### ***1.4.6 Dancehall, theology, religious studies and dance***

Despite the advancement of dancehall scholarship, no one is explicitly addressing dance, spirituality and the body, in short, the corporeal dancing body. The coupling of Jamaican dancehall and spirituality is a fairly recent and controversial concept in theology and religious studies. Scholars such as Dianne M. Stewart (2005) and Robert Beckford (2006) rightly argue that European missionaries instituted the

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<sup>65</sup> Dancehall tourism extends Jamaica's general tourism, which is focused around the north coast featuring all-inclusive and independent resorts and resource based facilities. However, it must be distinguished from the informal sex tourism supplied by male and female sex workers, Lauren C. Johnson (2012) identifies as linking into dancehall venues in the north coast tourist areas.

mediation of spirituality through institutional religion in the Caribbean as an attempt to separate spirituality from cultural expression. The discordant relationship between theology and culture results from this distinct separation between spirituality and religion, as ‘the most readily recognizable manifestation [of religion] is institutional religion’ (Forbes, and Mahan, 2000), many of which demand a clear distinction from worldly pursuits. However, Barry Chevannes insightfully highlights that African/neo-African spiritual practices in Jamaica, ‘did not necessitate the organization of religious doctrine into a single sect or church, with a single orthodoxy’ (1994 p.119), therefore the syncretization process between African and Christian spiritual practices and symbolisms began.

Beckford’s (1998 and 2006) studies are perhaps the first serious juxtaposing explorations of ‘church hall’ and dancehall. Perceived as polemic by most, Beckford’s informed adoption of ‘Black liberation theology’ (Cone, 1997; Pinn, 2003 and 2003b) challenges African/Caribbean Christianity by appropriating reggae/dancehall’s cultural production and resources. He uses dancehall to not merely enhance the Gospel, but to ‘*dub Jesus*’, meaning, adopting and reworking reggae/dub’s ‘hermeneutical act involving deconstructive/reconstructive activity’ (2006 p.2) in the religious context. This repackaging and remixing approach, which Hebdige (2007) terms ‘*Cut “N” Mix*’, towards sharing and delivering the Gospel message focuses on the dialogical reconnection of theology and culture. Despite courageously bringing together church hall and dancehall creatively through music, Beckford does not extend this exploration to other forms of cultural expression such as dance. Perhaps as a ‘child of God’ (a Christian), dance is witnessed but not consciously processed as spiritual corporeal continuities between the church hall and dancehall space, which is the originality this thesis seeks to contribute.

Joseph Pereira’s (1998) exploration of formal religion as Babylonian oppression through anti-Papal themes set against the African self-identity of Rastafari, and African heritage expressions, is juxtaposed within Christian themes, which tie the spiritual to the religious. However, it does not investigate dancehall’s connection to Jamaican African/neo-African or other alternative approaches to spirituality other than Rastafari and Christianity.



Conversely, Lena Delgado de Torres (2010; 2010a; 2015) explores dancehall spirituality through the Jamaican Queen traditions and cleansing ritual; as changing masculinities, dress, dance and spiritual cleansing; and juxtaposing Jonkonnu and Egungun masquerade practices. She uses visual media to make interesting observations relating to transgressive portrayals of gender. Whilst Torres seeks to highlight dance and dancehall's spiritual potential, she approaches it through the lyrical continuities within dancehall songs and their music video concepts, where there was scope to focus on primary analysis of the corporeal dancing bodies themselves. She does not provide many detailed descriptions or analysis of the dances themselves. Her focus on male dancers as projecting a feminized aesthetic, whilst using the 'Oya-inspired Egúngún masquerade' (Torres, 2015 p.24) to assert female empowerment, to some extent overshadows her spiritual connections.

This research involves a level of auto/ethnography, which Tami Spry scribes, 'makes us acutely conscious of how we "I-witness" our own reality constructions. Interpreting culture through the self-reflections and cultural refractions of identity' (2001 p.706). Thus, my contribution to dancehall's current scholarship is the foregrounding of the corporeal dancing body and its reading as potentially providing a window into alternative ways through which dancehall's marginalised practitioners live their lives, gain identity, and most importantly re-engage and manifest their spiritual embodiment through cultural expression. Most scholars because of their concentration on the lyrical content do not enable the spiritual aspect to surface. Many scholars implicitly hint at the spiritual, but do not explicitly address spirituality in relation to dancehall within their texts. My experiences as a Jamaican, having grown up in the Black church, whilst simultaneously growing up through and participating in each phase of reggae/dancehall culture, as both a social and professional dancer, choreographer and storyteller, puts me in a perfect position to explicitly discuss spirituality and dancehall as a researcher.

Going to dancehall sessions on Saturday nights, returning home just in time to bathe, change and attend church on Sunday, I have observed numerous points of, convergence and divergence between the dancehall and church hall space. As an insider/outsider within Jamaican African/neo-African practices such as Kumina, Revivalism and Dinkie Mini, with post-holding family members, my level of dance

expertise opens many doors within both African/neo-African practices and the dancehall space. None of the full-length texts on dancehall to date have explored dancehall through dance and the corporeal dancing body. Attending church on Sunday, Revival sessions and Kumina duties intermittently, alongside dancehall sessions, and moving with dancehall practitioners, I see the same, and/or similar movement vocabulary reoccurring across all these spaces in people ‘catching the spirit’ (spirit possession/trance),<sup>66</sup> moving, gyrating, sharing and communicating, but presented and performed, sometimes by the same persons in the dancehall space. Most authors who have written on dancehall are academics writing on the genre, but I am a practitioner, which gives me a certain expertise and access they do not have. I have danced in all the spaces I have mentioned, so this danced vocabulary is what this research aims to address, convey and analyse in order to determine whether a dancehall spirituality exists.

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<sup>66</sup> The myal possession state is detailed in: (*Introduction chapter*, section j).

## **Chapter 2. Old time story: *The convergence of African, neo-African and popular dance in Jamaica***

### ***2.1 Dancehall resistance and rebellion***

As established in the previous chapter Jamaican reggae/dancehall is perceived as a resistant and rebellious form due to its use of slackness and violence in the imagery it manifests in the lyrics of the dancehall DJ and the performance and performative (behavioural) actions of its' participants. The female body is often characterized as 'erotic posing and gymnastic and erotic dancing to claim the status of Queens in the dancehall' (Hope, 2010:136). The male and female 'coupling'<sup>67</sup> dance called 'dagging' is commonly referred to as, "'dry" sex, or the activities of persons engaged in the public simulation of various sexual acts and positions' (Watson, 2011 p.255) as defined by the Jamaica Broadcasting Commission. The female form, together with the male/female engagement is targeted as exemplifiers of dancehall's slackness trope (symbolism) (Cooper, 1993; Chude-Sokei, 1994; Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Hippolyte, 2006 ; Hyman, 2012). The aggressive gun lyrics and styling of dancehall males, alongside the angular, fast-paced, competitive dancing of the male crews/squads/groups furnish dancehall's violence trope (Stolzoff, 2000; Hope, 2010; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Hyman, 2012). Dancehall is therefore regarded as the antithesis of reggae music and its strong association with the spiritual philosophy of Rastafari (Chevannes, 1994). Contesting and moving beyond the slackness and violence trope, I argue that dancehall embodies Jamaican spiritual coding.

This chapter will establish dancehall's embodied Jamaican spiritual coding by contextualizing it within its 'genealogical' antecedents. Genealogy here, means the 'explor[ation of] influences and historical relationships' (Beckford, 2000), that is, the historical 'company' dancehall keeps.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, I extend genealogy to incorporate dancehall's re-connection with 'ancestral data' (Stines, 2009), the ancestral knowledge, I argue, un/consciously underpins ascribed meanings within the Jamaican

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<sup>67</sup> Coupling refers to the male and female close partnering, involving contact of the pelvic region, whether slow/fast, sensual/acrobatic, gentle/dynamic.

<sup>68</sup> 'Show me yu (your) company and I (I'll) tell you who you are' is a common Jamaican proverb.

context. This is important, as the connection to ancestral knowledge demonstrates dancehall's complex origins, demanding a deeper analysis than previously afforded dancehall. This must include its reading as a spiritual transformative survival mechanism. Most outsiders to Jamaican dancehall have mistaken its purpose. Jamaican dancehall has multiple functions in facilitating the birth to death, life-cycle celebrations within the African/neo-African Jamaican practices it embodies (Cooper, 1993; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Hence, it contains symbolic, genealogical, ancestral knowledge and encoded 'cultural knowledge' (Sklar, 1991 p.6), enabling cultural continuity.

## ***2.2 Chapter outline***

Providing a genealogy of dancehall as a ritual space through the transformations occurring within the dancing body, this chapter outlines dancehall's African antecedents. It first foregrounds the African and Jamaican dance classificatory systems and their intersection; it then outlines dancehall's African and neo-African antecedents in Jamaica; the transference of African worldviews and practices are then explored; a brief overview of dancehall's manifestation of African/neo-African practices within Jamaican popular forms follows; and finally a brief dialogue concerning the worldviews and cosmologies that shape the performance and performative (behavioural actions) within contemporary Jamaican dancehall culture concludes.

## ***2.3 Dance within the dancehall space***

*Although the dancehall space goes through a number of transitions during the course of each session/party, it is within the lead up to and the course of the coupling section that a real sense of ritual and transformation occurs. The energy within the space rises and a more urgent and dynamic 'vibe' (feeling/atmosphere) takes over as the man dem (the male) and female dancers contest for the dancehall floor. As the man dem battle each other, individually or in crews or squads, they perform intricate footsteps and arm patterns, in movements such as 'clouds,' 'nuh linga' and 'gully creep.' The male squads and crews perform increasingly complex choreographed routines in the 'clash' (competition/challenge) to out-dance each other.*



Fig.1 Cutie Expresionz – Uptown Mondays, Kingston, Jamaica 2013. Source: ‘H’ Patten

*The male aggression, camaraderie and tensions are contrasted, complimented and/or equalled by the females, who mesmerise the crowd with the wining (rotating) action of their pelvis, with splits, gambols, ‘head-top’ (wining head-stands) and rolling splits. Their ritualistic quest to regain agency in displaying control of their own bodies may read corporeally as part of the liberation struggle against centuries of enslavement, colonisation, governmental patriarchy and oppression (Wright, 2004; Cooper, 2004; Brown-Glaude, 2007). As the females lock pelvis with the man-dem, the energy of the two combine and interweave with circling pelvic body rolls and wining actions, creating sensual flows. Simultaneously, pelvises clash, connecting, bouncing, ‘bump and grinding/pounding’ in the ‘dagging’ action of the male against the female pelvic region, both front and back. At this point, the boundaries between artist, performer and audience blur and the dancehall becomes transformative, transcendent, ecstatic, horrific and a sublime space all at once.*

*Within all this activity most experience enjoyment, some dis/placement*<sup>69</sup> (Hope, 2006a) or even loneliness, whilst a few, perhaps more than realise, experience the divine.

Patten, field-notes 2010

## **2.4 Dancehall's African antecedents**

Whilst slackness and violence are an undeniable aspect within dancehall, what has been neglected to date are the symbolisms within dancehall's 'corporeal dancing body'. As outlined in the introduction, the dancehall 'corporeal dancing body' reunites the physical body with reason and emotion, whilst intentionally signifying an embodied history, through the fleshly physicality of the black African dancing body. Contextualizing dancehall's hidden meanings and symbolisms in relation to its African antecedents, where 'all [dances] have purpose and meaning' (Green in Hyman, 2012 p.213), the main purpose and function of dance within most ancient Africa societies/kingdoms, is to facilitate 'ultimate concern' (Tillich, 1952).<sup>70</sup> That is to say, dance facilitates divine communication (Tillich, 1952; Ajayi, 1998).

The unification of the spirit and mortal worlds has been of ultimate concern within most African societies, prior to the arrival of Christianity and Islam. Alphonse Tiérou (1992) notes the recording of African and Western contact as early as 1470 through the receipting of African statuettes purchased by Charles the Bold. However, according to Tiérou, the West does not fully comprehend African artistic expression as being 'magical, political, therapeutic and religious' (1992, p.7) until the 1686 accounts by geographer Olfert Dapper on African ritual practices. However, in Africa, dance and the body have historically been the main conduits through which good communication channels are established between humans and the 'Supreme Being' (God, Jah, Jehovah, or Allah etc.). I shall return to the spiritual function of dance after first exploring the position of dance in African societies.

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<sup>69</sup> Donna P. Hope coins the term dis/place, meaning disrespectful, disrespected and mistreated place or individuals 'denied our legitimate human rights ... forced to re-create and claim our resources, identities, personhood, and self-esteem by any means necessary' (Hope, 2006a, p.26).

<sup>70</sup> Ultimate concern is the organising principle at the center of the life of most individuals, as interpreted by Kelton Cobb (2005).

Dance is a central aspect of life in Africa, which as a symbolic medium carries particularities that link it to a specific people who comprehend and respond to its cultural codes and symbolisms (Turner, 1969; Nii-Yartey, 2013). According to Albert Mawere Opoku, ‘a study of the African Dance is a study of its (sic) peoples’ (1970, p.6), which echoes most dance scholars who agree, dance provides a ‘portrait of a people’ (Sklar, 1991, p.6). This is dependent on the embodied performance of ‘cultural memory’, the inherited symbolic gestures of multiple generations (Buckland, 2001; Hua, 2005). Cultural memory also resonates with the Africancentric notion of ‘ancestral data’ (Stines, 2009), as the following example demonstrates.

Dance is central to African religious practices as the main conduit facilitating communication between individuals, the community and the Supreme Being or God. In Ghana, the Ashanti people comprehend that ‘solemn dances like the *Akom* and *Apae* religious dances provide opportunities for public worship and collective prayers’ (2013, p.413), as Nii-Yartey rightly observes. The symbolism of/or within the dances he continues, ‘serve[s] to assure believers of the divine presence at the festival’ (ibid). The successful public performance of religious dances such as these is not judged solely upon the aesthetic achievement of the dancer, but is contingent on the dancer’s transformation and transcendence. Transcendence is signalled by the dancer becoming possessed, enabling the manifestation of the deities<sup>71</sup> summoned. Thereby, danced messages are conveyed, read and comprehended between the Ashanti, the ancestors and the Supreme Being.

Similarly to the Ashanti dances, I have witnessed dancehall functioning as a form of public and collective worship, causing individuals to transcend to higher levels of consciousness and perform encoded gestures that are comprehended by its participants. Dancehall Queen Stacey performs the female ‘head top’ dance, *balancing upside-down in a handstand ‘wining’ – circling/rotating the pelvis, simultaneously rocking it back and forth, to produce a tumbling/‘bubbling’<sup>72</sup> quality – whilst articulating the feet in a kicking action*. Stacey often performs the ‘head top’ ten feet up in the air, precariously balancing on top of speaker boxes and on lorry (truck) cabins as Stanley-Niaah (2010)

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<sup>71</sup> The term deity or deities is used in reference to the spirits/ancestors, also termed Loa in Haiti (Deren, 1991), or Lwas, which Daniel (2005) expands, in relation to the Orichas (Cuba) and Orixás (Brazil) divinities.

<sup>72</sup> For a more detailed description of wining and bubbling see: (*Introductory chapter*, section g).

also confirms. Attending ‘Uptown Mondays’ in April 2012, a female challenger, Dancehall Queen Sher Rumbur, suddenly inverted herself on the upstairs balcony and staircase railings in performance of the ‘head top’ to the adulation of those observing. In stark contrast, is the ridicule I have also witnessed ‘elder’<sup>73</sup> females and uninspired dancers receive from shaky attempts of the ‘head top’ with the stability of being on the ground. The spontaneity, energy and skill displayed in the effortless performance of the ‘head top’ dance by dancers who are clearly inspired, signals a level of transcendence. Beth-Sarah Wright (2004) suitably sums up the focused/determined performance of dance within the dancehall space, as projecting ‘as if there were something old and otherworldly present. This transcendental quality was even in the expressions of those surrounding ... [indicating s]omething reverent was taking place’ (2004, p.45). This is confirmed by Wright’s reference to onlookers being ‘occasionally bounced’ (ibid), or knocked, but respectfully making way for the dancers to continue. This demonstrates a level of comprehension and engagement of dancehall’s codes by its community. Having established dancehall’s functionality in relation to dance within Africa, I now turn to their classification.

#### ***2.4.1 African classifications***

African dances are generally classified under three broad headings: 1) religious or spiritual dances; 2) ceremonial dances; and 3) recreational/social dances (Opoku, 1970). Although originally created for a particular purpose, a dance may change role over time, particularly ancient dances. Where their original context may no longer be relevant but their popularity remains important to their people, e.g. war dances during peacetime, a new relevance may be attached to the dance. This may position it under an alternative category, but nevertheless it retains its original classification (Opoku, 1970; Nii-Yartey, 2013). Additionally, like most traditional dances, particularly those accompanied by live music/drumming, a level of transformation can occur. This may range from full transformation and transcendence into the possessed state, through to feelings of ‘communitas’ (Turner, 1969),<sup>74</sup> where a heightened, intense sense of

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<sup>73</sup> Elder, is usually a term of respect given to senior citizens, but may also be used descriptively as in most Western contexts. In this instance it combines both uses.

<sup>74</sup> See: discussion of Victor Turner’s (1969 pp.96-7) communitas in chapter 2.



belonging and community is engendered (Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Participants within this low level transformation rarely progress to full transformation or transcendence.

*Religious or spiritual dances:* Akom, Kpele/Otoo, Tigari, Sohu (Ghana); Bata, Bori (Nigeria); and Vimbuza (Malawi) – all enable strong levels of transformation and transcendence, manifesting in full possession, also termed Myal in Jamaica.<sup>75</sup> As outlined above, the main purpose of religious and spiritual dances is to achieve possession, facilitating communication with the Supreme Being via the ancestral spirits and thus unify the spirit and mortal worlds (Ajayi in Welsh Asante, 1998).

*Ceremonial dances:* Agbekor, Kete, Fontomfrom (Ghana); masquerade forms including Egungun (Nigeria); Gulewamkulu (Malawi); Bundu/Sande society (Sierra Leone); and Kumpo (Gambia and Cassamance) – all serve specific functions. For example, Agbekor is commonly known as a war dance, its main function is to help individuals prepare for war and later re-integrate them into society. Now performed socially, it also serves as an important deterrent against future wars as a documented reminder of the horrors of war within the Ewe community. Thus its role is encoded with specific gestural symbolism, which is recognised and responded to by Ewe communities. A level of transformation can occur, but rarely goes beyond feelings of ‘communitas’ within ceremonial dances.

*Social dances:* Kpanlogo, Kpatsa, Nagla (Ghana); Dowee and Maldo (Nigeria); and Kazakuta (Malawi) – all aid social interaction, communication and unification of the members of their society. Their transformative abilities are comparatively weak in relation to the spiritual and ceremonial dances. Nonetheless many of these dances may still stimulate the ‘communitas’ state of consciousness.

Dancehall as a music and dance genre has been referenced as a secular ritual (Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Walker, 2008) and functions as a space within which individuals symbolically negotiate identity and personhood to gain ‘smaddification’ (Mills, 1997; Nettleford in Scott, 2006).<sup>76</sup> Within the African classification system I would therefore place dancehall under the ceremonial category, although many may position it within the social category for obvious reasons (Walker, 2008). However, dance in the

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<sup>75</sup> Myal is detailed in: (*Introduction chapter*, section j).

<sup>76</sup> Smaddification as personhood is detailed in: (*Introduction chapter*, section i).

dancehall space, triggers higher states of consciousness in ‘the sheer pleasure of the dance itself’ (Stanley-Niaah, 2010, p.130), fostering intense feelings of *communitas*, which unifies its diverse participants. Dancehall also fulfills multiple functions in relation to the life-cycle celebrations from christenings to birthdays, weddings to funerals, send-offs (farewell for travellers), welcoming and memorialising functions, etc. (Hope, 2006a; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). As delineated above, dancehall has codes, gestures and practices transmitting messages that are specific to dancehall participants, but are often inaccessible to outsiders (Uzokwu, 1997). For example, a signature dancehall movement is ‘wining,’<sup>77</sup> as explained in relation to the ‘head top’ dance – *circling the pelvis, whilst rocking it back and forth, to produce a tumbling/bubbling quality*. Wining is incorporated into diverse movement patterns, but generally performed by females, or couples in close proximity, the obvious sexual nature of the movement often signals as slackness to many. Yet, those comprehending the African/neo-African antecedents of wining, recognise the subversive ‘affirm[ing of] human power over death by the ability to generate life’ (Ryman, 2010, p.105). Dancehall’s multiple, but specific functions, clearly establishes it as a ceremonial form.

Arguing that dancehall fulfills a ceremonial function, within the Jamaican context raises a number of important issues: What is the ultimate concern for dancehall participants? How is it approached/achieved? What part does dance play? Who is allowed to participate? Who are the gatekeepers? What are the symbolisms involved? What are the ritual paraphernalia? Where does it take place? How did these ritual elements cross from Africa to Caribbean? These questions will be addressed through the course of this thesis to assist in making a comparative analysis with Jamaican ritual dance practices such as Myal, Jonkonnu, Kumina, and Revivalism, in determining whether there is a spiritual aspect within Jamaican dancehall.

## ***2.5 Caribbean classifications***

Scholars have raised questions as to the cultural development of enslaved Africans as addressed relating to Richard E. Burton’s (1997) questioning of how

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<sup>77</sup> Wining, also ‘whining’ or ‘winding’ is described and contextualized earlier. See: (*Introduction chapter*, section g). Also see: (Stanley-Niaah, 2010, p.145).

African/neo-African culture developed in the Caribbean. In line with dance in Africa, Jamaican dances fall under three broad categories: 1) European influence; 2) Neo-African, commonly termed Indigenous/Creolised forms; and 3) African retentions (Carty, 1988). Confirming all three of Burton's scenarios to have taken place concurrently this also reflects a shift in focus within Caribbean dance from function to origins, as dance partly serves as acts of memorialism.<sup>78</sup> Conversely, Cheryl Ryman's (1980) extensive mapping of Jamaican dance practices maintains a focus on function, dividing dance practices in terms of religious and secular forms. Under religious dances, Ryman identifies five core forms: Myal, Kumina, Revival, Rastafari and Maroon, whilst the Asian Hosay and Jonkonnu masquerade are placed under secular dance.<sup>79</sup> In arguing dancehall's spiritual antecedents and coding, this thesis focuses on Kumina, Revivalism and Jonkonnu masquerade, drawing parallels, between religious and popular culture. I therefore argue against the secular classification of Jonkonnu by key scholars (Patterson, 1969; Barnett, 1979; Ryman, 1980). From an African perspective, for many nations such as the 'Yorubá, nature consists of spiritual and physical phenomena. And (sic) reality, in that worldview, is not partitioned' (Oke, 2007). Masquerade dancers are perceived as having transformed into spiritual beings on entering/wearing the mask/costume (Nthala, 2009). Hence in most African societies masquerade dances are automatically classified as spiritual practices (Boucher, 2012).

### ***2.5.1 Jonkonnu Masquerade***

I wish to demonstrate that as in African masquerade practices, Jonkonnu, also 'known as Jankunu (John Canoe, Jonkonnu, Junkanoo, John Kuner)' (Bilby, 2010 p.180) remains a transformative practice and should be reassigned to the religious classification. Many scholars contend that Jonkonnu is Jamaica's oldest dance tradition, citing Hans Sloane's reference to enslaved Africans who 'very often tie Cows Tails to their Rumps, and add such other odd things to their Bodies in several places, as gives them a very extraordinary appearance' (1707, p.xlix).

Although recognisable in Sloane's description the masquerade is not called by

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<sup>78</sup> Memorialism is used here as an act of memory and commemoration in order not to lose ancestral knowledge (cultural memory) embodied in the traditional ritual practices of motherland Africa.

<sup>79</sup> See: Ryman's mapping and chart, appendices 21 and 24.

name until British explorer Edward Long's (1774b) account depicting 'several tall robust fellows dressed up in grotesque habits, and a pair of ox-horns on their head ... danc[ing] at every door, bellowing out *John Connú!*' (1774b, p.424). Jonkonnu characters include 'Horsehead' and 'Cowhead', as Long describes, which can incorporate 'Pitchy Patchy', alternatively called 'Shaggy'/'Paul Pry' (pride), which Sheila Barnett (1979) argues is the original Jonkonnu character, alongside 'Mada Lundy', 'Belly Woman' and 'Satan'/'Devil'. Some characters have been preserved albeit with a Eurocentric stylisation in Isaac Mendes Belisario's prints, including 'Koo Koo' or 'Actor Boy', 'House Jonkonnu' also termed 'Jaw-Bone'/'Houseboat', 'Jack-in-Green' and the 'Set Girls' (Ryman, 1984; Walker, 2008; Smalligan, 2011).



*Fig.2 'Satan' or 'Devil' Jonkonnu dancer and band. Source: The Jamaica Gleaner*

Perceived by most as a secular form, Jonkonnu has links to a number of religious and transformative practices, although it is historically reported as a festive processional dance. Jonkonnu is performed during Christmas, originating from the three rest days enslaved Africans annually received (Barnett, 1979; Brathwaite, 1981; Ryman, 1984). Cited by theologian Dianne M. Stewart (2005), Jonkonnu rituals have been recorded as

incorporating the ‘Myal’ dance by Martha Beckwith (1928) and Kenneth Bilby (2007). Jonkonnu’s functioning as a spiritual practice is further reinforced in Beckwith’s (1928) and Bilby’s (2007) exposure of Jonkonnu’s inclusion of Gumbay drumming in the St. Elizabeth, Manchester, St. Mary and Portland parishes of Jamaica. Bilby, further evidences Jonkonnu’s incorporation of spiritual practices in Rhoden Town and Brown Town (St. Elizabeth), where he reveals:

‘The Jankunu <sup>80</sup> (Jonkonnu) builder ... responsibility for the construction of the headdress – is always a myal-man ... mean[ing] “spirit medium” ... referred to as the massa, or “master,” of the Jankunu’.

2007, p.16

The fact of Jonkonnu’s mask builder also practising as a myalist and according to Bilby (2007), performing ritual dances with the mask amongst the ancestral tombstones before its public outing, establishes Jonkonnu’s genealogical spiritual links. Caribbean scholar Edward Kamau Brathwaite describes Jonkonnu characters as ‘publicly permitted survival ikons of African religious culture’ (1990 pp.90-91), further supporting its spiritual link. Having demonstrated Jonkonnu’s comparable functioning with that of its African masquerade antecedents, within this thesis it is re-classified under the religious rather than secular category. Thus, Jonkonnu joins Kumina and Revivalism as part of dancehall’s spiritual antecedents and coding; however, Kumina and Jonkonnu are essentially African forms, whilst Revivalism is neo-African (Seaga, 1982; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005). I now shift attention to dancehall’s African/neo-African antecedents in Jamaica.

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<sup>80</sup> Kenneth Bilby (2007) adopts Jankunu spelling outlining the many permutations stating, ‘historical sources include John Connú, John Canoe, Johnny Canoe, Joncanoe, Jonkanoo, Jancunoo, Jankoono, John Kuner, and John Kooner, and in modern writings, Jonkonnu and Junkanoo. According to the Jamaican lexicographer Frederic Cassidy, the most common spellings of the term represent “educated” renderings that do not accurately reflect its actual pronunciation by practitioners; he states that ‘Jankunu’ is a truer rendering of its “folk” pronunciation, at least in Jamaica’ (2007, p.20). I choose to maintain the common Jamaican spelling of Jonkonnu.

## ***2.6 Dancehall's African/neo-African antecedents in Jamaica***

Jamaica's African/neo-African worldviews and aesthetics are embodied in dancehall's genealogy, and as I argue, are reflected in its socio-political and aesthetic expression. Dancehall's genealogical antecedents include: Myal, Jonkonnu, Kumina, Revivalism (Zion and Pocomania/Pukkumina), Dinkie Minie, Gerreh, Tambo, Bruckins Party, Rastafari/Nyabinghi, Mento and others (White, 1984; 1998; Cooper, 1993; Walker, 2008; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Ryman, 2012). Evidenced in its extensive movement vocabulary, these traditional practices play an essential part 'in the chain of re-membering and [the] linking [of] African traditions from the past to the struggle for liberation' (Stewart 2005 p. xvii). Kumina, Revivalism and Jonkonnu masquerade are the three major African/neo-African influences on dancehall this thesis is concerned with. Dancehall enables unification, renewal and transcendence to occur in its representation and re-creation of African/neo-African expressive culture, as a symbolic making 'whole', reflected in the collision of history, time and space, liberated by the convergence of Jamaican religious and popular culture through dance.

Jonkonnu, Revivalism and Kumina all share resonances, converging both with each other and contemporary Jamaican popular culture. Personal possession is an important aspect of all three practices and dance is their main medium for spiritual communication. Jonkonnu, Revivalism and Kumina all subsume the preceding Myal tradition within their practices. In order to better comprehend the importance of the myal state and later draw parallels with Jamaican popular music and dance, it is important for me to further delineate the Jamaican spiritual/religious cosmology.

### ***2.6.1 Revivalism***

Edward Seaga (1982) outlines the spirit world from the perspective of the Revival movement, which has many resonances with the Kumina worldview. Revivalism is a neo-African religious practice that emerged out of the Native Baptist religion<sup>81</sup> and the Great Revival of 1860 and 1861 (Seaga, 1982; Lewin 2000;

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<sup>81</sup> The Native Baptist religion emerged out of the missionary work of African-American evangelist George Liele, who worked in Jamaica in the late eighteenth century just prior to the Great Revival. See: (Stewart, 2005).

Stewart, 2005). Revivalism has two strands, Pukkumina also termed Pocomania the more African, and Zion the more Christian influenced practice.



*Fig.3 Revival Mother – August Town, Bog Walk. Source: ‘H’ Patten*

Within the Revival worldview is the dual mortal world and the spirit world, where spirits exist across three dimensions, that of the:

- ‘Supreme being’ and the ‘Heavenly host’ (including the archangels, angels and saints)
- Earthbound spirits (including fallen angels, prophets and the apostles)
- Ground spirits (including human dead or recent ancestors)

As already established, the corporeal body facilitates the link between the

spiritual realms through the myal state within ritual performances. ‘Spirit’ manifestation within the corporeal body is facilitated by proximity to the mortal realm. The spirits occupying the heavenly host are furthest away and most difficult to access, whereas the ground spirits, being closer are more accessible and less discerning regarding ethical issues in their response to human requests (Seaga, 1982). Ground/ancestral spirits are not considered evil, but more empathetic to the human condition, having once lived on earth (Lewin, 2000). Thereby, the duality of the spirit and mortal worlds facilitate Revival member’s ‘receiving messages’ (Seaga, 1982, p.8), communicating with and gaining guidance and direction from the spirits during the myal state, via the corporeal dancing body (Barrett, 1976; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005).

### **2.6.2 Kumina**

In line with Revivalism, Kumina cosmology consists of the spirit and the mortal worlds and the belief that, ‘[t]he world that we see is but a reflection of that [spirit] world ... The life-force flows freely from the supreme God, "King Zambi", through every person, animal, plant and element’ (Lewin, 2000, p.224).<sup>82</sup> Thus there is no separation between the two realms, but a constant interaction between them. Leonard Barrett (1976) argues that Kumina has Ashanti origins, derived from the Twi words ‘Akom’ meaning to be possessed and ‘ana’ by an ancestor. However, citing Charles Leslie and H. O. Patterson, Olive Lewin (2000) references Dahomean links. Despite these multiple connections Kumina has been established as a post-slavery KiKongo religious dance tradition from the Kimbundu-speaking peoples of Central Africa through the works of a number of academic researchers (Warner-Lewis, 1977; Schuler, 1980; Bilby and Fu-Kiau, 1983; Ryman, 1984; Lewin 2000). Cheryl Ryman (1984), states:

Perhaps the two most convincing areas of proof for Kumina’s Kongo source lie in the historically established preponderance of Central

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<sup>82</sup> Monica Schuler (1980) details the Kumina spiritual realm as consisting of the ‘sky-bound’, ‘earth-bound’, and ‘deceased ancestors – min’kuyu – the shades’ (1980 pp.71-72), similarly to Revivalism.



Africans in the parish of St. Thomas and in the linguistic strength of Ki-Kongo and related language groups in Kumina.

Ryman 1984, p.83



*Fig.4 Imogene 'Queenie' Kennedy in 'Myal' – Kumina Duty, St. Catherine. Source: 'H' Patten*

Kumina is practised in the parishes of St Thomas and St Catherine and is performed for both social and religious occasions within which the myal state is manifested. Kumina leaders are usually female, referred to as the Kumina Queen, however when a Kumina King is instated, such as the late Oliver 'King Bauchó' Barrett, a female Mother is also appointed to assist with aspects of his duties. Kumina specialists regard themselves as Africans, not Jamaican Africans, or African

Caribbean people (Lewin, 2000 p.245; Stewart, 2005 pp.143-144). Communication between the parallel mortal and spirit worlds is the main function of the Kumina dance ritual and is reliant on the corporeal dancing body as the conduit to attain the myal state. This is facilitated by the '*call and response*' interaction between dancer and musician (Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005).<sup>83</sup> The late Kumina Queen, Imogene 'Queenie' Kennedy provides insight into the role of 'myal' within Kumina in interview with Warner-Lewis (1977), sharing:

**Myal is de ting dey call a spirit where you' head 'pin roun' an' you drop an' you' 'kin pupalick'<sup>84</sup> 'pon you neck ... Dat a bongo myal spirit ... de dead African dem dem come roun' an' dem lick you all a' you' headside – an' ride you 'pon you neck an' you drop. You see? Dat dere mean to say myal hol' you now.**

**Myal is the thing they call a spirit where your head spins around and you fall and you spin somersaulting on your neck ... That is the bongo myal spirit ... the dead Africans come around and they hit you even on your temple – and ride on your neck and you fall. You see? That means myal controls or possesses you.**

Warner Lewis 1977, p.59

Spiritual communication is established when the corporeal dancing body becomes possessed, or 'mounted' (Schuler, 1980; Deren, 1991; Daniel, 2005), when the spirit/deity/divinity displaces the individual's soul<sup>85</sup> and occupies their body. At

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<sup>83</sup> A detailed analysis of Kumina ideology, including an overview of its African cosmology will be outlined within the analysis chapter. See: (Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005).

<sup>84</sup> "Somersault" as explained by Warner Lewis (1977 p.79) or the literal translation from Jamaican patois could be "pupa" meaning father, "lick" hit, describing the spiritual force, equivalent to the adult slap would cause an individual to fall with a forward momentum, thus causing them to roll in a somersault like action.

<sup>85</sup> Individuals are believed to have two souls, one, according to Seaga (1982) remains with the individual at all times during life and is equivalent to what Deren terms 'ti/bon/ange' (1991) and Daniel calls 'ti bonanj' (2005) within Haitian Vodou. The other soul, Seaga holds, roams at nighttime to produce one's dreams and relates in Vodou, to Deren's 'gros/bon/ange' or Daniel's 'gwo bonanj', being the soul that provides personality and energy, and communicates with the spiritual pantheon of ancestors etc. It is this soul that is dis/placed and temporarily replaced with an ancestral spirit during the myal state. According to Seaga one soul remains at the grave on death and roams as a spirit (this is most likely also the 'gros/bon/ange' or 'gwo bonanj', as it can then manifest as a personal spirit within Pukkumina), whilst the other soul either goes to heaven/hell and is reincarnated as a human or animal, Seaga's study is undetermined in this regard. Schuler (1980 pp.72-73) suggests that the personal

this point the individual is said to ‘catch myal’ (Ryman, 1980 p.13), meaning they attain the transcendental state. African spiritual cosmology uses dance to access the physical and emotional aspects of the corporeal body. Thereby, the myal state provides psychological and physical healing, guidance and deliverance from evil, as Lewin outlines:

The one possessed relays the advice and/or instructions received [from the ancestors] to the group. In order to achieve the possession or myal state, members of the cult sing in a loud, high pitched, nasal manner, while some of them perform a fast and vigorous dance referred to by them as the myal dance. Movements are angular and at times violent, with dancers darting about, covering a lot of space, performing acrobatic feats and throwing themselves to the ground. They claim that these movements are directed by ancestral spirits and there is no need to fear that they will injure themselves.

Lewin, 2000, p.178

This description could quite easily depict Jonkonnu, Revival or Kumina members in the ‘myal’ state. Alternatively, it could easily be a portrayal of the dancehall session building to its climax, when inspired dancers perform their most acrobatic, physical and challenging movements. Others lock bodies together, coupling and unifying themselves in the corporeal engagement of each other and the dancehall space. This begins to illustrate how dancehall’s genealogy both explicitly and implicitly intertwines the worldviews embodied in its African/neo-African antecedents (Hutton, 2007; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). It also highlights dancehall as a continuity of what Cheryl Ryman terms ‘the triad of mask-dance-music ... [where] traditional forms facilitate transformations and transcendence of the world of the mundane ... to that of the extraordinary and magical’ (2010, p.131). It is dancehall’s transcendent potential I now focus on, turning to its transference from Africa to the Caribbean.

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soul/spirit and the shadow/duppy (ghost) remain with humans during their lifetime, but the shadow/duppy roams at night, creating the dream state. At death, the personal soul/spirit returns to ‘Nzambi Mpungu’, Almighty God, whilst the shadow/duppy stays in the grave to roam and visit family members if death rituals are not fully or properly observed.

## 2.7 The Middle Passage

For Africans on the continent and throughout the diaspora, the trans-Atlantic trade in enslaved Africans dis/rupted<sup>86</sup> community cohesion and the balance between the spirit and mortal worlds. So how did African spiritual coding transfer to the Caribbean context? The trans Atlantic trade was and remains a major traumatic event for the estimated 14 million Africans (Rediker, 2008) involved in what African-American activist W. E. B. Du Bois terms ‘the sum of all villainies, the cause of all sorrow, the root of all prejudice’ (2014, p.10). The dis/connection of enslaved Africans from their families and communities invariably broke the spirit of many, resulting in them retreating within themselves, being dis/connected from the spirit world (Burton, 1997; Rediker, 2008). Marcus Rediker’s (2008) detailed expose of ‘*The Slave Ship*’, describes them as prisons, dungeons and factories taking on-board Africans as human beings, to break, transform, and deliver them as commoditised ‘enslaved people’ on their arrival in the Caribbean. His account of the use of lamentation songs by enslaved women provides insight into how Africans used cultural expression as a survival tool, functioning as comforter, memorialisation and identifier of country/kinfolk and message bearer.<sup>87</sup> Although Rediker makes no mention of it, cultural expression would have been an important medium through which communication was re-established between Africans and their ancestral spirits.

Scholars have reported that as part of the daily routine, enslaved Africans were forced to exercise on the slave ship decks. Rediker records their engagement as:

... something called “dancing” ... [ranging] from something more or less freely chosen, accompanied by African instruments (more common among the women), to the dreary, forced clanking of chains (more common among the men)

Rediker, 2008, pp.167-8

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<sup>86</sup> The prefix dis/ as in dis/rupt, re-designating a word highlighting the negative disrespect often inherent in it’s use and thus providing additional meanings was introduced in relation to dancehall by Donna P. Hope (2006a; 2006b) who references it as a dis/place as explained on p.71. See: (Note 64).

<sup>87</sup> Marcus Rediker provides a detailed description of the use of songs, particularly by enslaved African women to lament the loss of freedom, country and kinfolk in their own languages, enabling recognition of the various homelands represented on the slave ship in ‘orations, ... recitations from memory’ (2008, p.281). He also notes that Africans sometimes used cultural expression to vent their frustration, as at ‘Times (sic) they dance, shriek, [and] become furious’ (Rediker, 2008, p.284).

Suffering inhuman over-crowding below decks, the ‘dancing’ of Africans was an attempt by their enslavers to ensure a degree of health amongst the enslaved to maintain top market value. Stanley-Niaah (2010), argues that out of the ‘dancing’ of enslaved Africans developed the ‘Limbo’ as a dance of rebirth and renewal. Rediker (2008) disputes the backward negotiation of the hold’s opening by enslaved African’s emerging from the lower to upper ship decks as the origins of Limbo. Due to malnourishment and resistance strategies such as hunger strikes, the diminished physical strength of enslaved Africans would have made it an impossibly difficult task. Additionally, as espoused by African scholar Alphonse Tiérou:

... the dancer must be free to dance or not and any dance performed under duress is not regarded as dance by Africans.

Tiérou, 1992, p.11

Many Africans must have held Tiérou’s view, as many used the opportunity of being on deck during ‘exercising’/‘dancing’ to participate in mass suicides, favouring death over enslavement. These were subversive acts as death reflects the African worldview, maintaining the notion of the mortal and spiritual worlds. Thus in death, individuals escape physical bondage and return home to the ancestors in the spirit world (Stewart, 2005; Rediker, 2008; Nii-Yartey, 2013). Additionally, particularly towards the end of chattel enslavement it also negatively impacted the economic profitability of the trade.

Although Africans resisted against forced ‘dancing’, their relationship to dance was such that ‘life, with its rhythms and cycles is Dance (sic)’ (Opoku in Schramm, 2000, p.339). This would have made it almost impossible for any regular engagement in dance to remain devoid of the nonverbal symbolic communication between Africans themselves, their established ‘shipmate community’<sup>88</sup> and most importantly, their

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<sup>88</sup> Shipmate communities resulted from the bonds developed and experiences shared by enslaved Africans during the Middle Passage. Shipmate bonds were often as strong and important as kinship ties amongst Africans, exemplified by ‘[c]hildren address[ing] their parents’ shipmates as “uncle” and “aunty,” and sexual intercourse between men and women of the same boatland was viewed as incestuous’, Burton (1997) records. See: (Rediker, 2008).

ancestors. Thus whilst ‘exercising’, dance must have been used as a means of subversive resistance, serving as reportage, demonstrating hierarchy and elite membership (court/secret society dances),<sup>89</sup> psychological release, entertainment, memorial and historical memory (Turner, 1969; Nii-Yartey, 2013). Thus, whilst Europeans supervised physical activity, Africans were engaging in acts of resistance, conducting spiritual rituals that called on the assistance of the ancestors.

Conversely, Africans were regularly estranged from their own people and practices during enslavement. Rediker’s account of the kidnapping and enslavement of a 13 year-old boy, Louis Asa-Asa,<sup>90</sup> describes his arrival in the Americas as being totally isolated from his own Igbo people. Yet, the existence of Jonkonnu masquerade, Barnett (1979) suggests, demonstrates the survival and synthesis of diverse African nation practices and represents the importance enslaved Africans placed on memorialising their practices. Dancehall continues this function in its synthesising of African/neo-African practices within its dance vocabulary.

Dancehall relates directly to the ‘dancing’ on ships transporting enslaved Africans in the sense that it openly challenges Jamaican hegemonic notions of power, politics and gender in its subversive, sexualised celebration of corporeality, whilst maintaining the often unacknowledged African continuities underscoring Jamaican society (Cooper, 2004; Hope, 2006a; Stanley-Niaah 2010; Sharpe, 2003). The African continuity of utilising one activity to mask and signify an entirely different intention is therefore upheld, having transferred through the Middle Passage experience to the dancehall space (Cooper, 1993). Dancehall participants also experience modern-day parallels to the dehumanisation and belittlement suffered by enslaved African forebears, often looked down upon, marginalised and pathologised by Jamaica’s ruling class and state authorities.<sup>91</sup> I now examine transcendent African continuities within dancehall’s popular Jamaican antecedence.

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<sup>89</sup> Membership within ritual and ceremonial dance practices such as secret societies or court dances would be considered highly prestigious within the African context, therefore an individual’s demonstration of membership through dance would gain them a level of respect amongst the enslaved. See: (Rediker, 2008).

<sup>90</sup> See: (Rediker, 2008, pp.102-4).

<sup>91</sup> Cooper (2004 p.146) speaks of the ‘congenital pathology’ of reggae/dancehall culture and practitioners in exploring the demonization of the genre.

## ***2.8 Dancehall from Mento to the digital age***

Dance is a central part of the survival strategies within the African/neo-African worldviews that underscore Jamaican society, providing hope and resistance against oppression (Lewin, 2000; Bilby, 2007; Stewart, 2005; Ryman, 2010). Dance was therefore an important consideration in the early development of Jamaican popular forms such as Mento, Ska and Rocksteady. Artists have expressed dance as facilitating a transformative escape from the harsh realities of life. Mento, generally regarded as Jamaica's first neo-African popular form, not only provided Africans with a temporary means of escape from enslavement, but created countercultural spaces island-wide. From the quarters of enslaved Africans to the open land and yard spaces, Mento's countercultural spaces later transformed into dance hall 'lawns', later becoming present-day dancehall venues (O'Brian Chang and Chen, 1998; Stolzoff, 2000; Bradley, 2000; Barrow and Dalton, 2004).

### ***2.8.1 Mento***

In the performance of Mento, Jamaicans symbolically re/enacted and underscored African/neo-African worldviews. Mento represented 'the joining of Africa and Europe on foreign ground' using an expression frequently stated by Jackie Guy (in conversation) a former principal dancer with the Jamaica National Dance Theatre Company. It also characterised a neo-African 'process that blended elements of a variety of European social dance musics with African derived stylistic features' (Manuel, Bilby, and Largey, 2006, p.184). Mento's pelvic circling creates a countercultural space within which an individual may simultaneously focus attention on their internal and external-self. The body's stance, with relaxed knees and slightly forward tilted curved spine, maintains what African scholar Francis Nii-Yartey terms the "circular" image and "completeness of being" (2013, p.417). This basic African dance stance Alphonse Tiérou terms 'Dooplé' (1992). Mento's pelvic circling therefore reinforces the circle/life-cycle, creating temporary unity in the individual's life. Mento, performed singularly in movements like 'Betsy-down' involves - *the pelvis being rotated, whilst rocking forward and back, 'tumbling' in appearance. This is articulated with one foot in front, flat on the ground and the other behind with the*

*ball of the foot on the ground, whilst bending and rising through the knees.* ‘Betsy-down’, later morphed into dancehall’s generic ‘wining’ action, thereby transferring and maintaining its unifying role within dancehall’s ritual space.

Mento highlights the spiritual engagement of Jamaican corporeal dancing bodies, as the pelvis continually provides opportunities for transcendence through ‘jouissance’ as interpreted by theology scholar Ralph Norman (2008) from Jacques Lacan’s conception. Jouissance here represents the symbolic, ecstatic combining of the male and female as one, in Mento’s sensual circling/spiraling of the dancer’s pelvic regions. Cheryl Ryman describes Mento’s ‘slow, winding, sensuous movement ... performed separately or in intimate contact with a partner ... called the “dry grind”, “rent a tile” and “dub” or “rub a dub”’ (Ryman, 2010 p.118). Whilst the movement may convey sexual connotations within the sensuality of couples dancing, the circling of the pelvis also represents a challenge to death by affirming life in the unification of the African male and female corporeal dancing bodies. As the life giving force, the pelvis focuses the individual’s exploration of the ‘inner self’, which resonates with Kierkegaard’s notion that ‘only in the inwardness of self-activity, does [s/]he have his[/her] attention aroused, and is enabled to see God’ (in Hyman, 2012, p.250). In short, through circling/spiralling pelvic movement Mento enables a focus on the inner self that allows temporal transcendence. Ultimately, Mento represents a subversive act of liberation and resistance against the deliberate disconnection and separation of African male and female corporeality, both through enslavement, colonialism, and hegemonic structures (Stewart, 2005; Rediker, 2008).

### **2.8.2 Ska**

In contrast to Mento’s covert spiritual connection, emerging from the mid to late 1950s, Ska overtly combines the sacred energy of the Revival religious movement, with Mento, which manifests in a dynamic offbeat dance/sound (O’Brien Chang and Chen, 1998; Lewin, 2000; Salewicz and Boot, 2001; Bradley, 2002). Ska was a deliberate attempt by Jamaican producers such as Clement ‘Sir Coxson’ Dodds, to create a distinctive Jamaican sound as an alternative to the dominant American Blues and R&B influences imposed by Jamaica’s hegemony (O’Brien Chang and Chen,



1998; Bradley, 2000; Barrow and Dalton, 2004). As mentioned in the previous chapter, Ska was extremely popular because it emerged as a dynamic music and dance style (Seaga, 2004 p.9). An examination of the movement patterns within Ska reveals the syncretism of Jamaican Mento and African/neo-African influences from Revivalism, Jonkonnu and Burru Masquerade, alongside the Rastafarian Nyabinghi (White, 1984; White, 1998; Stolzoff, 2000; McCarthy, 2007; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Ryman, 2010). Yet, according to Jamaican artists Prince Buster and Jimmy Cliff, Ska did not exist as a dance in its own right, but comprised of ‘the Beebop dance, push and spin, and natural Jamaican things like flashing [snapping] the fingers and pickup moves from Pocomania and mento’ (O’Brien Chang and Chen, 1998). However, archival footage does not support their claim. Instead, the film footage of Cliff’s ‘*King of Kings*’ (1962) performance and ‘*This is Ska!*’ (1964), provide evidences of the dance being an integral part of Ska’s development, featuring a diversity of Ska artists including Cliff and Buster. Nevertheless, the spiritual energy of those dancing Ska may be read within the visual data of the time.

Ska’s derivation from the Revival dance vocabulary is evident in the outward extension and inward cross of the arms depicted as movements A and B in Chris Salewicz and Adrian Boot’s (2001, p.38) pictorial ABC guide to dancing Ska. Although they do not acknowledge Ska as a dance textually, pictorially movements C to F all project the distinct African/neo-African dooplé dance stance, featuring relaxed knees and the forward tilted carriage of the torso. The transformative energy of Revivalism is reflected in the ‘galloping, uptempo, intricately arranged and expertly played hybrid [beat]’ (Bradley, 2002 p.11). Revival’s transformative and transcendental energy is very much present in the movement vocabulary in – *the up and down bobbing/articulation of the torso, both the lateral open and close, or up and down arm swings and the side to side, lateral swing or twisting action of the pelvis*. The bobbing action of the chest may force short intakes of breath, leading to hyperventilation and therefore a sense of transformation and/or possible transcendence.<sup>92</sup> Ska therefore combines the African/neo-African ultimate concern (Tillich in Cobb, 2005), organised around connecting the spirit and mortal world in reaching the divine, with Tillich’s sense of ‘the holy as the ground [positive] and

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<sup>92</sup> Within the Revival setting, forced, sharp intakes of breath serve the deliberate function of causing hyperventilation to induce the myal state and ‘traveling’ within the spirit world. See: (Seaga, 1982).

abyss [negative] of being' (in Cobb, p.108). In other words, like Mento before and Rocksteady which follows, the Ska dance enabled temporal escape, where individuals experience being beyond the 'here and now', whilst remaining grounded in it and encountering what Tillich terms the 'sublime', meaning the 'holy' (in Cobb, 2005). Within the African cosmology the sublime equates to the spiritual realm (Lewin, 2000). Thus, Jamaican popular practices forming part of dancehall's antecedence continue to serve transformational spiritual functions albeit whilst occupying secular spaces.

### 2.8.3 Rocksteady

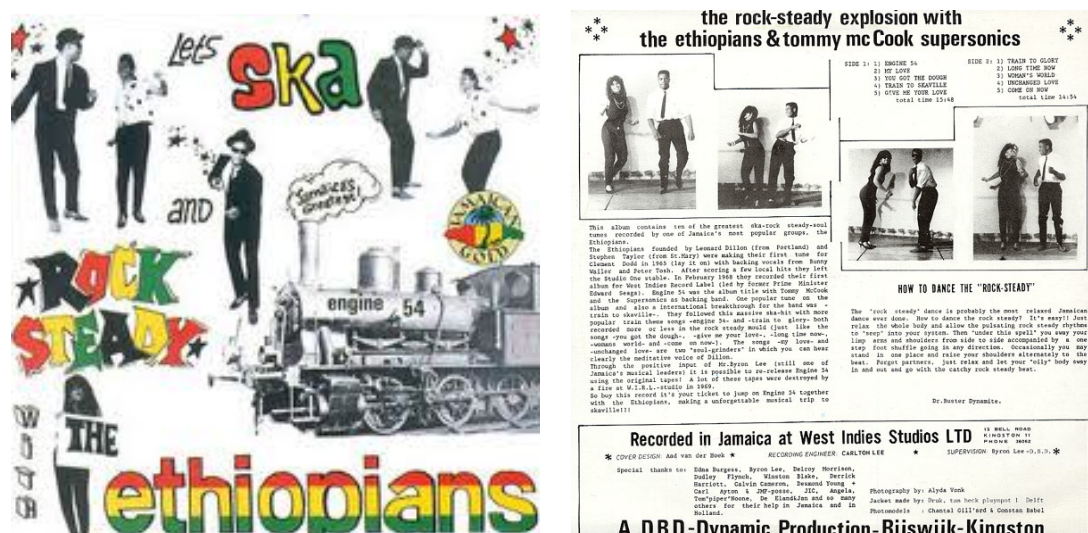


Fig.5 Ethiopians' (1967) cover/sleeve notes 'Engine 54: Let's Ska and Rock Steady'

The inextricable link between music and dance in the development of Jamaican music is foregrounded in 1966 with the emergence of Rocksteady, which slowed down the Ska beat and gave primacy to the bass guitar (Bradley, 2002; Hebdige, 2002; McCarthy, 2007). The primacy of the bass, effectively foregrounds the transference of the drumbeat rhythm, to the Rocksteady bass line. This, as Ska artist Sonny Bradshaw shares, 'gave [dancers] more time to do what they wanted to do' (in Hebdige, 2007 p.71), thus, Rocksteady developed in response to the dancer's needs. As Bradley (2000) and McCarthy (2007) perceptively note, the Rocksteady dance

preceded the genre's naming. Rocksteady is associated with the 'rude boys' also termed 'rudies' or 'rudi',<sup>93</sup> and their subversive rebellious rejection and 'disregard of society's rules and codes' (McCarthy, 2007, p.211). This manifests in rudies' 'tougher than tough'<sup>94</sup> 'cool', controlled, 'screw-face' (stern expression) and somber performative persona that translates as a relaxed natured resistance dance.

The relaxed nature of the Rocksteady dance is conveyed in part by Dr Buster Dynamite's dance instructions from the Ethiopians' (1967) album sleeve notes for '*Engine 54: Let's Ska and Rock Steady*' (fig.5), also reproduced in full by Lloyd Bradley, which explains:

The rocksteady dance is probably the most relaxed Jamaican dance ever done. How to dance the rocksteady? It's easy!! Just relax the whole body and allow the pulsating rocksteady rhythms to seep into your system. Then under this spell you sway your limp arms and shoulders from side to side accompanied by a one-step foot shuffle going in any direction. Occasionally you may stand in one place and raise your shoulders alternately to the beat. Forget partners, just relax and let your oily body sway in and out and go with the catchy rocksteady beat.

Dynamite in Bradley, 2000, p.159

The language Dynamite chooses in describing the movement vocabulary seems to communicate a transformative, transcendental, or consciousness-altering undertone to the dance and music. He speaks of allowing the rhythm to penetrate and 'seep into your system', being 'under this spell' and advises that you 'let your oily body sway in and out', which could be interpreted as being sanctified by holy oil, before going 'in and out' of consciousness. However, what is misleading is the notion that no partner is needed, as a feature of Rocksteady was what I term, the 'bruck leg' or 'two-step, side-dip-rock' performed by couples, facilitating intimacy in the dance. A modified revival or return of the Mento 'rent-a-tile' or dub (Ryman, 2010), as earlier outlined,

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<sup>93</sup> Rudies were young men, many having migrated from all over rural Jamaica to the West Kingston area. Faced with unemployment and hardship a significant number of them turned to crime to survive and negotiate their circumstances (See: Salewicz and Boot, 2001; Barrow and Dalton, 2004; Hebdige, 2007).

<sup>94</sup> Derrick Morgan's hit single '*Tougher than Tough*' (1966) sings of the rude boy era and attitude to life and is considered a 'rudi' anthem by some. See: (O'Brien Chang and Chen, 1998).

couples in Rocksteady locked pelvises together as they danced, some rotating slowly. Part of Rocksteady's legacy is the important 'shift of rhythmic focus onto the bass and drums' (Barrow and Dalton, 2004 p.55), allowing the sensual 'rent-a-tile'/'rub-a-dub' to become a constant feature within all subsequent Reggae/dancehall eras, Roots Reggae, Dub, Rockers, Lover's Rock and the Dancehall eras (Palmer, 2011; Campbell, 2015). Rocksteady was therefore transformative in its hegemonic subversion like Mento before it, in its mesmerising facilitation of individuals coupling.

#### ***2.8.4 Sound Systems***

Sound systems, also termed 'sounds' or 'sets', emerged in the late 1940s and have enabled dancehall participants to retain African/neo-African worldviews and aesthetics, both as a physical and audible transformative experience within the dancehall space, through 'sonic dominance' (Henriques, 2011). Sonic dominance is the all engulfing, body-penetrating saturation of sound/music that sound systems produce. Initially, sound systems started as radios, progressing to records, turntables and powerful amplifiers to which an 'assemblage of speakers (sometimes called house of joy) are attached' (Hutton, 2007 p.17). Sound systems represent a transformative resistance to the Jamaican broadcast radio corporation established in 1939 and the dominance of foreign music imports as they became, 'the people's radio' (Bradley, 2002, p.25) playing the music Jamaicans enjoyed dancing to (fig.6).

Astute sound operators, such as Duke Reid and Coxsone Dodds amongst others, aware of the inextricable link between music and dance recorded exclusive 'specials' now termed 'dubplates'<sup>95</sup> on acetate, from the mid 1950s. As sound systems grew increasingly popular, rivalries emerged fuelling the live sound 'clash', where rival sound systems symbolically battle, fight or war against each other musically to win the support of the crowd (Stolzoff, 2000; Seaga 2004; Manuel and Marshall, 2006). Sound systems thus developed extensive and exclusive record collections and progressively powerful amplification where, Henriques explains:

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<sup>95</sup> Dubplates are cut from tape straight to acetate records for the personal use of a specific sound system, but not pressed for mass-production. For a more in-depth explanation, see: (Stolzoff, 2000 p.58).



*Fig.6 Sound System Selector 'Boom Boom' – Hot Mondays, Kingston, 2010. Source: 'H' Patten*

Trouser legs flap to the bass line and internal organs resonate to the finely tuned frequencies, as the vibrations of the music excite every cell in your body.

Henriques, 2011, p.xv

Sonic dominance importantly engages corporeality, involving feeling as well as hearing the music, reflecting the African expression – through dance one sees the music and hears the dance (Opoku, 1970; Ryman 2010). Here, one also physically feels the music. Thereby, particularly in its contemporary form, dancehall's embodied sonic dominance can affect the psychological consciousness of dancers and other participants within the dancehall space. Pamela O'Gorman notes, dancers 'maintain a kind of introverted private relationship with the piece of Earth on which [s/]he dances alone' (O'Gorman in Stanley-Niaah, 2010, p.130). This suggests dancers experience a transformative affect within the dancehall space. This is reinforced in my own

research, as many dancers express a sense of ‘getting lost’ within dancehall music and dance. This research seeks to establish what ‘getting lost’ really signifies. Is it a transformative occurrence? Is it a transcendental experience? Is the myal state attained? Is the sense of *communitas* achieved or even important? Do these elements manifest in the daily life of dancehall dancers?

Sound systems manage to bridge, technology and the corporeal presence, through the DJ ‘chatting’ (speaking) over pre-recorded instrumental music to enliven the dancehall space (O’Brien Chang and Chen, 1998; Stolzoff, 2000; Barrow and Dalton, 2004; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Winston ‘Count Machuki’ Cooper, is credited as the first person to DJ “‘introduc[ing] live jive” in the dancehall and “the first disc jockey on the mike” (Kingsley Goodison in Hutton, 2007 p.23). The DJ’s original delivery of ‘verbal-music’ (Hutton, 2007) is later called ‘toasting’, entailing chatting/speaking in-between recorded lyrics/choruses and during record changes. Today, the role is that of vocalist and recording artist, ‘singing (or ‘voicing’) over a riddim ... [termed] ‘riddim-plus-voicing’ (Manuel and Marshall, 2006 pp.447-8).<sup>96</sup> This role is distinct from the ‘*Selector*’ (disc-jockey/MC) who chooses the recorded music played, whilst verbally enlivening the dance (Seaga, 2004; Ryman, 2010; Manuel and Marshall, 2006, Stanley-Niaah, 2010).

The DJ’s role necessarily highlights the inextricable link between music and dance, as Machuki literally birthed DJ art out of dance as a celebrated, ‘distinguished ... [and] “very good dancer”’ (Ernest Baxter in Hutton, 2007 p.22). Machuki also discovered Winston ‘King Stitt’ Sparkes, by way of Stitt’s dance talents (Salewicz and Boot, 2001). Reggae/dub specialist Lee ‘Scratch’ Perry admits developing and honing his musical creativity from, ‘the wild type of dancing ... [that] make me do funny things ... and find meself [myself]’ (Perry in Maysels, 2002, p.94). Perry’s description of his dancing mirrors that of Dub instrumentals. Produced and developed by recording engineers including Perry himself, Osbourne ‘King Tubby’ Ruddock; ‘Errol T.’ Thompson and others, they deconstruct, layer and rebuild spatial dynamics in the ‘fragmenting of the song surface’ (Veal, 2007, p.2). The unique Dub sound

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<sup>96</sup> ‘Riddim’ (rhythm) expresses the Jamaican pronunciation, which emphasises its weight and often primacy over melody within the musical mix. ‘Riddim-plus-voicing’ refers to the system where a riddim track is created, then multiple artists can ‘voice’ on top of the track. See: (Manuel and Marshall, 2006).

allows the DJ's voicing to enter, exit and clash with the music/scape in excavating and injecting it with significance. The dancer enters and exits the music surface, creating physical polyrhythmic counterpoints to the music, enabling dancing bodies, to symbolically, as Philip Maysles rightly states, reinvigorate past 'African "danced faiths"' (2002, p.94). Thus, he contends, 'If the dancers are so immersed in the music, they can connect with another world' (2002, p.104). Thereby I argue, like Dub music, dance becomes a reworking of older African/neo-African forms, harnessing their transformative potential and enabling various degrees of transcendence to take place.

Sound systems provide countercultural spaces for dance. A number of scholars locate Jamaican popular dance in relation to African-American dance, likening Jamaica's 'Kid Harold' to 'Bojangles' the African-American star and dance crazes such as '*Jazz*', '*Turkey Trots*' and other dances performed to ragtime, the '*Waltz*', the '*Charleston*' and '*Ballroom*' dances, the Cuban '*Rhumba*', the '*Swing*', the '*Twist*' and the '*Bump*' (White, 1984; Stolzoff, 2000; Hutton, 2007; Hickling, 2009; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). However, African/Jamaicans incorporated their own individuality into American popular dances along with elements of the Jamaican traditional practices to create 'Jamaican "blues" moves' (White, 1984 p.72). These improvised dance expressions were performed by dancers 'famed in the ghettos ... like "Needle", Clifford Stokes, "Persian" the cat, "Bop" (Mr Legs), "Sparkie", "Pam Pam" and "Baskin" (ibid). These 'culture-heroes' (White, 1984 p.73) form the first wave of contemporary dancehall dancers who secured the connection between Jamaican African/neo-African dance practices within popular culture. The DJ's voice transformed the dancehall space and sound system culture as sound operators transitioned into record producers. As scholars note, the development of the recording industry alongside the culture of 'stardom' (Hickling, 2009) has transformed the DJ's function from technician into contemporary performers and recording artist (Sharpe, 2003; Hutton, 2007).

### ***2.8.5 Reggae***

The late 1960s onwards heralded the Reggae era with explorations of blackness and black nationalism, that manifested in the Rastafarian political and spiritual ethos

combining with popular culture in subverting Jamaican hegemonic structures (Chevannes, 1994; Thomas, 2004; Hebdige, 2007). Musically, Reggae synthesises elements of all its forerunners, placing ‘the Ska riff on top of a slowed down rocksteady bass line with a dash of Mento’ (O’Brien Chang and Chen, 1998 p.42). However, ideologically Reggae injects a ‘black nationalism’<sup>97</sup> into Jamaican society by incorporating Rastafarianism, demanding a huge paradigm shift in the concept of God and the spiritual. Rastafari propagates the concept of a ‘Black God’ in the form of His Imperial Majesty (H.I.M) Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, crowned in 1930 ‘Ras Tafari ... King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God and Light of the World’ (Chevannes, 1994 p.42). Rastafari gained a tremendous increase in converts following ‘His Majesty’s’<sup>98</sup> visit to Jamaica in 1966 (Farley, 2009).

Rastafari’s ideology of a Black God extends to the individual in the Rastafarian self-reference/greeting of ‘I an/d I’, conveying the concept of an individual oneness with God, who resides within each individual. Hence individuals represent the objective temple and subjective reflection of God, which Christopher Farley highlights, is ‘the Rasta way of indicating that God and the self are linked’ (2009, p.128). Thereby, I an/d I expresses the unification and upliftment<sup>99</sup> of oneself and others as ‘God is in all men’ (Cashmore, 1979, p.67). Rastafari’s notion of God’s inherence within the individual is an important factor within Reggae music and dance. In relation to music, the introduction of electronic instrumentation, particularly the bass and the organ/keyboard, creates Reggae’s distinctive sound, whilst signalling its African/neo-African heritage. This manifests in the primacy of the bass, adopting the role of the traditional drums within Reggae’s rhythmic arrangement, as scholars have noted (Stolzoff, 2000; Bradley, 2002; Barnett, 2002). This represents a Rocksteady retention, whilst the incorporation of Rastafarian drumming is a continuity from Ska recordings, a number of which featured classic Rastafarian drumming by Count Ossie and The Mystic Revelation of Rastafari.

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<sup>97</sup> Reggae sits within the wider ideological concepts of blackness and Black Nationalism of the time such as the Civil Rights Movement, Garveyism, the Black Panthers etc. (Chevannes, 1994; Thomas, 2004; Brodber, 2012).

<sup>98</sup> H.I.M Haile Selassie I is generally referenced with affection and respect as ‘His Majesty’ by Rastafarian converts.

<sup>99</sup> Upliftment means the raising/elevation, advancement and/or improvement of the group or individual’s spiritual, social, cultural and moral consciousness.



Early Reggae dance movements were greatly influenced by the Rastafarian spiritual ethos, through the Nyabinghi dance.<sup>100</sup> Reggae, like Nyabinghi is often an improvised solo and generally performed by males, although females also perform with regal flowing movements, contrasted against staccato foot articulation and at times lunging leg movements. Male dances feature sharp, angular, nimble articulation of the legs, using alternating heel and ball actions of the feet, whilst the torso tilts forward, back and laterally, in relation to the pelvis as it shifts, accommodating body/weight adjustments in response to the footwork. Hops, turns, dips and splits are also a feature of Reggae, as may be witnessed in live concert recordings of artists such as Leroy Smart, Bob Marley and Jacob Miller, amongst others. These movements require great synchronicity between dancer and music, as the movement is habitually broken up by breaks – sudden stops, sharp jerks and poses – in time to the rhythm/musical inflections (Maysles, 2002; Ryman, 2010).

The transformative aspect of Reggae dance is inherent in its Nyabinghi influence; however, Rastafarians customarily deny and distance any notion of transcendence within the Reggae genre. Rastafari attempts to sever any link with the supernatural, despite the fact that Rastafarian ideology has been found by numerous scholars to be established upon Kumina and Revivalist principles (Chevannes, 1994; Bilby and Leib, 1985). Ryman explains Rastafari's influence from African/neo-African Jamaican practices, declaring:

It took its early form and dance-music expression primarily from Revival (street meetings, large borrowings of songs, and use of the bass or thunder drum), mento, buru (fundeh and repeater or akete drums), and to a lesser extent from Kumina.

Ryman, 2010 p.129

This demonstrates Rastafari's inherent African/neo-African continuities within its practice, which in turn underscores Reggae's spiritual ethos. The dancer's intuitive

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<sup>100</sup> The Nyabinghi dance accompanies Nyabinghi drumming and chanting. Barry Chevannes identifies Nyabinghi as originally being established as an anti-white political arm within Rastafari, with the dance being a death-by-magic ritual, meant to eradicate white oppressors, later extending to all oppressors of Rastafari (See: Chevannes, 1994, p.164). It has since become the cultural ritual, performance and entertainment expression within Rastafari.

connection and journeying into their inner-being in Hyman's (2011) re-interpretation of Kierkegaardian thought, must engage these resonances in the redemptive discovery of the sublime.

### **2.8.6 Dancehall**

As a distinct genre, Jamaican dancehall may be dated from the late 1970s, with the new wave of DJ artists emerging out of, but distinct to, the toasters of the 'Roots Reggae' era. Lyrically, Jamaican DJs such as Papa Michigan and General Smiley; Nigga Kojak and Mother Liza; General Echo; Brigadier Jerry, Clint Eastwood and others, began to explicitly express the socio-political conditions and aspirations of Jamaicans at the lower socio-economic level of society. Conversely, many scholars highlight the introduction of the digital era as the birth of contemporary dancehall. Following the violent clash of the 1980 general election, the defeat of Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP) by Edward Seaga's Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government heralded a new capitalist phase of materialism and free market liberalism (Stolzoff, 2000; Sharpe, 2003; Hope, 2006a; Hebdige, 2007). This is reflected in the large cohort of DJ artists emerging to provide a voice for marginalised Jamaicans through dancehall's subversively explicit themes (Chude-Sokei, 1994; Stolzoff, 2000; Cooper, 2004; Hope, 2006; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Sterling, 2010).

Dancehall is performed islandwide, although as scholars note, the vast majority of dancehall participants reside in Kingston, where most popular weekly dancehall sessions such as, Uptown Mondays, Boasy Tuesday, Passa Passa, Bembe Thursdays, Dutty Fridaze etc., take place. Dancehall sessions can be found every night of the week with most operating in and around the Kingston metropolitan area.<sup>101</sup> This distinguishes dancehall from Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival, which is an annual event, although their subversive, transformative, and transcendent elements in terms of movement bear many similarities (Stolzoff, 2000; Stanley-Niaah, 2004a; 2010; Hope, 2006).

Dancehall reflects its African/neo-African heritage within the dancehall space in

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<sup>101</sup> See: Chart no 1 p.166

multiple ways. It is reflected in the performative actions of participants, such as pouring a little beer on the ground to supposedly test if it froths (indicating it is good), which cosmologically represents the pouring of libation for the ancestors. Libation, as Stewart explains, ‘gives honor to and summons the company and assistance of the Divine Community (divinities, spirits, and Ancestors)’ (2005, p.xv). African/neo-African heritage is also in the preparation and layout of the space, such as the triangulation of the speaker towers, echoing the triangulation of women sitting one side, men another and children yet another within many African traditional performance contexts. This heritage is also inherent in the symbolic ritual greetings between participants, the structure of the musical tracks and the formalised construction and ordering of the playing of the music throughout the night, building to a climax, as the analysis chapters will reveal. However, it signifies most clearly within the dance and its costuming within the ritual dancehall space.

Jonkonnu masquerade manifests within dancehall in the symbolic masking of dancehall participants whose ‘shades’ (dark glasses) function as masks, hiding feelings and enabling the performance of personas adopted for projecting ‘hyped’<sup>102</sup> personalities (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Pinnock, 2007; Hope, 2010; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Jonkonnu is also visible in dancehall’s sartorial fashion allowing nightly physical transformations. The ‘uptown’ and ‘downtown’ class of people in Jamaica constantly code-switch with the former’s attendance of dancehall sessions enabling the ‘higgler’ (street vendor) to transform into the ‘dancehall diva’, as Stanley-Niaah recounts:

... [a female] remove[d] her t-shirt which she then used to wrap her head. With brassiere now revealed, she untied the front of what I thought was a skirt to reveal a black formal dress with puff sleeves. As she stood up, pulled the dress to its full height and placed the puff sleeves on her shoulder, she signalled that her dancehall outfit was not the mere t-shirt and skirt she was previously wearing.

Stanley-Niaah, 2004a, p.3

Physical transformations such as this generally take place in the privacy of the

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<sup>102</sup> A hype (hyped) persona is an inflated and aggrandized persona that may or may not be backed by financial or artistic power.

home, where code-switching<sup>103</sup> from schoolteacher to dancehall participant and back happens. Barnett (1979) and Bakare-Yusuf (2006) trace the symbolisms within Jonkonnu and dancehall respectively, revealing many resonances and deep-seated parallels in their functioning when their studies are juxtaposed, as my analysis chapter will further outline (Ryman, 1984; Bilby, 2007 and 2010; Smalligan, 2011). Yet, it is within dancehall dances that Jonkonnu characters make multiple re/appearances. The ‘*Police-officer*’ dance step manifests in dancehall’s ‘*World dance*’ movement, popularised by Gerald ‘Bogle’ Levy (‘*Bogle dance*’ creator) and popular DJ Beenie Man, where – *the shoulder is pulled backwards twice on alternating sides with a double step on the same side as the shoulder move is then improvised as single or multiple steps to the riddim*. ‘*Pitchy Patchy*’ manifests in ‘*Pon de river*’ and ‘*Down de flank*’ in DJ Elephant man’s hit single<sup>104</sup>. These steps may not appear transformative or transcendent performed singularly, but performed un-mass within the dancehall space the sense of ‘*communitas*’ (Turner, 1969; Stanley-Niaah, 2010) is soon apparent amongst the dancers present. Thus, the dancehall space establishes a state of ‘*betwixt and between*’ (Turner, 1969 p.107), a transitional space inhabited by dancehall participants which remains temporal, but infiltrates other spaces as dancehall is not fixed, but nomadic. The nuanced influence of Jonkonnu will be explored in greater detail in the analysis chapters.

Dancehall’s overt connection to religious memory is by way of those participants who are active within the African/neo-African practices, but also attend dancehall events, as scholars acknowledge (Hutton, 2007; Bilby in Manuel, et al., 2006). These participants consciously and/or unconsciously may transfer ritual symbolisms to the secular space. Clinton Hutton explicitly states, Jamaicans ‘*constantly journeyed into the dancehall to carry out their duty of being, to work the seal [the spiritual centre] in a more secular aesthetic sense*’ (2007 p.20). Here, Hutton proposes that Jamaicans purposefully transfer spiritual symbolisms to the dancehall space, in order to practice their religious belief systems in a more accessible space and perhaps a more appropriate mode of expression. This resonates with the African/neo-African integration of religious practices as part of everyday living (Nii-Yartey, 2006; Opoku, 1970). Hutton also delineates key religious symbolisms/posts and their

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<sup>103</sup> Code-switching is the negotiation of two or more distinct communities or cultures, whether of differing or the same racial group. See: (Morton, 2014 p.259)

<sup>104</sup> See: (Chapter 6, section 6.8.1-6.8.3).

dancehall equivalents, thus highlighting the correlation between ‘dancehall and church hall’ (Beckford, 2006).

In line with my own comprehension of dancehall and Jamaican religious practices, Hutton submits that the sound systems represent the Revival table/centrepole and the DJ/Selector ‘the Revival Shepherd/priest/priestess (mada) [mother]’ (2007 p.20). Though religious memory re/emerging in dancehall performance and performativity has been touched upon musically, linguistically and spatially, it has not been explored corporeally through dance to date (Stewart, 2005; Hutton, 2007; Bilby 2007; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). This research seeks to address this gap. Revivalism has a number of distinct movements that have found their way into Jamaican dancehall, such as the ‘balance’ step – *stepping out onto one flat foot (flat on the ground) at a forty-five degree angle and bringing the other foot to meet it, repeating on the other side, with the body upright and arms swinging loosely at the sides*. This movement turned into the reggae balance with a slight dip in the knee on each step and into dancehall with a more exaggerated lift of the knee and a forward dip of the torso.

The line between African/neo-African practices and dancehall culture is very fine, thus at times one crosses over into the other. Lovindeer’s hit single ‘*Poco Party*’ mixes dancehall movements with actual Revival steps, including wining and the basic reggae-balancing step. The wining of two young children, complete with innocent expressions in the video, demonstrates the non-sexual intent within this particular performance of wining when considered in relation to the video’s overtly religious content. The code-switching within dancehall is further exemplified in Lovindeer’s live performance of ‘*Pocomania day*’, which features audience members waving their hands and engaging the artist as church congregations would interact with the preacher during a Revival sermon. The audience’s response to the DJ’s lyrics and the music signifies their comprehension of the role they are required to play for the success of the performance. This may at times enable some audience members to experience a level of transformation and even transcendence. Chapter 3 will focus on dancehall in relation to Jamaican traditional forms in greater detail.

Dancehall as a neo-African form is regarded by most as being secular, but as I shall further demonstrate, the dance steps and musical rhythm of Kumina, Revivalism

and Jonkonnu are both covertly and overtly present within dancehall. Sample Six and Guidance's '*Kumina*' (2008), feature a music video within which popular dance artists including Sample Six and Shelly Belly perform a modern version of the Kumina dance. Although the traditional Kumina step is performed with both feet flat on the ground, the Sample Six version is performed more like the Kumina 'Congo step'. This involves *one foot being flat on the ground, whilst the other is positioned on the ball of the foot, producing an uneven 1, 2 step*. This facilitates females in particular wining their pelvis, as performed by young people amongst 'Kumina specialists', whilst some alternate into full dancehall wining or coupling with male and female pelvises locked together. Some dancers flick the foot on the ball off the ground, giving an appearance of Dinkie Minie within dancehall Kumina. The exuberance of the dance alone produces a transformative appearance amongst the dancers.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

Dancehall's origins are multiple and varied. As a space, I argue it encompasses its antecedent African/neo-African genealogical worldviews and thereby contextualizes it in relation to its continental African origins. Dancehall is therefore shown to serve a religious and ceremonial function as a form of public and collective worship. Dancehall is also demonstrated to draw on African/neo-African practices including Kumina, Revivalism and Jonkonnu masquerade, which not only feature repeatedly within dancehall dance vocabulary, but all three of which subsume the myal possession state. I therefore begin to illuminate how, like African/neo-African practices, dancehall uses dance to access the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the corporeal body. Thereby, dance within the dancehall space is argued to be a medium through which some level of communication and transcendence may take place between dancehall participants not only at the level of *communitas* (Turner 1969; Stanley-Niaah, 2010), but as this research aims to show, possibly extending to full transcendence and communication with the metaphysical realm through ancestral spirits.

I further contend that dance served as a subversive resistance and oppositional survival strategy (De Certeau in Burton, 1997) throughout the Middle Passage, the

most traumatic episode within African his/tory.<sup>105</sup> Using dance as a means of memorializing their traditional practices whilst facilitating and transferring the African ‘ultimate concern’ (Tillich, 1980), communication with the Divine, or Supreme Being, African forebears re-embedded their traditional practices as part of their daily living (Nii-Yartey, 2013), thus transferring it to Caribbean shores.

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<sup>105</sup> His/tory is used here in the Rastafarian sense to denote the African experience as being charted as the European’s story of Africa and Africans, as the experience has not been fully told by Africans from the African experiential perspective and contextualised within the wider history of Ancient African.

## Chapter 3. Come back again: *Towards a definition of spirituality*

### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter delineated the genealogical development of Jamaican dancehall outlining the African functional and the Caribbean origins focus in African/neo-African dance classificatory systems. Further, it highlighted the exchange of cultural expression that took place during the ‘Middle Passage’ crossings that assisted in facilitating the transference of artistic expression from the African continent to the Caribbean context.<sup>106</sup> Providing a brief overview of Jamaican African/neo-African practices and the popular cultural forms emerging from them, it concluded with a discussion of the intersection of spirituality and dancehall.

This chapter progresses the discussion by exploring dancehall and its relationship to spirituality and the body. These three themes are not abstract concepts but personal realities for many Jamaicans, as reflected in the lyrics of ‘*The Messiah*’ by dancehall DJ David Constantine ‘Mavado’ Brooks, and the popular Jamaican saying below it:

One man mi (I) fear/ A di (is the) Messiah/ Mi a bwoy (I am a boy),  
believe inna (in) prayer/ Mi step pon di bakklefield (I step on the  
battlefield), without no shield/ All (even) when shot a fyah (firing)

Mavado, 2010

Fadda God naah sleep! (Father God is not sleeping!)

Jamaican saying

Mavado’s sentiments, coupled with those of the Jamaican saying,<sup>107</sup> express the

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<sup>106</sup> Rediker (2008) argues that this exchange must have included European influences on Africans from the enslavers’ sea shanties and other practices. However, the brutalization of Africans Rediker describes and the ratio of Africans to Europeans would have seriously limited the amount of contact time between enslaved and enslavers.

<sup>107</sup> This Jamaican saying offers words of comfort and encouragement in times of adversity, and is particularly used by Jamaican elders.



psyche of many African/Jamaicans whose survival is sustained in the surety that God is on their side (Chevannes, 1994; Cone, 1997). Thereby, dance from an African/neo-African perspective is a means through which human beings connect with God, the Supreme Being, enlisting the mediation of the spiritual community, both ancestral and/or divine (heavenly host) deities to act on their behalf. Thereby, I propose that elements of Jamaica's spiritual practices transformed and transferred to Jamaican popular music and dance forms, from Mento, Ska, Rocksteady, Rastafari Nyabinghi, and Reggae, and are potentially passed on and made manifest in dancehall.

The association of dancehall and spirituality is highly contentious for many outsiders and insiders to dancehall culture. However, as highlighted in chapter 1, Carolyn Cooper (1993) traces cultural and spiritual continuities from Revival's '*Adam in the Garden Hidin*' to dancehall through Josey Wales' '*Culture Lick*'. I seek to do the same in relation to dancehall's dance genealogy. Thereby, this chapter seeks to establish some key elements that may form a working definition or parameters within which to explore *the spirituality of reggae dancehall dance vocabulary*.

### ***3.2 Towards a definition of spirituality***

An important part of Jamaican popular culture, dancehall dances are continually created and expanded upon to facilitate multiple functions determined by the birth to death life-cycle celebrations that provide life's meaning(s) within the African/neo-African Jamaican culture it embodies (Cooper 1993; Stanley-Niaah 2010). Dance, is a central feature within African/neo-African spiritual practices, mediating both physical and spiritual communication between individuals, communities and God, the Supreme Being. Likewise, this thesis argues the same is true concerning dance within the dancehall space.

To begin working towards a definition of spirituality regarding Jamaican dancehall, it is necessary for me to situate spirituality in relation to religion and power, before exploring it in relation to: 1) Jamaican spirituality; 2) Christian spirituality; 3) Spirituality as a broad set of practices and belief systems; and 4) Spirituality, dance and the corporeal body. This comparative approach will assist in identifying the key recurring themes on which notions of spirituality may be

established. My intention is not to provide a determinate definition of spirituality to apply to dancehall, for as rightly contended by Hip Hop theologian Daniel White Hodge, doing so ‘would undermine the culture’s organic elements’ (2010 p.29). The same holds true for dancehall. Alternatively, the aim here is to identify some key parameters towards creating a discourse concerning dancehall spirituality.

Spirituality as a concept is difficult to define as it covers a broad spectrum of perspectives, belief systems and worldviews that contribute to the human quest for life’s meaning(s). Theologian Dianne M. Stewart (2005) describes spirituality, from an African diasporic perspective as individuals possessing ‘extraordinary spiritual talents—gifts of perceiving the realm of the invisible, reading undisclosed phenomena (past, present, and future), communicating with spirits, and negotiating mystical power’ (2005 p.ix). Stewart’s description focuses on personal identity and the mystical nature of spiritual human beings. However, this conception of spirituality does not accommodate those who do not experience personal transcendence.<sup>108</sup> Even within African/neo-African practices such as Jonkonnu, Revivalism, and Kumina, whilst it is essential for main post holders to experience personal transcendence, it is not a requirement for all members (Seaga, 1982; Lewin, 2000).

The notion that spirituality is synonymously linked to religion is a recurring theme amongst many individuals encountered during this research. Carlyle Fielding Stewart III summarises spirituality from a Christian stance as ‘represent[ing] the full matrix of beliefs, power, values, and behaviours that shape people’s consciousness, understanding, and capacity of themselves in relation to divine reality’ (1999 p.1). Stewart III’s statement clearly supports a connection between spirituality and religion in relation to the individual. Yet, his assertion that spirituality is the development of ‘understandings of God within a specific context or culture’ (ibid), usefully suggests an interpretative cultural conception to individual engagements with spirituality and God.

Resonating with Stewart III’s spiritual definition is that of culture cited by Florence Mukanga, as ‘the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group’, (in

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<sup>108</sup> A deeper explanation of personal transcendence (spirit possession) is provided in relation to Kumina (section 2.6.2, pp.81-84) and Haitian Vodun (section 2.6.2, note: 80, p.83)

Forbes, 2010 p.51), which was adopted by the 1982 World Conference on Cultural Policies held in Mexico. Together, these spiritual and cultural definitions provide a foundation from which this thesis can ideologically juxtapose Jamaican dancehall culture with notions of spirituality.

### ***3.3 Spirituality and religion***

#### ***3.3.1 Spirituality and religion, autonomous or synonymous?***

Contemporary popular culture offers a multiplicity of approaches for engaging spirituality within formal, orthodox, congregational, alternative and countercultural religious and non-religious settings, despite its definitional complexity. In the absence of an agreed comprehension of spirituality, very few scholars offer any clear explanation of its usage. Some acknowledge, '[c]oncepts such as “spirituality,” or indeed “religion” itself, do not have commonly agreed definitions’ (Lynch, 2005 p.3), others reference spirituality in relation to religion, whilst many simply use both terms synonymously. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines spirituality as:

1. Relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things; and,
2. Relating to religion or religious belief.

The former definition clearly outlines spirituality as concerning the individual and their relationship to the material and spirit worlds. However, the latter definition assumes spirituality and religion to be synonymous or inter-connected terms. The synonymous use of spirituality and religion from a Western perspective has historically facilitated the engagement of Christian terms and approaches as the lens through which other spiritual worldviews are judged and assessed. Jacob K. Olupona cites Wade Clark Roof’s twelfth century Christian usage of the term spirituality, ‘to indicate “the subjective life of faith” as opposed to religion’ (in Babawale and Alao, 2008 p.xviii) as an early interpretation. However, he later cites Roof’s expansion of spirituality, which includes:

... affirmation of a transcendent Deity to refer to the presence of the human spirit or soul ... [and] the inner life that is bound up with, and embedded within religious forms.

(Ibid)

Although this seemingly confirms spirituality's integration of both outlined OED definitions, Olupona offers an important distinction between spirituality and religion. He suggests that spirituality accommodates religious pluralism free from the restrictions inherent in a commitment to a single religious tradition. Yet, the danger here, Olupona rightly warns, is spirituality's association with 'New Age'<sup>109</sup> spirituality, which runs the risk of representing a selective 'spiritual shopping' (Foster, in Olupona, 2008 p.xx), tailored to individual tastes. This is echoed by Simon Robinson, who highlights the concerns of those who argue that spirituality defies definition as this imposes a rationality on what is intrinsically ephemeral, but accepts that by not defining spirituality it becomes, a 'slippery word' (Robinson, 2007 p.23), constantly changing to accommodate individual needs.

Conversely, from an African perspective, no clear distinction between religion and spirituality exists as most African ontology is based on the duality of a mortal and spiritual world. Thus, the lifelong responsibility of human beings is to maintain and restore, wherever broken, the balance between the mortal and spiritual worlds. Theologian John S. Mbiti (1969) contends:

Because traditional religions permeate all the departments of life, there is no formal distinction between the sacred and the secular, between the religious and nonreligious, between the spiritual and the material areas of life. Wherever the African is, there is his religion.

Mbiti, 1969 p.2

This presents spirituality and religion as inextricably linked. I therefore agree with Mbiti and other scholars who contend that it is both inappropriate and misleading

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<sup>109</sup> Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead (2005) provide a good insight into 'New Age' also termed 'alternative' or 'holistic' spirituality in their exploration of what they state as the 'spiritual revolution claim' (2005 p.x).

to use Western concepts of spirituality to speak to African and other non-Western cosmologies. Concepts of spirituality are often constructed around cultural and linguistic definitions, attitudes and processes that are presented and generally accepted as universal, but nevertheless reflect and reinforce Western Christian worldviews, determined by historically specific power relations.<sup>110</sup> The Caribbean's history of enslavement is a case in point where African concepts of spirituality were never seriously considered, much less accepted within the Western canon of spirituality instituted across the region, as scholars have noted (Morrish, 1982; Burton, 1997; Stewart, 2005). Thus, definitions of spirituality should be made culturally explicit and clearly outline the relationship and role of religion, taking into consideration the individual and group power relations it establishes.

### ***3.3.2 Spirituality and power***

The impact of power on spirituality is evident in relation to African holistic approaches to spirituality. This challenges Western boundaries between religion and spirituality, the sacred and secular, reason and corporeality, alongside ideas concerning moral coding, by being fluid and blurred (Ajayi, 1998; Beckford, 2006). This is evidenced by European attitudes to dance within African American slave communities. Sterling Stuckey observes:

Slaveholders never understood that a form of spirituality almost indistinguishable from art was central to the cultures from which blacks came. Distinguishing between the two for the African was like distinguishing between the sacred and the secular, and that distinction was not often made. African religion, therefore, could satisfy a whole range of human needs that for Europeans were splintered into secular compartments

Stuckey in Ramdhanie, 2005 p.10

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<sup>110</sup> Writing on the associated area of mysticism Richard King (1999 p.7-8) highlights the unproblematised scholastic transposition of Christian categories and values on other religions, cultures and experiences, whilst in relation to Yoruba dance, Omofolabo S. Ajayi (1998 pp.3-5) highlights Western culture's ambivalence towards dance and the body, causing them to be condemned from a Christian perspective, but revered as an important integral aspect of spiritual worship, as a defining part of the individual and their community within most African nations generally, Yoruba culture in particular.

Here, the socio-politico-economic power and needs of the West are clearly privileged over African cultural and artistic approaches to spirituality. Crossing and opposing sacred and secular distinctions, spirituality and religion facilitate the physical and psychological requirements of Africans. Furthermore, as theologian Paul Tillich aptly articulates, '[e]very religious act, not only in organized religion, but also in the most intimate movement of the soul, is culturally formed' (Tillich, 1959 p.42). The intrinsic importance foregrounded by Tillich is that of community, as his perspective of spirituality incorporates the cultural philosophies underpinning individual and community worldviews. Bob Ramdhanie reinforces the African emphasis on community in defining spirituality as, 'dance practice underpinned by a system of beliefs rooted in traditional African religion' (2005 p.9). The cultural specificity and collective nature of spirituality and its flexible application in varying contexts are underscored by dance in this instance.

Through dance and other artistic expressions African/diasporic people adopt, according to Kelly Brown Douglas, 'a spirituality of resistance' (1994 p.105), that is, a connection to God employing African/neo-African cultural heritage passed down generationally, providing direction, purpose, and survival strategies. In other words, cultural expression becomes a praxis-based approach to engendering change by enlisting God's support through one's divine gifts (Beckford, 2006).

Brown Douglas noticeably foregrounds a religious undergirding to spirituality, in which 'religio-cultural analysis' (1994 p.106) serves to elevate Black religious and cultural approaches to facilitating a spirituality of resistance and liberation. This reinforces the notion that African/neo-African people are 'children of God, made in God's own image' (ibid), and thereby of value and worth. A definition of spirituality must therefore be pro-active and particularly, from the perspective of the marginalised, incorporate the concept of individual and community liberation. I shall now switch focus to Jamaican spirituality.

### ***3.4 Jamaican spirituality***

In arguing dancehall's spiritual antecedents and religious coding, as outlined in the previous chapter this thesis focuses on Kumina, Revivalism, and Jonkonnu masquerade as three major African/neo-African dance influences on dancehall, evidenced by their frequent recurrence within its' movement vocabulary. Additionally, this chapter will explore Rastafari because of its direct spiritual association with reggae from which dancehall emerged.<sup>111</sup> To better comprehend the influence of these worldviews on dancehall culture and thereby assist the development of a definition for spirituality, it is necessary to begin by exploring the African philosophies and religious rituals underscoring Jamaica's African/neo-African practices.

#### ***3.4.1 Traditional African practices (pre-Christian/Islam)***

African spiritual practices included notions of a Supreme Being, or God, long before Africa's engagement with Europe, although the vast majority of indigenous African practices do not distinguish between the spiritual and religious, sacred and secular, the spirit and material worlds, as many indigenous scholars confirm (Mbiti, 1969; Idowu, 1973; Ajayi, 1998; Babawale and Alao, 2008). Refuting the inaccurate reports of early travel writers, anthropologists and missionaries, John S. Mbiti (1969) and E. Bolaji Idowu (1973) have been instrumental in correcting the misnomer that Africa and its numerous religions are God-less. Emeka C. Ekeke and Chike A. Ekeopara (2010) affirm:

‘Africans had known God before the missionaries came’ (Ray XI). This view gave Africans and their religion, which was battered and shattered by the missionaries who condemned and denigrated their religion, a new hope and integrity.

Ekeke and Ekeopara, 2010 p.209

This demonstrates, as a good many scholars concur, that Africans worshipped

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<sup>111</sup> Barry Chevannes (1971; 1990; 1994) makes strong connections between Revivalism and Rastafarianism in his early research.

‘One True God – [the] Supreme Being, who is called by different names in Africa’ (ibid). Mbiti himself decisively declares, ‘[t]he God described in the Bible is none other than the God who is already known in the framework of traditional African religiosity’ (Mbiti in Paris, 1992 pp.6-7). Thereby, any definition of spirituality must focus on a Supreme Being, with a hierarchical set of spirits, deities and/or divinities that mediate for human beings, who in turn give reverence to them and maintain the balance between the spirit and mortal worlds.

### ***3.4.2 Spiritual hierarchy***

Spirituality forms an intrinsic part of the African way of life and in most instances, underscores the cultural worldview of each specific group, community and individual within African and neo-African societies. Ancient African practices may seemingly comprise of a large pantheon of gods, but they may best be comprehended as deities or spirits serving God, the ‘Supreme Being’. Ghanaian author E. K. Braffi (1990), clarifies the Akan spiritual hierarchy, he scribes:

‘The gods or *abosom* have been in existence since creation. Therefore they are claimed to have been created by the Almighty God’

(Braffi, 1990 p.9)

The conception of the Almighty God being responsible for the creation of intermediary spirits and human beings negates the misinformed polytheistic conception of African spirituality in Western scholarship. Nigerian Igbo culture also emphasise the fact that deities do not hold equal status or power to the Almighty. Mbiti outlines the ontological hierarchy within most African belief systems, detailing:

‘God is the Originator and Sustainer of man; the Spirits [superhuman beings and died ancestors] explain the destiny of man; Man [human beings both living and unborn babies] is the centre of this ontology; the Animals, Plants and natural phenomena [biological life] and objects [non-biological life] constitute the environment in which man lives,



provides a means of existence and, if need be, man establishes a mystical relationship with them'

Mbiti, 1985 p.16

This cosmology places human beings at its centre, as does Malidoma Patrice Somé who stresses, '[h]armony is the main function of life and rituals' (1994 p.32). This reinforces the synergy between continental African, and Caribbean African/neo-African practices. Returning to the Jamaican context, African/neo-African spirituality incorporates, belief in God as the 'Supreme Being'; the duality of the spirit and mortal/material world; a pantheon of spirits (also referred to as deities, divinities, or 'lesser gods') occupying three levels, the heavenly host, earthbound spirits and ground spirits; humankind; and nature (animals, plant-life and inanimate objects) (Schuler, 1980; Seaga, 1982; Ryman, 1984; Chevannes, 1994; Lewin 2000; Stewart, 2005).

Dance, music and the corporeal dancing body are employed, in rituals, as a means to divine communication, to receive messages and gifts of divination and healing power through transformation and transcendence attained during the 'myal' possession state, as Lewin (2000) and Stewart (2005) support. Divine communication, it is hoped, has a positive and concrete impact on participants' daily living. African/neo-African practices emphasise the 'myal state' (spirit possession) as an important means of material and spiritual communication.

As detailed in the previous chapter, the African Myal and Obeah practices initially perceived as occupying polar ends of the supernatural spectrum became a durable spiritual ritual during enslavement. Many African/Jamaicans believe, as Chevannes enlightens, 'nature is one threshold across which the spirit world crosses into the world of the living' (in Hutton, 2015 p.158). He continues, 'one can acquire the power of spirits and control both worlds' (ibid). Both Obeah and Myal therefore rely on the committed belief engendered fear of their members to retain their power, thereby allowing the application of the Jamaican adage 'belief kill and belief cure' (Hutton, 2015 p.157). Myal's separation from Obeah in 1842 as an autonomous spiritual dance practice, and its subsequent amalgamation as part of the possession state within Jamaican African/neo-African ritual practices was instrumental to its

survival (Barrett, 1979; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005; Ryman, 2010).

The European homogenisation of African/neo-African practices such as Myal and Obeah, created a discordant ideological split between religion and daily life, enforced on enslaved Africans by Christian missionaries (Beckford, 2006). Hence, Africans never fully instated Western Christian spirituality in Jamaica, neither were Africans, fully accepted as Christians by the white plantocracy (Morrish, 1982; Burton, 1997; Stewart, 2005). The spirituality officially represented by formal orthodox religious institutions in Jamaica are in many instances mediated through African worldviews, as scholastic studies evidence (Beckwith, 1929; Deren, 1953; Demangles, 1992; Chevannes, 1994; Lewin, 2000; Daniel, 2005; Stewart, 2005). A definition of spirituality here might therefore be – the human endeavour to communicate with the Supreme Being and the divine community through ecstatic, joyful, cultural and artistic expression, maintaining balance and harmony between the spirit and natural worlds to secure Divine assistance. This guarantees for Africans, that God is truly on their side.

### ***3.4.3 African/neo-African and Christian syncretisation***

A number of foundational elements can be identified as commonalities between the various African/neo-African worldviews held across the Caribbean region. *Iconography*, includes dance, music and gesture, as a foundational element within African/neo-African spiritual practices, thus in Revivalism,<sup>112</sup> Maria Smith argues it enables, ‘expression of Revival philosophy and aesthetic preferences’ (2006:i). Iconography thereby, she continues:

... functions as symbolic language and carrier of culture ... storing information that makes it possible for Revivalists to reconnect with African Metaphysics thus reclaiming the African self.

Smith, 2006:ii

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<sup>112</sup> For a more detailed description of Revivalism, see: (Chapter 2, section 2.6.1)

Likewise, I suggest dancehall also contains iconography, maintaining and re-packaging African/neo-African metaphysical signs and symbols through dancehall dance vocabulary. Dianne M. Stewart (2005) presents six important defining features that symbolise the ‘skeletal frame of African spirituality’ (2005 p.xvi). These comprise of *Divination* – the translation of signs and symbols manifesting as physical or psychological symptoms; *Libation* – calling on the ‘Divine Community (divinities, spirits, and Ancestors)’ (2005 p.xv); *Incantation* – praise-songs permitting spirit/human communication; *Offering* – sacrifices (physical or symbolic giving or abstinence) honouring the ‘Divine Community’; *Visitation* – the myal state where human beings become possessed by the spirits, and ‘teachment’<sup>113</sup> (spiritual teaching) occurs; and lastly, *Communion* –reconnecting the spirit and mortal community in ‘collective thanksgiving for the [spiritual] blessings’ (ibid).

I have witnessed iconography, divination, libation, incantation, offering, visitation and communion in operation within the numerous African and Caribbean spiritual rituals I have had the opportunity to attend. Crucially, I have also observed their manifestation within many dancehall events. Hence, I seek to extend these spiritual categories by adding, *Devotion* – the commitment of the individual towards developing a personal communication channel to the Divine community; and *Bodification* – the presentation and display of the corporeal dancing body. *Bodification* differs from *Visitation*, as the former represents the many dancers who display and entertain the spirits without attaining the myal state, whilst the latter represents and is dependent upon attainment of the myal state for communication and ‘teachment’. Both contribute to the maintenance of balance between the spirit and material worlds. Somé explains, ‘[for] the Dagara, every person is an incarnation, that is, a spirit who has taken on a body. So our true nature is spiritual’ (1984 p.20). From Somé’s clarification, it is logical to conclude that human beings inherently possess the ability to communicate with the spirits. Thereby, a definition of spirituality may be – ritual practices and beliefs through which humanity attempts communication and re-engagement with the divine spirit community, establishing harmony to acquire a personal experience of the Divine. Spirituality therefore concerns the route and means

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<sup>113</sup> Teachment is a Jamaican term referring to supernatural education by the spirits inhabiting the spirit world. Imogene ‘Queenie’ Kennedy provides a good example of spiritual training in relation to her personal experience during a twenty-one day period of being in the myal state. See: (Schuler, 1980 pp.73-75).

through which communication with the Divine takes place.

#### ***3.4.4 Double-conscious syncretisation***

The integration of African/neo-African practices with Christianity is apparent in the fact that many African/Jamaicans hold ‘formal membership in the nonconformist [Church] denominations but informal participation in Myal’ (Chevannes, 1994 p.20). They maintain an orthodox front in good times, but when trouble arises, revert to African/neo-African practitioners for solutions. Kumina and/or Revival specialists, who may or may not also be Myal or Obeah practitioners, are often consulted. Furthermore, unlike Christianity, which sought to transfer spiritual knowledge through doctrine and the biblical text, Jamaican religious dance practices utilise Myalism, focusing on the experiencing of knowledge acquisition through spirit possession (Chevannes, 1994). Consequently, the conception of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit within the Christian trilogy is crucial to the incorporation of Myalism and Christianity within spirituality. This syncretism allows many African/Jamaicans to maintain Myalism as the state of possession by emphasising the Holy Spirit as the route to the father, above the intervention of Jesus Christ the Son (Stewart, 2005). So, within African/neo-African definitions spirituality is – an embodied awareness of the self, others and community, both spiritual and material, rooted in African belief systems grounded in one’s environment; the ability to acquire and negotiate extraordinary spiritual talents, skills and mystical deeds; the attainment of the myal state and therefore communication with the Divine spirit community through dance and artistic expression; and an ability to negotiate and accommodate others.

#### ***4.4.5 Rastafari***

Rastafari’s spiritual ethos is genealogically connected to Kumina, Revivalism and Buru (Bilby and Leib, 1985; Chevannes, 1994), as well as aspects of Christianity (Austin-Brooks, 1997), as earlier delineated. The key Rastafarian leaders Leonard Howell, Robert Hinds, Joseph Hibbert and Archibald Dunkley, despite each leading different ‘Rastafarian mansions’ (Barnet, 2012 p.2) or branches, all shared the

Rastafarian ideology of a Black God ‘Jah’, manifesting in the personality of H.I.M Emperor Haile Selassie I (Austin-Broos, 1984; Campbell, 1987; Chevannes, 1994; Barnett, 2012). Barry Chevannes describes Howell’s Rasta community based at Pinnacle estate, St Catherine (1940-1954) called the Howellites, as ‘dancing and singing to the rhythms of the *baandu* and *funde*, the two Kumina drums’ (1994 p.123). Chevannes notes Hibbert as being involved in ‘science’ (the occult) and implementing it within his mansion. Conversely, Dunkley did not permit any form of spiritual possession in his mansion, contrary to Hinds whose ‘King of Kings Mission was organized along the lines of a Revival group’ (Chevannes, 1994 p.127). Thus, Rastafari’s African/neo-African continuities were prominent in its early functioning and presentation.

However, Rastafari’s second wave of leaders, particularly those emanating from the Youth Black Faith,<sup>114</sup> deliberately eradicated any Revivalist and/or Kumina procedural remnants, employing instead the ‘intense debate and exposition they called reasoning’ (Barnett, 2012 p.19) to eliminate all possibilities of myal spirit engagement. They also instigated the title ‘Warrior’ or ‘Dreadful’ (Chevannes, 1994 p.156), for Rastafari devotees displaying (deep self-discipline and restraint), later shortened to ‘Dread’ (ibid), and the adoption of the identifying ‘dreadlocks’ mode of hair growth (ibid). The self-reference/greeting ‘I an/d I’, indicating that ‘Jah’, the Almighty or Supreme Being, resides within each individual (Cashmore, 1979; Chevannes, 1994; Farley, 2009) remained central to Rastafari’s African national mental and physical liberation approach.<sup>115</sup> To that end, Nyahbinghi, initially a ‘secret order sworn to “death to white oppressors”’ (Chevannes 1994 p.164), which Chevannes notes, ‘by the 1960s ... [expanded to] “death to black *and* white oppressors”’ (ibid) developed as a music and dance ‘death-by-magic ritual’ (ibid). However, today Nyahbinghi represents Rastafarian dance and musical expression.

The Rastafari African spiritual ethos is embodied in Jamaican popular music and dance, alongside other cultural expressions, including everyday Jamaican language use. Rastafari’s linguistic influences are observable within the engagement of dancehall dancers, who often use the term Jah, interchangeably with God, particularly

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<sup>114</sup> Michael Barnett (2012) details the Youth Black Faith Mansion branch of Rastafari founded by Arthur and Pan-Handle.

<sup>115</sup> For further details on Rastafari and reggae, see: (Chapter 2, section 2.8.5 pp.96-99).

amongst the ‘man dem’.<sup>116</sup> For example, Orville ‘Dancehall Professor’ Hall highlights, ‘a whole heap (a lot) a di yute dem seh (of the youths say) “Jah kno star!” (God knows my friend)’ (interview, 2010, 0:07:26.0), which is a common expression used in both positive and negative situations. Rastafari’s spiritual influence manifests also in the Nyabinghi dance movements<sup>117</sup> incorporated into Reggae dance, providing its inherent spirituality. Thereby, a definition of spirituality includes – a deeply embodied awareness of self in relation to others, and a material community, rooted in African beliefs systems; the facility to acquire and negotiate extraordinary mystical skills; the use of dance and artistic expression as a liberation praxis strategy; personal communication with Jah, the Supreme Being.

### ***3.5 Christian perspectives on spirituality***

Christian concepts of spirituality are predominantly linked to religion, however, a clear distinction between spirituality as devotion, and religion as a structural framework, is offered by ethnomusicologist Emmett G. Price III, who holds:

Different from religion, spirituality is an individual and unique journey that is not systematic or formulaic but is based on a desire for harmony: harmony with self, harmony with society, and harmony with the cosmic universe. Religion is based on the assumed presence of spirituality, but also offers an institutional framework that grounds beliefs and systematizes worship ... Regardless of context, the ultimate goal of both spirituality and religion is transformation

Price III, in Brown, 2010 p.158

Thereby, spirituality represents a devotional pathway to an external energy or force referred to by different names – God, the ‘Supreme-Being’, Jehovah, Allah, Jah, etc. A hierarchical religious structure, based on the religious institution and cultural background of the believer determines how perceptions of spiritual devotion are generally formalised. From a Western perspective, Christianity is positioned at the

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<sup>116</sup> For an explanation of the contested replacement of the term ‘males’ by ‘man dem’ see: (*Introduction chapter*, section h).

<sup>117</sup> For a description and discussion of Nyabinghi see: (chapter 2, section 2.8.5).

pinnacle, representing various denominations – Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Moravians, Methodists, Pentecostalism, Mormons, Quakers, Amish, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses, the United-Reformed movement etc. Other world religions include – Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Shinto, etc. However, the numerous African and neo-African Caribbean religious practices are repeatedly inaccurately homogenised and categorised under Paganism or Animism etc., as scholars opine (Mbiti, 1969; Hood, 1990).

Christian spirituality predominantly focuses on the relationship between God and human beings, with reason prioritised over the corporeal body. In this engagement reason is privileged through the intellectual and educational elite, manifesting in its ideological detachment from the sinful carnal body (Hood, 1990; Ajayi, 1998). I explore this in greater detail shortly in relation to spirituality and the body. This, nonetheless, creates a problematic dichotomy for Christianity, as the corporeal body is central to the New Testament teachings and the symbolic use of Christ's body for the redemption of humankind. It is recorded:

{26:26} And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed [it,] and brake [it,] and gave [it] to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. {26:27} And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; {26:28} For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Mathew 26:26-28

Perceived as sinful, the flesh is hereby established as the route to the divine. The discordant relationship between spirituality and daily life instituted by Christian missionaries on enslaved Africans manifests a dichotomous discord between the sacred and secular in Jamaican and Caribbean Christianity generally. However, no such dichotomy exists within African/neo-African spirituality and their translation of Christianity as Kelly Brown Douglas articulates:

‘... sexuality is that fundamental dimension of human beings that governs intimate, sensual, affective, emotional, and sexual relationships. Human sexuality and spirituality are inextricably linked

because both involve a person's relationship to God ... all that is of the earthly realm is God's and is sacred'

Brown Douglas, 1999 p.84

From an African/neo-African perspective the body is reconciled with reason and spiritually maintains a central role, as it is through corporeal engagement that the spirit enters and the individual is animated. Alistair E. McGrath (2001) highlights spirituality's Hebrew derivation 'ruach', which translates as 'spirit', encompassing 'breath' or 'wind', meaning that which provides life to the corporeal body. Spirituality thereby fully translates as 'the life of faith ... that which animates the life of believers' (2001 p.2). This reinforces spirituality as a devotional route to and personal relationship with God. Thereby a definition of spirituality may be – a personal relationship with God encompassing the intimate, sensual, affective, emotional, and sexual aspects of humanity.

McGrath also provides four key definitional elements to Christian spirituality: 1. Knowing God the Divine, not just knowing about God; 2. Experiencing the Divine; 3. Transformation of one's mode of living; and 4. Attaining Christian authenticity in thought and action, meaning the attainment of an authentic understanding of our relation to the world, others and nature (1999 p.4). McGrath cites George Ganss, Richard McBrien, Don E. Saliers, Philip Sheldrake, William Stringfellow and Richard Woods who all reference spirituality in relation to religion.

Interestingly, Stringfellow and Woods include the body within their definitions of spirituality. Stringfellow defines spirituality as engaging a holistic approach, involving the unification of the 'body, mind, and soul, place and relationships' across time and space, connecting the whole being to nature and the Divine (in McGrath, 2001 p.4). Accordingly, Woods describes spirituality as 'the self-transcending character of all human persons' (ibid), that enables escape from the mundane performative self. Woods' definition most clearly expresses the notion of spirituality as enabling personal transformation, transcendence and development. Ironically, this enables all four of McGrath's key definitional elements to be unmistakably articulated when applied to African/neo-African practices, as earlier outlined.



Robert Beckford suggests a new way of perceiving spirituality, which is inherently presented as the moving of the Holy Spirit, or the entering of the Divine God within the individual and as such the experiencing of a ‘socio-political pneumatology ... to provide a holistic, socially-engaged and practical model of the spirit’ (2006 p.128). This praxis based experiential spirituality is a mode through which the church can therefore arm individuals with the tools for what Beckford terms ‘**spiritual** warfare, fighting with **spiritual** weaponry such as worship, song, prayer and fasting’ (2006 p.20), in the engagement of individuals’ specialisms to engender spiritual, socio-economic and cultural change. A Christian spiritual definition must involve – belief in a transcendent God, spiritual texts, sacred symbols, and spaces, as well as a universal set of common or core aspects.

### ***3.6 Spirituality as a broad set of alternative practices and belief systems***

Within contemporary postmodern societies, spirituality and religion are increasingly perceived and engaged as autonomous entities, with spirituality viewed as being ‘about the practice and outworking of the spirit’ (Robinson in Parry et al 2007 p.24). This highlights individual or personal autonomy to any particular group or community, leading in part, to a decline in membership of formal and congregational religious institutions such as Christianity. As spirituality is sought in alternative countercultural spaces, particularly in Western capitalist societies, scholars note that a gradual shift has occurred placing emphasis on individual spiritual development (Beaudoin, 1998; Forbes and Mahan, 2000; Heelas and Woodhead, 2005; Lynch, 2005; St John, 2011).

Spirituality is an important force within life, providing a mode to accessing the external life source, and is a transcendent/transformative medium giving direction and purpose to life within contemporary society (Parry et al, 2007). Condensed into what Gordon Lynch (2005) identifies as the functionalist approach, spirituality serves three main functions. Firstly, the social function – offers an organising community, operating under a set of guiding principles to assist daily living; Secondly, an existential or hermeneutical function – providing ‘resources (e.g., myths, rituals, symbols, beliefs, values, narratives) that may help people to live with a sense of

identity, meaning and purpose’ and/or; thirdly a transcendental function – a channel allowing individuals to transform and experience the divinity of God. Rather than an either or approach, most people probably adopt elements from all three categories, which I shall explore in relation to popular culture in an attempt to define spirituality.

### ***3.6.1 Social function***

Frequently employed in the development of personal identity, popular culture has assisted generations of contemporary youths to discover their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual being. Academics have examined spirituality and religion in relation to sports (Edge, 2012; Parry, et al 2007), media (Detweiler, and Taylor 2003), celebrity (Dyson, 2001; 2004; Laderman, 2009) and music (Cone, 1999; Brown Douglas, 2012) amongst other genres within popular culture. Consequently, popular culture represents, as Stuart Hall proposes, the ‘commodification, of the industries where culture enters directly into the circuits of a dominant technology – the circuits of power and capital’ (2005 p.472). Music, dance and technology have historically played major roles in the development and negotiation of popular culture and social identity, in relation to class, gender, race, colour, sexuality and other ‘subcultural’ (Hebdige, 1979) identifying symbols. From these identifiers ‘narratives’ (Gelder, 2007)<sup>118</sup> are constructed that effectively ‘binds people into a social order of shared beliefs and values’ (Lynch, 2005 p.28). This fits with Emilé Durkheim’s view of religion as functioning as ‘an eminently social thing’ (Durkheim and Fields, 1995 p.9). The agreed social boundaries of subcultural membership, positions its members outside society’s normative centre. For example, reggae/dancehall might be perceived as occupying the centre of indigenous Jamaican culture, but it remains marginal to Jamaica’s hegemony and mainstream global dance cultures. Spirituality is the relationship and communication between individuals, groups and the communities in which they sit, made manifest through coded and culturally specific artistic expression and negotiated performativity.

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<sup>118</sup> Narratives are ideas that together create what Gelder describes as ‘effects’ or ‘affects’ that engender reactions that formulate the perceptions that with time become associated with a particular group, whether true or false. See: (Gelder, 2007).

Exploring spirituality's social function through artistic expression, anthropologist Graham St John (2011; 2012) argues that the sensual experiences felt by participants of 'techno' (electronic) music within 'psychedelic festivals', replicates the feelings stirred in spiritual sites and spaces. St John contends that rave culture represents a 'unique crossroads of sound, vision, cybernetics, pharmacology [recreational drug use], and embodiment in dance' (2011 p.210). Employing 'rave technologies' including audio-visual effects, 'Psychedelic festivals' construct a multi-layered sensory engagement. In contrast, reggae/dancehall's emphasis on dance, music and lyrical content create a multi-layered sensory 'vibe' (atmosphere), that engender feelings of 'communitas' (Turner, 1969), an intense sense of community with and/or without the use of pharmacology enabling individuals, I argue, to experience personal spiritual upliftment.

'Rave technologies', according to Jo Hall, 'encourag[es] participants to move from tracing individual pathways through the event to a "consciousness of being part of something much larger"' (2009 p.62). Thereby, part of the social function of electronic dance music is to facilitate altered states of consciousness, creating larger 'collective identities' (Hall, 2009), which correspond with Benedict Anderson's (1989) 'imagined communities', or groupings amongst its numerous participants whose transformations resonate with the spiritual experience. St John (2011) recognises 'psychedelic trance' (psytrance) emerging out of 1960s and 70s beach parties in the Goa province of India, as a transcendent experience, manifesting altered states of consciousness. Associated with practices he terms 'Psychotechnologies', St John describes psytrance as:

... a repository for those practicing and experimenting with alternative spiritual dispositions who are open to traverse human/spirit world boundaries outside mainstream religious practice and faith.

St John, 2011 p.218

This demonstrates a comprehension of the world as comprising of both the material and spiritual dimension that 'psytrance' culture attempts to reproduce. St John goes further, to acknowledge the spirit world as accommodating the 'Divine',

referencing it as being ‘variously encountered in this period as the “source,” the “One,” “godhead,” “Great Spirit,” “Mother Nature,” or “Self”’ (2011 p.204). For St John, ‘psytrance’, in referencing an external energy, is what distinguishes it from rave music’s ‘techno trance’, which he argues in line with François Gauthier (in St John 2011), is gratuitous and self-indulgent so does not constitute a possessive dance. Thereby, popular culture through ‘psytrance’ offers some key considerations for the definition of spirituality, particularly in relation to dancehall culture. Spiritual forms must refer beyond themselves to incorporate the conception of a dual spirit and material world. Its social function should include the idea of community or ‘communitas’ (Turner, 1969), allowing individuals to experience something larger than them. Personal transcendence is an important element as a medium through which to experience and navigate the dual worlds. Importantly, spirituality exploits artistic expression, particularly dance, music and the body, as sensory transcendent and transformational mediums.

### ***3.6.2 Existential/hermeneutical function (Popular culture and virtual faith)***

Contemporary popular culture incorporates a multiplicity of signs and symbols including music, media, fashion, games, technology and electronic media, etc., that like religious institutions, provide individuals with resources to attain a sense of meaning, direction and identity in their lives. Popular culture offers countercultural approaches for spirituality, as globally, numerous people engage it as ‘*Virtual Faith*’ (Beaudoin, 1998). Writing on ‘Generation X’ (individuals born in the 1960s and 70s), Tom Beaudoin suggests that popular culture represents a rejection of organised religion, providing ‘an inchoate [or fledgling] GenX spirituality’ (1998 p.23), which subsequent generations now use in shaping the modern world. Conversely, others question whether popular culture assists in shaping ‘public ideas or merely acts as a mirror reflecting our ideas back to us’ (Detweiler and Taylor, 2003 p.19). Regardless of one’s standpoint, popular culture provides a plethora of contemporary signs and symbols that now govern people’s engagement with society’s major institutions, including religion, education, government, media and industry (Rawls, 1971).

Most people within contemporary societies recognise and continually transfer

symbolic resources between sacred and secular spaces, as popular cultural symbols are communicated across multiple platforms (radio, internet, television, films, books, etc.) (Van de Port, 2006; Lynch, 2007). Facebook, Twitter, Apple, McDonald's, Puma, Nike and dancehall's fashion and styles all feature amongst the signs and symbols found in and around most public buildings. Churches, mosques, synagogues etc., are also invaded by cultural signifiers, as signage, marketing, or on electronic technology used by the leadership, staff and/or members. Many of these signifiers are now as recognisable as religious iconography, including the cross, or the Madonna and child.

Symbols work as 'signifying practices', a notion developed by Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, as a system in which a sign or symbol has two component parts, a 'signifier' comprising of a sound, object or image and a 'signified' idea or concept. Anything that represents something else may be considered a sign, although, the relationship between signs and concepts must be agreed and learnt by a particular community. From a Christian perspective, whether written, an image, or object, the *sign* of the cross acts as a *signifier* of Christ's body crucified on the cross, which signifies redemption and the forgiveness of sin for humankind. However, the cross loses its significance for those outside of the Christian faith, without knowledge of its teachings, for whom it may merely signify a crossroads, for example.

Scholars have read religious meaning into many iconic symbols using signifying practices (Detweiler and Taylor 2003; Lynch, 2005). For example, the Twitter bird resonates with the dove, first appearing biblically when used by Noah in the Ark to test if the floods had receded (Genesis 8:8-12). It reappears, communicating God's approval of Jesus's baptism in the New Testament, which states, 'lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him' (Mathew 3:16). Popular culture is underpinned by what Lynch regards as 'the set of resources (e.g., myths, rituals, symbols, beliefs, values, narratives)' (2005 p.28), forming contemporary symbolisms that inform people's sense of morality and justice. As more and more scholars attempt to develop a 'theological [or spiritual] aesthetics of popular culture' (Lynch, 2005 p.185), dancehall culture has a contribution to make as it encompasses numerous symbols that may convey religious signification. The definition of spirituality – must therefore reference the signs and

symbols forming the resources that create the boundaries of faith, whilst reaching beyond its own boundaries to other communities to achieve universality.

### ***3.6.3 Transcendent function***

Evidence exists that suggests many people now reference themselves as being ‘spiritual’ as opposed to ‘religious’. Theology scholars Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead (2005) report, ‘terms like spirituality, holism, New Age, mind-body-spirit, yoga, feng shui, chi and chakra have become more common in the general culture than traditional Christian vocabulary’ (2005 p.1). This observation demonstrates spirituality’s increasing importance, although pursued and defined through contemporary holistic lifestyle philosophies.

Holistic lifestyle philosophies, which I term ‘holilifestyles’ as an abbreviation for somatic (embodied or experiential) practices, can be considered ‘self-transcendence’ (Robinson in Parry et al, 2007) spirituality. The term ‘holilifestyle’ acknowledges the spiritual or holy philosophies that underscore practices such as Reiki, meaning ‘spiritually guided life force energy’<sup>119</sup>, or Buddhist meditation etc., whilst forming an umbrella term for alternative holistic philosophies and practices. Hazrat Inayat Khan, founder of universal Sufism asserts, ‘[t]o attain spirituality is to realize that the whole universe is one symphony in which every individual is one note ... It is not following a religion, it is living a religion, making one’s life a religion, which is necessary’ (in Price III, 2010 p.158). Khan’s assertion, foregrounds devotion as a primary element within definitions of spirituality, as ‘holilifestyle’ philosophies now form an intrinsic part of the daily routines shaping individual spiritual worldviews and devotional practices, in line with Khan’s definition. ‘Holilifestyle’ philosophies legitimise the primacy of the individual ‘self’, dubbed the ‘subjective turn’ by Heelas and Woodhead. They argue:

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<sup>119</sup> The International Center for Reiki Training, provides this explanation as part of its description of Reiki as a Japanese holistic form that focuses on both the psychological and physical well-being of individuals, by unifying the mind, body, emotions and spirit through the discharging of a ‘life force energy’ when laying hands on patients. See: <http://www.reiki.org/faq/whatisreiki.html>

“The turn” ... is a turn away from life lived in terms of external or “objective” roles, duties and obligations, and a turn towards life lived by reference to one’s own subjective experiences.

Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.2

Thereby, spirituality is a subjective rejection of living ‘life-as’ (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005), meaning conducting one’s life in fulfilment of the expectant demands of others, including family, friends, or an external energy such as God, as ‘primary “sources of significance”’ (Taylor in Heelas and Woodhead, 2005 p.3). Conversely, ‘the turn’, encourages individuals to adopt a ‘subjective-life’ (ibid), focussing internally, being life’s primary concern and so determining life’s values, desires and solutions oneself. Transcendence and transformation is no longer the sole domain of formal or orthodox religions, but is sought through New Age spirituality, complimentary spiritual practices (Aromatherapy, Chanting, Humour, Hypnosis, Mindfulness, Reiki, Reflexology, Light etc.), TranceDance, Shamanism, Yoga, music and dance in the development of personal identity. Thereby, spirituality is – a circular dance, where personal transcendence and/or transformation, breathes life into each important link within the chain, connecting each individual to the Supreme Being whose neck it encircles. Therefore spirituality is an embodied, lived experience and evolving journey.

### ***3.7 Dance and the corporeal dancing body***

Although frequently linked to reason, spirituality nevertheless involves and is highly dependent on performative action in its manifestations. Dance and the corporeal body occupies a central role within the spiritual rituals and worldview of African/neo-African practices such as Kumina, Revivalism and Jonkonnu in Jamaica, Sango (Shango) and Spiritual Baptists in Trinidad and Tobago, Haitian Vodun, Cuban Yoruba, and Bahian Condomblé amongst many other practices. These forms all represent continuities from Africa past, present and future.

In an attempt to define spirituality in relation to the corporeal dancing body, the OED’s conception of it as ‘affecting the human spirit or soul’ seems the most

appropriate starting point within Jamaican African/neo-African practices, the biblical context and the broader Caribbean region. The corporeal dancing body is the main conduit through which spirituality is mediated from an African perspective, transmitting semiotic meaning through dance, to please and appease God as the Supreme Being, the intermediary spirits and ancestors who assist humankind, and human beings themselves (Ryman, 1984; Farris Thompson, 1984; Ajayi, 1999; Lewin 2000 Hutton, 2015). The Jamaican Revival Mother Margaret Williams shares her experience of the myal spirit:

When you are in the spirit, you feel that the world is going around and you turn without you want[ing] to turn. When the spirit overflows within you, you have to shout and shout and shout.

Williams in Braithwaite, 1978 p.60

Equally, Kumina specialist Imogene 'Queenie' Kennedy also reveals her experience of the spirit. She declares:

When the myal going take you, now, you whole body become like it cold, see? And you feel you feet them draw, and you neck ... sometime you neck fall away back, yah so ...

When the myal possession is going to take over and control you, your whole body becomes as if it is cold, understand? And you feel your feet being pulled (controlled), and your neck ... sometimes your neck falls backwards ...

Queenie in Schuler, 1980 p.78

Both accounts highlight spirituality as being a process in which an external energy or force enters the individual, causing them to negotiate control over their own corporeality. This reinforces the African belief that the corporeal dancing body serves the important spiritual role of navigating the duality of the spirit and material worlds. Conversely, Omofolabo S. Ajayi, highlights the inconsistency of the Western



Christian view of the body, remarking:

Christian moral ethics vacillate between perceiving the body as the site of soul/spirit and the temple of God on one hand and, on the other, as the weak flesh, the base of carnality, and the ultimate house of sin.

Ajayi, 1998 p.3

This dichotomy is compounded by the church's perception of dance as being 'the ultimate manifestation of the sinful flesh' (Ajayi, 1998 p.23). In contrast, Yoruba belief respects the body, regarding it Ajayi declares, as 'a site of culture, beauty, art, expression and spirituality' (1998, p.3). I wholeheartedly agree with Ajayi's submission that Africans have long recognised that the sinful corporeal body can be cleansed and used anew. Furthermore, the body is what facilitates the Holy Trinity, as Christ, '... the word was made flesh' (John 1:14), creating a direct link between human beings, God and the Holy Spirit. Importantly, a Christian precedence exists pertaining to dance in the biblical texts, in king David's dance to praise God, (2 Samuel 6:14-16), quoted in the introduction.<sup>120</sup>

David's dance demonstrates the importance of artistic expression as spiritual worship. The inextricable link between music and dance is apparent in the sounding of the trumpet and the accompanying chants. However, the Bible marks the negative perception of the dancing body. It is written, 'Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart' (2 Samuel 6:16). Michal's moral disdain for David's dancing is related, in part, to David's level of undress. This equates with the levels of undress amongst many female members within the dancehall space, which contributes to the slackness trope now associated with dancehall (Cooper, 2004; Watson, 2011; Hyman, 2012). David reinforces the virtue of dance in his rebuttal of Michal's scorn; however, dancehall's resistance to hegemonic morality has yet to be acknowledged by many dancehall scholars. Thus, spirituality at this juncture may be defined as – the personal physical and emotional surrender of one's will in the ecstatic expression of joy in praise of the Supreme Being.

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<sup>120</sup> See: (*Introduction chapter*, section 1.4).

The corporeal body, ritualised in dance and music expresses an active subversion of Western values in both its performativity and performance of marginalised African expressions. Moreover, it represents the reinstitution of an African/neo-African comprehension of spirituality and aesthetic judgement in which the former is experientially materialised both by and through the later. Chevannes fittingly articulates this:

When followers found him [God] it was to be filled by him, to be possessed ... the quintessential experience of the myalized Christianity, replacing prayer and hymn singing. And this experience Myal ritualized in circular gatherings away from the plantations, where worshippers danced and groaned until struck to the ground by the spirit. In this state they remained until he released them, ready to be cleansed by the waters of baptism.

Chevannes, 1994 p.19

As earlier established, by virtue of the Holy Spirit signifying God residing within humanity and humanity thereby becoming an extension of God, the body assumes a level of importance. Clinton A. Hutton (2015) advances the African approach to spirituality as being:

... conceptually and methodologically rooted in the weaving or gathering of nations of African spirits, cosmologies, aesthetics and rituals as the basis for interpreting, appropriating and incorporating other forms ... into a diasporic expression of their presence'

Hutton 2015 p.100

The importance of facilitating the manifestation of the spirits alongside the intrinsic valuing of the self is made apparent here. The 'smaddification' (Mills 1997), 'smadditisation' (Nettleford, in Scott, 2006 p.227), or 'smaddityzin' (Stanley-Niaah, 2013), meaning the foregrounding of the individual self as being of importance and worth, is critical within conceptions of spirituality, as the individual and their corporeality form an integral aspect of African/neo-African cosmology. Facilitating

the build up to and onset of the myal state, the dancer's corporeal transcendence increases their profile and status both within the spirit and material worlds.

The ability to transcend to the myal state is a prerequisite for many of the higher spiritual posts, including grade 'A' Kumina queens or kings,<sup>121</sup> Revival Shepherds or Captains, Revival Mothers and certain Jonkonnu characters, as some historical scholarship evidences (Beckwith, 1929; Ryman, 1984; Bilby, 1984; Wynter in Coester and Bender, 2015). Lena Delgado de Torres (2010) likens the dancehall queens to the queens occupying the African/neo-African leadership roles in Kumina, Revival, Bruckins and Rastafari. Excluding Rastafarians, these female figures communicate with the spiritual realm and are therefore well respected within the leadership hierarchy.<sup>122</sup> This assists in raising the profile of the dancehall queens. Regarded as the public face of the female engagement in dance, dancehall queens frequently lead the immediate build up to the explosion of energy many perceive as the onset of 'madness', during the state of possession or myal within the dancehall space.<sup>123</sup> Torres explains:

Just as night blends into daybreak at the dance, the borderlines are blurred between presence of the self and states of spirit possession. Dancehall creates feelings of ecstasy, or being transported outside of the self in rapturous contemplation of the divine. These extraordinary experiences become the everyday lives of the dancers.

Delgado de Torres 2010 p.3

Dance is a way of moving and operating that demonstrates to onlookers a particular worldview, a change of consciousness and/or corporeal engagement with the material world in the dancer's everyday life. Stanley-Niaah also acknowledges dancehall dance as facilitating a spiritual agency positing '[it] is the act of communicating with Spirit for healing at the level of the community/village, body and

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<sup>121</sup> Kumina queens and kings are graded A and B to distinguish their status and abilities. Grade A being the highest ranking, with spiritual as well as organizational duties and capabilities. See: (Ryman, 1984 pp.81-128).

<sup>122</sup> Jean Besson discusses the status of women and the nicknames and titles positions of authority may attract. See: (Besson, 2002 p.17).

<sup>123</sup> Nadine White (2013) investigates dancehall queen dancers questioning whether they are 'vulgar or skilled?' as dancehall's perceived trendsetters and lead dancers.

soul' (2010 p.89). Likewise, despite classifying it as a secular space, Hope acknowledges dancehall as also functioning as a ritual space where, 'marginalized children of the poverty-stricken inner cities of Kingston ... can bruk 'way [break away] and indulge in frenetic, spiritual rituals of self-affirmation and renewal' (Hope, 2006a p.128). Yet until now there has been no in-depth study into dancehall and spirituality. On the contrary, Torres remarks, '[t]here is a marked absence of any Dancehall discourses openly promoting Myal or "spirit possession through dance," although it is quite clear that dancers go into another psychic state while performing' (2010 p.11). Spirituality is therefore: performance and performative behaviour, engendering transformation within the dancer, causing a temporary physical and psychological change in their crossing between the mortal and spirit worlds.

Therefore the main purpose spiritual dances serve is the achieving of the myal state of possession by its participants, thereby, facilitating communication with the Supreme Being via the spirits, ancestral or otherwise. Spirituality therefore must necessarily include the bodily manifestation of spirits or deities through the temporary displacement of the spirit of a living human being, during the myal state (Deren, 1953; Daniel, 2005).

### ***3.8 Discussion***

Scholars are beginning to concede that dancehall has spiritual continuities. Carolyn Cooper presents dancehall as representing female corporeal fertility and a 'continuity of West African traditions of embodied spirituality in the diaspora' (2004 p.21). Conversely Donna P. Hope (2006b; 2010) perceives dancehall as a secular space, reflecting the complex and often contradictory facets of Jamaican masculinity. Yet, Christopher A. Walker (2008), Sonjah Stanley-Niaah (2010) and Lena Delgado de Torres (2010) all recognise and present dancehall in relation to the sacred, ritualistic and spiritual retentions of the African/neo-African practices within its genealogy.

Stanley-Niaah (2010) employs ritual and spirituality almost interchangeably, making a convincing argument for dancehall's consideration as a ritual practice. In a definition of sorts, she outlines spirituality as being, 'oneiric, metaphysical and esoteric' (2010 p.87). She extends the spiritual conception, proposing ritual is, 'the act of

communicating with Spirit for healing at the level of community/village, body and soul ... often including ancestors, for transformation and healing through reconnection with purpose' (2010 p.89). This underscores the culturally inscribed, functional nature of spirituality, as dance becomes an interconnected physical and psychological transformative communication ritual. Although Stanley-Niaah rigorously explores the spatial geography of the dancehall space, she does not explicitly explore the spatial links between the spiritual and material realms and the corporeal body's mediation of the two in any depth, as this thesis attempts to do. Definitions of spirituality must include – a strong geographical and cultural ethos; it must acknowledge both the material and spiritual communities comprised by the individuals and groups forming 'imagined' communities (Anderson, 1983),<sup>124</sup> both physical and spiritual,<sup>125</sup> that maintain the spiritual and religious worldviews and approaches to life that transverse and erode sacred and secular distinctions.

### ***3.9 Conclusion***

This chapter has explored spirituality as a pathway to the divine and as a way of life or holilifestyle choices. In doing so it has demonstrated how dance, music, movement and the corporeal body have historically combined to create spiritual rituals of survival and devotion, honouring God, the Supreme Being. Hence, in the African context, as John Mbiti states, '[w]herever the African is, there is his religion' (Mbiti, 1969 p.2), as religion and spirituality are regarded as synonymous by most Africans. Conversely, from a Christian perspective, spirituality is the life guiding belief system, whilst religion is the institutional framework that structures it, establishing the moral coding of society.

A loose definition for spirituality would therefore include: Belief in a 'Supreme Being' or 'God-head'; dual or parallel spirit and mortal/material worlds; a pantheon

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<sup>124</sup> Benedict Anderson (1983) proposes that ideas of nation-ness and affinities to communities beyond one's personal and physical engagement and experience are imagined within elastic boundaries, as where one community stops another begins and at times overlap.

<sup>125</sup> John S. Mbiti (1969) explains that spirituality and religion are part of the individual's foundational being and kinship existence; therefore the notion of belonging to a community composing of the living and the spirit world, is inherent within the individual's participation in life itself. Olive Lewin (2000) further details this conception of the material and spiritual community, as explored in the section on Jamaican spirituality.

of spirits (also referred to as lesser gods, divinities, or deities); use of the corporeal dancing body as an artistic and expressive conduit; submission to the will of the Supreme Being; it must be culturally specific, whilst maintaining a certain universality; it must engender dynamic leaders and functionaries; it must be self focused, whilst incorporating group and community communion; incorporate signs and symbolisms; rituals; space and place; enable ecstatic participation, joy and transformational transcendence; and provide a set of resources for its members to negotiate all of the above (existential/hermeneutic resources). African/neo-African spirituality involves special ritual languages, understood only by its members; secrecy as part of the initiation code of responsibility and an element of masking, which may all be found within the dancehall space.

As earlier stated, to define spirituality is akin to defining life itself. As A. D. Appea (in Braffi, 1990) suggests, spirituality and/or religion can be multiplied by the number of people living in the world at any one time, as each individual, has their own nuanced interpretation and comprehension of it, even those sharing the same belief system or religion, culture, family or shrine. However, what is certain is that spirituality in the African/neo-African context is bound up with music and dance through the corporeal dancing body, facilitating the conception of dance as a 'collective prayer' (Nii-Yartey, 2013).

## **Chapter 4. The Massive arrive: *Methodology and outline of the main players***

### ***4.1 Introduction***

This research is a qualitative exploration into spiritual embodiment within reggae/dancehall dance vocabulary, employing ethnographic research methodology, including multi-sited, and multi-visit ‘field-research’ methods (Marcus, 1995; Hannerz, 2003). I investigate reggae/dancehall incorporating a theorisation of spirituality and the corporeal dancing body to address three main research questions: Firstly, *is the spiritual worldview of African forbears reimagined within the dancehall space?* Secondly, *is the dancing body a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space?* Finally, *what spiritualities are emerging from dancehall?*

### ***4.2 Chapter structure***

This chapter presents the main ethnographic methods engaged in presenting dancehall as a means to experiencing ‘Divine communication’ (Tillich, 1952) from the perspective of dancehall practitioners. I begin with an overview of ethnographic methodology, followed by ethnographic concerns. I then delineate each of the ethnographic methods I employ. In addressing the use of Multi-site and Multi-visit ethnography, I outline the process of *location selection*; the *importance of social and cultural contexts*; and *how I aim to arrive at spirituality in dancehall*. I then explore issue of *access to venues, artists, and gatekeepers*, before concluding with a short Summary.

### ***4.3 Ethnographic methodology***

As scholars have established, ethnography is approached as both methodology, and method; however, as a qualitative research methodology ethnography’s multiple research methods are used for empirical data collection, analysis and ‘writing up’

theory (Marcus, 1995; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Lillis, 2008; Atkinson et al, 2011). According to dance ethnographer Deidre Sklar, “ethnography” literally means “portrait of a people” (Sklar, 1991 p.6). She further clarifies, “portrait” is too thin and two-dimensional a metaphor ... for an ethnographer seeks not only to describe but to understand what constitutes a people's cultural knowledge’ (Sklar, 1991 p.6). Thus, ethnography attempts to comprehend the worldview and modes of meaning making of a particular community from their perspective.

Ethnographic methodology, incorporating multiple qualitative research methods covering multiple disciplines including: Participant observation; informal or semi-structured interviews; thick description; auto/ethnography; visual ethnographic methods; dance analysis; and secondary data collection, which together facilitate ‘the weaving together of data in order to understand a particular phenomenon’ (Lillis, 2008 p.356). Ethnographic methods form the tools that guide the reader to an authentic conception of the complex social interactions governing a particular worldview. Ethnography enables researchers to develop a dynamic ethical, flexible and experiential approach in creating new knowledge, the principle demand of academic research.

#### ***4.4 Ethnographic concerns***

Christian Scharen and Aana Marie Vigen’s (2011) working definition for their theological ethnography provides a useful framework for ethnographic study:

... as a process of attentive study of, and learning from, people—their words, practices, traditions, experiences, memories, insights—in particular times and places in order to understand how they make meaning (cultural, religious, ethical) and what they can teach us about reality, truth, beauty, moral responsibility, relationships and the divine, etc. The aim is to understand what God, human relationships, and the world look like from their perspective.

Scharen and Vigen, 2011 p.16



This is in stark contrast to the problematic classic conception of ethnography emerging, according to Hammersley and Atkinson, ‘in nineteenth-century Western anthropology, where an ethnography was a descriptive account of a community or culture, usually one located outside the West’ (2007 p.1). Most classic notions of ethnography reinforce patriarchal white supremacist notions of ‘otherness’ within the relationship between researchers and research subjects. This raises issues of emic (insider) and etic (outsider) positioning which emphasises many hierarchical assumptions embedded within the ‘outsider’ gaze. It implies that the Western gaze can objectively analyze, interpret, and translate the inner workings, and symbolic meanings within the lived communities and culture of others, accurately representing them in written form.

James Clifford highlights ethnography’s privileging of scribal approaches, which are ‘from beginning to end, enmeshed in writing ... minimally, a translation of experience into textual form’ (1988 p.25). Pat Noxolo (1999) offers a cautionary note, citing Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1992) who she states, ‘describes as “bad anthropology”’: [t]he old anthropological supposition ... that every person from a culture is nothing but a whole example of that culture...’ (in Noxolo, 1999 p.23). The presumption that Western ideological readings may be universally applied to generalise other cultures is challenged here. Western bias exists within the very terms and lenses adopted in conducting ethnographic studies. Doris Green, creator of Greenotation asserts, ‘a specific word for dance does not exist in a number of African languages. Therefore the definition and words that define dance as movement to music are from the language of the colonizers’ (Green, 2017 p.13). Similarly, anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler submits:

[Dance] is a word derived from European concepts and carries with it preconceptions that tend to mask the importance and usefulness of analysing the movement dimensions.

Kaeppler, 1999 p.13

Green and Kaeppler expose how cultural perspectives projected as universal often carry a cultural specificity that undermines that of others. Enforcing Western

bias, the term dance can reflect an imposition of the researcher's cultural perspective on research communities. Kaeppler replaces the term dance with 'structured movement systems', which though widely embracing (incorporating all aspects of organized movement), is unsuitable for African/neo-African dance as it omits emotion, particularly in Western dance forms where movement can be assembled and structured independent of music, which may or may not be added later. Conversely, music is crucial within African/neo-African dance and is inextricable to the injection of emotion within most dances. Cameroonian artist Francis Bebey affirms, 'African music ... expresses the feelings and life of the entire community. The sound of feet pounding the ground becomes the rhythm of the music whose notes are in turn transformed into dance steps' (Bebey, 1975 p.14). Thereby, even in the absence of audible music, as Bebey advocates, it remains present within most African/neo-African dance affecting the dancer's emotional state.

African dance is unmistakably an embodied response where emotion and mood dictate its function and meaning, as Ivoirian scholar Alphonse Tiérou volunteers, '[d]ance involves emotion and induces an experience which cannot be conceptualised or reduced to words' (1989 p.11). Thus, Kaeppler's 'structured movement systems' is at odds with African concepts of dance as religion, as emotion, and as Opoku asserts 'our life and soul' (in Schram, 2000 p.1). With this in mind, where possible I adopt the terms employed by research participants, particularly 'culture bearers' and those I term 'culture sharers',<sup>126</sup> to minimize 'outsider' imposition, although the term dance is maintained as it is now entrenched within Jamaican and most Caribbean African/neo-African languages.

Contemporary ethnography has progressed beyond the Western gaze upon the 'exotic other' inferred above. For example, 'urban ethnography' (Back, in Duneier and Back, 2006) has developed on the Chicago School of ethnography's

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<sup>126</sup> The terms 'culture bearers' and 'culture sharers' are employed here to overcome the problematic term 'informants' under which these roles are usually combined within ethnographic and anthropological research. The term informer is negatively received within Jamaica and carries serious reprisals. Many hit songs, from Tony Rebels light-hearted 'Chatty Chatty', to Beenie Man's 'Informer' and I-Octane's more contemporary 'Informer A Work', amongst others all highlight the disdain with which informers are viewed. They openly describe the extreme punishment meted out against individuals deemed to be informers as a deterrent against such behaviour. Thereby, I adopt the term 'culture bearers', a borrowed term commonly used amongst Jamaican folklorists for those who possess and impart embodied historical knowledge, and 'culture sharers' a term I coin for those who share their embodied knowledge performatively or through performance, whether conscious of its historical background or not.

‘documenting [of] the range of different patterns of life to be found in the city ... shaped by the developing urban ecology’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007 p.2). Having shifted from the exotic locations of Evans Prichard’s anthropological training (Hannerz, 2003 p.202) ethnography has broadened to cover socio-politico-economic concerns, research of the body, gender, race, ethnicity, spiritual practices, cultural and national identity, cultural expression and performativity amongst many other themes (Sklar, 1991; Back, 1993; Savigliano, 1995; Venkatesh, 2002; Lynch, 2005; Lillis, 2008; Scharen and Vigen, 2011). Having outlined ethnographic methodology generally, I now detail the ethnographic methods this thesis employs.

#### ***4.4.1 Ethnographic methods***

Linking spirituality with reggae/dancehall evolved from an auto/ethnographic experience during my teenage years:

In Britain’s late 1970s Hockley district in Birmingham, reggae veterans, the Mighty Diamonds played at the Muhammad Ali Centre, a community venue ... dedicated to the great boxer – Music pounding, the smoke filled hall was hot like fire, physically and emotionally, as lead singer, Donald ‘Tabby’ Shaw, ... vocally broke out into the Diamonds’ hit song – ‘Identity’ – A sister nearby, immediately grabbed her breasts and squeezed her face as she sprinted forward! Stopped suddenly! Turned and calmly walked back as if she, ‘catch the spirit’ (had been temporarily possessed by an ancestral spirit). She had momentarily been caught up in the ecstasy of the music and lyrics ... and in that instance took some, including myself, back to [the Black Pentecostal] church – but not all the crowd shared this experience.

Patten, 2016 p.102

The impact of what I now interpret as the ‘myal spirit’<sup>127</sup> temporarily passing through this sister is what led to the choice to ground spirituality through reggae/dancehall and ethnographic methodology in this thesis. This myal incident suggests that African/neo-African ancestral knowledge integrating ancestral data (Stines, 2009), cultural knowledge (Sklar, 1991), and cultural memory (Buckland,

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<sup>127</sup> The myal spirit state of possession is detailed in the Introduction chapter section 1.6.10.

1999; Meusburger, et al, 2011), remains a continuity of resistance that manifests within the popular cultural expression of African/Jamaicans in Jamaica and its diaspora.<sup>128</sup> Continuities of resistance therefore connect African and neo-African peoples globally, thus an ethnographic methodological enquiry incorporating auto/ethnography offers a transformational research experience for both participants engaging in this research and myself as the researcher.

This multi-sited, multi-visit ethnographic study focuses on the dance that takes place within three Jamaican dancehall sessions, 'Uptown Mondays' my primary location, with 'Xpressionz Thursdays' and 'My Cup' dancehall sessions respectively employed as comparative sites. A case study featuring the male and female dancers from Dance Xpressionz Dance Company, ranging in age from 18-38 was also undertaken. The majority of the data within this study is collected from primary sources through participant observation 'field-research' primarily between 2010 and 2017. This research involves the analysing of new research material underscored by existing research and theoretical frameworks from the disciplines of theology and religious studies, combined with dance studies. Consequently, this syncretic mix of research methods will enable me to gain and develop: experiential insights into dancehall corporeal dancing bodies in action; textual and reflexive data concerning the construction and engagement of corporeal dancing bodies and dance vocabulary; and resources such as visual and audio recordings, together with some electronic (computer-based) media documenting performances of dancehall dance vocabulary that potentially display spiritual embodiment.

Conducting multi-visit ethnographic fieldwork over an extended period facilitates my investigation of changes in the approach, attitudes and styles of dance within the dancehall genre. This ethnographic research incorporates: participant observation; informal or semi-structured interviews; thick description; semiotic analysis; dance analysis; auto/ethnography; visual ethnographic methods; and secondary data collection, each serving specific functions.

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<sup>128</sup> See: (*Introduction chapter*, note 10).

#### ***4.4.2 Participant observation***

Participant observation is ethnography's primary method for collecting empirical data through embodied fieldwork entailing the researcher working alongside research participants, immersed within the culture being studied (Kaeppeler, in Buckland, 1999). As in classic anthropology it requires a considerably extended period of intense investigation collecting data in the field to demonstrate an in-depth comprehension of the intimate daily functioning of research participants from a particular community. The data from both anthropological and ethnographic research provides a micro-perspective of the particular society under investigation, 'making sense of local action' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983 p.189), which must be interpreted and may be expanded to derive a macro-perspective 'applicable across a wider – a generic – range of phenomena' (ibid) or the wider society the researched community sits within.

Culture bearers/sharers are selected on the basis of their knowledge or experience of the research area and are crucial to the interpretive process. Within this study, proficiency in and/or knowledge of the execution of dancehall, Revival, Kumina or Jonkunnu movements, or an in-depth knowledge and access to any or all of these practices were required as further explored in the 'gatekeepers' section. They provide the all-important background and contextual knowledge that cannot be gained by observation alone. Dance ethnologist Deidre Sklar (1991), in a quest to comprehend the meaning behind the Mexican dance of 'Our Lady of Guadalupe, the "dark Virgin"' (Sklar, 1991 p.6) during her Tortugas Fiesta case study, was forced to question culture sharers to inform her observations and 'appreciate the meaning of the Danzante performance and the quality of the dancers' experience' (Sklar, 1991 p.8). Informal interviews are therefore effective in obtaining data to aid the researcher's comprehension of what may be hidden in plain sight.

My researcher participant observation experiences are critical to the process of revealing, 'the significance of what we mean when we say "dance"' (Sklar 1991 p.8), in guiding the decoding of the semiotic symbolisms encoded within corporeal dancing bodies Stuart Hall references 'as the canvases of representation' (2005 p.474). Both in

its performance and performative<sup>129</sup> mode, data extracted from dancehall corporeal dancing bodies will be (de)coded and (en)coded from the perspective of the practitioners, contextualized by my reflexive observations.

This study applies a theology and religious studies lens to ethnographic data, although mindful of Scharen and Vigen's opinion that, '[e]thnographic methods provide a path by which truth emerges, rather than a way to apply truth' (2011 p.17). Ethnographically, I hope to reveal the worldview of reggae/dancehall practitioners and their foundational underpinnings. Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor (2003) profess 'to look at theology through the lens of popular culture, [and] to learn about perceptions of God in general' (2003, p.16), whilst they continue, attempting 'to create a theology out of popular culture, rather than a theology for popular culture' (2003, p.16). Likewise, this study seeks to facilitate a comprehension of potential spiritual connections, continuities, transformations and/or transcendences occurring within dancehall corporeal dancing bodies in establishing whether dancehall spirituality exists. I shall now examine interview processes.

#### ***4.4.3 Informal or semi-structured interviews;***

This thesis employs 'informal' or 'semi-structured', and 'structured interviews' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Schensul, 1999 p.56) not only to detail what may be hidden in plain sight to inform observations, but as an attempt to give voice to the research participants (Banks, 1993). Informal interviews facilitate the conducting of interviews within the interviewee's own environment where appropriate to make interviewees more at ease and therefore more forthcoming in imparting their knowledge. Anthropologist Jean J. Schensul (1999) suggests informal interviews enable the exploration of particular themes, the identification of local terms, language use and ideological views so, as sociologist Mitchell Duneier remarks, 'we can get a fix on how their [interviewees'] world works and how they see it' (Duneier et al, 1999 p.10). Hence, 'group interviews' also called 'focus group' interviews (Hanna, 2010) are importantly used to put less secure dance artists at ease, whilst gaining consensus on the issues that really concern them.

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<sup>129</sup> See: (*Introduction chapter*, note 8).

Inclusion of focus group interviews can enable the identification of key players, hierarchy and performative or behavioural actions (cultural etiquette) in discussing multiple themes, enabling a general impression of the worldview of culture bearers or research subjects to be gleaned (Schensul, 1999 p.57). One aim of focus group interviews is, as Hanna correctly describes, ‘to get at the common knowledge that informs a group’s understanding of the meanings, practices, and social structures that operate within their local setting’ (2010 p.215). For example, within the Dance Xpressionz focus group interview, the majority of Xpressionz’s members (male and female) shared that they had come to dancehall from church backgrounds. Popular performer Dansa Bling shares his experience:

Bling - Bling again! Mi grow up inna church tu, but, yu si di day my mother set foot pon di plane an fly out [emigrating to the USA] ... that’s the time mi start go by 'Traffic force' ahmm the guys dem a dance, an den [me] start pick it up an from desso, one an two time mi go back a church, up til now.

H – Wha kine a church?

Bling – Pentecostal! ... Up tu now, she [mother] still a try fi get me

Xpressionz dancers in unison – “Back into church!”

Dance Xpressionz, personal interview, Patten, 2013, 0:24:04.4

Their biographies not only demonstrate the importance of religion within Jamaica’s wider society, but also hint at the fact that dancehall replaces the spiritual space and function religion usually fulfills, as Energy Xpressionz declares:

Energy Xpressionz - An di thing about it is Cutie Xpressionz, Fluffy Xpressionz an Energy Bunny were Christians,

Bling – Amen!

Energy Xpressionz – Filled with the Holy Ghost, Fluffy an Energy were filled, an now wi gyrating.

Dance Xpressionz, personal interview, Patten, 2013, 0:24:04.4-0:25:07.1

These ‘testimonies’ motivate others to share their own dancehall calling and the personal transformations it has caused. Kavanaugh had quietly observed others. He finally remarks:

Well for me, living inna di garrison from yu young, as yu si Sunday day come yu haffi go a church ... Well mi neva really grow inna di church still but, yu kno mummy an daddy, yu kno if yu have di elders dem a go a church yu haffi go deh wid dem nuh matta weh yu waan du. Yu waan 'ide [hide], yu waan go kick ball, nuh matta weh yu waan du, yu haffi go a church.

Kavanaugh, personal interview, Patten, 2013, 0:26:06.0.

Kavanaugh like the other dancers stresses the importance and centrality of the church and spirituality within their varied families and communities within Jamaican society. This resonates with my own Jamaican upbringing, as I expand upon within the auto/ethnographic section. The use of open-ended set questions allowed a level of un-restricted involvement from all participants and enabled me as the researcher to maintain some control over the direction in which interviews progressed. The dancehall context made questionnaires inappropriate due to the participants’ resistance against hegemonic structures and the spontaneity required in engaging participants. Furthermore, set questions enabled a level of ‘standard practice’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983 p.2), offering the potential for measurable quantitative research methods if required.

#### ***4.4.4 Thick description***

Gordon Lynch (2005), and Scharen and Vigen (2011) note that theology and religious studies scholars focus on reading texts, ‘whether sacred texts such as the Torah, Qur’an, or the Bible, or other historical texts such as the writings of leading historical theologians or other religious figures’ (Lynch, 2005 p.15). However, ethnographic scholarship has developed particular and distinctive approaches to writing due to the diverse range of data it employs (Hannerz, 2011). The data gained



enables the development of ‘thick description’, an approach to writing originated by Gilbert Ryle in the 1960s according to Joseph G. Ponterotto (2006 p.539), but adopted and embedded within ethnographic methodology by Clifford Geertz (1973).

Thick description involves writing around kinesthetic action, layering multiple descriptions to provide the context and intent behind a movement, action or gesture. Geertz (1973) clarifies this by highlighting the distinction between a wink and an eye twitch. Both result from the same action of closing and opening the eyelids. A ‘phenomenological’ (Merleau-Ponty and Smith, 2002; Fuchs, 2003) or ‘thin description’ details kinesthetic action but does not convey their very different intent, as a wink is a deliberate signaling action, whilst a twitch is involuntary. Geertz complicates the matter raising the issue of mimicry, which engages the exact same eye movement, but completely negates the intent of the preceding two actions by diverting attention to the individual performing the mimicry. This foregrounds ethnography’s dependence on multiple layers of knowledge in creating a ‘thick description’ that when combined with observation facilitates the deriving of meaning.

Norman K. Denzin, builds on Ryle and Geertz’s conception of ‘thick description’, suggesting it ‘presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another ... [and] inserts history into experience (Denzin, 201 p.100). Ponterotto defines ‘thick description’ as:

... accurately describ[ing] observed social actions and assign[ing] purpose and intentionality to these actions, by way of the researcher’s understanding and clear description of the context under which the social actions took place ... captur[ing] the thoughts and feelings of participants as well as the often complex web of relationships among them ... lead[ing] to thick interpretation, which in turns [sic] leads to thick meaning of the research findings for the researchers and participants themselves ... lead[ing] readers to a sense of verisimilitude, [sic] wherein they can cognitively and emotively “place” themselves within the research context.

Ponterotto, 2006 p.543

Whilst this conception of ‘thick description’ is comprehensive, I extend it to include the omitted capturing of the thoughts and feelings of the researcher. For

example, as a dancehall and African/neo-African dance insider I can write in and interpret the African/neo-African cosmology that many dancehall dancers may or may not be consciously aware of although some allude to it, but do not clearly articulate it from their own experience and perspective.

Theresa Lillis (2008) refers to ethnographic contextual description as ‘talk around text’ from the ‘writer-focused’ perspective, ‘mov[ing] beyond not just the text but the researcher’s own research agenda or frame of reference’ (2008 p.359) through varying degrees of reflexivity. Employing thick description within an auto/ethnographic research frame, the talk around text approach enables the weaving together of multiple participant voices, including the researchers. Hannerz suggests that even where the dance ethnographer cannot access public performances through active participation they experience and communicate danced data through, ‘empathetic insight into the more practical, bodily aspects’ (Hannerz, 2003 p.211). I adopt the reflexive approach in ‘recognize[ing] that the participants’ analytic lens and perspectives are central to establishing what may be significant and important in any specific context’ (ibid).

However, in shaping the data the researcher, as James Clifford contends, assumes ‘experiential authority’ (1999 p.35). Similarly Bourdieu and Wacquant clearly state, ‘as soon as we observe the social world, we introduce in our perception of it a bias ... [in observing and interpreting an experience] we must retire from it more or less completely’ (in Partridge, 2007 p.8). Yet, care must be taken as ‘a methodological distance ... has the potential to distort’ (Partridge, 2007 p.8). Likewise, writing on theological normativity Natalie Wigg-Stevenson also draws from Bourdieu, cautioning, ‘the ethnographer does not simply observe but actually constructs her[his] object of study’ (2011 p.2). However, my insider position within both dancehall and dance coupled with my adoption of auto/ethnographic reflexivity facilitates my going beyond ‘confessional tales’ (Van Maanen, 2011 p.73), thus negating outsider distortion.

My insider knowledge enables a consciousness of the challenge of translation faced by researchers in the analysis and re-presentation of data. Kim Etherington (2004) foregrounds the limitation of written texts in discussing a student’s interview that highlights the fact that ‘inflections and pauses, the lilt of her musical accent and

the fast pace of her speech' (2004 p.137) are all lost in translation/transcription. Hence, in this thesis the excerpts from informal and focus group interviews are presented in the Jamaican language and English, with the use of full stops and commas representing the interviewees' pauses, emphasis and phrasing, rather than formal English grammar. The retention of the flow of the Jamaican language is important, being part of dancehall culture's identity and popularity and is therefore privileged wherever possible throughout this thesis.

#### ***4.4.5 Auto/ethnography***

Autoethnography, auto-ethnography, auto/ethnography, ethnography with autobiography, autobiographical or reflexive ethnography, are amongst the many terms employed to refer to this widely employed self-reflecting research approach. According to Tetnowski and Damico, the originators of autoethnography Karl Heider and David Hayano respectively, approach ethnography as, '(1) an intensive participant observation study taking place in the field and (2) when a member of a group or interaction studies their own group or an activity they are participating in' (in Forsyth and Copes, 2014 p.49). This study straddles both these auto/ethnographic approaches, being an intensive participant observation study, whilst as the researcher I belong to the group and activity under study. Being a Jamaican born in Britain and a dancehall participant, I operate outside the Jamaican dancehall locations being based in the UK. My researcher position is therefore that of an insider/outsider.

I was initially resistant to auto/ethnography, because as Scharen and Vigen, insightfully warn, handled badly '[reflexive] work can amount to little more than glorified "navel-gazing"' (2011 p.69). Conversely, this research employs aspects of auto/ethnography as a 'possible way to enact self-disclosure for the sake of intellectual honesty and authenticity' (ibid). The auto/ethnographic approach acknowledges the fact that researchers, like myself, can never claim complete objectivity as early ethnographers purported, because individuals are never value neutral. The voice of both research participants and the researcher is crucial within auto/ethnography, particularly as ethnography increasingly employs contemporary methods of data collection.

At the outset of this ethnographic project I was clear that it was about Jamaican artistic expression and the spiritual influences dancehall corporeal dancing bodies may embody. According to Kim Etherington (2004), as both a method and a form of text, autoethnography ‘does not merely require us to explore the interface between culture and self; it requires us to *write* about ourselves’ (2004 p.140). Nevertheless, I did not want people to access my personal story. Born twenty days after my mother’s UK arrival I felt this might make others perceive me as being less of a Jamaican giving rise to questions of my authenticity and knowledge of ‘real Jamaican culture’, having been raised outside the country.

However, personal reflection can unearth revelations that are transformational for both the researcher and/or research field. The revelation resulting from my own auto/ethnographic reflections address the issue of researcher and research-subject relationships, etic (outsider) and emic (insider) perspectives (Savigliano, 2000 p.2-4; Buckland, 2001; Lillis, 2008 p.361). The reflexive process enabled an ideological reorientation of myself in relation to both Jamaica and the UK. As a researcher, I now recognise that growing up in the UK has strengthened my African/Jamaican heritage in many respects. It is responsible for me knowing the Jamaican African/neo-African practices Carolyn Cooper terms the ‘thematic repertoire’ (1993 p.2) in greater detail than many resident Jamaican citizens. It facilitated my becoming a custodian of many cultural and family secrets habitually kept from those born in Jamaica. This serves to strengthen the ‘cultural memory’ (Buckland, 2001), ‘re-memories’ (Henry, 2002) and ‘ancestral data’ (Stines, 2005; 2009), which I now retain as what I term ‘ancestral knowledge’.

My reflections on the embodied nature of African/neo-African practices within dancehall dancing provide examples of how spirituality enters this research as my field-notes record:

Thinking of my own feelings of excitement and the explosive energy running through my body as dancehall artists deejay to the strong body penetrating dancehall riddims, I believe I felt something different to those [participants/adherents] standing beside me within UK dancehall sessions. Most had no conscious experience or knowledge of the traditional practices from which dancehall emerges. The African worldviews that underpin the African/neo-African practices also

underpins the very thinking of many African/Jamaicans, both consciously and subconsciously.

Patten, field-notes 2017

Yet my self-reflections mirror, connect with and are echoed by those of dancers within the Jamaican context, such as leader of the Timeless Crew, Taz Timeless, who affirms:

Bogle [Gerald Levy] talk about grooving, moving the body from the waist up. Grooving come from back in the days from Mento and Ska. Right! From being in the yard and being a Maroon. Nuf a dem doan even kno dat (many of them don't even know that) ... (laugh) ... Di (the) nook an' cranny is a old folks saying from back in the day, my granny used to say it to mi (me) ... So the nooks an' cranny it mean that the roots and the culture and yu (you) have to understan (understand) the whole ora (presence) of Jamaica, if yu doan understan dat (you don't understand that), if you are not of Jamaican blood yu cyaan understan dat (you can't understand that) ... Nook an' cranny is everyting (everything) that blends into dancehall, from the taxi driver to the sellers etc.

Taz, interview 2017, 0:01:07.2

Taz's insistence on dancehall participants having some knowledge of its African/neo-African 'nook and cranny' origins is supported corporeally in his embodied movement vocabulary. My own corporeal dancing body carries both dancehall vocabulary and that of the African/neo-African practices within its genealogy. Thereby, auto/ethnographic self-reflexivity assists the process of, 'showing the familiar in the apparently strange (Goffman 1961; Turnbull 1973) [and/]or the strange in the familiar (Garfinkel, 1967)' (in Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007 p.161). Recognising, foregrounding and juxtaposing the normative or what I term the 'invisible routine' within the dynamic performances of dancehall, disturbs and places it under interrogation.

Hegel proposes, 'the familiar is not necessarily the known' (in Lynch, 2005 p.18), as my interaction with master dancer Gerald 'Bogle' Levy, of which I was recently reminded by a former student and bredrin (brethren/friend), exemplifies. He

recounts:

We decided to go to a nightclub in New Kingston area! ... *The Asylum* nightclub. Back then this was one of the baddest [best] Club in Kingston.

We got there after midnight and the vibes was right. Music was pumping the dance floor was covered with dancehall lovers, moving to tracks of the latest dancehall hits.

Bogle and his entourage was there, not sure if John Hype was with him but he had some tuff [good] dancers with him. All I remember hearing was Bogle say “a who dah bredda de?” [who is that brother?] ‘H’ was on the dance floor a done [finish] the place, I don't think he realized that everybody in the club was watching him. Bogle say “blood clut a who dat!!!?” [who is that?] A wah kind a move dat!!!? [what type of dance is that?] Dam [those] moves yah baddddd no blood clut!!!”

Bogle walk over and introduce himself to ‘H’ and said “mi woulda [I would] love fe [to] learn dem [those] moves da, a wha yu call it?” [what do you call it?]

Bro that's all I remember ...<sup>130</sup>

Former dancer, interview 2017

This interaction with Bogle represents the recognition of African/neo-African and dancehall genealogical heritage and skill in my syncretic performance of both forms, disturbing the ‘invisible routine’ expression of my dancehall corporeal dancing body. Dancehall’s incorporation of both sacred and secular movement vocabulary direct from the African continent, demonstrates Randolph-Dalton Hyman’s (2012 p.20) interpretation of Stanislavski’s conception of the dancing body as being where ‘the elements of the human soul and the particles of a human body are indivisible’ (Stanislavski, in Hyman, 2012 p.21). Thus, corporeal dancing bodies translate and manifest the inner psychological experiences of the performer.

Larissa Kingston Mann asserts, ‘in places where the silencing and depersonalizing of human bodies have been the foundation for exploitation, it is crucial to respect and grant authority to people's bodily experience and expression’

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<sup>130</sup> See: Appedix 25.

(Mann, 2014 p.10). This, foregrounds the fact that the translation and encoding/decoding (Hall, in Dyrness, 2001) of African/neo-African bodies from a practitioner perspective must be privileged within anthropological and ethnographic scribal approaches. Historically, scholars have negatively represented African/neo-African corporeal dancing bodies (Long, 1889; Abrahams and Szwed, 1983; Thistlewood, in Hall, 1999). Egan, Frank, and Johnson suggest, 'Autoethnographic writing places individual experience in broader sociohistorical context' (in Hanna, 2010 p.215), thus using auto/ethnographic reflexivity and dance analysis, this thesis provides an alternative narrative.

Throughout this research I often observed within the dancehall space, rather than actively participate in an attempt to remain as objective as possible, mindful of 'the strong attachments one develops with one's subjects' (Duneier 1999 p.79). Yet as Marta E. Savigliano (2000) proposes relating to Tango dance, the process of participant observation can prevent the ethnographer from directly experiencing that which they observe. She asserts, 'we will only observe with difficulty the politics of pleasure rather than live pleasure in itself' (Savigliano 2000 p.8). I remain continually aware that researchers may get so caught up in recording their subject that they become disengaged from the very experience they claim authority over.

#### ***4.5 The theory underpinning this ethnography***

I employ signifying practice and dance analysis alongside ethnographic methodology in structuring the analysis chapters in a manner that: firstly, represents the progression of the dancehall dance session; secondly, addresses the research questions in ascribing spiritual meaning to dancehall's movement vocabulary, and; thirdly, apply a theology and religious studies lens to the data. This is achieved by providing both phenomenological (Fuchs, 2003; Merleau-Ponty and Smith, 2002) and semiotic readings (De Saussure, 1966) of experientially embodied participant observations across the four empirical chapters.

Former choreographer of Ghana Dance Ensemble, Professor Albert Mawere Opoku identifies dance as reflecting the history, socio-economic and political aspects of African life. He affirms:

Deeper insight into our way of life – our labours, material cultures, aspirations, history, social and economic conditions, religious beliefs and disbeliefs, moments of festivity and sadness – in short, our life and soul ... are revealed to the serious seeker, in our dance.

Opoku in Schram, 2000 p.1

Applying this conception of dance as representing the ‘life and soul’ of a people to Jamaican popular culture, the corporeal dancing body and dance is central to an analysis of the dancehall space. In the introduction I outlined the ‘corporeal dancing body’, coined to foreground the physicality of the fleshly corpse and the sustaining spirit within black African dancing bodies. Therefore, dance analysis will be used to decode the cultural memories embodied within dancing bodies initially using Thomas Fuchs’s (2003) concept of the ‘lived body’. The kinesthetic movement will be described detailing the action of the physical limbs in geometric and directional terms. A further reflective layer of engagement provides a sense of the dancers’ emotions, Fuchs’s ‘corporeal body’. The black/African/neo-African ‘corporeal dancing body’ combines the two facilitating a reading that re-unites the physical body, reason and emotion, triggering cultural memory in conveying the dancer’s intent. This facilitates the corporeal dancing body’s reading linked to its socio-political, historical, economic and material physicality, collapsing time and space, ‘invested with historical references of “otherness” (difference)’ (Patten, 2016).

Theologically, I draw on Gordon Lynch’s (2005) contention that religion is determined by either a substantive or a functional definition in analysing dancehall dance vocabulary. The substantive designation of religion centres on belief in a supernatural being/beings, religious functionaries, religious paraphernalia, rituals and spaces. The analysis chapters will demonstrate those elements within dancehall that qualify it as a spiritual religious practice substantively or functionally relating to both its dance and practitioners in evaluating whether a spiritual embodiment exists within reggae/dancehall dance.

Lynch’s existential/hermeneutical function is used in examining the ‘early-vibes’ section (chapter five), the setting up and establishing of the dancehall space. The ‘mid-juggling’ section is divided in two with the ‘man dem’ section (chapter six) analysed relating to religious social functioning, and the ‘female’ section (chapter



seven) examined as the transcendent function of dance. The ‘coupling section’ (chapter eight) expands the functionalist notion of spirituality and religion, focusing on transcendence through the notion of ‘conjure’, as developed by Robert Beckford, representing an ‘appeal to the spirit world for intervention and transformation of earthly existence ... [employing] cultural products’ (2014 p.129). This theoretically underscores the reading of dancehall dance vocabulary as a continuity of Jamaican African/neo-African spiritual practices and cultural expression. As mentioned above, in reality all spiritual functions outlined operate interchangeably throughout dancehall events.

Through dance, Beckford’s (2014) ‘conjure’ lens represents the evoking<sup>131</sup> of the spirits, the main purpose and function of the corporeal dancing body within African/neo-African practices, the summoning of spiritual intervention. Beckford adopts Theophus H. Smith’s (1995) notion of conjure as the therapeutic use of biblical texts (figures, events, objects, places etc.), incorporating the magical practices and functions of African/neo-African practices to transform and re-present historical events. Thereby, dance analysis and conjure facilitates a reading of the corporeal dancing body as invoking/summoning/or calling upon spiritual assistance, whilst exposing a ‘theological-political narrative aesthetic’ (Beckford, 2014 p.4).

Conjure is a concept through which material objects are used to signify spirituality, as exemplified by ‘The Cross’, the archetypal Christian signification or representation of Jesus Christ’s redemptive sacrifice, furnishing human salvation, healing and liberation. With healing in mind, Beckford incorporates ‘enchantment’, effectively loading and embodying culture with the Spirit, which as a ‘Pentecostal theology of culture’ (Beckford, 2014 p.127), foregrounds the Christian ‘Holy Spirit’ of the Triune God. Nonetheless, I extend ‘conjure’ and ‘enchantment’ by re-incorporating the full extent of the African/neo-African cosmology to include myal spirit possession, as outlined in the introduction chapter and signposted by scholars such as Smith (1995) and Stewart (2005).

Beckford affirms, ‘experience is held as equally valid a tool for theology as Scripture, but must be in a dialogic relationship with Scripture’ (Beckford, 1998 p.249). This resonates with Paul Tillich’s notion of ‘ultimate concern’ (1964), which

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<sup>131</sup> See: Oxford English Dictionary online: [en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evocation](http://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evocation).

he proposes, ‘manifest[s] in the realm of knowledge as the passionate longing for ultimate reality’ (Tillich, 1959 p.8). Tillich’s notion that religion represents humanity’s spiritual pursuit for an ultimate experience of reality is adopted in examining dancehall culture’s spiritual underpinning. Tillich asserts, ‘religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion’ (Tillich, 1959 p.42), that is to say, cultural expression both embodies religion and is also the mode through which the Divine is experienced. Through dance analysis supported by the data emerging from informal interviews, dancehall corporeal dancing bodies are critically deconstructed and framed using Tillich’s conception that cultural expression is inherently a mode by which to experience a ‘theonomous revelation’ (Cobb, 2005 p.94), meaning a foretaste of God, encoded in ‘the scale and beauty of art and creation’ (ibid Tillich).

#### ***4.6 Visual ethnographic methods***

Marquard Smith (2008) presents ‘visual culture studies’ as entailing an assortment of methods and approaches that embody most of what is visual, but with specific applications dependent on its user. Equally, Sarah Pink (2003) employs ‘visual ethnography’ quite specifically focusing on how people use, create and engage movement and progression as an urban experience. Whilst this may foreground ‘glimpses of the everyday’ (Rakic and Chambers, 2009) as some researchers and those researched might experience, map and negotiate space within the field, this is not how I engage visual ethnography.

I adopt visual ethnography in line with sociologist Mitchell Duneier (1999), who foregrounds the useful reminder visual media provides, in relation to Ovie Carter’s photography, accompanying his ethnography. He states, ‘Ovie’s photographs helped me to see things that I had not noticed, so that my work has now been influenced by his’ (Duneier and Carter, 1999 p.12). Visual documentation such as film, video and photography enable the ethnographic researcher to read the detail within their observations. Thereby, I employ visual media to document and record the dance vocabulary within the field and/or formal ‘dance’ spaces, not as ‘(re)construction and (re)presentation of “reality”’ (Rakic and Chambers, 2009 p.260), but to enable the re-visiting of the performance, for closer inspection, re-

reading and the noticing of things that may have escaped observation during the live action of the original performance.

Of the video footage I analyse in this research most was recorded by myself, despite the data at times being limited and/or determined by the video-light of other videographers when my own video-light source was unavailable. Thereby, the footage acts not only as an *aid memoire*, but also as a secondary layer of observation enabling the detail of the periphery, away from the central focus to be noticed, interpreted, and added to the discourse. Dr. Evilyn Parker – in the YouTube video *Realization and Ritual* highlights the realization process as being like watching a film a second time and realising, ““oh my God, I didn’t notice that before”, therefore seeing things we miss on first, or casual glances’ (Parker, 2017). This also highlights how the focus or gaze adopted is highly subjective, as the video or photographic image records objects and subjects that may be negated by the researcher’s initial gaze, but subsequently becomes central to the discourse.

Visual documentation assists in transporting the researcher back into the ‘field’, recalling and re-experiencing details consciously noted, but subsequently forgotten outside the research space. Additionally, interviews may be conducted both in person, and/or using electronic technology (phones, email, texting, messaging, the Internet, etc.), which Hugh Gusterson (in Hannerz, 2003 p.212) terms ‘polymorphous engagements’. These are particularly pertinent to this research and through ‘talk around text’ I weave together the multiple voices and visual ethnographic approaches into a cohesive whole.

#### ***4.7 Secondary data collection***

Much of the secondary data collection for this research has been carried out in the traditional manner, through library and computer searches, through electronic and social media. Additionally, many hours were spent in the University of the West Indies (UWI) library, West Indies and Special Collections section during my multiple research fieldtrips. This furnished access to dissertation theses that I would otherwise have never obtained access to. Newspaper and dancehall event flyers have all proved to be valuable sources of dancehall knowledge.

#### ***4.8 Multi-site/multi-visit ethnography***

The concept of ‘multi-sited’, or ‘multilocal’ research models have become increasingly popular within contemporary ethnography in response to post-modernism, globalisation, and transnationalism (Marcus, 1995). Commonly conducted through participant observation, ‘multi-sited’ ethnography involves multiple, frequent, shorter, fieldtrip visits for the researcher to participate in, observe, experience, and interpret the world of their research subjects from a participant perspective connected to global contexts (Marcus 1998 and Hannerz, 2003). However, I modify the conception of multi-sited ethnography, as this research is more multi-local, focusing on multiple sites local to the Kingston area, each having a global reach through the use of videography, Internet streaming and other technology. This enables a comprehension of the ‘merging of production and reception sites’ (Marcus, 1998 p.103) in this instance, the Jamaican dancehall space.

The advantage of the anthropologist spending a year or more in the field may well enable them to witness behavioural changes over all four seasons and varying conditions, completely valid for the study of behavioural patterns and establishing its impact on culture and environmental concerns generally (Hannerz, 2003 p.209). Yet, these issues are of less concern to an ethnographic project principally concerned with dance. In this instance, multi-visits enabled me as the researcher to witness the impact of outside influences and their socio-politico-economic affect on dancehall culture. More pertinent to this research is Scharen and Vigen’s suggestion, ‘We can discover real and relevant truth—about God, creation, [and] human beings—through ethnographic study and in many cases this truth is transformative. But it is never perfect or all encompassing’ (2011 p.19). In conducting research into dancehall cultural production and the fast changing state of becoming it represents, an awareness of when, where and how the main dance events occur, their timing, duration and purpose, enable researcher visits to be targeted, focused and intense, in attempting to access ancestral knowledge, as explored in chapters 2 and 3.

L’Antoinette Stines aptly sums up dancehall cultural expression as the ‘synthesis of ancestral presence, media influences, foreign infiltrations, and traditional memo-

ries as the evolutionary and revolutionary (evo-revo)tools of resistance against Jamaica's unwieldy class structure' (Stines, 2005 p.45). Spirituality within this context forms part of the resistance strategy of marginalised African/Jamaicans, therefore my use of participant observation is in line with the scholarship that recognises the impossibility of researcher 'value neutrality and objectivity' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007 p.13). This is especially true as my emic positioning and knowledge is increasingly evident and influential as I draw upon knowledge of dance studies through various scholars (Sklar, 1991; Kaeppler, 2000; Buckland, 2001; Ryman, 2010). Likewise, my development of Jamaican African/neo-African ancestral knowledge and cultural memory during the multiple periods of time spent interacting with African/neo-African and dancehall practitioners, along with Jamaican academics certainly influences the invaluable collaborative and ethical relationships I have made and continue to maintain with participants who share their knowledge, time and skill, as evidenced by the quality of the data collected, developed and shared over time.

Michael H. Agar (1986 p.16) asserts that ethnography's focus is about comprehending what has just happened, rather than anticipating the future to reveal the hidden, partial truths corporeal dancing bodies convey (Clifford, 1999) connecting the multiple dancehall locations chosen in this research. Multi-sited fieldwork occupying multiple spaces facilitates comparative observation drawing into sharp focus changes within identified themes such as gender, class, race, sexuality, relationships, hierarchy, socio-economic-politico conditions, sacred and secular issues, routed within the 'cultural knowledge' (Sklar, 1991) of the dancehall community.

#### ***4.9 Selection processes***

##### ***4.9.1 Location selection***

Location(s) and access are key elements to the success of ethnographic research, and as Hannerz proposes, 'site selections are to an extent made gradually and cumulatively, as new insights develop, as opportunities come into sight, and to some extent by chance' (Hannerz, 2003 p.207). The chance collision of extraordinary circumstances inadvertently determined my selection of dancehall locations for this study. The winning of a bursary in 2010 to conduct field-research in Jamaica from

The Association of Dancers of the African Diaspora (ADAD), now part of One Dance UK, and the timeframe set for the research period coincided with a period of martial law in Jamaica. In 2010, an order for the arrest and USA extradition of Kingston's Tivoli Gardens 'area don' and alleged drug-lord Christopher 'Dudus' Coke, led to violent civil unrest in the Tivoli Gardens garrison area. This resulted in over 73 deaths, amongst them civilians, gunmen and security force members (Jamaica Observer, June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010),<sup>132</sup> in addition to the implementation of a nightly curfew across Kingston city, leading to the suspension of the internationally renowned Passa Passa dancehall session.

Rather than frustrate my field-research, the period of martial law served to demonstrate the resilience of dancehall culture. Dancehall participants merely shifted their attendance to dancehall sessions taking place in and around the Kingston Metropolitan area. Within the gap left by Passa Passa, some established sessions relocated to indoor venues such as the Limelight Club in Halfway Tree, which hosted Hot Mondays and Xpressionz Thursdays at that time. With the strict enforcement of the "Noise Abatement Laws" (NAL), outdoor sessions were forced to stop by 2am whilst indoor sessions ran until 4am.

A number of new, informal sessions emerged. In Vineyard Town a local family used the opportunity to open their home and residential yard to local people, establishing My Cup, as a weekly intimate dancehall session for the community to release tension and enjoy themselves. Started from a family 'pardna' (partner savings)<sup>133</sup> this Saturday night session enabled its organisers to participate in dancehall's informal economy. Jamaican law enforcement allowed this informal session to continue because, as officers at the Hunts Bay constabulary report during a recorded discussion, whilst individuals and criminals are in the dancehall session they are not out committing crime.

Selection of the dancehall locations for this study, reflect the role and purpose dancehall serves for its participants. Uptown Mondays (operating prior to 2002, until

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<sup>132</sup> See: Observer news report: [http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/-Dudus--captured\\_7736251](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/-Dudus--captured_7736251) (26.09.2010).

<sup>133</sup> A 'pardna', or 'partner' is a savings scheme where individuals contribute a set amount of money together over a set number of weeks, corresponding to the number of members. Each week one member collects the full pot until all have done so by the final week.

the present), represents an established street party; Xpressionz Thursdays (2009-2011) marginally preceding the martial law period, represents a safe space; and My Cup (2010) represents a direct response to martial law, as a cathartic space for enjoyment, resistance, and temporary escape from life's stresses and traumas by those occupying the lower-strata of Jamaica's socio-economic ladder. Ethnographically, this 'chance' collision of circumstances potentially provides a deeper, richer and more informative comprehension of dancehall dancing and whether it is spiritually embodied in the midst of resistance and trauma.

The rationale for choosing Uptown Mondays and Xpressionz Thursdays as ethnographic locations was more strategic. Firstly, both locations are equally accessible being centrally located in the Kingston Metropolitan area; secondly, and crucial to this research, these locations are regularly attended by many dance artists, including Dance Xpressionz, because as Marta Savigliano holds in relation to Tango's milongas (venues), 'what matters is who goes there and how often' (Savigliano, 2000 p.3); thirdly, both locations were extremely popular during 2010's period of instability; fourthly, both locations are predominantly frequented by lower and middle-class African/Jamaicans, but were gaining an increasingly cosmopolitan global and 'multilocal' (Hannerz, 2003) audience and reach.

#### ***4.9.2 Access to venues and artists***

Access is an important consideration in decisions concerning ethnographic research. Power dynamics between the ethnographer and research participants begin with the identification, selection and accessing of culture bearers through to the negotiation of roles (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1982; Williams, 1967; Anca Giurchescu, 1999). This was of vital concern within my conscious decision making as a researcher. Sudhir Venkatesh (2002) suggests, '[t]he interaction of fieldworker and informant is itself potentially revealing of the local properties of social structure and may also be mined to illuminate chosen research questions' (Venkatesh, 2002 p.92). Thereby, in complete transparency I reveal Xpressionz Thursdays is run by Dance Xpressionz (Xpressionz) my case study group, and therefore access to both the space and the attendant dancers was easily brokered through them. Additionally, my

privileged relationship with Dance Xpressionz stems from my having formerly trained the artistic director, Orville ‘Dancehall Professor’ Hall, and the operations manager, Shelly Ann ‘Oshun’ Callum in African Dance over a number of years.

Hall and Callum’s knowledge of my personal ‘insider’ dance expertise and their skill, position, and level of knowledge in the dancehall genre is why they were selected as culture bearers, and the group as culture sharers. Through Xpressionz, I not only gain relatively free movement within many dancehall spaces, Uptown Mondays included, but I also receive introductions both to and from many dance artists (each culture sharers, and potential culture bearers). I therefore continue to revisit the various dancehall session locations on my multiple field-trips particularly Uptown Mondays, where my ethnographic exploration has covered a prolonged timeframe from 2009 to the present.

In parallel to the dancehall sessions I also attended a number of African/neon-African practices, including: Kumina New Years’ duties and events, a Kumina ‘Nine Night Set Up’ (wake keeping session); Revival duties/sessions; Revival fund raising events; Jamaica Cultural Development Commission performances and festival competitions; Jonkonnu performances and rehearsal; Maroon celebration events. My participation in these events was made possible by my many years of conducting research in the field, collecting dance vocabulary for spectacular dance performances.

#### ***4.9.3 The gatekeepers***

A major benefit to adopting an ethnographic approach is that as an established choreographer, dancer, and dance teacher, as with Dance Xpressionz, I am able to draw on many longstanding professional and personal relationships. This gives me access to individuals within principal agencies such as the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC), the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMCVPA) amongst many others, alongside independent artists and practitioners in both the cultural and commercial dance and music sectors. I thereby both secure and call on high calibre culture bearers and culture sharers. These individuals are effectively the gatekeepers of Jamaican cultural expression. Mitchell Duneier (1999), borrowing from Jane Jacobs (1961), calls them ‘public characters’,



the self-appointed guardians and link to the various communities of culture bearers and sharers. Many public characters are often culture bearers and/or sharers in their own right and are invaluable assets to the researcher, and vital to the success of any research project.

Dance Xpressionz exemplify culture bearers who simultaneously occupy the role of gatekeepers. For example, Hall often speaks on behalf of the dancers within the dancehall field due to his high profile as ‘Dancehall Professor’ being a dancehall television and radio presenter. Many outsiders to dancehall express concern that many dancers lack the confidence and/or background knowledge and history of the genre to clearly articulate their ideas and thoughts on dance. All too frequently, dancehall participants are dismissed as illiterate ‘downtown’ individuals with little knowledge to contribute or articulate, rendering them voice-less.

Hall’s gatekeeping role acts as a protection against potential embarrassment in relation to the representation of dancers’ and their educational sensibilities. The reality is that in Jamaica, although English is the official language, Jamaican is the first language of the majority of African/Jamaicans. This creates a condition whereby dancehall culture and Jamaican mainstream culture represents, what Carolyn Cooper fittingly terms, ‘slackness hiding from culture’ (Cooper, 1993). Moreover, on many levels Hall’s speaking on behalf of dancehall dancers further secures his and Dance Xpressionz’s status and profile.

In conducting this research, my researcher role is often translated locally to ‘book author’, and therefore education, positioning me as part of ‘officialdom’. This at times raises issues to do with expectations as Venkatesh’s (2002) study, aptly addresses. He proposes that the ethnographer runs the risk of inadvertently becoming engaged in the lifestyle of their research subjects,<sup>134</sup> which some refer to as ‘going native’ (Pollner and Emerson, in Atkinson et al, 2011 p.118, 121). Brokering the relationship between myself and research participants, I am cautious to avoid unintentionally becoming a ‘conduit’ (Venkatesh, 2002), perceived as a means of

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<sup>134</sup> Sudhur Venkatesh’s (2002) ethnographic study of The Robert Taylor Housing development in Chicago, is an examination of the social production of the ethnographer from the informants’ point of view, where all “officials” including the ethnographer are regarded as “Doan the hustle,” whether willingly or unwittingly, they participate in aspects of their research subject’s social processes. See: (Venkatesh, 2002 p.6).

accessing resources/services by participants. This creates an expectation of the researcher reciprocating the sharing of knowledge (data) from culture sharers/bearers by utilising their influence to benefit individuals personally or as a community. Conversely the researcher can become a ‘customer’, supporting the services offered by participants (Venkatesh, 2002). A low level Jamaican example is the purchasing of top-up phone-cards, food or drinks sold by research participants. My years of experience as an artist has assisted my negotiation and avoidance of the ‘conduit’ and ‘customer’ positioning, which can lead to safety and vulnerability issues both in the field and in terms of protecting ethnographic sources (Agar 1986; Venkatesh 2002).

#### ***4.10 Conclusion***

This chapter aimed to outline the theoretical ethnographic methodology developed, to explore spiritual embodiment within reggae/dancehall dance vocabulary. I first established ethnography as a methodology under which a number of methods are combined. I then gave a broad overview of the ethnographic methods utilized within this research. This entailed a critical examination of Participant observation; Informal or semi-structured interviews; Thick description; Auto/ethnography; Dance analysis and the theory I use to underpin this thesis in relation to the corporeal dancing body. The use of Visual ethnographic methods as an aide memoir and my approaches to Secondary data collection, led to the use of Multi-site and Multi-visit ethnography as a mode of targeted field research. Exploring my selection of dancehall as a mode of investigating spirituality I finally delineated complex challenges of access, both to venues and artists and securing the good will of gatekeepers. I now turn to the empirical chapters.

## Chapter 5. Party Time – *Early Vibe: Thick descriptions/analysis of dance in the dancehall space*

### 5.1 Introduction

As outlined in the previous chapter ethnographic methodology, including multi-sited participant observation (Hannerz, 2003), semi structured interviews (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), thick description (Geertz, 1973), signifying practice (De Saussure, 1966), and dance analysis (Adshead, 1988) is used to present an alternative perspective of dancehall culture through the voices of its practitioners in this and the following three empirical chapters. Adopting the general format of a dancehall session, I address the research questions:

- *Is the spiritual worldview of African forbears reimagined within the dancehall space?*
- *Is the dancing body a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space?*
- *What spiritualities are emerging from dancehall?*

This chapter in demonstrating that the dancing body transfers spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space will first clarify evolving debates surrounding dancehall's creative process. It then outlines the structure of a typical dancehall session. It will then explore the transference of religious coding within the *Early Vibes* section of Jamaican dancehall. Finally, it examines the dancehall space from a spiritual perspective to illustrate how through the corporeal dancing body a 'dancehall spirituality' is emerging and that this spirituality is both rooted and routed through the African/neo-African practices and worldviews embodied within Jamaican cultural expression.

### ***5.1.1 Dancehall – evolving debates***

Those who study and analyse dance, usually do so to identify the intrinsic value of the dance practice, or with a view to recording and/or reproducing the dance in some way (Buckland, 1999). Although these are not the primary tasks within this research, the observations from my perspective as a dancer and choreographer will inevitably feature textual explanations of the dance vocabulary intrinsic to dancehall's 'hidden voice' (Henry, 2002) and values that dance practitioners can reproduce, particularly in relation to any spiritual undergirding. Thereby, this chapter provides an account of the dancehall space and the issues and dialogues that inform the embodied cultural expression of dancehall dance artists.

During my multiple research fieldtrips a number of debates have taken place over the years questioning whether or not Jamaica has entered into a post-dancehall phase as proposed by scholar and Grammy-nominated producer Dennis O. Howard (2016). As the discrete form emerging from the late 1970s until the present, dancehall has undergone numerous incarnations. Leading dancehall dance practitioners, including John Hype, Orville Hall and Crazy Hype in personal interviews (2017), now categorise dancehall in two distinct but inter-related phases, as new and old skool dancehall. However, Global Bob (in interview 2017) and younger dance practitioners now insert a third category, speaking of 'old skool' (1980-1999) 'mid skool' (2000 – 2010) and 'new skool' dancehall (2010-present).

Conversely, Thomas Talawa Presto (in conversation 2017) argues that the new and mid skool categories not only enable dancehall's separation from its African/neo-African antecedence but allows a simplification of the movement vocabulary through the extraction of the core body movement. I am in agreement with Presto, the new skool term potentially severs the African/neo-African continuity in emphasising dancehall's hybridity as Chude-Sokei (1994) has opined for years. This simplification of the form potentially shifts dancehall's emphasis from that of being the latest in Jamaican indigenous practices to an independent art form, thus making it easier for dancehall to be appropriated globally, as shall further be discussed within my analysis of dancehall dance. Nevertheless, the older more experienced dancers are now adopting the old, mid and new skool categorisation to not only identify the movements emerging from each era, but to establish structural principles pertaining to

the way the genre is approached. Old skool movements can be applied to new skool music, but new and/or mid skool movement should not be performed to old skool music as dancehall continually moves forward, never backwards. Global Bob expounds:

... di dance moves don't go in the reverse. Yu can't du a new skool step, yu can't du a 'Gas' [Ding Dong and Ravers Clavers dance] to a 'Worl a Dance' song from Beenie Man, or to a Buju, 'Bogle' song ... but you can do a 'Bogle' dance move to a popular riddim today, becau dancehall goes forward, di dance moves progress

Global Bob in interview 2017

Thus, according to Global Bob, to perform new skool movements to old skool songs is a sign of naivety within dancehall dance. Crazy Hype reinforces this stating, '... old school is the foundation' (in interview 2017). Nonetheless, dancehall's popularity and growth remains on the increase with numerous dancehall sessions and events emerging across Jamaica, with multiple events taking place each night of the week within the Kingston metropolitan area as noted by dancehall scholars (Hope, 2006a; Stanley-Niaah 2010) and evidenced in chart no.1 below.

<b>Dancehall Venues in the Kingston Metropolitan Area, Jamaica WI</b>				
Days	Venue 1	Venue 2	Venue 3	Venue 4
Monday	Mojito Monday	Uptown Mondays	Hot Mondays	
Tuesday	Boasy Tuesday			
Wednesday	WeddyWeddy Wednesday	Passa Passa		
Thursday	Xpressionz Thursday	Bembe Thursdays		
Friday	Wear Wah Yu Have Fridays	Fresh Fridays	Dutty Fridaze	Dung A Town

Saturday	Grab A Gyal Saturdays	Couple Up Saturdays	<i>My Cup</i>	
Sunday	Wild Out Sundays	Icicle Sundays	Bounty Sundays	Wet Sundaze

Chart No.1 Compiled by H Patten – auto/ethnographic observation fieldtrip (2010).

## 5.2 Dancehall session structure

Outlining the various stages within the progression of a dancehall session through the voices of dancehall practitioners themselves, the artistic director of Dance Xpressionz and resident/chief judge for *Dancin' Dynamites* television dance programme Orville 'Dancehall Professor' Hall explains:

There is a, there's a early vibe that if you go to a dancehall session early, early, the earlier dancehall songs you'll hear, you'll hear the Jimmy Cliffs, you'll here the Bob Marleys, you'll hear the Dennis Browns, the Burning Spears, yu might hear some a dem ting deh. You might hear even some a di oldda, R&B songs ... When the party start getting more into it now ... it is sectionalised ... and the flow might be different, depending on the turn out ... Yu have a section that is dedicated to the dancas, straight, jus di dancas, weh yu get the dance songs and di dancas get mad an get fi du dem ting ... a section that is, dedicated to now the gangstas, where the gansta music dem an di man dem fire the finga shot dem, weh dem jus put up dem finga an, get serious ... There's a section now that is dedicated to, the females, weh di man dem stan back an watch di females dem du dem ting an get mad ... An den there's a section weh dem call the couple up section. Now the couple up section, is where man an woman, the daggering ting wha dem used to talk bout, man an woman a dance an rae rae rae. Den now yu have di, exhibition section ... part of what people used to call daggering, but daggering is different from exhibition.

Hall, in interview 2010, 0:00:03.3

Hall's description illuminates the different sections of music and dance that make up the dancehall session. As he states, it starts with the 'early vibe' (Hall in interview 2017), also called 'early juggling' (Ding Dong, in interview 2010), or 'early out' (Stanley Niaah, 2010) section, with an easy vibe (mood) during which, Taz, leader of Timeless Crew articulates, '... di (the) Selecta (Selector) play some easy

going rocking music, some, some nice cool reggae, an yu (you) can, stan (stand) up an, yu can drink yu likka (liquor)' (in interview 2017 0:36:25.9). It progresses, as dancehall DJ, dancer and leader of Ravers Clavers dancers Kamar 'Ding Dong' Ottey asserts, to the 'mid juggling' (in interview 2010) comprising of the male and the female sections. He elaborates '... so if is early juggling a gwaan (happening), dancers tend to do some early type a (of) dancing until yu (you) get de (the) mad part a (of) it, [the section where] dancers get mad an (and) ting (so-forth)' (Ding Dong, interview 2010 0:12:13.0).

Selector, Camar Fire Reeves reinforces, 'Is a step, is a step by step ting (thing), yu (you) understand?' (in interview 2010 0:01:41.0). The dancehall session and thus the dancing progresses in stages throughout the night; the coupling section concludes a cycle within the dancehall session. This cycle is repeated multiple times building to the final intense coupling section, which features what Hall terms 'exhibition dancing' (2010), forming the climax of the dancehall session. Established, teacher, performer and choreographer Fredrick 'Tippa' Moncrieffe elaborates:

Each time yu (you) go roun (round), is a different set. So yu (you) wi (will) ha (have) four set a dat (that) for di (the) whole night. So di (the) dance, usually di (the) dance start 12 o'clock or 1 o'clock, so by 4 o'clock, it finish.

Tippa, interview 2010 0:39:03.4

The coupling and/or exhibition section is where the latest, most popular dancehall tunes by the most celebrated artists of the moment (whether past or present, living or ancestral, free or incarcerated), excite corporeal dancing bodies into action. This and the subsequent chapters together follow the dancehall session structure to reveal how dance and the corporeal body function analogously within Jamaican religious and popular culture.

Section one, the '*early vibes*' section, represents the sanctification of the dancehall space. The parallels between dancehall and African/neo-African dance spaces and resources are juxtaposed to highlight the body's transference of religious coding through dance within the Jamaican dancehall space. These resources, I argue,

assist the development of a sense of identity, meaning and purpose amongst dancehall participants. Section two, the '*man dem section*' emphasises how a 'dancehall spirituality' is beginning to develop and manifest in foregrounding the engagement and interaction of male corporeal dancing bodies within the dancehall space, demonstrating dancehall's replication of religious social functioning. The '*female section*' chapter then emphasises the use of female corporeality as a transcendent vehicle and medium through which the 'Divine' may be experienced. This interrogates how spirituality is rooted and routed through African/neo-African practices and worldviews across geographic and metaphysical space and time. Finally the '*coupling section*' combines the social, existential/hermeneutic and transcendent functioning of dancehall to establish the 'myal state' of possession, or 'enchantment' (Beckford, 2014) and smaddification (Mills, 1997) or personhood as key liberating, resistant, spiritual functions that underpin dancehall dance culture. The following description gives a general overview of the dancehall environment providing a context to the dancehall session, space and progression.

### ***5.3 Uptown Mondays, Savannah Plaza dancehall session/party (15.04.2013)***

*As bodies start exiting Mojito Mondays signalled by the sudden start up of a couple prestige vehicles, it is just a short walk around the corner to Uptown Mondays dancehall session, the main event. The time is around 2.30 going to 3.00am as we pass the vendors, the Jerk chicken man, the soup man, a few drinks sellers and higglers [vendors] selling small general nick-nacks including cigarettes, sweets and gum etc. We walk across the front car park of Savannah Plaza, now quickly filling up with vehicles around the rectangular building of the ice cream store located in the centre of the car park. Groups of people stand in-front of the locked stores along the L shaped building across the back and left side of the car park. In the far right hand corner of Savannah Plaza is the entrance to the Uptown Mondays party. An out-door event held in the confined space of what is the back car park of Savannah Plaza by day, which used to be blocked off by a trailer, but now has its own portable fencing [decorated] with sponsorship signage.*



*As we file through the short, narrow corridor formed by the metal barriers we are not searched as 'special guests' entering the dancehall space with Dance Xpressionz dancers. The dancehall space is demarcated by the car park space and another L shaped two storey building facing and to the left of the entry with a balcony running along the first floor with stairway access either end of the balcony. To the right a tall wall runs from the building facing, to the entrance, whilst the back wall of the stores in the front car park runs from the left of the building, securing the square within which Uptown Mondays takes place. The balcony area and the space below it facing the entry, forms the VIP section of this dancehall space, with high top tables provided for drinks to be displayed and consumed. Artists such as Bounty Killer and his mantourage (entourage of men) normally occupy the balcony area, but in his absence, on this occasion the VIP balcony is occupied by a few dancers. The dancehall singjay Ioctane later enters the dancehall space and establishes himself in the VIP section. The session gets an increased hype (excitement) due to his presence.*

*The Sound system set, crew and selectors are located under the balcony to the left of the exit, a temporary Red Bull sponsored bar is set up near to the opening of a corridor space in the corner beyond which is the permanent bar and bathrooms or toilets. Previously recorded dancehall images are projected high up against the entrance wall. Dance Xpressionz situate themselves in their usual position, where I have stood on many occasions, near to the bar left of the entry, backs to the screen. Amongst and in-front of the other dancers facing the VIP section, Xpressionz occupy a prime high visibility spot, with a set of the triangulated speaker boxes behind them. My Korotech Dancefest participants stand behind Xpressionz and the main dancers. They, along with a few Japanese visitors, mainly female, are the only visible foreigners in this space this week.*

*The male dancers lead the dancing in their groups, squads and crews, performing set choreographed routines. Their routines are performed to multiple songs, as most Jamaican dancehall dancers dance to the riddim, rather than lyrics. Many dancers in the space appear to be familiar with a number of key dances, featuring large arm and leg gestures with undulating torso movement. This often happens when there has been a large commission involving many dancers working on a commercial ad, or tour, such as the Digicel 'Just Buss' 2010 marketing campaign.*

*As the dancers periodically perform part of the routines known to them all, the whole dancehall floor becomes energized and the small open space at the centre is invaded, disappearing under the wave of movement encompassing Uptown Mondays.*

*As we settle in the space, I observe the dancers' acknowledgement of each other, as each group enters the space and find what may appear to be a random spot, but with multiple visits, it becomes apparent that each dance crew, squad or group has their demarcated spot. The dancehall space, is governed by unwritten rules of organization, social interaction, gestures and rites of celebration and practices, that although are observed, often remain unnoticed. The selector acknowledges the dancers in the space through his roll call of dance artists present. Dance Xpressionz are one of the main focal points of the session. Orville, Dansa Bling and Lil Ville vacillate from operating as part of Xpressionz one minute, to becoming an integral part of the man-dem dance energy another. In these moments, a dynamic, warrior type, focused and determined vitality enters the space. There is a passing on and passing over of the energy and an air of comradery and communitas.*

*The predominantly female Xpressionz dancers seemingly control the centre space during the female section of the dance. They also accompany the males within the male section, performing parts of the male routines to stamp their authority amongst the few females who might venture to perform alongside the men, unless when coupling (partnering). Few female dancers openly challenge the Xpressionz females, but the Elite Team dancers have an open exchange and/or dance alongside Xpressionz one on one. Exposed to the male gaze, modelling expensive outfits, and elaborate hairstyles, the female dancers articulate their bodies demonstrating their control of each muscle of their corporeality. As they whine/wine and rotate their pelvis one moment, then shake and manipulate their buttocks both independently and as one whole, some perform splits and forward rolls onto their backs, legs spread touching either shoulder, others stand, their heads between their legs to display their 'camel toes' (the imprint of their vaginas, through tight skin-fit shorts, tights (leggings), and/or skinny jeans.*

*The Korotech participants take photos and the professional photographer amongst them starts to use his small palmcorder to video the proceedings whilst I record the audio. I later collect a palmcorder and also start to video. We are both*

*forced to follow the 'official' videographer who has a light attached to his camcorder. We are therefore restrained and limited by what he chooses to record, as that is where the video-light is directed.*

*Ioctane's decision to leave sparks a mass exodus from the session. As the dancehall massive remaining continue trickling out, Xpressionz also decide its time to go. Outside, casual vendors are prepared for the finishing time and are ready for the 'early morning' sales from the hungry performers and adherents.*

Patten, field-notes 2013

The above extract provides an overview of the dancehall session as an event, and I shall presently examine each section of the dancehall session in detail to demonstrate how the corporeal body functions analogously within dancehall dance and African/neo-African cultural practices. First, it is important to outline some parameters against which dancehall is presented as a spiritual practice. The fact that dancehall embodies a ritual element has been acknowledged by a number of scholars. As outlined in chapter 2, Cooper (2004) speaks of dancehall as embodying female fertility rituals, whilst in chapter 3, Beth-Sarah Wright (2004 p.45) identifies a 'transcendental quality' and an 'old and otherworldly presen[ce]' (ibid) within the engagements taking place between dancehall participants. However, Sonjah Stanley-Niaah begins to address the possibility of a ritual aspect within dancehall in declaring:

My aim is not to argue that ritual – understood, in the traditional sense, as that which is practiced amongst many indigenous peoples – can be found in the Dancehall ... [as] a call to Spirit and the ancestors for transformation and healing through reconnection with purpose ... My concern here is the everyday celebration of a continuum – God, self, life, death, anniversary – that dancehall presents within its calendar.

Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.90

Like Stanley-Niaah, few scholars have overtly presented dancehall dancing as a spiritual religious practice involving spirit transformation in its own right, although Lena Delgado de Torres (2010; 2015) does explore dancehall as a cleansing ritual and masquerade form. Hence, contrary to Stanley-Niaah and others, this thesis is concerned with ritual as ‘a call to spirit and the ancestors’, as transformation, as healing and the reconnection with self as a process of smadditisation. Theological study places emphasis on Theos or God, which according to Gordon Lynch, ‘implies an absolute reference point for our existence’ (2005 p.94), thereby spiritual existence can be perceived as functioning to facilitate the search for belonging, transcendence, and meaning in relation to ‘this absolute reference point’ (ibid). However, I suggest that the dancehall space may better be explored and theorised more inclusively through the Rastafarian concept of ‘I an/d I’, which proposes that God the ‘divine essence lies in all Rastafarian adherents’ (Barnett in Nettleford and Salter, 2008 p.49).

The notion of God residing in the individual I, or self, offers a reinterpretation in line with theologian Gordon Lynch, who argues that theology represents the quest for ‘meaning and value in life’ (Lynch 2005 p.94). This echoes Paul Tillich’s conception of religion as individuals striving to attain or experience the ‘divine’, or ‘ultimate concern’, which he believes ‘manifest[s] in all creative functions of the human spirit’ (Tillich, 1959 p.8) placing the individual ‘self’ centrally. The Rastafarian conception of ‘ultimate concern’ is ‘Jah’ (God), who is referenced as the ‘Supreme Being’ by many Africans. This conception is complicated in the perception of Jah, held by many Rastafarians, as having become incarnate in the form of H.I.M Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia (Williams, in Nettleford and Salter, 2008). The conception of Jah as the I (Godhead), residing in the I (self), forces an acknowledgement of theological ‘meaning and value’ as being inherently invested with culturally determined biases, values, and political meaning in its functioning.

The individual I, pursuing meaning and value to experience the I of the Supreme Being is explored here using Lynch’s functionalist approach in which religion serves three main functions, as he outlines:

1. A social function: religion provides people with an experience of community and binds people into a social order of shared beliefs and values that provides a structure for their everyday lives (see, e.g., Durkheim, 1915);
2. An existential/hermeneutical function: religion provides people with a set of resources (e.g., myths, rituals, symbols, beliefs, values, narratives) that may help people to live with a sense of identity, meaning and purpose (see, e.g., Geertz, 1973);
3. A transcendent function: religion provides a medium through which people are able to experience “God,” the numinous or the transcendent (see, e.g., Hick, 1990, pp.161ff.)’

Lynch, 2005 p.28

Following this model, dancehall is explored as a means of social ordering and structure, providing symbolic iconography and the transformational and transcendent experience of the Supreme Being. Going further, within Lynch’s functional approach will be incorporated the notion of ‘conjure’, as developed by Robert Beckford as an ‘appeal to the spirit world for intervention and transformation of earthly existence ... [employing] cultural products’ (2014 p.129). In this vein, it is proposed that dancehall be read as a continuity of Jamaican African/neo-African spiritual practice and cultural expression. As such dancehall culture through the notion of conjure inherently embodies ‘a spiritual potential that might engender a religious experience’ (Beckford, 2014 p.127). Dancehall culture may therefore be viewed as a mode of ‘individual and sociopolitical healing’ (Beckford 2014 p.129), and thus a cathartic coping strategy. As such, dancehall participants must be accepted as organizing their lives around the experiencing of ‘ultimate concern’ (Tillich, 1959) or the Supreme Being, by the temporary regaining of smadditisation, channelled through the corporeal dancing body. Following the typical dancehall session outline given above, these approaches will now be explored in projecting a spiritual lens on the ‘early-out’, the ‘mid-juggling’ and ‘the coupling’ sections of the dancehall phenomenon in this and the following chapters.

#### ***5.4 Early Vibes Section – The dancing body transferring religious coding within the Jamaican dancehall space.***

As established within dancehall scholarship, the ‘clash’ and ‘juggling’ sessions are the two main forms of sound system dances that constitute a dancehall session.<sup>135</sup> The ‘early vibes’ section, adopting Hall’s insider terminology in relation to the ‘sectionalised’ (interview 2010) nature of the dancehall session will be explored here using Lynch’s conception of religion as serving an ‘existential/hermeneutical function’ (2005 p.28). The ‘early vibe’ section offers the same resources for dancehall practitioners to organise and live their lives by as that provided by religion’s existential/hermeneutic function. The aim here is to present parallels between the dancehall and the African/neo-African spaces and resources (including myths, narratives, rituals, ritual paraphernalia (objects), symbols, beliefs and values) used to permit the body’s transference of religious coding through dance within the Jamaican dancehall space. These resources, I argue, assist the development of a sense of identity, meaning and purpose in relation to the dancehall phenomenon.

The ‘early vibe’ section of the dancehall session provides much of the necessary foundational resources for dancehall’s functioning as a spiritual ritual, beginning with the sanctification of the space. The ‘early vibe’ begins with the clearing and cleaning of the space, Torres’s ‘cleansing ritual’ (2010), the ‘stringing up’ (setting up) of the sound system set (amplification equipment) (Bradley, 2000; Stolzoff, 2000), including the triangulation of the speaker boxes and the important tuning of the set (Henriques 2011). Fine-tuning serves, as Henriques illuminates, ‘to optimise the set’s auditory performance; to regulate its entire frequency range; to ensure it is free from interference or distortion, and [it] has a pleasant tone, texture and timbre’ (2011 p.68). The slow build up to the event from the ‘early vibes’ section serves to encourage (or turn off) potential adherents attending the session, as scholars have submitted (Stolzoff, 2000; Stanley-Niaah 2010; Henriques, 2011; Howard 2016). The ‘early vibes’ features ‘classic reggae’, also termed ‘old hits’, ‘oldies’ or as Henry (2002 p.81) comments, “‘revivals’ (classical reggae) of note ... geared toward a more

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<sup>135</sup> Stolzoff (2000), Manuel and Marshall (2006), Veal (2007), Henriques (2011), and Howard (2016) all provide in-depth exploration of the differences between the "clash" and "juggling" sessions and the importance of their respective roles in the development of dancehall culture.

mature clientele'. Often featured alongside old hits reggae are classic R&B, also termed 'rare groove' and at times older 1970s, 80s and 90s dancehall hits.

The preparation and technicalities inherent within the set up, tuning and auditory playing of the sound system during dancehall's 'early vibe' resonates with the ritual preparation and sanctification of African/neo-African cultural spaces, where practices such as Kumina and Revivalism take place. In relation to many present day Revival churches this includes the stringing up of speaker boxes, as recorded (mass-produced) Revival gospel songs are now regularly used to accompany services. Whilst, Revival congregations sing and play percussion instruments over gospel recordings, the traditional live drumming of the past is now reserved for special occasions, such as ritual tables and duties. I recently witnessed the use of a sound system set at a Revival church in August Town where I had previously attended many services and 'tables'<sup>136</sup> featuring live drumming. This change, demonstrates how sound systems now function similarly as part of the rituals, symbols and values of both sacred and secular spaces. Hence, in both spaces it may be argued, sound systems assist in the transformation and transcendence of participants.

Comparably, the preparations for the dancehall session and those for Kumina ceremonies entail the buying of ritual paraphernalia and provisions, the sanctification of the space and the 'tuning' of the music, as Olive Lewin details:

The drums are put in place to the south-west of the table and consecrated with white proof rum. The drummers then drink some and pour a little into their cupped hands to wipe over their hands and faces. The drummers usually begin to warm up in the early evening while guests and visiting Kumina devotees arrive. Later, the host bands filter into the area raising and joining in songs, supported by the drummers and people playing percussion instruments like shakkas (maracas), tambourines and graters, and improvising with bottles, sticks or anything on which a rhythm can be played.

Lewin, 2000 pp.225-226

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<sup>136</sup> A ritual table or duty is held for a specific function, which Edward Seaga lists as, 'thanksgiving for a particular event, prosperity, deliverance, memorial, death and judgment, mourning, consecration, pole-planting, ordination, dedication, baptism, farewell, etc.' (Seaga, 1982 p.9). This essentially follows the major life celebration events.

Lewin's description conveying the preparations for Kumina rituals is mirrored in the preparations of contemporary dancehall rituals, as Stolzoff (2000) and Stanley-Niaah (2010) detail in mapping the geographical space. However, Lewin does not specify the symbolic rubbing of the drum 'face' (the skin) with white rum as an act I have often witnessed performed by musicians even for 'spectacular' stage performances. Corresponding to 'fine tuning' (Henriques, 2011), this assists the gaining of the correct timbre, pitch and drum tone, as this use of rum not only symbolises the feeding of the ancestral spirits, but also affects the tension of the drum skin. I therefore contend that dancehall's early vibe represents the sanctification of the dancehall space as it maintains many functionary elements that assist in preparing for the corporeal transference of religious coding within the dancehall space.

Equally important to the sound quality within preparations for a dancehall session, is the vibe or energy created within the space. Hence the adoption of Hall's 'early vibe' term in naming the early section of the dancehall event. The dancehall venue may remain vacant, apart from the sound system crew or operators (predominantly male), for a large portion of the 'early vibe'. Selector Camar 'Fire Reeves' explains:

Yu deh a de party from early, ... we work with a vibes! If nobody nu really deh deh, we hold we own vibe till people come so de people dem walk in pon a vibe, yu understand?

You arrive at the party early, ... we work with a vibes! If nobody is really there, we maintain our own vibe until people arrive so the guests walk into a vibe, understand?

Reeves in interview 0:01:41.0

Thereby, the early vibe tuning of the sound system not only ensures a 'pleasant tone' but also, symbolically serves as an invitation to the community to attend and participate in the dancehall event. Within the early vibe period, a limited level of dance occurs. Stolzoff comments, 'people barely sway in the early part of the dance' (2000 p.104). Dancehall dancer Raddy Rich has a more nuanced view, sharing:



When yu enter yu know, a dancehall, first kinda music they start to play, they start to go back in the past like some old, reggae music, yu know! ... they remind yu that yeah, this is our culture. Yeah!’

When you enter you know, a dancehall, first kind of music they start to play, they start to go back in the past like some old, reggae music, yu know! ... they remind you that yeah, this is our culture. Yeah!’

Raddy Rich in interview 2010 0:06:10.0

The music policy furnishes the myths, symbols, beliefs, values, paraphernalia and narratives that directs the dancehall ritual, but importantly, it also dictates the type of dancing that occurs at any given time within the dancehall space. Reggae ‘oldies’ music dictates the adoption of the basic ‘reggae balance step’, or ‘reggae bounce’ (Ryman, 2003) amongst most participants. As I describe elsewhere, the ‘*reggae balance step*’ involves – ‘*stepping out onto one foot (flat on the ground), feet kept parallel and bringing the other foot to meet it, then repeating the same thing on the other side, with a slight dip in the knees on each step*. The dip became more exaggerated – *the knee lifts with a forward dip of the torso* – as it evolved into dancehall’ (Patten, 2016 p.109). Ryman (2003 p.171) notes, ‘[t]he movement principle of the bounce is perhaps the most pervasive characteristic of Jamaican movement. ... Its source resides primarily in an African heritage and in the kinetic memory of the body which carries the heritage’. She continues stressing, ‘[t]he Jamaican emphasis is to be seen in the monotony of the bounce’ (ibid). This is possibly the cultural knowledge (Sklar, 1991) Stolzoff refers to in suggesting dancehall adherents ‘barely sway’ (2000 p.104).

#### ***5.4.1 The balancing Step***

The reggae balance step may easily be recognised as a continuity of the neo-African Revival balance movement – *one foot steps out, the other is brought to meet it forming a vee shape, with a small twist of the torso, repeated on alternate sides*. Within both Revivalism and reggae the balancing step is a waiting and transition step

where repetition and gesture establish and reinforce community identity, whilst negotiating dancehall's 'liminal space' (Turner, 1969). With this in mind, the invitation to the community to attend the dancehall session may be read as an invitation to both the seen (human) and unseen (spirit) community to enter the 'in-between' (Bhabha, 1994) dancehall space. It is within this liminal, or in-between space that through the corporeal body the spirit and the material worlds combine temporarily.



*Fig.7 Revival Mothers balancing.* Source: 'H' Patten

Within the early vibe section, couples often take the opportunity to perform the intimate 'rent a tile', or 'rub', the early style of coupling (partnering) dance involving the circling of the pelvis, often incorporating a slight simultaneous forward and back rocking action, performed on one spot. Ryman's eloquent description of its, 'slow, winding, sensuous movement' (Ryman, 2010 p.118) highlights it as being a continuity and adoption of African/neo-African practices emerging from such forms as Kumina and Jonkonnu Masquerade. The circling of the pelvis is a gesture that through repetition signifies humanity, as according to Elochukwu E. Uzuoku, repetition,

signals a comprehension of one's group gestures and by extension, group identity (1989 p.3). Moreover, the circling pelvic gesture corresponds with the Ghanaian notion that 'circular images give a sense of perpetual motion and completeness of being' (Nii-Yartey, 2016 p.3). The circling, wining or tumbling pelvis, particularly linked to African/neo-African spiritual practices, also signifies the life-cycle, as the pelvis represents the life-giving force, replacing the life that death expels, which as Ryman asserts, 'affirm[s] human power over death' (2010 p.104). Thereby, through dance the pelvis continually reaffirms itself and in the unification of male and female corporeal dancing bodies, dancehall transfers spiritual coding through its popular cultural and African/neo-African genealogy.

### ***5.5 Dancehall space, spiritual perspective***

A change in music policy signals to the community, both seen and unseen, when it is time to enter the space as Stanley-Niaah aptly highlights, 'the selector moves from playing "oldies" to playing more recent music ... signal[ling] that the dance event is progressing' (2010 p.59). However, the 'early vibe' section establishes some direct parallels in terms of functionaries and symbols within dancehall and the African/neo-African practices, which I shall now outline in brief. Olive Lewin (2000) outlines rituals, altars/tables, healing, spirit invocation and engagement and celebration as the main characteristics of Revivalism and Kumina, with the latter maintaining two distinct forms of music, *bailo* and country songs, the latter being the deeper spiritual ritual and the former more social. Adopting her functionaries and symbols, I use data collected from African/neo-African and dancehall practitioners in drawing comparisons.

Leader B (LB) and Leader N (LN), functionaries within August Town Revival Church clarify the fact that Revivalism operates on two levels. LB contends, 'our orders come in, the 60 and the 61 order' (personal interview 1986 p.1). The 60 and 61 orders are earlier referenced in chapters 2 and 3 as Zion and Pukkumina respectively, as scholars have previously recorded (Seaga, 1982; Besson and Chevannes, 1996;

Smith, 2006).<sup>137</sup> The 60 order works solely with angels, so in performing their movement LN shares, ‘yu (you) pu’ down, (put down/perform) yu, yu stamp yu (your) feet and move yu han’ (your hand)’ (personal interview 1986 p.2). Conversely, the 61 order works with Prophets, LN describes as ‘Divine spirit from the earth’ (personal interview 1986 p.3), meaning ancestors who have transitioned, passing from the earth to the spirit world. LB explains, ‘Saints that have gone on before, they can manifest themselves through the [myal] spiritual order’ (personal interview 1986 p.3). Hence, as LN asserts, ‘Those yu bow, yu don’t stamp’ (ibid) with respect to any associated movement. LB confirms, ‘they have this bowing motion!’ (personal interview 1986 p.4). I have witnessed this myself on numerous occasions.

Dancehall sessions can be read in parallel to Kumina and Revivalism as maintaining this dual continuity through the ‘clash’ and/or ‘juggling’ sessions (Stolzoff, 2000). Many dancehall dance movements display a clear upward or downward orientation. Dances such as, Bogle, Clouds, Signal Di Plane, Body Basic, Pressure Dem, Badda Wave, Wheelie Bounce, Summer Bounce, etc., all feature an upward focus. Conversely, Hotfoot, Gully Creeper, Nuh Linga, Sweep, Screechie, Butterfly, Jockey, Della Move etc., these dances all focus towards the ground, ‘duttu tuff’, as Jamaican poet Louise Bennett (1989) and country folk call the earth. The transformative and transcendent aspect of the dance will be further explored in detail in the following ‘man dem’, ‘female’ and ‘coupling’ sections.

The Sound system set as the energy source, obviously replicates the musicians and the African/neo-African ‘seal ground’ through which the spirits may enter (Hutton, 2007). Artistically the Selector also called the MC (Henriques, 2011) leads the community directing the proceedings. The Selector symbolically represents the Leader, Shepherd, Captain, Bishop, Pastor, Kumina King or Queen. Dancehall dancer and DJ Crazy Hype articulates this from a spiritual perspective proposing, ‘dancehall space could be [perceived] like a church, where the selector is like a pastor. The selector is the person who decides how the vibes inna di party go’ (interview 2017, 0:19:16.0). Lena Delgado De Torres similarly contends, ‘Jamaica’s queen narrative draws on the matriarchal structure of Kumina and personages such as Queenie Kennedy, and finds a popular manifestation and embodiment in the character of the

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<sup>137</sup> Revivalism is outlined in chapters 2 and 3, both the Pukkumina and Zion branches. See: (Seaga, 1982; Lewin, 2000). Also see: LB and LN interview Appendix 28.

Dancehall Queen’ (2010 p.19). The Kumina Queen, the Revival Mother and Jonkonnu’s ‘Madda Lumly’ are all encapsulated in the Dancehall Queen in terms of status and profile, but also in the female dancers in terms of movement.

Drinks within the dancehall space, particularly aerated and alcoholic beverages, form the “‘Libation” giv[ing] honor to and summon[ing] the company [spirits]’ (Stewart, 2005 xv), in the ‘pouring down’ of a little drink on the ground, symbolically feeding the ancestors. Sylvanus Kwashie Kuwor comments, ‘traditional prayers are done through Tsifodi (Pouring of Libation)’ (2013 p.50). Kuwor remarks, it may be ‘seen as a solo performance, but ... [witnessed by others] it is a communal activity’ (2013 p.52), as those witnessing include the ancestors. Devotion is performed in the African/neo-African forms through the call and response inherent in the music and dance as well as the lyrical content or orality of the Revival congregation or Kumina and Jonkonnu participants, which has direct correlations with the dancehall’s selector/participants engagement.

Jonkonnu’s masquerade regalia, Revival and/or Kumina dress are clearly evident in dancehall fashion, as Bakare-Yusuf (2006) competently outlines, connecting dancehall fashion to the sartorial style of the Congolese ‘sapeurs’.<sup>138</sup> Dancehall’s styling, bling bling jewellery<sup>139</sup> and adornment, together mirror/represent the shiny sequins, jewels and beads of Jonkonnu and Revivalism, incorporating the colourful and medicinal plant life used by the latter. The speaker boxes, with their heavy bass, obviously encapsulate the drumming, and percussion of the African/neo-African musicians morphed into the form of the soundman dem (Hutton, 2007), the audio engineers and crew that set up and operate the sound system set.<sup>140</sup> The various tones of the drums, the bass, tone, tip with slaps and breaks controlling the dance action and movement of the spirits, are now replicated by vocals and the various frequencies of the bass, midrange and tweeter boxes. The ‘pull ups’ and ‘Cut “n” Mix’ (Hebdige, 2007) between tracks, now re/represent the drum breaks and commands. Sherwin Gardner, an artist within the fairly recent Dancehall Gospel genre eloquently states,

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<sup>138</sup> Sapeurs and adherents of the Saps, meaning the Societe des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Elegantes (the Society of Tastemakers and Elegant People) in The Congo. See: Stephen Doig, The Telegraph, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/fashion-and-style/10564648/Meet-the-dandies-of-Brazzaville.html>

<sup>139</sup> See: (Chapter 1, note 36).

<sup>140</sup> See: Henry (2002) and Henriques (2011).

‘God provides an anointed music for each age. Dancehall is the music of this age’ (in Rommen, 2006 p.235).<sup>141</sup>

The notion of dancehall having a Christian spiritual anointing is reinforced in Global Bob’s insightful contention that, ‘the people who attend dancehall are God fearing people. This why even when songs play of such nature [gospel and/or dancehall gospel], you’ll si (see) a lot of signals go up. Hands go in the air because everybody can relate, to what the songs are saying’ (Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:20:37.0). This suggests that dancehall participants transfer both Christian and African/neo-African coded symbols and ancestral knowledge to the dancehall space, as many are the very same people attending Jamaica’s numerous churches and/or African/neo-African spiritual practices. In terms of night noise, Revivalist practitioners had to negotiate the Night Noises Prevention Law of 1911, according to Seaga (1969), as most dancehall dance artists, musicians and scholars opine in identifying the Noise Abatement Act of 1997 as having the single biggest impact on the successful running of dancehall events.

## ***5.6 Conclusion***

The ‘early vibes’ section represents the sanctification and setting up of the dancehall ‘ritual’ space, as will be explored in the following section. Nonetheless, dancehall’s ‘early vibes’ sets the foundation that enables dancehall culture’s transferring of religious coding by functioning existentially, providing the myths, beliefs, symbols, paraphernalia, values, narratives and rituals Lynch suggests are necessary for forming the foundations of spiritual and/or religious practice. This will now be investigated in relation to the dancers themselves.

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<sup>141</sup> A number of dancehall artists experiencing a spiritual and/or religious calling have gone into the church (become Christians). Recognising the power of dancehall many, along with Christian trained artists, have been instrumental in developing the popular ‘dancehall gospel’ genre, which features artists such as: Chevelle Franklin, Dj Moses, DJ Nicholas, Goddy Goddy, Jason Mighty, Marion Hall (formerly Lady Saw), Papa San, Positive, Ryan Mark, Sherwin Gardner, Stitchie (formerly Lieutenant Stitchie) and many others. This is a rich unresearched dancehall element.

## **Chapter 6. Party Hot – Man dem section: *The corporeal dancing body creating ‘dancehall spirituality’***

### **6.1 Introduction**

If the ‘*early vibes*’ section represents the sanctification of the dancehall space, then the ‘*man dem section*’ foregrounds the creation of a ‘dancehall spirituality’ through the performance and performative articulation of the corporeal dancing body. Western Christian perspectives privilege speech and the voice as the major means of communication thereby restricting corporeality. Theologian Elochukwu E. Uzukwu affirms, ‘dance was gradually eliminated from the liturgy in medieval Christendom’ (Uzukwu, 1997 p.6). Yet, the corporeal dancing body remains a crucial, integral and versatile component of African/neo-African interaction and cultural expression (Uzukwu, 1997; Ajayi, 1998). The centrality of religious and spiritual practices within most African worldviews is correctly articulated by Bolaji Idowu as occupying ‘our inner most beings’ (1973 p.1) and accompanying, he continues, ‘the great or minor events of life’ (ibid). Therefore, spiritual and religious devotion is often regarded as representing life itself within many African/neo-African belief systems. Kariamuwelsh Asante reinforces this stating, ‘Religion played a central role in the lives of West Africans, and the music, dance and other arts reflect[s] those belief systems’ (2010 p.30). Hence, this chapter will further demonstrate dancehall’s functioning as a religious practice by exploring the analogous use of the corporeal dancing body within both dancehall and African/neo-African dance practices.

To foreground the danced commonalities and continuities shared between dancehall and African/neo-African dance contributing to the creation of a ‘dancehall spirituality’ it is necessary to consider: Why do people dance? What type of kinaesthetic movements do dancehall bodies employ? What are the spatial relationships and groupings formed? Who are the main actors? What possible codes are embodied within dancehall? What meanings might be perceived or comprehended in the translation of dancehall movements from the dancehall space to the wider

Jamaican society and beyond? How does spirituality manifest within dancehall? How might dancehall spirituality provide a survival mechanism for its marginalised participants? In addressing these concerns over the following chapters what will begin to emerge is dancehall's embodiment of Jamaican spiritual cosmology and religious coding within the corporeal dancing body and the nature and importance of any emergent dancehall spirituality.

## ***6.2 Why people dance***

Dancehall dancers use their corporeality to maximum effect within the Jamaican context because, as I have observed in many practitioners throughout this research, most dancers are inspired and hyped by the act of dancing itself and how it makes them feel. Dancehall dancer and entertainer Fredrick 'Tippa' Moncrieffe explains:

When we hear a popular song dat (that) we like, is like a lot a energy, yu jus (you just) get a, energy jus (just) come tu yu (to your) body, yu'r (you're), yu, (you) yu (you) feel energised, yu (you) feel, yu'r (you're) on top of di worl' (the world).

Tippa, interview 2010, 0:18:45.4

Many dancers are also hyped or energised by the opportunities dance affords them. Dancehall dancing facilitates corporeal bodies to be transformed and transported in pixelated form across the Internet, occupying infinite locations at once (Hope, 2010; Sjövall, 2013). Award winning dancer Global Bob enlightens:

Most Selecta and mos' (most) DJs, they are focusing more on social media, because they kno (know) that it reaches a mass audience ... is (its) not jus about going to the street no more ... they have campaigns online and say, "the best female danca (dancer) to dis (performing to this) song, wining, anywhere she's from, she will win \$100 US ... they will do di (the), a mad video, an den dat (and then that) video go viral. So it give the artist a push, give the danca (dancer) a push.

Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:38:34.3



Dance videos present opportunities for dancers to be spotted, to ‘buss’, gain contacts, contracts and invitations to physically tour multiple distant countries, gaining the economic rewards so badly needed to help them, their families and other members of their community escape poverty (Hickling, 2009; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Gooden, 2014). Dancehall also diverts many artists and adherents from complex problematic and dangerous lifestyles. Kemar ‘Ding Dong’ Ottey, DJ, dancer and leader of Ravers Clavers dancers explains:

So de whole a we a dance an every ting (all of us are dancing and everything). Ummm, yu (you) have a whole lot a (of) yute weh (youths who) I pick up round (around) me, dat (that) didn't have anyting (anything) else to do or didn't see any way out ... dats de (that's the) plus of me dancing or whatever, because, I wi (will) give yute an yute (youths) hope. I wi (will) give dem (them) ideas and ways to get out a it [poverty], an (and) not by jus (just) picking up a gun an (and), try rob somebody or, picking up a knife and try rob somebody an (and) kill somebody.

Ding Dong, interview 2010, 0:25:04.1

Yet, as I argue, dancehall also provides the means for many dancers to metaphysically fly, transcending and transforming themselves to varying degrees through the act of dancing. Kent Robinson aka Dansa Bling states:

When me deh (I'm in) a dancehall yu kno (you know), a jus (just) me an di (and the) music yu (you) know. Nobody else nuh deh roun' me (is around me). ... The only somebody a go deh roun me unless me couple up an start dance wid (The only person to be around is if I'm partnering and start dancing with) a female, but when me a dance (I am dancing) is just me an di (its just me and the) music, mi jus mek di (I just let the) beat take me wherever.

Bling, interview 2013, 0:31:10.6

Likewise, popular female dancer Shelly Xpressionz confirms:

As Bling seh (says), when yu (you are) in the space an (and) dancing, a mean, it tek yu tu (it takes you to) a different place, meaning yu (you) zone out, is like, there is nobody else aroun' yu (around you).

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2013, 0:32:52.0

It is this transformational and transcendent element of dancehall dancing that this research seeks to explore. As dancers creatively express themselves, they transform both their own corporeality and the dance movements themselves, naturally incorporating the influences that surround them. Established dancer Stacia Francine 'Fya' Edwards contends:

You hear a dancehall music you immediately, kick into, that vibe of wanting to either wine up yuself (yourself) or ... The riddim sometimes kinna (kind of) tell yu (you) exactly what to do. ... I, I truthfully dwell in, the beat of the drums, which, comes right back to my whole ancestral values of, of, the whole drumming aspect of, of African, an di (and the) Kumina, an di (and the) Dinkie Mini, which, yu (you) know dat (that) is from, whole heap a (many) centuries ago.

Stacia Fya, 2017 0:19:23.

Fya foregrounds the influence of the Jamaican African/neo-African practices on dancehall dancing. Cheryl Ryman contextualises this influence asserting, 'the African recreated the culture of the homeland and that of their specific ethnic ancestry with retentions that today may be described as the ancestral forms of the African antecedents' (2010 p.98). Through corporeal dancing bodies, I contend that dancehall participants continue to re-create, reproduce, re-present and represent both sacred and secular ancestral knowledge and 'ancestral data' (Stines, 2009) as continuities direct from Africa and from neo-African indigenous creations.

Dancehall provides an alternative to Western knowledge and belief systems by delivering, as Jamaican DJ Capleton espouses, an 'Africentric approach to the black experience' (in Henry, 2002 p.8). As an Africentric approach dancehall retains religion's 'social function' ascribed by Lynch, 'provid[ing] people with an experience

of community and bind[ing] people into a social order of shared beliefs and values that provides a structure for their everyday lives' (2005 p.28). Dancehall's holistic 'Africentric approach' is one in which dance is a lived experience where sacred and secular ancestral knowledge combine to form a spiritual expression of life, emotion and community. This worldview formulates the shared beliefs and values under which dancehall participants create a social order for their own 'livity',<sup>142</sup> exemplified in the following 'man dem section' outline.

### **6.3. Uptown Mondays – dancehall 'man dem' section**

As Hall delineated in chapter five, a section of the dancehall session is dedicated to the dancers where, 'yu get the dance songs and di dancas get mad an get fi du dem ting' (interview 2010, 0:00:03.3). 'Video-lights'<sup>143</sup> sculpt dancer's bodies creating partial silhouettes. Dancers exploit the polyrhythmic structure within the gangster music and dance vocabulary as they create variation within the unison patterns of the choreographed dances performed. The video-light directs untrained eyes around and across the space. Illuminating particular moments in time the video-light serves to distinguish the main players from the adherents, elevating a dancer's position and profile within space and time. The video-light draws dancers and their dances into clear focus, recording particular steps, moments, and/or performances for prosperity, streaming them globally across social media sites. The intensity of the performers' facial expressions demonstrates the power of each individual dancer, yet they also betray their isolation and withdrawal into themselves during performance.

Three male bodies move in triangulated unison. Crazy Hype and Cash Banga are recognisable as part of the M.O.B (Men Of Business) dance group at the front with determined expressions – *their feet march right, left, right, left. The right arm moves (as if throwing something behind the head) in an upward motion, before working in a slashing type action moving diagonally across the chest and back to the originating side, with an emphasis of the arm crossing on the fourth beat. Shoulders move in a lateral motion, dropping on alternating sides left, right, left, right, in*

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<sup>142</sup> Livity is a Jamaican Rastafarian term that means the entirety that encompasses how an individual lives their lives.

<sup>143</sup> Section 6.7.1 outlines the video-light syndrome (Hope, 2006a).

*opposition to the movement of the arms. This causes a small lateral swaying movement of the torso, which is echoed in the pelvis. The left arm is held quite still, bent almost at ninety degrees, due in part to the fact that the dancers hold a drink, in an open cup, in the same hand – The drink therefore dictates a restricted arm movement, similar to that in the Revival dance, where – the pendulum type lateral swaying of the upper body movement is limited by the hand holding a naked candle flame, requiring almost stillness to avoid the flame being blown out – therefore the arm becomes the pivotal point of the movement in both instances.*

Black and white beads are worn around the necks of the dancers. Crazy Hype, also wears black and white beads, but additionally dons a hat partially masking his face and a white shirt. A third member of M.O.B wears a yellow T-shirt with the British Union Jack flag in the design and black pants, he and Cash Banga wear dark glasses or ‘shades’. All together, the movement, dress code and expressions, project a masculinity of strength, determination and advancement, but above all a sense of unity, community and belonging.

Another group of man dem dancing – *step onto one foot and drag the alternate foot back, brushing the ground, before bringing it back, slightly ahead of its original position and stepping on it to repeat the sequence on the opposite side. The body shifts weight dropping down from side to side, the weight dropping onto the leg that is stepping forward. The body is relaxed, bending forward with a slight diagonal to diagonal rotation, led by the shoulder on the same side as the leg stepping forward, whilst the arms swing together forward and back – The whole movement mirrors that of the Revival advancing ‘cut and clear’ step, where – feet move as described, with hands thrown upwards above the head, as if ‘cutting and clearing’ the spirits in the air with scissors in each hand – The difference here is that traditional drumming gives way to dancehall’s recorded ‘riddim plus voicing’ (Manuel and Marshall 2006) music.*<sup>144</sup>

M.O.B.s *Money Walk* dance with – *feet crossing and stepping out as the dancers advance – is literally highlighted by the video-light as – the dancer’s spines*

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<sup>144</sup> Riddim plus voicing describes the creation of dancehall backing tracks on which multiple lyrics are placed, covering diverse themes by numerous artists. They demonstrate the competitive creativity of dancehall DJs and Songjays. See: (Manuel and Marshall, 2006).

*move in a snaking action to the riddim created by their feet – The Selector’s command to “walk wid it” signals the next set of dancers who – use a twisting action from the pelvis to walk on their heels, causing their feet to twist outward on each step as they advance with arms relaxed at their sides – They demonstrate their skill by playing with the polyrhythmic structure of the genre in executing the movement together, but with different phrases in timing.*

The Selector then directs attention to Dance Xpressionz, led by Dansa Bling and Hall performing the *Cross Over* dance, involving – *one knee relaxed supporting the body weight, whilst the other leg, almost straightened, crosses in front, touches the ground and returns so both feet are flat on the ground just over shoulder width apart, knees bent in the douplé<sup>145</sup> position, the feet do an alternating 1, 2, 3 step – Hence the total timing of the step is – step 1, step 2, step 1, 2, 3 or cross front, return, step left, right, left – The quick steps cause – the body to ripple through the spine as the torso or rib cage moves laterally and the shoulders rotate forward, with an alternating circling action, whilst the arms, held outward, ripple through the shoulders.* Some variation is shown in the use of the arms as Bling raises his arms whilst Orville drops his on the one, two, three step. A female dancer, Cutie Xpressionz, joins in behind Bling and Hall. Her movements are gentler in texture than the man dem, but they all maintain a serious expression and downward gaze in the execution of the dance.

The dancers ride the riddim, marking the beat, but elongating it in the flow of their corporeality. Dancehall adherents around them observe and acknowledge the dance. Some sway their torsos echoing the swaying motion of the dancing bodies. The Selecta also sways in line with the riddim, his focus is on the motion of the dancers, whilst engaging them both visually and verbally, encouraging them and the dancehall massive, drawing attention to the dynamics of their movements. Wearing a yellow T. shirt he carries a white rag (towel) around his neck, which he uses to wipe the sweat from his face at intervals. The rag also represents a continuity from Jamaica’s African/neo-African heritage, where individuals carry a towel, which often doubles up as a shawl, headdress, or means of holding an individual in the myal state, thus

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<sup>145</sup> Alphonse Tiérou coined the term *douplé* to describe the deep bend, Ghanaians call ‘sitting on your waist’ or within Western dance is referred to as a *plier*. For a more detailed explanation see: (Tiérou, 1992).

preventing direct physical contact and the possibility of the spirit transferring from the individual being held.

The Rifikal team performance demonstrates the importance of the circle within both dancehall and African/neo-African dancing. With a – *forward action of the torso requiring the chest to lift in a half circle going forward, continuing into a contracting half circle going into the back, whilst the arm pushes forward as if grabbing something, before circling the hand as if spinning a wheel. The feet step forward, planting the foot flat, before lifting it back and alternately lifting the knees, using the leg the same side as the arm going forward. Whilst the arm circles, the feet go into a hop-step, hop-step action with the knees turned out on a diagonal, causing the pelvis to either drop side to side or circle in a tumbling action. They progress into a marching step, again with knees turned out, arms cutting half circles across the body, whilst the ribcage of the torso shifts laterally creating a snake-like action of the whole torso. The head turns side to side with an intense expression* – The dancers work in unison although dressed individually. We see two lines of three male dancers performing, with the front three consisting of two African/Jamaicans and one Japanese dancer.

The dancing is conducted in an orderly ritual, where the Selecta calls out each dance group, crew or squad in turn. He knows their names and engages each as he passes the attention from one group to the other. They in turn dance and effectively pass the dance on to the next group. The video-light helps in facilitating this ritual. Its shift from one group to the next not only helps to direct adherents' attentions, but effectively informs the dancers when to start and stop dancing, as many dancers stop performing as soon as the Selecta and video-light turns from them.

Patten, field-notes 2013

#### ***6.4 Dancehall as community and communitas***

A cursory reading, of the interaction between the man dem and their engagement of dance within the dancehall event, both in the unison performances of individual group dances and the moments where the whole space becomes animated

with individuals expressing themselves independently, dancehall dancing clearly fulfills religion's 'social function' (Lynch, 2005). Dancehall's social functioning serves to unify and engage diverse communities in the manner that Bain-Selbo and Sapp contend, 'religions help people experience "collective effervescence" or *communitas* ... [as] humans are social creatures and we like to come together to transcend ourselves through the greater reality of a community' (2016 pp.6-7). In the dancehall session within '*the man dem section*' corporeal dancing bodies come together and engage in the intense experience Victor Turner conceptualises as '*communitas*' (1969). *Communitas* is the deep binding, overwhelming sense of community Turner explains as being, 'the mutual confrontation of human beings stripped of status role characteristics – people, "just as they are," getting through to each other' (Turner, 1979 pp.470-471). Dance facilitates *communitas* in creating social cohesion, which permits individual transcendence through the removal of hierarchical structures.

Although in the midst of dancing a general sense of equality and *communitas* may be achieved by many, nevertheless a level of hierarchy is maintained within dancehall. Each Jamaican community has an operative sound system, with the area dons, their crews or foot soldiers often being the financiers of regularly held community dances (Charles, 2009). Celebrating the major life-cycle events, the dons and their gangs openly display 'conspicuous consumption' (Hope 2006) lifestyles within the dancehall space. Christopher A. D. Charles submits, 'dancehall musical space is important to social groups like the youth gangs' (2009 p.57). Hence, dancehall engenders multiple groupings in terms of gender, sex, class, colour etc., creating hierarchies some find intimidating and inhibiting to their free participation in dancehall culture.

Social cohesion leading to feelings of *communitas* is particularly evident during group or mass dance performances. In the above extract, although a number of groups, squads and crews are described, each with its own dance movements and dress-codes, social cohesion is apparent in the Selector's direction of the dancehall space. The Selector calls out each group incorporating independent solo artists, giving each space to shine and gain smaddification. Similarly, scholars have argued that sport provides religion's social cohesion function forming part of the daily life cycle

of its participants (Lynch, 2005; Watson and Parker, 2014; Bain-Selbo and Sapp, 2016). In the same vein as sport, I therefore shift focus to the kinaesthetic unification of the *Bogle* dance in relation to dancehall's social functioning and the spiritual/religious role it provides for dancehall participants.

### **6.5 Kinaesthetic movements – social functioning**

Some levelling of hierarchy within dancehall dance is exemplified on a basic level in a number of dancehall's global hits. Glendon 'Admiral Bailey' in *Della Move* (1988) sings 'yu si di knock knee Barney, a do di *Della Move*' (you can see knock knee Barney, doing the *Della Move*). Likewise, Mark 'Buju Banton' Myrie in *Bogle Dance* (1992) waxes lyrically, 'a mussi Nanny dat, after a nuh so *Bogle* stay! She cyaan do it good, but she a rock same way' (that must be Nanny there, but that's not how *Bogle* is done, she's not doing it right, but she's rocking just the same). In both instances, those unable to master the dance steps still have and exercise the right to perform them. Dancehall's social religious functioning lies in the individual's inclusivity and right to perform to their own limitations. Christopher Walker (2008) highlights *Bogle's* engagement of uptown and downtown<sup>146</sup> society in its performance. Walker declares, '[t]he [*Bogle*] dance was infectious, and all across the island [Jamaica,] people were doing it ... Dancing poorly was OK and was jokingly encouraged in the song' (2008 p.54). *Bogle* as a platform for personal expression creates a sense of 'communitas' Jamaicans refer to as a 'vibe'.<sup>147</sup> Tippa fittingly affirms:

If somebody seh (say) do *Bogle*, cau (because) *Bogle* out long time, yu (you) lean to one-side, put di (the) body weight on the right foot, an mek (make) a wave motion wid di (with the) upppa body. Yeah? An point in di (the) sky.

Tippa, interview, 2010, 0:27:37.7

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<sup>146</sup> See: (*Introduction chapter*, section I, note 3).

<sup>147</sup> A vibe is a feeling, and mood, involving emotion, a sense of belonging, enjoyment, and comradery.



The *Bogle* dance (figs.8-11), created in Jamaica by dancehall's 'master dancer'<sup>148</sup> Gerald 'Bogle' Levy satisfies many of the same needs and desires offered by formal religions in its performance. *Bogle* is one of dancehall's earlier mass performance dances. A global phenomenon since 1992, *Bogle* continues to enable communities to come together despite differences of gender, age, politics, location (crossing garrison/area boundaries), social class (uptown/downtown), race, colour, and/or worldviews. The *Bogle* dance is instantly recognized by many globally and often garners the same resultant sea of arms and undulating bodies across the dancehall space whenever Buju Banton's *Bogle* song is played.

#### 6.5.1 Kinaesthetic movement – *Bogle* dance



Fig.8-11 Gerald 'Bogle' Levy (R) performing the *Bogle* dance.

The *Bogle* dance is performed in Jamaica with a forward undulating motion and a pulsating impetus at the initiation or start of the movement. As stated elsewhere, '[t]he forward action resonates with the Revival breathing or 'drilling' pattern [fig.12] – *exhaling, whilst stamping the lead leg, dragging the support leg to meet it* – building to the myal state' (Patten, 2016 p.118). However, in the *Bogle* dance – *the body is carried with a backward tilt* – similar to the arched back of the *Limbo* or the 'Silo' (fig.13) movement within the *Bruckins* dance<sup>149</sup> – *the lead leg is placed in front,*

<sup>148</sup> For details of the African/neo-African 'master' artist concept see: (Chapter 1, section 1.4.3).

<sup>149</sup> The *Bruckins* dance was created as a celebratory emancipation dance and is performed by African/Jamaicans from the Kensington and Manchieneal districts in the parish of Portland, Jamaica

with the supporting leg behind (see figs. 8-11). Arms are held up, with relaxed (bent) elbows, either moving in response to the body's impetus, or articulated in a forward circling action – The *Bogle* movement is reversed to – a contracting, backward-circling action – in Britain and many other regions to which it has migrated.

### 6.5.2 *Bogle's African/neo-African signification*



Fig.12 Revival – basic movement Fig.13 Bruckins – Silo movement

Within the liminal dancehall space individuals may experience a sense of equality and *communitas* dancing in unison with others, empowered simply by the act of dancing. This I contend is a continuity transferred from the *Bruckins* dance to the *Bogle*, evidenced by the immediate parallels drawn between both dances by most African/Jamaicans. Created to celebrate African/Jamaican emancipation the *Bruckins* dance inherently invokes feelings of *communitas*. Liberation theologian James H. Cone (1985) holds that justice, liberation, hope, love, and suffering, were five main elements of black religious ideology emerging out of enslavement. This enables the belief that, 'God's justice was identical with the punishment of the oppressors, and

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See: (Ivey Baxter's chapter on 'Social Dances and Dance Steps' in Coester and Bender (2015) or Cheryl Ryman's 'When Jamaica Dances' in Sloath (2010) for more detailed overviews).

divine liberation was synonymous with the deliverance of the oppressed from the bondage of slavery' (Cone, 1985 p.757). Therefore, God's support of the oppressed represented a confirmation of African 'smaddification' (Mills 1997) that is to say, 'some-bodied-ness' or personhood demonstrated in the quiet dignity displayed in the performance of *Bruckins*.

Walker draws direct parallels between the *Bogle* and the *Silo* movement within *Bruckins*, which involves, he delineates: 'dancers compet[ing] doing the silo, a movement that includes a bruck (break) and a small circle and wave in the torso. In both dances very skilled dancers are able to go all the way backwards in a hinge or to limbo until their upper backs touch the floor, all while continuing the waves or brucks in the body' (2008, p.53). The competitive element present within *Bruckins* is transmitted within dancehall, apparent in the personal interpretation of set dance movements by individuals during periods of mass freestyle dancing. Dance furnishes numerous corporeal dancing bodies with a sense of 'some-bodied-ness' in demonstrating and being recognised for their creative individuality. Veteran dancehall dancer Jonathan 'John Hype' Prendergast proclaims:

Me response fi di dancing, me own di dancin'. I am di ambassador for di dancin'. I am di prestige ... I have created di biggest dance in di worl until tedday! '*Pon Di Riva, Pon Di Bank!*' So dese are tings, these are 'istory. I don' deal wid record yu kno, cau record can be broken, but yu cyaan bruck 'istory, yu haffi join 'istory. So I'm di history man.

I am responsible for the dancing, I own dancing. I am the ambassador for dancing. I am the prestige ... I have created the biggest dance in the world until today! '*Pon Di Riva, Pon Di Bank!*' So these are things, these are history. I don't deal with record you know, because records can be broken, but you cannot break history, you have to join history. So I'm the history man.

John Hype, in interview 2017, 0:20:27.2

John Hype's statement runs contrary to Turner's conception of *communitas* as a hierarchical leveller, as dancehall establishes its own hierarchies on multiple levels pertaining to the expression of dance. Michael 'Crazy Hype' Graham, founder and

CEO of M.O.B dance group reinforces the importance of smadditisation entwined within dancehall culture declaring:

Yu know, when mi a dance mi feel like seh mi a di bes', bes' person pon eart', yu kno wah a mean? Like the dancing jus tek ova ... mos' a di steps dem wah mi do inna dancing, I create them on my, I create them myself, yu get mi? ... So! I feel myself like I'm di best person on eart' when I'm dancing, yu kno wha a mean? ... What mi nuh create, mi wi do mostly Bogle dance move dem because, when yu talk about Bogle dance moves seen, no one cannot do Bogle dance moves, that is living, better than mi, no one!

You know, when I am dancing I feel like I am the best, best person on earth, you know what I mean? Like the dancing just takes over ... most of the steps that I do in the dancing, I create them on my, I create them myself, you get mi? ... So! I feel myself like I'm the best person on earth when I'm dancing, you know what I mean? ... What I do not create, I will do mostly Bogle dance moves because, when you talk about Bogle dance moves seen, no one cannot do Bogle dance moves, that is living, better than me, no one!

Crazy Hype, interview 2017, 0:15:59.5

John Hype and Crazy Hype's statements may appear to project a degree of 'braggadocio',<sup>150</sup> however, most dancers interviewed during this research express similar opinions towards the empowerment dance facilitates. However, viewing Crazy Hype's performance in Major Laser's 'Watch Out For This' music video, the ease of his gliding in executing Bogle's signature movement – *squatting low to the ground with one leg extended using the heel in a dragging action, whilst shuffling the supporting foot in a flat heel and toe action* – almost seemingly resurrects Bogle's spirit within Crazy Hype's own corporeality. Many dancehall participants give special respect to the execution of this movement. Bogle himself seemingly manifests through this movement to honour proceedings.

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<sup>150</sup> Lena Delgado de Torres discusses dancehall braggadocio as a 'sort of confidence-boosting utterance' (Torres, 2010 p.22) using Cassidy and Le Page's definition of 'Boasy', quoting as 'originating from the Yoruba "bosi," which means to be all right, to be successful', (Torres, 2010 p.23). She goes on to explain, 'It means in Jamaican: 1. proud, vaunting, conceited; 2. showily dressed, well dressed, attractive' (ibid). Torres and others like Stanley-Niaah (2010) highlight the preponderance of braggadocio in dancehall as being related to profile and status.

This demonstrates the level of importance placed not only on dancehall's unifying sense of *communitas*, but equally the empowering smadditisation dance permits in defiant resistance to the dehumanising legacies of enslavement and colonialism (Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Patten, 2016). The transformative and liberating nature of dance is emphasised by Ding Dong, who affirms:

Is not even a personal issue, like, yu might deh in front a me an a seh hi to me or wha'ever, an mi don't see yu! Mi eyes dem wide open, an mi don't see yu, because I'm inna my own zone, like dance yu know, a like, my total freedom, no care weh me a go t'ru, from music a play an mi inna a session, an mi a party an a dance, I don't t'ink of anyting else, but dat moment ... is like everything else jus blank to me ... mi jus inna my, inna my freedom, yeah! An, an as it done, as mi done an wha'ever or mi stan' up again, Boom! Is jus, is like me jus go back inna reality, ... when me a dance an everyting, it jus tek mi outta reality, until mi done.

Ding Dong, interview 2010, 0:14:00.7

Ding Dong connects dance as facilitating his getting into his zone, gaining freedom and liberation, much in the same way African/neo-African spiritual practices serve transformative and liberation functions. In this sense, similarly to Jonkonnu, Kumina and Revivalism, as scholars have recorded (Lewin 2000; Stewart 2005), dancehall functions as a spiritual, religious, and resistance practice. Thereby, African/neo-African spiritual practices are, 'rooted in Myalism, where dreams and visions (as opposed to repentance and confession of Christ) were the criteria for orthodox participation' (Stewart, 2005 p.105). Thus, the social functioning of spiritual religious practices extends beyond mere feelings of *communitas*, but encapsulates a liberation based, praxis. The connection between freedom, liberation and dance, is foregrounded by Dianne J. Austin-Broos (1997) in relation to Jamaican Pentecostalism, she states:

The dancing, singing, and celebrating saints are forbidden in their daily lives to dance, sing, or utter the asides of a "sweetheart" or "freeness" life. Yet some of these forms, transformed and sanctified, have been incorporated in the church ... yet in a Jamaican milieu, these features

have been interpreted through a religious discourse bequeathed by the emancipation

Austin-Broos, 1997 p.34

The emancipation religious discourse Austin-Broos highlights within dancehall's liberation praxis remains at the level of individual escapism as a survival strategy and thus in accordance with Burton (1997) 'opposition', having not yet extended to a praxis or action based 'resistance' approach. Nevertheless, the physical or corporeal element of *communitas* is clearly of eudemonic importance, as feelings of joy and happiness are very much evident within the interaction and engagement of male bodies within the non-verbal danced communications taking place within most dancehall spaces.

### *6.5.3 Spatial relationships*



Fig.14 Bogle and Labba Labba



Fig.15 Bogle and Willie Haggart

Bogle dancing in the dancehall space with Labba Labba and Willie Haggart (figs.14 and 15 respectively) foregrounds how feelings of *communitas* and kinship enable all participants, male or female, to engage each other outside 'normative' boundaries and taboos. Special relationships that may otherwise be regarded as transgressive within the wider Jamaican society are permitted between man and man, female and female, or the man dem and the females occupying the dancehall space (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Pinnock, 2007; Hope, 2010). Donna P. Hope in her study of

dancehall masculinities highlights its transgressive nature, ‘with increasing levels of homosociality publicly displayed in the choreographed dances and male-on-male physical contact in the centre of the dancehall’ (2010 p.139). Adom Philogene Heron (2012) suggests in performance the man dem ‘confront varying degrees of risks ... [as] an individuated art of self emerges ... transcend[ing] the exigencies of sufferation’ (2012 p.15). Equally, Nadia Ellis remarks, ‘the male dancing body has the freedom to tell different stories in the context of dancehall more than almost anywhere else in Jamaica’ (2011 p.14). Dancehall dance facilitates the expression of the man dem as they communicate, display themselves, move together, clash, touch, show strength, vulnerability, humanity, compassion, aggression, brotherhood, humour and bloodline connections.

The male corporeal freedom foregrounded by Hope, Philogene Heron, and Ellis is only permissible, I contend, as dancehall *communitas* encompasses within its performance a consciousness of a wider community. Clinton Hutton affirms, ‘Blacks conceive that the spiritual world and the world of the living constituted one reality on a continuum’ (2015 p.154). Thus, dancehall as a continuum of African/neo-African expression integrates the unseen ancestral ‘spirits’ within its community (Mbiti, 1985; Somé, 1995). Thereby in the midst of dancehall’s (seen) communication between those physically present in the space is the (unseen) communication, facilitating the sharing and dissemination of ‘ancestral data’ (Stines, 2009). Stines rightly affirms:

... the Jamaican body shouts<sup>151</sup> a plethora of ancestral data ... the ancestral shouts resounded loudly in indigenous, traditional, and popular Jamaican movement. They were deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of the island’s religious, social and communal exercises.

Stines, 2009 p.2

The social function of dancehall dancing is therefore reinforced through corporeal dancing bodies transferring the ‘plethora of ancestral data’ and knowledge by manifesting African/neo-African dance vocabulary within dancehall dances. Ding Dong, articulates dancehall’s genealogical African/neo-African ancestry, stating:

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<sup>151</sup> Shouts, as in screaming, meaning a combination of instinct, impulses, and memory.

Whether we waan believe it yes or no, a lot of movement from us within dancehall, it come from our ancestors dem ... inna Africa dem dance a lot. Dem dance fi call down de rain, dem dance when somebody a married, dem dance fi jus nuttin at all. Celebration, ceremony, sacrifices everyting dem dance, yeah? ... Lot a de dances dem weh we do in dis time, is connected to those dances with we not even knowing dat we doing it ... because its jus inna our stream. Yu get me?

Ding Dong, interview 2010, 0:21:00.4

Ding Dong's statement demonstrates that dancehall dancers are conscious of the genealogical continuities between their dancing, African and neo-African dancing and their social functioning, providing a structure for the everyday livy of dancehall participants. Ryman reinforces, '[o]ut of necessity and instinct, the ancestral dance-music forms morphed into homegrown creolized forms' (Ryman, 2010 p.99). Hence, as an indigenous creolised form, dancehall participants are actively involving themselves in alternative rituals forming modern manifestations of ancestral dance/music. This manifests a 'dancehall spirituality' I argue, that plays a crucial role as a survival strategy for Jamaica's disenfranchised and marginalised poor.

### ***6.6 Embodied codes***

Dancehall practitioners consciously and subconsciously recreate gestures and symbolisms that signify the ancestral knowledge within its embodied ancestral forms. Individuals having participated in African/neo-African practices continue to carry this embodied knowledge with them. Thereby, as many African/neo-African practitioners are the very same people attending dancehall sessions it is highly unlikely that they leave their deep seeded belief systems behind when entering dancehall's secular space. Writing on Revivalism, Jamaican scholar Maria Smith (2006) describes its major elements as iconography, meaning symbolic representations offering semiotic clues to a particular culture. She states:



‘Iconography represents important concepts of peoples, places, buildings all interrelating and creating an awareness of things in form and context. These concepts can inform religious, historical or cultural patterns that are important to the transmission and continuation of cultural forms ... Iconography includes people, landscape, space, dress, objects, symbols, symbolic gestures, music, dance, verbal images, dreams and colour symbolism’

Smith, 2006 p.9

Smith advocates that iconography encapsulates and transmits the worldview of a particular community through symbolic signs. She includes dance as a set of symbolic signs that convey the African/neo-African cosmological worldviews and ideas of Jamaican African forebears. Iconography may also be read as Ryman’s (2010) coded ancestral forms. As such, they influence the movement that pours out of African/neo-African corporeal dancing bodies. Revival footings, Kumina pelvic actions, Jonkonnu breaks and hand gestures are all dissected, divided, redistributed and re-purposed to re-emerge as new dancehall movement vocabulary. Therefore dancehall dances and corporeal bodies may be regarded and approached as signifying practices conveying the meanings and intentions of ancient and contemporary dance creators.

### ***6.7 Signifying practices***

Considering dancehall as a ‘signifying practice’ (de Saussure, 1966), I address its spiritual potential by exploring three main aspects, firstly the signification of the video-light within the dancehall space; secondly the body as signifier; and thirdly, signification within dancehall movement vocabulary. The notion of signifying practice comes from semiology, developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1966), involving a sign (written, spoken, painted, sculpted, played or danced), conveying meaning by referencing something beyond itself. Signs consist of two elements, a signifier (a sensory stimulus – a sound, object, smell, touch or visual image/movement) and that which is signified (a concept). The field-notes above exemplify in that the ‘video-light’ sculpting the dancers’ bodies create halo type

silhouettes. The notion of the halo signifies the concept of spirituality or religion. Meaning is therefore attained by connecting the signifier to the signified, however, this relationship must be learnt, being culturally contingent. Although highly significant within Christianity, the halo might be unknown within non-Christian cultures. Consequently ‘signifying practices’ have limitations, as encoded readings embodied within cultural expression may not necessarily be decoded in the manner intended since the receiver(s) may adopt alternative meanings.

### ***6.7.1 Video-light to spot-light***

The video-light is an important signifier within dancehall culture serving to distinguish it from ordinary parties. According to Hall, ‘parties doan [don’t] usually go fa, [for] fa video-light so the, the video-man himself now, is now, arhmm, a integral part of what happens in the dancehall’ (interview 2010, 0:05:58.9). As earlier described, the video-light sculpts the dancers’ dancing bodies, illuminating and lifting them out of the physical darkness and relative anonymity of dancehall’s ‘liminal space’.<sup>152</sup> The ‘video-light syndrome’ (2006a p.127) coined by Hope, ‘[is the] powerful need to be seen, documented, photographed and, in particular, videotaped’ (ibid). A central feature of the dancehall space the video-light signifies the place and space where dancehall dancers truly become liberated. It is a platform or stage where individuals, crews or squads potentially become ‘translocal’ (Hannerz, 2003)<sup>153</sup> and gain celebrity. Hope emphasises this in relation to another popular dancehall session:

The preponderance of high-tech imaging devices on the *Passa Passa* platform reflects its multiple layers where African retentions, creolized dance, and inner-city style merge with high technology ... encoded representations will reach outwards from the confined space and stage of *Passa Passa* to flaunt their composite selves on multiple and extensive stages. Even momentarily, their spirits will be freed from the

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<sup>152</sup> For a discussion of Stanley-Niaah’s use of liminal space as the confined space in which hierarchy is temporarily collapsed, see: (Chapter 1, section 1.4.4).

<sup>153</sup> Hannerz uses the idea of translocal connections, where multiple locations are interconnected, as dancehall dancing connects Jamaica, the wider Caribbean, the UK, Africa, Canada and America, with Europe, Japan and other un-expected locations such as Australia as ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1989).

here and now to be seen and heard in the there and elsewhere ... They will be known as dancehall kings, queens, and superstars.

Hope, 2006b p.137

The video-light's discerning lens, like the anonymous 'voice-of-God narration' (Rabiger, 2009; Nichols 1983) used to stamp authority in traditional documentaries, foregrounds encoded symbols. Illuminating dancehall's African/neo-African continuities as hybrid forms, the video-light represents multiple opportunities for artist to be seen, 'buss',<sup>154</sup> and gain success as 'dancehall superstars' (Hope 2006). Hence, the video-light is highly contested and affects artistic standards across the gender divide and sector as a whole. Hall details:

... yu (you) even fine dat di (find that the) male dancers are now fighting the female dancers fi di (for the) video-light. Literally pushing them out a di (the) way, becau (because) this is now, possibly my ticket. We have dancers going to Japan, we have dancers going to Englan' ... [who] are able, to come back tu (to) Jamaica and pay down pon a likkle cyaar (little car).

Hall, in interview 2010, 0:25:46.7

Hall reinforces how the video-light forces issues of gender and emerging masculinities to the fore within dancehall discourse. In personal conversations some internationally renowned dancehall dancers admit that in the absence of the video-light they may not dance to their best abilities, unless foreigners or promoters who can potentially buss their careers are present. Nonetheless, as a dance practitioner I seek to expand the video-light concept and erode the physical boundaries of its white light perimeter via the liberating space of the mind.

Replacing the physical video-light with the notion of the 'spot-light', this research immediately expands the dancehall space and place. The spot-light has two aspects, the first being the 'spot', signifying the physical place where individuals are recognised, found and seen. Secondly, the 'light' represents illumination, elevation

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<sup>154</sup> Buss - meaning to burst onto the entertainment scene, achieving success both economically and through notoriety, therefore acquiring the "bling bling" lifestyle. See: (Hickling, 2009).

and visibility. Therefore together the spot-light has three core significations. Firstly the spot-light signifies the theatrical conception of the physical light marking the 'centre stage', the contested space/stage where dancers perform, transform, and clash through dance. The spot-light as illumination signifies success, assisting many dancers to achieve 'stardom', expressed by Fredrick Hickling as 'any status in which the individual becomes the focus of attention in the public eye' (2009 p.9). The spot-light is therefore a critical marketing tool where the best and most prominent dancers appear, inevitably leading to them regularly featuring on local and outernational video productions. Aware of the power and influence of the spot-light and videography, Jack Sowah rightly declares, '[r]ight now you have girls whelh deh a England an America true my Videocassette' (Sowah in Hope, 2006a p.73). Thereby, the spot-light and videography forces most serious dancers to maintain 'camera-ready-masks' (Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.172), projecting a fashion, style and persona that convey dancehall's sense of braggadocio and conspicuous consumption.

Secondly, the spot-light symbolically surpasses the physical space, as conceptions of the 'centre stage' exist with or without the physical light being present. Whenever and wherever artists are moved to dance or clash, a 'centre stage' is signified and made manifest. However, as Hickling contends, '[m]odern stardom seems to be more about marketing than celebrity, but requires a trustworthy team' (2009 p.35), thereby promoters and artistic scouts searching for dancers to fulfill roles as performers, teachers and choreographers attend the dancehall space to observe the latest talent entering the spot-light.

Finally, the 'spot-light' signifies the crossroads, the liminal space where place, space and time collide as dancers transcend and move between the physical and spiritual worlds. Within the 'spot-light' corporeal dancing bodies both consciously and subconsciously signify spiritually in re-creating and re-connecting Ryman's ancestral forms from African homeland cultures. Hall holds, that the dancehall space is 'where dance is the nucleus of what happen[s]. The crews them are always there and always, showing off them routine always in the video-light' (interview 2010, 0:05:58.9). As Hall recognises, the spot-light is central to the dancers' creative expression. Inside the spot-light the inextricable relationship between dance and

music embodied in the dancers' response to dancehall rhythms signify and manifest African/neo-African genealogical practices.

The inseparable link between dance and rhythm, Ryman suitably asserts, 'persists beyond the traditional into the popular dancehall arena' (2010 p.109). She observes, 'Solo or duet performance of dancers is encouraged and highlighted by one of the videographers shining the video light [/spot-light] on the performers while recording the dance sequence' (ibid). Although noting the video/spot-light as recognising and foregrounding dancers, Ryman overlooks the fact that the spot-light is often the instigator of spontaneous dancing, what I call 'satellite-dance-bursts'. This refers to the sudden intense bursts of energetic dance that takes place within the spot-light, frequently triggered in response to the focused attention signalled by the spot-light's illumination of individual(s), whilst roaming the dancehall space. Most scholars have not yet focused on the 'spot-light' as signifier and catalyst for dancers to go through spiritual transformations and transcendence, to which I now turn.

### **6.7.2 Signifying bodies**

Approaching dancehall as a signifying practice, corporeal dancing bodies convey codes that signify spiritual and religious meaning on multiple levels. Crazy Hype and Cash Banga's marching movement described above, may be read simply as signifying a determined dancehall masculinity. However, alongside the use of dark glasses, a security/bodyguard, or masquerade persona may also be signalled. Yet, in conjunction with the black and white beads around the dancers' necks and the dominant red lettering on Cash Banger's chest, a strong signification of 'the three primary colours of Kongo spirituality: red, white and black' (Hutton, 2015 p.154) may be read. Thereby, the warrior type strength of the dance movement further gives an African/neo-African signification of Vodun and/or Santaria *Lwas* or *deities* of Ogun or Elleguá. Ogun/Ogoun/Ogou/Ogūn/Ogum/Orgū is the African warrior deity of iron/power and is symbolically represented by the cutlass/machete/sword (Deren, 1991; Daniel, 2005; Hutton, 2015). Elleguá is a little more complex, known by multiple aliases, as Yvonne Daniel delineates it is:

(Elegba, Legba, Elegbara, Papa Legba, Eshu, Echu, Exu, or Eua), who is responsible for opening communication between the human and superhuman or spiritual worlds in both Fon derived (Legba) and Yoruba derived (Eshu) religious communities.

Daniel, 2005 p.71

As the gatekeeping messenger communicating between humanity and the deities, Elleguá is more commonly called Legba in Jamaica and is more frequently found in Haitian (Vodun), as well as Cuban and Bahian (Yoruba) practices originating from West Africa (Deren 1991; Desmangles 1992; Daniel 2005).

### 6.7.3 *Legba signifiers*



Fig.16 M.O.B Dancers



Fig.17 Dinkie Mini Islington



Fig.18 Dinkie Mini step

Legba is known in Jamaica as the guardian of the crossroads and protector of the disabled and as such is linked to the Dinkie Mini dance, found in the parish of St Mary.<sup>155</sup> Dinkie Mini features – *an uneven movement, as the supporting leg faces forward, foot flat on the ground (in parallel), with the knee of the other leg turned in,*

<sup>155</sup> Olive Lewin (2000), Cheryl Ryman (2010), and Laura Tanna with Hazel Ramsay (2015) all provide good descriptions of the Dinkie Mini practice, despite some of the overviews being related to the musical element. However, Ramsay does describe the dance step itself, but some knowledge of the dance would be required in order to fully reproduce the dance from her description.

creating a knock-knee letter K against the supporting knee, with foot placed on the ball (turned inward). With both knees relaxed in a *douplé* bend, the flat foot drags along the ground to meet the foot on the ball, which flicks along the ground in the direction of travel – the stance and movement signifies the disability of the deity within the dance.<sup>156</sup> Many confuse Legba with ‘The Baron Samedi’ (commonly depicted wearing a hat) due to Legba’s duality, which connects him to Ghede, who in turn has connections to ‘The Baron’ due to both deities being associated with the crossroads. Thus, Crazy Hype corporeally presents a strong signification of Legba/Eshu/Elleguá/Ghede/Baron Samedi by donning a hat partially masking his face, whilst wearing black and white beads, a white shirt and light coloured pants. The symbolic colours of Eshu and Elleguá are black and white, and/or red and black, hence from an African/neo-African perspective Crazy Hypes overall appearance signifies the deity whether intentionally or not.

In relation to dance, the upright body is the signifier or phallic representation of the potomitan, (the ‘centre post’ within Revivalism and Kumina), against which mother earth (the horizontal ground) ‘the open space around it [the potomitan] ... [signifies] his [Legba’s] womb’ (Laguerre in Desmangles, 1992 p.109). Thus, corporeal dancing bodies within the dancehall space inherently become signs, signifying renewal and rebirth, as well as representing the cosmological communication between the dual spirit and material worlds. Dance Xpressionz’ performance of the *Cross Over* dance spirituality signifies the connection between heaven and earth, with the upward direction of Dansa Bling’s arms linking the heavens, whilst the feet connect with the earth. ‘Mother earth’ represents the route through which the spirits enter the body within many African/neo-African practices. The feet’s contact with the earth is the symbolic intersection between the spirit and

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<sup>156</sup> Leslie G. Desmangles confirms Legba’s connection to the cross/roads, describing Legba as ‘the guardian of destiny who holds the keys to the doors of the underworld’ (1992 p.11). As the gatekeeper connecting the spiritual and material world, Legba is the first deity to be called upon in any ceremony and according to Daniel, occupies ‘the intersection of physical reality and metaphysical concern’, (2005 p.71). Legba is therefore regarded as sustaining life in this manifestation, but conversely, in Haiti his alternative side or mirror reflection is Mèt Kafou Legba, meaning ‘Master Legba of Intersections’, director of the Rada spirits and therefore representing death as Kafou (Desmangles, 1992 p.110). Maya Deren holds, as Kafou, Legba’s ‘figure is black, is Ghede, God of the Dead’ (1991 p.37). Legba in embodying Ghede as his alternative persona is represented as an old man with a walking stick. However, as Ghede, Legba has a connection to Baron Samedi, ‘Lord of the Cemetery, of the cross/roads ... of the magic related to both the Dead and the cross/roads’ (Deren, 1991 p.69), which complicates Legba’s complex character. The complexity of Legba’s character lies in him also being known as ‘the cosmic phallus’ (Desmangles, 1992 p.109) and is said to be androgynous and therefore represented by the potomitan, the centre post, or the walking stick (Desmangles, 1992).

material worlds. Therefore, through multiple symbols: dance; gesture; clothing; colours and so forth a dancehall spirituality is signified nightly, as part of the life-cycle rituals dancehall facilitates.

### **6.8 Dancehall movement signification**

As functionaries within dancehall's ritual space the 'Old Skool' generation of dancers are respected as gatekeepers, due to their international success and profile, gained from their dance creations. John Hype's '*Pon Di River, Pon Di Bank*' (*Pon Di River*), was made global by the party tune of the same name by DJ O'Neil 'Elephant Man' Bryan, whose alias 'Energy God' immediately foregrounds dancehall's spiritual/religious signification. A global hit, *Pon Di River* like *Bogle* is instantly recognised and danced to, creating an upbeat party vibe whenever 'dropped' (played) by a Selector. However, from a semiotic perspective the dance carries deeper spiritual significance than its party vibe conveys. Elephant Man on Boomshots.com<sup>157</sup> explains the movement as signifying, 'we jumping in the river, we jumping back on the bank' (Boomshots.com, Accessed 26.06.2017, 1.32), reflecting a Jamaican African continuity. Moving in the river and on the bank is a signifier of enslavement. Whilst escaping to freedom many enslaved Africans threw hunter dogs off their scent by travelling through Jamaica's waterways and tributaries. Thus Elephant Man's song, read as in the African/American spiritual '*Wade in the Water*', signals African resistance, rebellion and resilience.

#### **6.8.1 *Pon Di Riva, Pon Di Bank***

Featuring a basic pumping action of the foot as its signature movement, the *Pon Di River, Pon Di Bank* dance involves – *relaxed knees, maintaining a bounce (feet shoulder width apart), whilst lifting the knee of the lead leg and crossing it over the supporting leg, touching heel to the ground and immediately lifting knee and returning the lead leg back to starting position. Repeating on alternating sides, the*

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<sup>157</sup> Boomshots.com is an online magazine, a news site, and YouTube TV channel that specialises in reggae/dancehall current affairs.



arms work in opposition to the feet, with bent (relaxed) elbows and hands in a loose fist, or open, with the body twisting in the same direction as the lead leg. The movement is continuous travelling (moving) forward with incremental hops, due to its repetition of the foot crossing back and forth on alternate sides. The movement resonates with the notion of the ‘changing same’ (Jones & Baraka 1959), where the traditions of the past maintain recognisable artistic symbolisms that, although ‘trace[able] back to one distant location, have been somehow changed’ (Gilroy, 1991 p.111). In *Pon Di River*, the basic lifting of the knee resonates with the knee action in *Bruckins*, the Jamaican emancipation dance, but changed to accommodate an up-tempo vibe, reinforcing it’s signalling of African resistance and rebellion.

### 6.8.2 *Pon Di River* signification



Fig.19-21 Kiprich & Elephant Man - Pon Di River, Pon Di Bank Fig.22 Bruckins

The basic crossing and returning of the foot in *Pon Di River* also signifies Jonkonnu’s basic step associated with Pitchy Patchy. Ivy Baxter scribes, ‘Paul Pride, the Pitchy-Patchy, also did quick steps sideways from foot to foot, which caused his costume of brightly coloured rags and tatters to “tremble”’ (2014 p.172). Thus *Pon Di River* steps signify a newly retranslated ‘traceable’ echo of Jonkonnu, serving to remind African/Jamaicans of their not so distant historical past. Yet it also signifies and warns Jamaica’s poor of the need to retain modern-day escape routes through the gullies, gully sides, road verges and even rivers and streams as precautionary measures against gang warfare, civil unrest or police raids. Importantly, *Pon Di River*

also signifies metaphysical escape and spiritual crossings. The river reference connects to the still prevalent and popular river baptisms, particularly within rural Jamaica and in Revival practices where provision is always made for the 'River portions' (spirits) to join the proceedings (Lewin, 2000).

The alternating crossing back and forth of the feet potentially establishes new, changing relationships as dancers meet and pass each other. The momentary 'breaks' created in one dancer's encountering of another translates as a momentary rupture in time and space. This mirrors and equates with the musical *Cut 'N' Mix* (Hebdige, 2007), or the 'aesthetic of the sound collage' (Veal, 2007 p.9), where additional/new sounds are created in 'the rewind (or "wheeled-back"/"pulled-up")' (Manuel and Marshall, 2006) aesthetic. This 'haal (haul) and pull up', is often a call and response (antiphonal) command between the dancehall massive and the Selector, instructing the latter to perform the sudden stop, rewind and replaying of the riddim. This reproduces the drum breaks of the African/neo-African practices (Lewin, 2000) that not only accentuates the movement but, provides the momentary ruptures in time that enables the ancestors to enter the proceedings. This creates an aesthetic tension amongst dancers and adherents that is never the same in any two sessions.

As earlier highlighted in outlining my conception of the corporeal dancing body, black bodies signify the historical references of 'otherness' connected to enslavement, colonialism and other forms of oppression mapped in relation to whiteness. The repeated movement sequence of *Pon Di Riva* acts as signifier to the new meetings, greetings, challenging, connecting, teaching and learning rituals, created out of contemporary experiences. Gilroy suggests these experiences, 'are produced in the long shadow of our enduring traditions' (Gilroy, 1991 p.126). The everlasting shadow of ancestral data and knowledge is sustained in corporeal dancing bodies. *Pon Di Riva* linked to the *Down Di Flank* movement in Elephant Man's music video generates a visual signification of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, where throughout the Atlantic 'Middle Passage' crossings, Africans were forcibly made to dance to the lash of the whip at their feet.

### 6.8.3 Down Di Flank



Fig.23-25 Elephant Man performing *Down Di Flank*

The *Down Di Flank* movement (Fig.23-25) is essentially a development upon *Pon Di River*, but features – an up and down pumping action of the lead knee, leg crossing over the supporting leg forward and back with an even timing, multiple times (leading foot does not touch the ground until changing feet), whilst hopping on the supporting leg – The hopping action of both dances signifies both the jumping from the whip and jumping in and out of rivers and streams in escape. During the ‘Middle Passage’, according to official estimates collated by Marcus Rediker (2008), over 1.8 million of the 12.4 million Africans trafficked between Africa and the Caribbean were forcibly thrown overboard numerous slave ships into shark infested waters throughout nearly four hundred years of the trade.<sup>158</sup> Yet, notions of freedom, survival and renewal are maintained within dancehall movements such as *Pon Di Riva* and *Down Di Flank*, re-presenting and re-encoding Jonkonnu’s *Pitchy-Patchy* and *Warrior* movements amongst other African/neo-African dances in contemporary form.

The conception of dancehall dances as being re-emergent shadows of ancestral data and knowledge is reinforced by Tippa Moncrieffe who confirms, ‘... yu have some of the steps that’s in Jonkonnu, we, we use them in the early 90s. Like the “Police Man”’ (Tippa, interview 2010, 0:03:31.1). He continues, ‘“Worl’ [World] Dance” and “Police Man” is the same move yu kno! Is di same dance move, an dat is

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<sup>158</sup> Michael Rediker (2008) provides a number of detailed descriptions of the ‘Middle Passage and the inhumane treatment of enslaved Africans, whilst Barbara Fletchman Smith (2011) investigates the lasting trauma created by the brutality of enslavement.

Jonkonnu move, but yet still we change di name an wi call it “*Worl Dance*” (Tippa, 2010, 0:12:02.3). Recognising *Worl Dance* as signifying a re-emergent continuity of Jonkonnu’s *Police Man* character, Tippa endorses dancehall’s conscious recycling of spiritual movement vocabulary. Thus, contrary to hegemonic belief, dancers such as Tippa and John Hype do recognise genealogical African continuities within dancehall dance vocabulary. John Hype asserts:

[Dancehall’s] social culture is from way back, from Africa. So is (its) a bloodline, it come right down. Cau dem seh (because they say) we come from Africa, an (and) come a (to) Jamaica. So it come right down di (the) bloodline. Dancin’ inna wi (is inside our) blood. Wedda yu waan (whether you want to) believe it or not.

John Hype, in interview 2017, 0:11:22.1

Equally, the bloodline link between African and dancehall dancing is what Cooper terms ‘*Noise in the Blood*’ (1993). The spiritual ‘noises in the blood’ are also acknowledged by scholars such as Lena Delgado de Torres, exploring Jamaican African/neo-African culture in relation to dancehall through ‘Obeah’ discourses and Jamaican queen narratives drawing on Kumina, Bruckins and Jonkonnu. She contends:

Dancehall is a space of Afro-Jamaican religiosity manifested in dance, horn and drum. DJs are griots and their fans follow them as a religious devotee follows a prophet or guru ... Dancers are similarly crowned as gods in the Dancehall space.

Torres, 2010 p.1

The dancehall dancer is respected, but contrary to Torres’ statement, they are not crowned as gods, although dancehall participants especially revere Bogle and ICE. Females are crowned as Queens, but although the term ‘Dancehall King’ has been established in Europe linked to male dance competitions up until the present day Jamaican male dancers are not conferred with the title of King. Cheryl Ryman purports, ‘Bogle was there ... [but] was never called King and never reach that level

in the way that a, Carlene [the original Dancehall Queen] had' (Ryman, interview 2010, 0:52:31.6).<sup>159</sup> Therefore, possibly out of respect to Bogle's memory, the premiere male master dancer, never conferred with the crown in his lifetime, the title of King has rather been bestowed upon DJs such as Yellow Man and Beenie Man in Jamaica (Hope, 2010). Nonetheless the spiritual 'noises in the blood' signify in the work of dancehall dancers from Bogle and ICE, through to contemporary dancers such as female dance artist Stacia Fya, who connects dancehall's genealogical ties, asserting:

... is full circle. Yu (You are) teking (taking) it from the roots, yu (you are) teking (taking) it from, as I said, the Dinkie Mini, the, the, the Bruckins, the Kumina, the whole wining (winding) of the waistline, and, alternately utilising yu (your) hands, or attitude ... many moons ago, somebody created some dance or the other, an (and) then, many moons layta (later), some other person come up with that same, style, but call it a different way. Arr (or), arr (or), flow it a different way, but when yu (you) check di (the) level, di (the) technique is, the same.

Fya, interview 2017, 0:36:09.3

Fya's statement highlights the unconscious recycling of dance vocabulary, which reinforces dancehall's spiritual underpinning. This is similarly acknowledged by Julian Henriques who exploring 'Sonic Bodies' (2011) from an auditory perspective, asserts:

Currently, Dancehall "riddims" make use of Kumina rhythms (as Reggae had previously used Nyabinghi rhythms), although, interestingly, the musicians themselves are not necessarily aware of the rhythms' origins as such. In this way, ancient old-world African traditions come "up to the time," to use an Elephant Man catch phrase, with the latest digital technologies at the top of the Jamaican hit parade.

Henriques, 2011 p.12

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<sup>159</sup> Carlene Smith was crowned in 1992 by the media as a major outernational Dancehall Queen, despite dancehall queens having been around 'as informal community celebrities since the 1970s' (Stanley-Niaah, 2010) and Smith not being a dancer. Her beauty and modelling skills brought a new level of profile to the dancehall space and Queen category, which has been sustained with the annual Dancehall Queen dance competition.

Although scholars like Henriques and Torres foreground African/neo-African practices as catalysts within dancehall's cultural expression, Donna P. Hope (2006a; 2010), Dennis Howard (2016) and others approach dancehall as a secular space. Interestingly, neither Hope or Howard engage dance in any depth, focusing more on gender and the socio-politico-economic issues surrounding dancehall's cultural production. Yet, as Dianne M. Stewart fittingly notes, '[i]n the Caribbean, one is dealing with expressions of religion which have often been written off as "demonic" because they do not come under the umbrella of Christianity' (Stewart, 2005 p.189). Jamaica is generally considered a visibly Christian society where, Austin-Broos highlights, 'a very strict moral code still allows for eudemonics' (1997, p.34). Nevertheless as scholars have noted, a spiritual duality exists within most African and Caribbean societies between the formal, mainly Christian, religious traditions and the African/neo-African practices such as Jonkonnu, Kumina, Revivalism, Vodun, Santaria, and Candomblé amongst others.<sup>160</sup> Hence, throughout this research some dance artists express Rastafarian affiliations, as Shelly Belly leader of Jamaica's *Bermuda Squad* articulates, 'Mi (I) keep it real, caus mi (because I am) a Rasta yu (you) know! A tru yu nuh (it's because you don't) see de (the) locks, yu (you) know! (2010, 0:06:16.6). Many dance artists maintain a personal spiritual relationship with the 'Supreme Being' and position themselves as non-denominational. John Hype fittingly explains:

I jus (just) live upfull an right inna di (righteously in the) Almighty sight yu kno! (you know!) An give praises an pray to him yu kno! (you know!) Yes so, I no (don't) really have no (any) church or mmhmm! Cau di (because the) church a anyweh, weh mi a go (anywhere, where I go), a di (it's the) same God yu kno? (you know?) ... I can sit an talk to 'im (him), same like how yu (you) can sit an talk wid (with) me ... So I preffa (prefer) to stay in my kingdom an praise di (the) Creator in my kingdom ... Now, my faith is wittin (within) me!

John Hype, in interview 2017, 0:23:11.5 and 0:25:12.7

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<sup>160</sup> See: (Chapter 3, section 3.4).

Professing to be spiritual but not necessarily religious, like John Hype, many dancers exhibit a ‘double consciousness’ relating to their spiritual beliefs. Many practitioners deny having direct experience of African/neo-African practices, expressing religious affiliation to the formal religions, yet many maintain ideas and opinions that demonstrate a conscious and/or subconscious acceptance of the African/neo-African worldviews. This is evidenced in the dance movements many dancers create and perform within the dancehall space. Ding Dong’s dance called *Sweep* (Fig.26) and Marlon ‘Overmars’ Hardy’s *Nuh Linga* (Fig.27), both popularised by Elephant Man’s song compositions featuring their respective dance names, clearly evidence sacred significations within their dancehall corporeal manifestation of African/neo-African expression, as I now explore.

#### 6.8.4 *Nuh Linga* dance



Fig.26 Ding Dong Fig.27 Overmars Figs.28-30 Elephant Man performing Nuh Linga

The *Nuh Linga* dance movement (Figs.27-30) involves – *relaxed knees in the douplé position, lead leg turns in and scribes a circle on the ground moving the foot outward from the body, finishing with a step onto the leading leg, repeating on the alternate side* – The leg action can be repeated on one side multiple times for variation – *The torso maintains a circling action, resonating with Kumina and Dinkie Mini’s ‘cork-screw’ circling action* – The ‘cork-screw action’ is a term coined by Cheryl Ryman, as she describes, ‘... its an up an (and) down and around, movement

... an (and) all I could think of was corkscrew ... I call it a corkscrew movement ... it's, it's the going aroun' (around) and lifting up and down at the same time, which is what, a corkscrew action kind of is' (in interview 2010, 0:14:55.0) – *Arms work in opposition to the legs, with the hand either open or in a loose fist, repeating the movement on alternating sides* – The 'Sweep' is almost identical to *Nuh Linga*, the difference being – *the foot sweeps off the ground and makes only half circles* – rather than the full circle of *Nuh Linga*.

*Nuh Linga* connects with the Haitian Vodou spiritual dance called *Yanvalou*, as both forms feature the circling action of the feet serving to trap the spirit. Marie-Jose Alcide Saint-Lot describes *Yanvalou* as, 'undulation from the shoulders to the hips imitat[ing] the movement of the serpent and the waves of the sea' (2003 p.98). The undulation and pulsation within *Nuh Linga*, *Yanvalou* and to a lesser extent *Sweep*, reflects the island locations out of which the dances emerge. Francis Nii-Yartey reinforces this notion stating, 'such factors as social, religious and historical situations; ecological, environmental and climatic conditions ... dictate the basic characteristics of a dance' (Nii-Yartey, 2016 p.8).

However, dance also signifies the spiritual vocabulary that underpins African/Caribbean cultural expression. Alphonse Tiérou (1992 p.9) suggests, 'choreographers can design in space the invisible forms which have their roots in the everyday life of yesterday and today'. Thus, *Gully Creepa* signifies the suppleness of the spine and therefore as Yvonne Daniel delineates, 'the snake god, the water god and the rainbow goddess, Papa Damballah, Maitre Agwe, and Maitress Ayida Wedo respectively' (Daniel, 2005 p.74). Hence, a spiritual rather than material gender may be enacted through dance.

### **6.8.5 Gully Creepa**

The *Gully Creepa* dance (Figs.31-35) involves – *stepping forward with the lead foot (touch and step) in crouching position, using alternate feet. The pelvis pushes forward on each step, shoulders drop with a forward-rotation on the side of the leading leg. Arms are relaxed or are thrown up in the air in opposition to the legs, continuing the ripple through the spine as the chest pushes forward, which establishes*



*an impulse in the spine. The undulating flow is broken up with a lateral move of the ribcage, accentuated by the relaxed arms.*



Fig.31-35 Usain Bolt the triple Olympic Gold medal champion at 100 and 200 metres celebrated his 2008 world record breaking 200m victory performing Gully Creepa.

*Gully Creepa* signifies the undercover walk young people are forced to adopt when crossing borders beyond their own territory – *Gully Creepa's relaxed knee, pelvis pushing action* – has similarities to Jonkonnu's '*belly woman*' character, usually performed by a male dancer dressed as a heavily pregnant female, who dances by – *thrusting the pelvis and 'false belly' (stomach) forward, intermittently wining the waist/belly in a circular motion*. The focus of the dancehall steps, being upwards towards the heavens in *Clouds*, neutral in *Nuh Linga* and downwards in *Gully Creepa*, may be read again as connecting the heavens and the earth. This is a common motif in many African/neo-African spiritual practices, including Kumina, Yanvalou, Revival and Jonkonnu.

Orville Hall speaks about dancehall dances as being African based with the movements inextricably linked to the rhythm. Hall asserts:

... A man might write a, a bad lyrics ... and bad in this context means good ... if it is not placed on a riddim that, goes into the system [the soul], then the dance move is not created. ... let's use 'Gully Creepa', when you listen to the riddim, of 'Gully Creepa', an look at the

dynamics of the dance, yu realise that, that was not, that was not because of the lyrics, that's purely because a di riddim!

Hall, interview 2010, 0:37:09.9

This demonstrates Opoku's (1969 p.53) contention that choreographed dance involves, '[t]he putting together of carefully selected movements which express clear ideas, a style or character combined with form', but of course music is a crucial component, determining the feel and vibe to convey the meaning behind the dance. Hall affirms:

When a danca create a, a, a, a, a certain dance an (and) it becomes popular, is because a wha di riddim du to him, an it comes out a di body naturally ... Weh! Where was Ice coming from when Ice du *Gully Creepa*? Di dance weh look su much like di dance weh dem call Yanvalou! From, from Haiti! Yu kno wha mi a seh? Where was Ice? Wha, wha, what was his head space like? Weh him did deh? Yu kno!

Hall, interview 2010, 0:37:09.9

Hall reinforces spiritual signification within *Gully Creepa*, whilst highlighting the functional purpose of the dance, created to enable 'yutes' (youths) to hide and cross territorial boundaries. *Nuh Linga*, *Sweep* and *Gully Creepa* all signify the Nigerian *Bata* dance of the Yoruba deity Sango. Bob Ramdhanie outlines *Bata*, as signifying 'Sango, the god of thunder and lightning, transcend[ing] into the human body' (2005b p.323). Thereby the dancer embodies Sango's power and strength in the dynamic, angular shoulder jerks and body twists performed in *Bata* dance. However, *Nuh Linga* and *Gully Creepa* also embody Sango's less fiery persona, his dual personality in which, 'Oya's rippling body movements circle around him to charm his fiery passion' (ibid). Despite *Nuh Linga*, *Sweep* and *Gully Creepa* being originally created as male dance movements it is Oya's element that facilitates female bodies executing and performing the dances equally well.

Hence, although dancehall dances are created to entertain, release stress and tension, engender feelings of communitas and smadditisation, they serve an important role as a signifying practice, enabling dancehall practitioners to engage in

contemporary manifestations of ancient spiritual rituals. Asked whether dancehall has any ritual aspects, independent dancer Shevon 'Cojo Hotfoot' Chambers determines, '... a ritual? A ritual in what way like? Because I don't really think it's a ritual. I don't think so' (Cojo Hotfoot, interview 2017, 0:11:04.2). However, he later shares:

When I'm dancing, I feel my spirit moving. That's why at one point in M.O.B we created a dance called 'Rifical, Spiritual', because we moving spiritually. Yeah, yu have to have a spiritual connection man.

Cojo, interview 2017, 0:24:46.3

Cojo continues explaining:

... remember, Revivalism is a spiritual thing yu know, and I told you the spiritual, thing is a high part of dancehall. At one point in dancehall, I think it was bout, 2002 or 2003, where yu had this dancehall rhythm, that was, similar to the rhythm that yu wi hear in a Revival church. And we had all those Revivalist moves doing back then. The 'Shankle Dip' and the, yu know how those people behave when, in a Revivalist church! So all of that man, dancehall is, is a mixture, as I told you, dancehall is the culture for Jamaica, so dancehall is a little of everything.

Cojo, interview 2017, 0:00:13.1

Cojo's statements highlights the fact that dancehall participants are acutely aware of the spiritual signification dancehall embodies and its transformative potential. Stanley-Niaah addresses the transformative nature of the dancehall genre, stating, 'performance through dance in Dancehall events constitutes a street drama of total aesthetic and psychic transformation' (2010 p.88). The psychic, transformative and transcendent continuities between dancehall and African/neo-African dances are the main focus of this examination of the dancehall session and its progression within the *'Man dem section'*.

## ***6.9 Conclusion***

Dancehall's role has been shown to be analogous with Lynch's (2005) functional notion, Turners' (1969) 'communitas' conception and African/neo-African worldviews in maintaining a social functioning as a spiritual/religious practice. I have demonstrated that read through a semiotic lens dancehall dance reveals multiple hidden meanings. Consequently, limitations within semiology lie in the fact that the encoded readings embodied within cultural expression may not be decoded in the intended manner of its creator(s) when placed in a different or new context. Additionally, it also relies on the assumption that those creating cultural expression consciously do so. Adopted outside of its original community meaning within dance, may frequently be lost and/or the movement be re-encoded with new meaning or accepted merely for its aesthetic rather than symbolic value.

## **Chapter 7. Party Hot Up – Female section: *Dancehall spirituality rooted and routed through African/neo-African practices and worldviews***

### **7.1 Introduction**

Transcendence is a key function of spiritual and religious practices particularly in relation to Jamaican African/neo-African practices, as scholars have noted (Austin-Broos, 1997; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005; Wynter in Coester and Bender, 2015). Having demonstrated in chapter five how the *'early vibes'* section establishes a religious existential/hermeneutic functioning and sanctification of the dancehall space, chapter six, the *'man dem section'*, investigated spirituality's social functioning continuities by comparing dancehall and African/neo-African corporeal dancing bodies. According to Lynch, 'religion provides a medium through which people are able to experience "God," the numinous or the transcendent' (Lynch, 2005 p.28). This chapter, focusing on the *'female section'* explores the performance and performative gestures articulated by female corporeal dancing bodies relating to spirituality's transcendent functioning, in order to determine whether an emergent 'dancehall spirituality' exists within the dancehall space.

The *'female section'* will focus firstly, on the transformative aspect of dance, and secondly, the transcendent nature of corporeal dancing bodies within the dancehall space. Corporeality will be explored as the mode by which dance facilitates 'the realization of harmony in the universe through gesture' (Uzukwu, 1997 p.14). Corporeal dancing bodies perform gestures, in line with Beckford's (2014) conception of 'conjure', the manifestation of an embodied, 'spiritual potential ... [where] culture [is] charged with the Spirit' (Beckford, 2014 p.127). Thereby, cultural gestures within dance trigger what Barry Chevannes calls a 'deeper consciousness' (in Stewart, 2005 p.209) in which African beliefs, practices, and spiritual worldviews are masked within Christianity as neo-African practices, or continue as African spiritual dance idioms, leading individuals to experience the Divine. Transcendence and the experiencing of the Divine from the perspective of African/neo-African people therefore serves as

evidence that God, the Supreme Being is on their side in all resistant endeavours against oppressive forces.<sup>161</sup>

## 7.2 Transformation

From a spiritual perspective, within the female section corporeal dancing bodies go through two main phases: first transformation, preparing individuals for the second phase, transcendence. Donna P. Hope and others address transformation in relation to the socio-politico-economic changes dancehall has accomplished for Jamaica's poor, 'effectively creating its own symbols and ideologies and negating' (2006a p.25) much of Jamaica's hegemonic structures. However, I am concerned here with the physical corporeal transformations taking place within the dancehall space. Transformation begins, as scholars highlight, with the preparations prior to attending the dancehall session including visits to the hairdressers, nail technicians, barbershops, dressmakers etc. Additionally transformation takes place by individuals dressing up and adorning themselves through, Rex Nettleford advocates, 'the device of "masking" (in fancy-dress)' (in Bakare-Yusuf, 2006 p.17), as African/Jamaicans he argues, 'still have reason to devise masks to disguise, to create music to affirm, and to assemble dances to celebrate' (ibid). Others have also highlighted the transformative African/neo-African masking that occurs within the dancehall space (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Torres, 2015).

The transformation of the female body is vividly conveyed in the movie *'Dancehall Queen'* (1997). The transformation of Dancehall Queen (DHQ) Olivine reveals the stark contrast between her nightly, revered profile, and her 'normative', ordinary persona when caught in daylight hours away from the dancehall 'spot-light'.<sup>162</sup> Lead character Marcia's transformation mirrors that of Olivine, but takes

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<sup>161</sup> Dianne M. Stewart (2005 p.60) states: 'African Jamaicans have continued to view spirit possession as the pivotal indication that God is with them, present in their experiences and efforts to overcome adversity'. This underscores the importance of personal possession within African/neo-African practices as their continuance represents a rebuttal of the Eurocentric notions of spirituality, hidden within Jamaican hegemony. Stewart rightly acknowledges spirit possession as a continuity of African ritual practices, citing Leonard Barrett's notion of The Great Revival as representing a conscious revival of African spirituality, through which Stewart presents the binding continuities between most African/neo-African practices as being 'divination, visions, prophecy, and healing' (See: Stewart, 2005 p.108).

<sup>162</sup> See: (Chapter 6, section 6.7.1).

place over time through her dance and costuming. The viewer therefore witnesses her change from ‘higgler’ (street vendor) into a prize winning Dancehall Queen. Stanley-Niaah (2010), provides a real-life transformation recounting a female’s removal of her T-shirt, turning it into a head-tie, untying what Stanley-Niaah took to be a skirt, ‘reveal[ing] a black formal dress with puff sleeves’ (2010 p.105), which she suitably modifies into a dancehall outfit by reversing the dress and exposing the shorts below. Physical transformations as described become the precursor to the psychological and emotional transformations required of dancehall participants.

During auto/ethnographic observations I have witnessed the psychological and emotional transformation in many dancers such as Shelly and Stacey Xpressionz, alongside DHQ ‘Danger’ and even male dancers such as Orville Hall, Dansa Bling, Raddy Rich and others. Many project a quiet, often shy nature in private, particularly during my observations of them relaxing between rehearsals and/or performances. Yet, a total transformation occurs when dancing where they display levels of braggadocio seemingly incompatible with their private personalities. Conversely, there are those who carry their dancehall personas over into their private lives, seemingly unable to transition back to their normative selves as Stanley-Niaah (2010), Torres (2010), Preston (2016) and others foreground.<sup>163</sup> Pertaining to female corporeality Bakare-Yusuf holds, ‘survival entails the transcendence of social death, through an attempt to overcome the horrors and anxieties of daily life’ (2006 p.15). Transformation is therefore crucially linked to the gaining of smadditisation,<sup>164</sup> visibility and profile. Visibility has an economic dimension as without it dancers experience difficulty gaining recognition or work, impacting their economic survival and that of their family and community (Hickling, 2009).

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<sup>163</sup> Popular DJ artists Adija Palmer, aka ‘Vybz Kartel’ and Shawn Campbell aka ‘Shawn Storm’ along with Kahira Jones were all convicted of the 2011 murder of Clive ‘Lizard’ William, exemplifying the artists’ inability to return to normality in acting out the gangster personas they portray on stage. For a more in depth analysis of the public and private persona of Palmer and his trial, representing that of dancehall, see: Preston (2016 pp.223-253)

<sup>164</sup> ‘Smadditisation’ is detailed at the beginning of this research. See: (*Introduction chapter*, section i).

### 7.3 Cultural expression and transcendence

Transformation is an important precursor to transcendence, thereby the corporeal dancing body and cultural expression is foregrounded within most African/neo-African practices as the major means by which transcendence into the myal possession state occurs. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, West Africa declares, ‘African art and ethos are bound up with the forms of our social and cultural development’ (Nkrumah, in Nii-Yartey, 2016 p.viii). Spiritual and cultural expression therefore remains at the forefront of most African/neo-African practices, as part of the social and cultural development of their participants, as explored under Jamaican spirituality<sup>165</sup> in chapter 3. However, Dianne J. Austin-Broos rightly argues that music should be recognised, ‘as an embodiment of worship’ (1997 p.4), thereby dance being inextricably linked to music must also be regarded as the corporeal embodiment of worship.

Alphonse Tiérou provides support for the conception of dance as the corporeal embodiment of worship. He states, ‘[dance] is the tangible proof of man’s endeavours to transcend himself’ (Tiérou, 1992 p.12). Maria A. Smith provides an important reminder of the role of dance, quoting Revival leader Bishop Reid who proclaims, ‘Dance is powerful; it is deliverance; it is life’ (in Smith, 2006 p.65). The dancehall space therefore represents a contemporary continuity, as a space in which corporeal dancing bodies demonstrate their power in transcending and operating across the multiple layers of the spirit world, under varying degrees of myal possession.<sup>166</sup> The myal state is not a trance state, which L’Antoinette Stines aptly deems to be ‘a **passive** condition’ (2009 p.188), but rather she holds, ‘an **active** condition’ (ibid), which Kumina practitioners ‘experience as a “spiritual travel, a journey”’ (ibid), which Revivalists similarly believe, as will later be expanded upon in the ‘*Dancehall spiritual signifiers*’ section. Smith affirms the existence of multiple spiritual layers, testifying, ‘[t]he notion of a supreme being and lesser spirits made it possible for the formation of a synthesized cosmology’ (2006 p.8). Thus, as corporeal dancing bodies

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<sup>165</sup> Myal is explored and delineated both autonomously as a dance form and in its manifestation as the transcendent possession state integrated within other Jamaican spiritual practices. See: (Introduction chapter, section j). Also see: (Chapters 2 and 3).

<sup>166</sup> Chapter 2 provides an overview of the African/neo-African practices and the cosmological worldviews in which they sit, whilst in chapter 3, the section on Jamaican spirituality presents a more general overview of African/neo-African approaches and philosophies relating to spirituality and religious cosmology.



enable poor people to access synthesized cosmologies within Revivalism, Kumina, Jonkonnu and other African/neo-African practices it is reasonable to assume that they continue doing so within the dancehall setting.

#### ***7.4 Temporal corporeal communication***

Corporeal dancing bodies within African/neo-African practices manifest the onset of the myal state in a very visual and public manner. I include the Pentecostal church under the umbrella of African/neo-African practices here despite, as Jacqueline Grant opines, ‘Christianity implicitly mean[ing] deculturalization and acceptance of the western value system on the part of Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans’ (Grant, in Stewart, 2005 p.164). Nevertheless, within corporeal dancing bodies the myal state often begins with the temporal passing of the spirit manifesting as sporadic shudders, shakes, jerks or convulsions. Austin-Broos (1997 p.143) describing spiritual embodiment in the Pentecostal church notes, ‘it is usual for the neophyte to twitch involuntarily in the shoulder, arm, or possibly in the thigh’. Equally convulsions also occur within Revivalism where, as in Pentecostalism, it may be accompanied with glossolalia (speaking in unknown tongues)<sup>167</sup> as short phrases.

Within Kumina the temporal spirit manifests as short ‘breaks’ instigated either by the dancer – *raising the leg, momentarily suspending it before stamping into the ground, sending a rebounding undulation through the pelvis and spine* – to which the playing cast (lead musician) responds with a drum slap. Alternatively the musician signals the temporal spirit by playing a break to which the dancer responds. Other African/neo-African practices have equivalent responses but in most instances the temporal spirit is a precursor to a greater onset of the myal spirit.

Similarly to the African/neo-African practices the function of corporeal dancing bodies in the dancehall space is also to manifest the onset of a myal type state in dynamic and extremely visual modes. Dancers display temporal flashes of inspiration

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<sup>167</sup> Glossolalia or ‘speaking in unknown tongues’ may involve short sentences accompanied by an invitation or rebuking of the spirit. It can be a more lengthy string of words forming the equivalent of sentences and paragraphs that certain post-holders within Revivalism or the Pentecostal church can interpret. Essentially, glossolalia is “speaking in tongues” as initial objective evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence in an individual’ (Yong and Alexander, 2011 p.4). See also: (Austin-Broos, 1997; Beckford, 2006).

and/or skill before they fully, as Crazy Hype and Oceana waxing lyrically command, ‘let the music tek (take) control, let it take ova (over) your soul’ (Crazy Hype interview 2017, 0:30:03.8).<sup>168</sup> The wining of the pelvic region signals the beginning of the music taking control for the majority of female dancers. As I outline in the introduction and elsewhere – *“Whining” or “wining”, is a signature female dancehall movement involving circling/rotating the pelvis, whilst rocking it back and forth to produce [what I term] a tumbling/ “bubbling” (Stines 2009) quality and is performed with varying degrees of dynamic athleticism in almost every dancehall event’ (Patten, 2016 p.101).*

Female dancer and diva, Stacia ‘Fya’ Edwards, aptly articulates why wining is a signature female dancehall movement, sharing, ‘... if you hear a dancehall music you immediately, kick into, that vibe of wanting to either wine up yuself or, so the vocabulary basically speaks, with the riddim. Yeah!’ (Fya, interview 2017, 0:19:23.1). Fya’s automatic response to ‘wine’ on hearing dancehall riddims, exemplifies wining as a mode of ‘conjuring’ (Beckford, 2014), meaning summoning and connecting to the African cosmology embodied within ‘deeper consciousness’ (Chevannes, in Stewart, 2005).<sup>169</sup> Renowned male dancer Taz Timeless confirms the presence of wining within African/neo-African cosmology through his Revivalist grandmother. He asserts:

She ward aaf (chases off) any bad spirit. An (and) when I use to go to church wid arr (with her), an (and) she dance an (and) ‘speak in tongues’ [glossolalia], trus’ mi (trust me) when dem (they) get in spirit dey (they) dance! Right! dey (they) dance an mi use fi si (I used to see) my granmadda (grandmother) dance an (and) gyrating, an (and) then when I come home, my granfadda (grandfather) put on two Dennis Brown CD, or, or, or two Lieutenant Stitchie [popular Jamaican artists].

Taz interview 2017, 0:18:10.2

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<sup>168</sup> Crazy Hype during interview used these lyrics to highlight how he feels when dancing. See: Appendix 7.

<sup>169</sup> Adanna Kai Jones (2016) identifies ‘winin’ (wining) or ‘rollinh it’ as an important part of Caribbean cultural identity, exported to the various global regions to which Caribbean people have migrated.

Taz's grandmother's 'speaking in tongues' is a clear indication of her being in myal possession, whilst 'gyrating' or wining within a spiritual space and context. This embeds wining within the transformation and transcendence process. Thereby, just as dance within African/neo-African practices engage the corporeal dancing body as a channel to manifest and progress into full myal, so too does the corporeal dancing body within dancehall. Moreover, females perform more independently than the man dem within the dancehall space through wining and other movement vocabulary. This presents them with more opportunities for individual smadditisation and transformation leading to transcendence whilst expressing themselves during solo performances.

Within the female section of dancehall events females exercise freedom to be as creative and imaginative as they dare. Showing-off personal skills, flexibility, agility, daring, acrobatic balance and dynamic qualities, female dancers embody the personas, attributes and personalities of multiple African deities, as do their male counterparts (Cooper, 2004; Wright, 2004, Bakare-Yusuf, 2006a, Torres, 2010). Females expertly use their skills to transform and transcend in defeating any challenger, which I shall now explore.

### ***7.5 The female section within the dancehall session***

Describing the progression of the dancehall session Orville Hall emphasises, '[t]here's a section now that is dedicated to, the females, weh di man dem stan back an watch di females dem du dem ting an get mad' (Hall interview 2010, 0:00:03.3). Within the female section the Selector features the latest party tunes, empowering females to take command of and enjoy the dance floor. As the man dem vacate the central dance space they themselves transform, becoming observers, shifted to dancehall's periphery. Taz declares:

Yu wi hear di Selecta seh ... "A di gyal dem time now!" ... dat's when I get laas ... cos dey are di woman, yu kno? An dey look good, dey are sexy, dey're buffulous.

Taz interview 2017, 0:36:25.9



Fig.36 Female wining and tumbling

Global Bob endorses Taz's sentiments proclaiming, 'female dancers are the bes' (best), if there is no female danca (dancer), then I will exit from dancehall' (in interview 2017, 0:31:50.0). The 'buffulous(ness)' and skilful sensuality of the female corporeality is a central and crucial element within the wining action featured within most female dance displays, as the following extract from my research field-notes exemplify.

#### ***7.5.1 Uptown Mondays dancehall session (April 2013)***

Three females perform, articulating their pelvis in the wining action (fig.36). The centre female 'Fluffy Xpressionz' is dressed in black – *wining in the douplé position, with the feet just over shoulder width apart, knees bent and feet turned out (pointing diagonally), her hands touch either side of her head, then crosses, touching either shoulder and opens, so hands bend upwards to touch the same shoulder to the*

*up-tempo riddim – her right hand is hampered as it holds a drink and rag (flannel) – lifting the left leg, she grabs her left buttock cheek with her left hand. Returning to the open douplé position, she repeats the whole sequence on the other side, lifting the right leg (minus the buttock cheek grab) due to the hand being occupied. She remains in the open douplé position, extends her left arm out to the side, running her right arm along it (as if applying lotion) – A European female dancer with purple hair wears a ‘Team Face’ T-shirt and a faded blue-jeans ‘batty-rider’ (shorts) – wining her waist continuously, she manipulates her outstretched back leg, pushing from the ball of the foot down into the heel, releasing it back to the ball position and repeating the press into the heel multiple times, with the supporting leg in the relaxed knee position.*

The third female ‘Cutie Xpressionz’, dressed in orange, wearing a ‘boob tube’ top and batty rider shorts with knee high black leather boots also – *wines the pelvis in the tumbling motion but uses an alternating heel and toe shuffle action with both feet to gain loco-motor movement, scribing almost a half figure of eight floor pattern. She turns on her own axis to make a circle, changing the pelvic action to the ‘one drop’, lifting one buttock cheek with both knees straight, the leg of the raised hip therefore goes onto the ball, then as the hip drops down, the foot drops flat on the ground, and the alternative foot and hip rises as the movement is repeated from side to side, causing each buttock cheek to rise and fall independently from the other. Cutie then extends her arms, one upward (skyward), the other downward (earth bound), maintaining a focused expression throughout.*

*The female shakes, vibrations and jumping of the pelvic region and buttocks, up and down, side to side, in twisting action, and in multiple combinations – all create a sense of frenzy that builds as the music intensifies – the kicking up of the dust captured within the spot-light beams, the turns, varied expressions, the sense of motion within the tight, limited, dancehall space, all heighten the sense of transcendence. Fluffy Xpressionz steps out of the dust, turns and claps, echoed by Cutie Xpressionz turning, hopping on one leg, whilst holding the other in the air in a vertical split. A stripe T-shirt and denim batty rider shorts wearing young lady, rocks her hips laterally whilst bending over holding her ankles, making her buttocks rock side to side in the air. Cutie Xpressionz runs into the ‘spot-light’ and starts peddling her legs whilst prostrating facing the ground, enabling her buttock cheeks to jump*

*excessively. Fluffy Xpressionz makes her whole body shimmy and jerk. Shelly Xpressionz arches her back in an open release gesture before bending forward, whilst other females dance, bump and bore (push and barge) through the customary tight, intimate, dancehall space. Fluffy Xpressionz's open doublé stance, throwing the shoulder to the side and returning to centre, together with Cutie Xpressionz' clapping, crossing and touching her body, dancing on the ground – all serve to hint at transcendence within the dancehall space.*

Patten, field-notes 2013

### **7.5.2 Dancehall as gesture**

The above thin, phenomenological reading of the dancehall space, presents female corporeal dancing bodies performing kinaesthetic actions in response to the collision of external vibrations and internal stirrings, both physical and emotional, of corporeal dancing bodies moving in conjunction with and in reaction to dancehall's musical 'sonic dominance' (Henriques, 2011).<sup>170</sup> African spirituality positions the body at the centre of reality, and as Tiérou endorses, 'in rediscovering the body, one rediscovers one's own identity' (Tiérou, 1992 p.11). A full comprehension of the context and intent underscoring dancehall dance vocabulary is crucial to deriving meaning and is obtainable by reading corporeal dancing bodies. The symbolisms embodied in dancehall dance will therefore be analysed adopting a spiritual/religious lens, using theologian Elochukwu E. Uzukwu's (1989) notion of 'gesture' to identify meaning construction conveyed within dancehall corporeal dancing bodies. Uzukwu declares:

Worship involves motion: humans move towards God in response to God's movement towards humans ... our motions or gestures, and the way we generally interpret human rhythmic movement, are bound to an ethnic experience.

Uzukwu, 1989 p. ix

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<sup>170</sup> Chapter 2, section 2.8.4 explains 'sonic dominance' in more detail. See also: (Henriques, 2008; 2011).

Uzukwu clearly acknowledges gesture as resulting from the negotiated kinaesthetic movement of a particular community of people in time and space. In relation to worship, from an African/neo-African perspective dance, as a major cultural expression, derives meaning from within the worldview of a particular nation or community in relation to God and the spirit community. Thus, gesture, which Uzukwu categorises as the kinaesthetic movement of the hands, is a reflective rather than, ‘instinctual response to external or internal stimuli’ (1989 p.3). Gesture, is therefore a rational process. Conversely, Alphonse Tiérou also links gesture to the hands in distinguishing it from dance, which he argues is more formidable than gesture being, ‘a complete and self-sufficient language’ (1992 p.11). However, within African and Caribbean contexts most parts of the body may be used as gesture and therefore form part of any dance movement. The pushing out and retracting of the lips, often used by elders, may covertly direct an individual as to where to look or move, whilst within the Yoruba Bata dance it is effectively used as an alternative to the shoulder jerking breaks. Equally, Ajàyí (1998 p.32) highlights nodding or shaking the head as gesturing agreement or disagreement respectively, as in Western societies. Thus, despite Tiérou and Uzukwu both limiting gesture to hand movements I extend its use to the entire body.

In analysing the field-notes above the female wining action must be foregrounded, I propose, as a gesture that signifies a regenerative rejection of Eurocentric ideals. This includes a rejection of Rastafari’s moralistic objection to wining, which Thomas Osha Pinnock (in Sloat, 2002) insightfully identifies as a ‘double conscious’ (Du Bois, 1994) adoption of Western Christian moral coding. Wining is therefore argued here as being a deeply embodied gesture. Fluffy Xpressionz’s smooth – *wining in the douplé position* – signals in accordance with Uzukwu (1989) a gesture or (gestus)<sup>171</sup> that identifies her with a particular community, in this instance African/Jamaican people, including the spiritual community that encompass their cosmological worldview. Importantly, as earlier outlined wining is also part of the corporeal dancing body’s preparation for transcendence, as the dancer begins the transformation process from her normative

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<sup>171</sup> Uzukwu uses the term *gestus* to mean the movement of a particular part of the body, usually the hand. See: (Uzukwu, 1997).

corporeality into that of a conduit, ready for progression into the full myal state. This is supported by Stanley-Niaah in her recording of a female dancer's approach to wining, where Stanley-Niaah writes:

[She] loves "wining" her hips because when she does it feels like renewing energy radiating through her body, and when these "vibes" take over she steps out of her self.

Stanley-Niaah, 2010 p.130

This clearly demonstrates Stuart Hall's (2001) 'encoding, decoding' concept as the dancer 'denotes' the repetitive circling and wining action, or gesture, which 'connotes' (ibid) a reality beyond corporeality. Yet, concentrating on the physical and psychic rewards of dancehall dancing, Stanley-Niaah focuses on dance as a masking of self and a means of escape from reality. Despite recording how dancers '... step outside his or her reality to enter an ethereal one ... [similarly to] many traditional performance practices in which varying states of possession are experienced' (Stanley-Niaah, 2010 pp.130-131), she chooses not to explore dancehall's transformative and transcendent function in any great depth, contrary to this research.

Dancehall's intrinsic wining gesture represents a transformative and transcendent act signifying the rejuvenation and replenishment of life through the repetition of the rotating and circling action of the pelvic region, the life-giving force. Corporeal dancing bodies wine, Ryman affirms, 'in many of the traditional dances in Jamaica, particularly those which celebrate life in the midst of death, as the "nine night" or funerary dances of gere or wake do' (in Gambrill, 2003 p.171). She continues, '[t]his feature [wining], retained from our African ancestors, has surfaced in Jamaican popular dances, from mento to today's reggae' (ibid). Yet, the wining gesture has a far longer trajectory within Jamaican history linked to Jonkonnu, which dates back to Sloane's (1725) records.<sup>172</sup> Ivy Baxter (1970) writing on dance within Jonkonnu specifically notes that dancers 'do rotary pelvic movements ending with the sudden stop' (1970 p.223). Wining remains a signature movement of Jonkonnu's Belly Woman masquerade. Ryman herself connects wining to Jonkonnu, scribing:

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<sup>172</sup> Jonkonnu masquerade is outlined in greater detail in chapter 2.



*Belly Woman* steps lightly while jerking her huge and pregnant ‘belly’ up and down, or while rotating the belly energetically’

Ryman, 2014 p.198

This establishes an historical genealogical link between wining and spirituality. Scholars such as Stewart (2005) and Bilby (2010) have already revealed Jonkonnu’s spiritual/religious continuities as a masquerade form.<sup>173</sup> Bilby explains that Jonkonnu practitioners, “‘masked the spirit” in the common African sense of *embodying* it” (2010 p.210), thereby Jonkonnu dance vocabulary corporeally embodies ancestral data and knowledge. I contend that African/neo-African dancehall dancers corporeally access embodied continuities facilitating transformation and transcendence through historically linked dance movements including wining.

Conversely, the ‘*Team Face*’ female despite a good attempt at wining betrays what Uzuoku describes as the ‘characteristic body movement or attitudes of a group’ (Uzuoku, 1997 p.9), not because she visually appears Caucasian, but as the timing of her wining goes slightly offbeat, just enough to disrupt the flow of her – *rotating, circular, pelvic repetitions*. This reinforces Tiérou’s (1992) notion that dance is a communicative expression that ‘speaks to the heart of the spectator’ (1992 p.11); however, performers and spectators must be speaking the same language and in dancehall as in other African/neo-African practices, maintenance of the riddim is crucial.

Returning to the gestures of Fluffy Xpressionz – *her hands touch either side of her head, then crosses her chest, touching opposite shoulders, and returns to touch the shoulder with the same side hand, to the up-tempo riddim* – these gestures may be read as signalling the head, representing rationality, connecting the spirit and corporeal world. The gesture of crossing the arms across the chest thus represents death, but followed by them opening, they signal renewal of life, particularly when coupled with her – *lifting the left leg, and grabbing her left buttock cheek* – which serves as an obvious reminder of her fleshly presence, reinforcing her corporeality.

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<sup>173</sup> Chapters 1 and 2 both address the spiritual connection with masquerade forms from an African perspective in relation to Gule Wam Kulu and Egungun.

Whilst this gesture carries overtly sexual overtones, which from a dancehall perspective ‘celebrate[s] the female’s ability [to] “keep her man” through the fulfillment of his sexual desires’ (Hill, 2010 p.4), it also carries deeper cultural signification relating to procreation, renewal and a remembering of the black African corporeal life-cycle.



Fig.37 Fluffy Xpressionz displaying fleshly corporeality

Kelly Brown Douglas (2012) writing on Black Jazz bodies makes reference to ‘crossroads theology’, contending that corporeality remembers and carries embodied feelings relating to long forgotten events through ‘memories grafted upon bodies’ (Douglas, 2012 p.134). This notion relates to Henry’s (2002) idea of ‘re-memory’, a concept he develops combining Tony Morrison’s (1987) ‘rememory’ from the novel *‘Beloved’*, and Avery F. Gordon’s (2008) development of the ‘deeply social memory’, which incorporates the shared memory of others in creating a sort of haunting ‘rememory’. An example is enslavement, which may not have been experienced by most contemporary diaspora/Africans first hand, but many continue to experience a ‘re-memory’ or haunting of enslavement in the legacies of oppression entrenched within Eurocentric codes masked as hegemonic universal structures.

Citing Audre Lorde, Douglas further argues that embodied memories<sup>174</sup> enable the body to communicate ‘erotic power’,<sup>175</sup> as a deep internal strength and sense of self. Thereby, on a deeper level Fluffy’s signalling of her own corporeality (fig.37), both signifies and embodies female power, which Cooper (2004) and Wright (2004) both construct through female initiation and fertility rites, the latter enabling the summoning and manifestation of the female orishas/deities (spirits) of Oshun and Oya in relation to dancehall. Oshun and Oya are both river gods, as the Yoruba do not assign gender to orishas, with Oshun also being, according to Cooper, the ‘personification of the Erotic in Nature’ (2004 p.103), whilst Oya is, she continues, ‘the orisha of wind, tornado and ... the orisha of masquerades and female power’ (Bakare-Yusuf, in Cooper, 2004 p.104). Thus Fluffy’s performance can be read as a transformational ritual celebrating ‘self’ and personhood, ‘... to heal the traumatised body, to proclaim and affirm the body's potential for creativity and joy’ (Bakare-Yusuf, 2000 p.213). Put simply, Fluffy’s corporeal dancing body becomes a rejection of Jamaica’s historic legacy of enslavement and Eurocentrism. She embodies instead, new transformative codes reinforcing contemporary transcendent cultural identities, re/presenting the continuities of her African/neo-African forebears.

### ***7.5.3 Repetition and identity***

Theologically, Uzukwu argues that through repetition individuals learn and display the codes of their community, thereby, demonstrating an identity in accordance with that community. Consequently, gestural repetition can be perceived as ‘underlining the properties of ritual and symbol’ (Uzukwu, 1989 p.5). However, gestures contain the symbolic codes of a particular community within the specified codes of their society before that of humanity in general. Employing an African worldview, Mawere Opoku divulges the underlying narratives embodied in dance, describing them as:

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<sup>174</sup> Embodied memories also have strong resonances with ‘cultural memory’ (Buckland, 1999; Meusburger, Heffernan and Wunder, 2011), as outlined in chapter 1. Bilby (2010) also makes reference to ‘cultural memory’ and social ‘remembering’ as modes of transmitting or conveying knowledge of the past.

<sup>175</sup> Erotic power has resonances with jouissance, as will shortly be developed in the Coupling section.

The putting together of carefully selected movements which express clear ideas, a style or character combined with form ... drum rhythms, voices, costumes, and mimed gestures etc.

Opoku, in Nii-Yartey, 2016 p.8

Francis Nii-Yartey (2016) highlights the similarity between Opoku's definition, and the universal definition of choreography, despite its' drum reference, which he unfortunately leaves unstated. Nonetheless, Robert Farris Thompson (1984 p.xiii) advises:

Since the Atlantic slave trade, ancient African organizing principles of song and dance have crossed the seas from the Old World to the New ... intermingling with each other and with New World or European styles of singing and dance.

Thompson, 1984 p.xiii

This, as does Opoku's definition, acknowledges that dance, often referred to as a universal language (Kaeppler, 1972), conveys specific ideas and symbolisms that embody the belief system of a particular community through gesture, but also subsumes new influences. Dance is therefore not universal, as the gestural codes must be learnt before they can form part of the 'signifying practices' of any community. Nonetheless, through repetition, movements such as dancehall's wining gesture, signifies African conceptions of continuity, spiritual harmony and rebirth. As outlined in the '*Early Vibes*' chapter, Nii-Yartey proposes that the circle and repetition represents, 'a recurring relationship between the past and present; the ancestors and the living; the unexpected and the familiar' (2016 p.10). Hence, he identifies African circle symbolisms as being gestures that represent 'perpetual motion and completeness of being' (2016 p.11). In line with many African scholars (Mbiti, 1985; Somé, 1995), I also identify circular gestures as signifying the cyclical link between the dual material and spiritual worlds within African/neo-African practices and worldviews.

Most dance practices within dancehall's genealogy including Jonkonnu, Myal, Kumina, Revivalism, Vodun and Yoruba practices embody repetition and circular movement vocabulary. This continuity was earlier demonstrated in my analysis of the 'Nuh Linga' and 'Gully Creepa' dances with their – *circular torso, pelvic and foot movement, coupled with the jocking or forward thrusting action of the pelvis* – establishing a dancehall spirituality in the 'Man Dem' chapter, although females also perform these dances.<sup>176</sup> Pinnock confirms the transcendent nature of popular Jamaican dance, highlighting Rastafari's rebuttal of African/neo-African practices as they 'maintained a language of spirit possession as the pelvis reacted to the centripetal pull of regeneration' (2002 p.102). Thus, a 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1994) is foregrounded within Rastafarian doctrine, which continues in Jamaican society's resistance against dancehall culture. Pinnock, observes, 'yards/lawns were the ultimate ritual space to release spiritual and secular conflicts' (2002 p.102). Stacia Fya, recognising dancehall's sacred/secular conflict reinforces the transformative and transcendent functioning, which genealogically and spiritually connects the dancehall space and wining. She proclaims, 'yu have to understand where it is all coming from ... yu teking it from the roots, yu teking it from, as I said, the Dinkie Mini, the, the, the Bruckins, the Kumina, the whole wining of the waistline' (Stacia Fya 0:36:09.3). Thus, the gesture of wining constantly (re)connects and signifies back to an African/neo-African spiritual and transcendent genealogy in resistance to Eurocentric hegemony.

#### ***7.5.4 Analysis of female dancing***

An analysis of Cutie Xpressionz's corporeal dancing reveals a transcendent spiritual element and genealogy within dancehall. In the above field-notes, Cutie – *extends her arms, one upward (skyward) and the other downward (earth bound), creating a diagonal line, whilst turning on her own axis* – this symbolically connects heaven and earth (figs.38-40). Read from an African/neo-African perspective this serves to restore, as Lewin articulates, 'communication between departed ancestors,

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<sup>176</sup> The female circling motion is also prominent in the head circling action of 'Dutty Wine'. See: (Marshall, 2009).

spirits, gods, the supreme God and the living for guidance and direction' (2000 p.147).

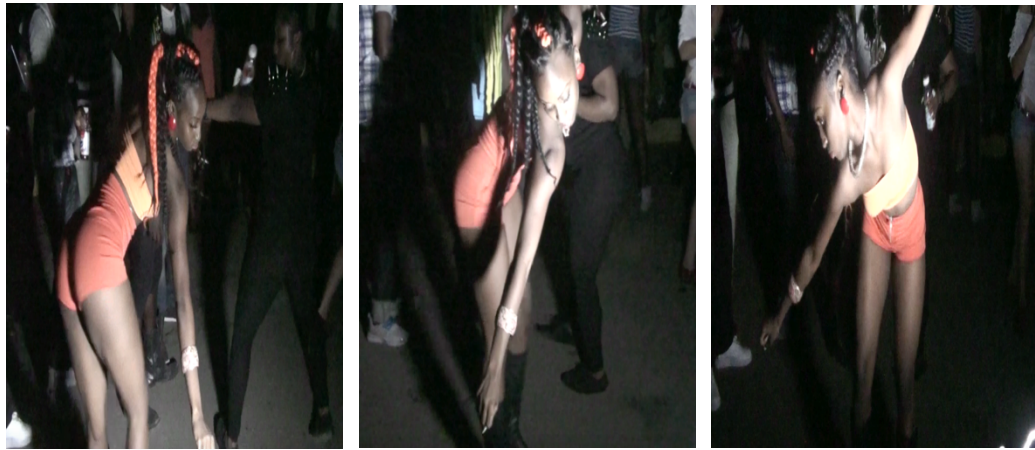


Fig.38-40 Cutie Xpressionz performing the 'One Drop' movement, circling on her own axis

Thus, Cutie's corporeal dancing body becomes a mediating channel, bearing in mind, as Smith holds:

[I]t is through the body that we experience our world and it is through the body that the link between the human and spirit world is facilitated

Smith, 2006 p.11

Thereby, Cutie's – *changing pelvic action to the 'one drop', lifting one buttock cheek with both knees straight, then dropping the hip as the foot drops flat on the ground, and the alternative foot and hip rise* – resonates with the spiritual transcendent functioning of Revivalism. In the 'Early Vibe' chapter, Revival culture bearer NW comments on the 60 Revival order, stating, 'hmm, yu (you) deal with angel, that is angel from above ... yu, yu (you, you) stamp yu (your) feet and move yu han (move your hands)' (NW, interview 1986). Cutie's execution of dancehall's 'One Drop' movement beautifully illustrates NW's description, providing an almost perfect

signification of the Revivalist connection between the spirit and material worlds within the dancehall space.

The symbolic connection of the dual aspects of humanity is an important theme, as according to Kofi Asare Opoku, ‘man[/woman] is a biological (material) being as well as a spiritual (immaterial) being’ (1978 p.10). Similarly, amongst the Dagara people of Burkina Faso, West Africa, human beings are considered ‘an incarnation, that is, a spirit who has taken on a body. So our true nature is spiritual’ (Somé, 1994 p.20). The spiritual nature of humanity, albeit a recurring theme is dependent on the corporeal dancing body for spiritual communication as Douglas reaffirms asserting, ‘Gods have spoken through the movements and expressions of the body’ (Douglas, 2012 p.134). Thus corporeal dancing bodies remain the conduits through which balance and harmony are maintained and/or restored between the spiritual and material worlds through transformation and transcendence.

#### ***7.5.5 Dancehall spiritual signifiers***

The frenzy of the female movements featuring – *mesmerising pelvic wining and tumbling, with splits, gambols, ‘head-top’ wining (Fig.41), rolling and hopping, splits, ‘camel toes’,<sup>177</sup> shakes and shimmies* – as touched upon in chapter two, exploring dancehall’s genealogy, all signify varying degrees of myal transcendence within the dancehall space. Contemporary dancehall spaces represent ritual<sup>178</sup> countercultural<sup>179</sup> and transcendent spaces. Throughout this auto/ethnographic research, some spectacular and often dangerous feats have been observed, performed by individuals transforming and transcending the demarcated dance floor space.

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<sup>177</sup> ‘Camel toes’ generally refers to the imprint of the female vulva beneath tight fitting clothing, (See: OED definition). In dancehall dancing, it refers to movements involving females bending over with their bottoms in the air, therefore presenting a camel toe imprint, or floor dancing, when they roll onto their backs, raising their legs to touch the shoulders, thus achieving the same effect.

<sup>178</sup> Ritual is used here both in the sense of, ‘a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order’ the OED definition, but also in the sense of an activity or actions that have developed symbolic meanings signifying beyond normative understandings and that what is visible.

<sup>179</sup> Countercultural spaces are places where the rules and order of the dominant culture is temporarily suspended, as outlined in chapter 1.



Fig.41 'Head-top' dance

An aut/ethnographic observation of myal transcendence occurred in April 2013 in the form of a challenge, which has since become more commonplace as I describe elsewhere:

... during the 'Uptown Mondays' dancehall session held in Savannah Plaza (Kingston), a female dancer sent out a challenge to all females present. She suddenly inverted herself precariously on the Plaza's upper open-staircase landing railings and commenced performing dancehall's contemporary female 'head top' dance – *balancing upside-down in a handstand, wining/bubbling*, as earlier described. Her performance was clearly inspired, and as L'Antoinette Stines suggests that wining 'resembles fertility steps found in African dances' (2009: 297), possibly signalled a level of transformation or transcendence.

Patten, 2016 p.103

Later identified as Dancehall Queen Sher Rumbur, challenges like hers and the sense of transformation created within dancehall, is recognised by Lena Delgado de Torres who boldly contends, 'dancers go into another psychic state while performing' (Torres, 2010 p.11), but suggests there are no 'dancehall discourses openly promoting Myal or "spirit possession through dance"' (ibid). Yet, some scholars directly signal a



transcendent aspect within dancehall (Cooper, 1993; 2004; Beckford, 1998; 2006; Stanley-Niaah, 2010), although focusing on dancehall's lyricism, geographical space, or the social psyche of dancehall artists (invariably DJs and singers). Others merely allude to dancehall's spiritual connections (Bakare-Yusuf, 2000; 2006a; Ryman, 2003; 2010). Torres, clearly connects dancehall with its genealogical African/neo-African lineage, despite asserting:

None of the dancers I interviewed admitted to any involvement in Revival, although it is quite clear that it is a root of Ska, Reggae and Dancehall. Instead, dancers claimed an allegiance to Kumina, as I discuss in the next chapter in terms of the links dancers made between Dagging and Kumina

Torres, 2010 p.5

Contrary to Torres's experience, a significant number of dancehall dancers I have interviewed and engaged with throughout this research are acutely aware of the varied spiritual aspects that manifest within dancehall and they themselves link them back to African/neo-African practices including Jonkonnu, Kumina and Revivalism. Likewise, scholars both in conversation and often within their texts express either overtly or more implicitly dancehall's genealogical spiritual links. Shelly Xpressionz, aka Oshun Xpressionz<sup>180</sup> explains in practical terms:

To how the music mek yu (makes you) feel is (it's) like you are just in, space. ... There is nobody else [Shelly smiles] ... Yu (you) start du (to do) routine[s] and stuff an yu (and you) get so laas (lost) in the routine and carried away, sometimes the group stop and is (it's) you one (alone).

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2013, 0:32:52.0

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<sup>180</sup> Shelly gained the name Oshun from a theatre production where she played the 'River Deity'. As the senior female of Xpressionz the name is fitting as she plays the 'Mother' role, both in terms of her maternal attitude towards the group members and from an African/neo-African perspective, as a senior 'post holder' within the group. See: (Lewin, 2000).

The notion of being ‘laas’ (lost) in the corporeal movement and music signifies the onset of the myal state.<sup>181</sup> However, some artists reject the idea of ‘getting lost’ within dancehall expression. Crazy Hype declares:

Mi no kno how dem, how, how, how dem laas inna di music ... mi mek di music tek control, is a difference yu kno, between laas and mekking di music tek control.

I don’t know how they, how, how, how they get lost in the music ... I let the music take control, there’s a difference you know, between lost and letting the music take control.

Crazy Hype interview 2017, 0:27:49.3

Similarly, veteran dancer John Hype pronounces:

Dem laas long time man! [laughter - JH kiss him teet'] ... How you fi deh inna di party an music a play an yu nuh conscious a weh a gwaan? Yu laas? Yu laas long-time! Yu suppose fi focus when yu come a work.

They’re lost long ago man! [laughter - JH sucks his teeth] ... How can you be in the party and music is playing and you are not conscious of what is happening? You’re lost? You’re lost a long-time! You’re supposed to focus when you come to work.

John Hype, interview 2017, 0:33:36.8

Interestingly, John Hype’s focus on dance as work when within the dancehall space is also true for most professional and aspiring dancehall dance artists. Alternatively, Fya both confirms and sums up transcendence within dancehall,

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<sup>181</sup> Shelly Xpressionz’s feeling of ‘get[ting] so laas’ in music clearly conveys a myal engagement, reflecting ethnomusicologist J. H. Nketia’s assertion, ‘Instead of waiting for the gods to come to believers, men[/women] take the initiative to bring themselves in ritual connection with them ... The incidence of possession is of course not restricted to the worship of the gods. It is known to occur in other contexts—particularly celebrations of the life cycle (1957 pp.4-5).

declaring, 'sometime yu (you) doun' (don't) even know that yu laas (you're lost) until, when yu (you), realise five, six hours pass an yu (and you are) still, dancing' (Fya, interview 2017, 0:28:16.9). This has parallels with transcendence within the African/neo-African context.

Within myal's 'lost' state, an individual's soul, which Leslie G. Desmangles (1992) terms 'personality', is believed to be displaced by a spirit/divinity/deity/lwa/orisha (Deren, 1991; Daniel, 2005), and the individual is said to be "'mounted' like a horse' (Desmangles, 1992 p.3) within the Vodun and Yoruba practices. The corporeal dancing body is the conduit through which, transcendence manifests, and the myal state occurs, regarded by Zion Revivalists as "'receiving messages" from the spirit' (Seaga, 1982 p.8). Equally, it is believed 'the possessed "travel" in the spirit world' (ibid) when the spirit assumes corporeal control amongst Pukkumina Revivalists. In both instances the individual is taught during myal possession, as is the case in the Kumina practice. The late Kumina Queen, Imogene 'Queenie' Kennedy shares:

When de **myal** gwine **tek** you now  
you' whole **body** becomes  
like it **col'**  
see?  
and you **feel**  
you' **feet** dem **draw**  
an' you **neck** yah—  
sometime you' **neck**  
fe **away** back yah **so**.

Kennedy, in Warner-Lewis, 1977 p.59

Kennedy clearly describes the African myal spirit as mounting and taking control of the body in a manner that is easily recognisable and familiar within

African/neo-African cultural expression (fig.42). The above field-note describing the young lady wearing a stripe T-shirt and denim batty rider shorts – *rocking her hips laterally whilst bending over holding her ankles, making her buttocks rock side to side in the air* (fig.43) – immediately signifies the Kumina pelvic action.<sup>182</sup> This ‘conjuring’ (Beckford, 2014) of Kumina’s corporeal continuity indicates that as individuals get ‘laas’, or as Crazy Hype (interview 2017) suggests, are taken over by the music and dance, varying levels of myal transcend occurs.



Fig.42 ‘Queenie’ in myal state



Fig.43 Young lady pelvic shake

Maureen Warner-Lewis sums up the myal state as ‘a somatic experience of aggressive intercourse’ (1977 p.59). Thus, the spirit may manifest in violent shaking, jerking, rolling, spinning, jumping, sinuous undulation, pulsation or animal mimicking gestures and motions that develop into culturally recognisable gestures appearing sexual and/or sensual. Various myal manifestations found within African/neo-African practices may also appear sexual/sensual and may also, I argue, be observed in the dancehall space. The manner in which spirit manifestation occur

<sup>182</sup> Olive Lewin (2000 p.235-238) provides a description of Kumina’s basic movement, however she emphasizes a back and forth or rotational movement, whereas I have mainly witnessed a lateral side-to-side movement.

within the corporeal movement of individuals in Revivalism is referred to as a 'portion', as LB shares:

Once you're walking truly with God and he outpour his spirit on yu, then, yu receive messenger or yu might receive a prophet or whatever *portion* that prophet or messenger work.

LB personal interview 1986

The 'spiritual portions' manifest in the specific ways in which an individual may move or dance, linked to the spiritual cosmology as outlined in chapters 2 and 3, which includes the 'ground spirits', 'earth bound spirits' and 'the heavenly host', who all operate under the Supreme Being. Similarly Orville Hall, director of Dance Xpressionz identifies the different types of spirits that manifest amongst the Xpressionz dancers, stating:

... we started to, individualise now, to see weh people have, dem strengths. Dat (that) is when we realise seh (that) Shelly love to climb things ... so when the girls were on the stage doing some madness, yu (you) hear somebody seh (say), "Is who dat (that) up deh so? (up there)" So Shelly tek di (takes the) spotlight from everybody ... cause she's climbing on something and she's hanging upside down, and she's wheeling on it and it, it just look dangerous ... Stacey is the 'head-top' person ... Stacey would climb on things but she doan (does not) stay dere (there). So she climb on it to jump off and she jump from some place to the groun' inna (ground into) a full split ... these are things that they, they would use to just shut down the competition.

Orville interview 2017, 0:15:39.9



Fig.44-45 Shelly/Oshun/Mumma Xpressionz

Shelly Xpressionz (fig.44-45) confirms her climbing spirit, sharing an experience of transcendence. She begins by outlining the importance of the music, stating:

There are a few songs in dancehall, I mean when it starts and the Selectors know, and they play them back to back just like that in succession, once you start dancing, you are lost

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017, 0:10:45.6

This resonates with the African/neo-African context such as Kumina, where the musical breaks help drive the onset of myal (Lewin, 2000; Stines, 2009). Shelly and Orville Xpressionz together narrate how Shelly became ‘laas’ (lost) in the music in the dancehall space. Running across the street they emphasise, she climbed into a nearby tree followed by her male dance partner. Shelly recalls:

... that night in particular, ahmm, I don't know when I reach (arrived) in the tree, because it wasn't a tree that was very easy to climb ... [b]ut

I was up there, the guy was up there, an' I mean, all I heard was noise, that's all I heard, noise! And then when I came down, I mean I was, I was still dancing, I was, is, is like I didn't know where I was, but I was still dancing and carrying on, and a girl touch me an say "de, de (the, the) back a yu (of your) foot blood up yu kno! (is bleeding)" and mi seh (I said) "yeah?" An dat (and that) was it, mi gaan (I went) again. And then the last thing I remember is saying to Orville, the back of mi foot (my leg) burning ... I mean, the blood was running down ... And after that we just left.

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017, 0:10:53.8

Orville explains that dancing in the tree hanging upside down like a bat, Shelly's calf burst against the tree branch, due to the added weight of her partner hanging onto her and dancing, but having transcended into the myal state, she was totally unaware of any injury until when coming out of the myal, much later. This correlates to the spirit manifestation I personally witnessed during the crowning of Kumina King, Oliver 'King Baicho' Barrett (fig.46), Queenie's nephew who was, as Stines notes, 'regarded internationally as the grand master Kumina drummer' (Stines, 2009 p.180). As originally recorded in my field-notes:

... my relationship [to Kumina] changed as a brother 'ketch myal spirit' [became possessed] and bolted forward. An elder's voice shouted, "hold him", and as the nearest one to him I grabbed him, holding him by the waist of his pants, as through my years of dancing I know something of how the spirit moves.<sup>183</sup> I then feel his rhythm and follow him as he dances and inches in the Kumina movement. At one moment he is pulling me and I slacken [my grip] to give him space, when they shout, "let him go" he dashes into a tree and in a second hangs upside down like a bat – still dancing.

Patten, field-notes 2000

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<sup>183</sup> Individuals within the myal must be held by a band (cloth) around the waist to prevent the spirit transferring and entering the individual holding them.



Fig.46 *Kumina* - Oliver 'King Baicho' Barrett

The remarkable similarities between the myal<sup>184</sup> experience of Shelly Xpressionz in the dancehall and the Kumina experience I observed and felt, holding and guiding the Kumina participant dancing in an altered, other, or heightened psychic state, demonstrates the analogous functioning of the corporeal dancing body, transferring Jamaican religious/spiritual (en)coding within dancehall's popular cultural contexts.

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<sup>184</sup> Myal is discussed in chapters 1 and 2 as part of dancehall's genealogical roots and under the section on Jamaican spirituality in chapter 3. Fredrick Cassidy provides a number of definitions of myal citing a number of authors. He states, 'Russell defined myal as "Excitement bordering on madness". The word seems to have acquired a specialised sense today, however: "dancing with a spirit in a trance", or, at a cumina ceremony, "the possession dance of a dancing zombie" (Moore)' (Cassidy, 2007 p.243). As I establish citing Stines (2009), myal is not a 'trance', but another level of spiritual consciousness, where the individual is an active participant in the danced events, which provide knowledge advancement, spiritual healing or restoration of harmony and balance.



### 7.5.6 The frenzy

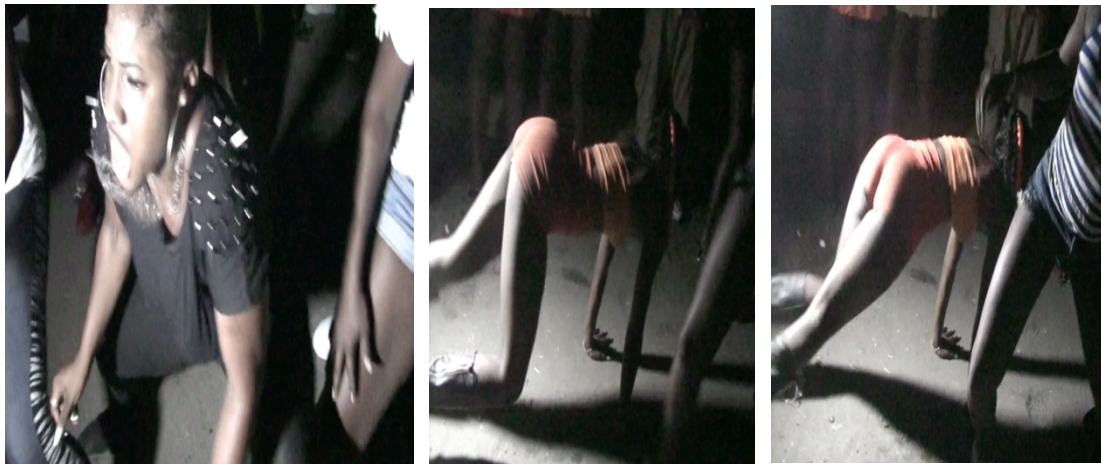


Fig.47 Fluffy Xpressionz – doublé stance Fig.48-49 Cutie Xpressionz – prostrate

The frenzy that ensues within the field-notes occurs as – *Shelly Xpressionz arches her back in an open release gesture* – symbolically connecting with Revival’s ‘Heavenly host’ spiritual realm – *before bending forward* – connecting with mother earth and the ‘ground spirits’ – *whilst other females dance, bump and bore (push and barge) through the customary tight, intimate, dancehall space* – creating a sense of ritual and Beckford’s notion of ‘enchantment’ (2014), which will be discussed in greater detail in the following ‘Coupling section’. Observing – *Fluffy Xpressionz’s open doublé stance, throwing the shoulder to the side and returning to centre (fig.47), together with Cutie Xpressionz’ clapping, crossing and touching her body, dancing on the ground* – the sense of female celebratory rituals demonstrating strength, courage, initiation, survival, fertility, sisterhood, sensuality and courtship displays all collapse and combine as female corporeal dancing bodies transcend within “communication rituals” (Wright, 2004 p.46) in the dancehall space.

### 7.6 Conclusion

Smith argues, ‘Through religious rituals and ceremonies Revival people gain release from everyday pressures even temporarily and are empowered and energized to cope with the problems of everyday life’ (Smith, 2006 p.32), the same thing happens within dancehall’s rituals of communication. The polyrhythmic patterns of

Cutie Xpressionz's hand clapping, before she cycles in a prostrate position (fig.48-49), relates to the Sabar dances of Senegal and Gambia in West Africa, performed as 'an integral part of life cycle ceremonies (baptisms, weddings and circumcisions), Muslim holiday celebrations, political meetings and wrestling matches' (Tang, 2007 p.10). This signifies the smadditisation and agency of female corporeality. The 'head top' dance reinforces female corporeality, clearing the space for female dancers to perform, as symbolically the vagina is presented at face level, which within the Jamaican context is taboo, as public attitudes towards oral sex remains negative, because like homosexual sexual activity it does not assist procreation in bringing forth life. Additionally, although clothed, the public display of the vagina also has significations with enslavement, as Wright (2004) and Cooper (2004) both argue, due to the bondage status of enslaved African men, enslaved African females were left unprotected and were therefore subjected to dehumanising incidents of rape, torture and abuse, as explored in chapter one. Therefore, the vagina, as a sign of female fertility also serves as a reminder of both African female and male vulnerability. Yet, within the dancehall space, the head-top dance movement is also a signifier of: physical strength; balance, both that of the female corporeality and the ideological representation of balance between the external material world and the internal route to the spiritual world; renewal, as the vagina is the birth canal from where new life emerges; sexuality and sensuality, as signified by female deities such as Oya and Oshun. The head-top dance therefore represents female corporeal dancing bodies as being spiritual signifiers through 'fertility', 'communication' and 'ancestral knowledge rituals'.

## **Chapter 8. Coupling section: *Male and female relationships***

### ***8.1 Introduction***

The preceding '*female section*' served to foreground the transformative and transcendent nature of dancehall corporeal dancing bodies, this '*coupling section*' chapter seeks to deepen the notion of a transcendent function within dancehall cultural expression. It offers an alternative and contextual reading of approaches to partnering within the dancehall phenomenon in arguing that it retains continuities from the African spiritual cosmology conveyed in Jamaican religious dance traditions. I use the term 'coupling up' to reflect how dancehall dancers themselves describe the partnering dance between male and female participants within the dancehall space, particularly the 'dagging' dance style.

In exploring dancehall 'coupling up' dance displays and re-conceptualising it from a spiritual perspective, I will examine the performance and performative interaction between male and female corporeal dancing bodies moving together; I go on to explore how spirituality manifests first externally, in the visual coupling between partners; and second internally, drawing on knowledge of the personal stirrings felt by individuals, conveyed through the informal interviews by dance artists; I conclude the chapter by summarising how coupling assists transcendence within the dancehall space, therefore reinforcing the conception of dancehall dance being a continuum of African/neo-African spiritual cultural expression. However, I begin by contextualising how 'dagging' is perceived within Jamaican society and the shift to the 'coupling up' term.

#### ***8.1.1 Perceptions of dancehall dagging or 'coupling up'***

Dancehall dissenters (particularly the ruling-class, Christians and Rastafarian members of the lower socio-economic class) all share the view that dancehall is the antithesis of any cultural or spiritual philosophy, as Randolph-Dalton Hyman (2012) makes clear in the introductory pages of his PhD thesis, proclaiming:

This is a study of “Dagging,” the Jamaican style of dancing marked by violence and raw sexual licentiousness inna di dancehall (in the dancehall)—a male-dominated dance space in Jamaica.

Hyman 2012 p.iv

As a Jamaican born Canadian citizen, Hyman’s damning introduction to dancehall ‘dagging’ as a ‘coupling up’ partnering dance is maintained throughout his thesis. He further asserts:

The growing obsession in the dancehall with masculinity and sexuality gave birth to the latest dance craze dagging in 2008. But this style of “dirty dancing” has been part of the dancehall since its inception. It’s only just gone viral.’

Hyman 2012 p.264

As Hyman’s comments demonstrate, ‘dagging’ is pathologised. Many outside of the genre including the Jamaican authorities, the media and many citizens regard ‘dagging’, as highlighted in chapter one, in line with the definition of the Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation reproduced in Roxanne Watson’s report as being:

... a reference to hardcore sex or what is popularly referred to as ‘dry’ sex, or “the activities of persons engaged in the public simulation of various sexual acts and positions

Watson, 2011 p.255

The Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation’s assessment of dagging presents the form as pornography, totally negating its role as a creative artistic form and mode of survival, as shall be later outlined. Watson accurately continues to assert:

By early 2009, this music [and dance] had become so controversial that the Broadcasting Commission decided to ban it from radio, television and cable channels across the island

Watson, 2011 p.255

Practitioners reacted to the negative governmental and media response to dancehall culture by taking it to increasing heights of creative and physical daring. Orville Hall affirms:

Dem (They) impose a ban on the word and the action, and that is when in the dancehall it just really got to a different level ... we [were] rebelling and saying, you are taking away the joy of what we are doing, the release, because we went to dancehall to release the tension of the day and were, really having fun.

Hall, interview 2017, 0:01:29.8

In contrast to the Jamaican hegemony, dancehall practitioners present a clear alternative perception of the role and purpose daggering serves within the dancehall space. Hall challenges hegemonic notions of dancehall's daggering dance, contending:

... they [the hegemony] were still dwelling on the word daggering, when we pass the word daggering ... daggering came about as an effort to get man and woman to dance again, because we lost that. I remember in the 70s and 80s when you had 'rub-a-dub', yu know, 'cool and deadly' and male and female dancing together, dancehall was losing that, because when 'Bogle' came out and Bogle showed men that they could dance, men literally came out in the middle, full force, women were pushed to the side, so there was not the couple up dances any more. ... So, like Fire Links, Garey Trucks, some of these Selectors were the Selectors, Richie Feelings and some of these Selectors were trying to get man and woman to dance together again.

Hall, interview 2017, 0:06:26.4

Thereby, daggering was and continues to be an attempt to restore the public social partnering of male and female participants within the dancehall space. The use of the ‘coupling’ term to replace ‘daggering’ came from within the dancehall fraternity. Shelly or Oshun Xpressionz insightfully shares:

... daggering it changed (Orville - Yeah man) So they [dancehall practitioners] said ok, if not daggering then, we call it “couple up”.

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017, 0:08:01.1

I thereby use the term ‘coupling’ or ‘coupling up’ to negate the negative connotations carried by the term daggering and in respect of it representing a ‘self-generated’ (Lewis, in Henry, 2002) term from within, rather than imposed on dancehall practitioners. Carolyn Cooper suggests that dancehall is, ‘essentially, a heterosexual space (some would say heterosexist) in which men and women play out eroticised gender roles in ritual dramas that can become violent’ (2000 p.1). Although heterosexism in dancehall is undeniable, dancehall’s public social partnering, ‘coupling up’, as eroticised ritual dramas represent a much deeper cathartic healing and survival process than immediately apparent. Robert Beckford’s ‘conjure’ (2014) concept, meaning to invoke/summon/or call upon the Spirit for assistance, whilst exposing a ‘theological-political narrative aesthetic’ (2014 p.4) is employed here. Through the concept of conjure, as foregrounded in chapter four, material objects such as ‘The Cross’ become spiritual signifiers of humankind’s redemption.

Dance and the corporeal dancing body as central elements of African/neo-African spirituality will be shown to be material signifiers used to conjure spirituality within the dancehall space. Affirming the significance of dance within Revival spiritual rituals, Maria Smith holds, ‘[a]ll the ceremonies are enacted like dance dramas’ (Smith, 2006 p.23). Thereby, conjure is employed alongside the notion of ‘jouissance’, as variously explored by scholars such as Jacques Lacan, the feminist Simone de Beauvoir, and the eroticist, George Bataille amongst others. Within Ralph Norman’s (2008) theological exploration, jouissance is presented as an orgasmic sexual transcendence, a ‘religious bliss ... symbolizing [an] encounter with the

transcendent’ (Norman, 2008 p.156). The transcendent nature of jouissance is my focus in reading dancehall’s sensual corporeal genealogical continuities.

I seek to demonstrate that through conjure the material corporeal dancing body evokes jouissance as a survival tactic and resistant alternative to hegemonic Western puritanical spirituality, the cost of which requires enduring conscious sexual repression. Thereby, utilising the notions of conjure and jouissance, transcendence as a spiritual healing process (Wright, 2004), becomes the culmination of dancehall’s spiritual functionality through coupling corporeal dancing bodies. This will be made increasingly apparent in the performance and performative interaction of coupling partners, as outlined within the following field-note descriptions.

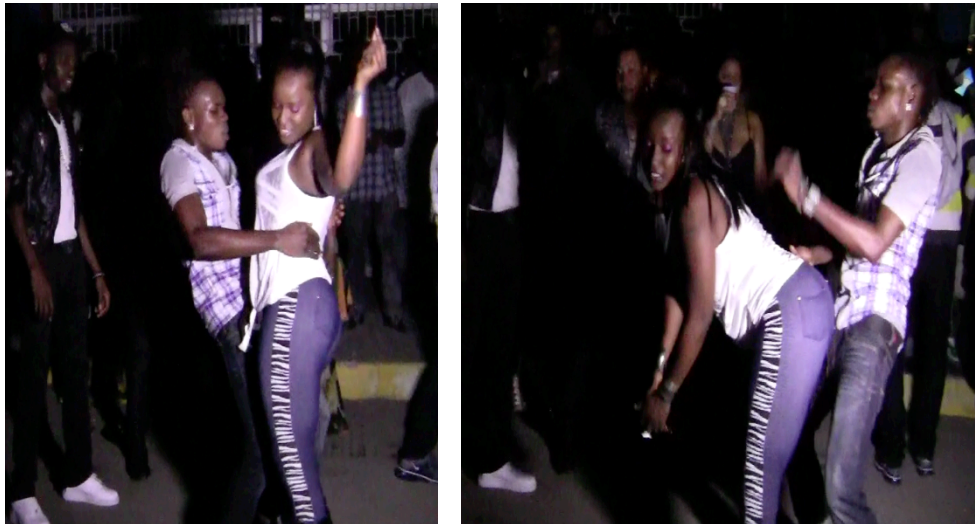
## **8.2 The coupling section within the dancehall event**

Within this thesis, the ‘early vibes’, the ‘man dem’ and the ‘female’ sections, have all focused predominantly on the ‘Hot Mondays’ dancehall session that took place on April 15<sup>th</sup> 2013. The following participant observations of dancers ‘coupling up’ draws on multiple dancehall sessions to enable an analysis of the dance over a wider timescale.

### **8.2.1 ‘Uptown Mondays’ – coupling 15.04.2013**

Within the ‘early vibes’ section a male and female, Lil Ville Xpressionz and Shelly Xpressionz, ‘couple up’. With mimetic type gestures, Lil Ville – *wines on Shelly, his pelvis ‘tumbling’, circling/rotating whilst simultaneously rocking forward and back, initially in-front of Shelly, face to face. Arching back Lil Ville counterbalances his weight. His pelvis pushes forward making full contact with Shelly’s. Holding her around the waist he steps around Shelly, positioning himself behind her. She effortlessly bends forward, presenting her buttocks as Lil Ville wines against her. His pelvic wining has little tension and both pelvises move freely in the tumbling, wining action, with the tiniest of gaps appearing between them as they dance closely. Shelly backs her derrière into Lil Ville’s groin region and both wine*

*together* – noticeably, they do not engage in the full pressing, maximum contact, that emerges towards the latter stages of the session.



Figs.50-51 Lil Ville Xpressionz and Shelly Xpressionz, couple up

Later, within the ‘*Female section*’ of the session, Shelly Xpressionz now couples up with Crazy Hype, adopting – *a wide douplé stance, as if sitting on a chair, her pelvis/buttocks bouncing up and down in Crazy Hype’s lap. He too adopts a wide douplé position as he wines behind her. His left hand is bent over Shelly’s head holding a cup, the right hand guides and directs Shelly’s buttocks to his pelvis. She bends over touching the ground, her feet spread more than shoulder-width apart creating a wide base, and with her knees now straight, she presents her derrière in the air. Her pelvis moves subtly in a lateral, sideways rocking action echoed more overtly by Crazy Hype’s pelvis, as he arches backwards, feet apart, his pelvis pushes further forward achieving maximum contact with Shelly’s corporeality. Shelly suddenly drops down into a split. Crazy Hype pulls back his pelvis and covering his groin region, quickly turns his head to look over his shoulder towards another male dancer.*

Later still, as the music gets more intense, coupling with Crazy Hype, Shelly – *arches way back, her pelvis pushing forward as he holds and supports her around the*



*waist. – Even later still, Shelly becomes part of a trio, as she and Cutie Xpressionz – bend over touching the ground, their derrières up in the air as Lil Ville moves in and proceeds to dagger each in turn, alternately thrusting his pelvis forward against their buttocks. With impeccable timing, he jumps between the females, delivering single and double bump dagger(s) to each of them, who both brace themselves, wining, shaking or rocking their pelvises in-between each interaction, anticipating the next engagement based on the sonic cues providing rhythmic timing embodied within the musical pulse. – This coupling dance, although dynamic and entertaining is in stark contrast to what Orville Hall terms ‘exhibition coupling’ as exemplified by the following description.*

Patten, field-notes 2013

### **8.2.2 Xpressionz Thursday 2010**

A female wearing a short black sequined dress, revealing her underwear beneath, stands bare footed with a black drinks bucket on her head, crowning her curly processed hair – *she daringly jumps from a three to four-foot high speaker box, across a five-foot gap and lands in the open arms of a male dancer.* – Wearing a white T-shirt and calf length jeans he catches her, she immediately – *starts jerking her whole body, holding him around his neck as he spins her in a hundred and eighty degree turn. Engrossed in the dance, her legs dangle astride the male as she manipulates and jerks her pelvis back and forth, creating a rippling action down the length of her legs. Arching backwards until her hands touch the ground, she effectively performs a handstand, whilst the male dancer daggers her. Holding her legs under his arms to support her, his pelvis bumps back and forth against her upside-down crotches (crotch) and buttocks in this daggering ‘exhibition dance’ – other participants observe and are entertained.*

The entertainment continues as dancers such as Crazy Hype, in a blue T-shirt and orange pants, couples up with a female in skinny-fit dark blue jeans and a purple T-shirt. She – *bends over, hands touching the floor, thereby presenting her buttocks up in the air, legs are apart forming a wide base, with slightly relaxed knees. Crazy Hype rubs his pelvis up and down from her ‘camel toe’ region to the top of her*

*buttocks in incremental steps, similarly to the ‘Tic-Tock’ dance action, stopping at the 12, 3 and 6 o’clock points and reversing back down to repeat the whole sequence. – Crazy Hype’s pelvic breaks, both emphasise and are emphasised by the DJ’s voice on vinyl, and even more regularly, the Selector’s voice on the microphone. This is explicitly pronounced in the following account.*

Patten, field-notes 2010

### **8.2.3 My Cup Dancehall Party 2010**

A yute (youth) dressed all in white with red shoes and red-framed shades (sunglasses) couples up with a female dressed in a fitted black sleeveless crop-top and green batty-rider shorts. She – *wines her waist bending forward, her body almost ninety degrees to the ground* – standing behind her the yute – *wines down on her in the douplé position, his feet apart so her pelvis nestles between his thighs/groin region* – the Selector shouts the directive to “bang arr, bang arr” (bang her, bang her). She adjusts herself – *putting her hands ‘a dutty’ (on the ground) for additional stability as, resting his hands on the lumbar region of her back the yute switches from wining to forcefully daggering her, thrusting his pelvis forward and back against hers to the rhythmic pattern of the selector’s directives.* This is part of the onset of the frenzy that many culture bearers refer to as ‘the madness’ or ‘crotches mawning’ (morning).

Patten, field-notes 2010

### **8.3 Historical genealogy of coupling up**

Historically, coupling has a long trajectory within Jamaican African/neo-African practices. Roger D. Abraham and John F. Szwed’s (1983) compilation of British travel accounts from the seventeenth to nineteenth century record numerous instances of dance across the Caribbean, many featuring in relation to death observances. The common perception of African/neo-African dance and music expression is one of being rude, lewd, debauched and crude, due to the biases and

prejudices of the Eurocentric lens through which they were observed. Charles Leslie (1740) typically remarks, ‘Sunday Afternoon the Generality of them dance or wrestle, Men and Women promiscuously together’ (in Abraham and Szwed, 1983 p.282). Most authors pay little attention to the dance steps and choreographic patterns, recording them using general terms based on their entertainment value. Little attempt was even made to name those dances observed and recorded.



Fig.52: ‘Rent-a-tile’ coupling

Yet, genealogical continuities exist between coupling up dances within Jamaican popular culture, the ‘rent-a-tile’ coupling dance (Fig.52) being an example, as described in relation to Mento in chapter two. Elsewhere, I outline some corporeal movement patterns involved in the coupling (partnering) style of the traditional mento ‘rent-a-tile’ dance, which dates back to enslavement, quoting Jamaican scholar Cheryl Ryman who describes it as:

... a slow, winding, sensuous movement ... performed separately or in intimate contact with a partner ... [originally] called the "dry grind", "rent a tile" and "dub" or "rub a dub"

Ryman, in Patten, 2016 p.113

I draw attention to Ryman's emphasis on the close intimate contact of coupling here, as this continuity is maintained throughout dancehall's genealogical lineage. As I have previously detailed elsewhere in relation to reggae and its British offspring 'Lover's Rock', coupling is an intimate and resistant act:

... incorporating a dipping action to the slow intimate, full contact of the male and female pelvis rubbing against each other in half or full circles, or scribing a figure of eight ... the unification of male and female corporeal dancing bodies is a continuity that runs through mento, rocksteady, reggae and dancehall, but in ska, although pelvises might not lock (touch) the symbolism remains in the pelvic action.

Patten, 2016 p.113

Despite the obvious sexual overtones inherent within coupling, dancehall maintains a spiritual connection due to its central circling pelvic action. As detailed in the female section relating to wining, the circling pelvic action signifies the renewal of life (Ryman, 2010), an important theme within African/neo-African cultural expression. Although the spiritual connection between the circling pelvic action during dancehall coupling may have escaped most scholars to date, amongst the dance artists I have interviewed many make the link between various elements of dancehall and Jamaica's African/neo-African spiritual practices. Taz Timeless affirms:

When me was small an my granmadda used to tek mi to Mento yard an, the man siddung pon di drum, the likkle kete drum an him a beat it right desso, an all dat, an di graitta an di pot cover a beat, me si man an ooman a dance an gyrate togedda, an wining up pon one a nedda. Right! Yeah! Mi si all dem ting deh. Right!

When I was small and my grandmother used to take me to Mento yard and, the man sit down on the drum, the little kete drum, and he is beating it right there, and all of that, and the grater and the pot lid was playing, I see man and woman dancing and gyrating together, and wining up on each other. Right! Yeah! I saw those things. Right!

Taz, interview 2017, 0:17:11.0

Significantly, the concept of *jouissance* places ‘man an ooman a dance an gyrate togedda’ or corporeal ‘coupling up’ at the centre of its discourse. Scholars have conceded that *jouissance* has no direct English translation from its French origins.<sup>185</sup> *Jouissance* is often referred to, particularly within feminist theory, as representing extreme pleasure both spiritual and sexual. This may result in an excessive, orgasmic explosion of emotion, ‘a sense of being overwhelmed or disgusted, yet simultaneously providing a source of fascination’ (Fink, 1997 p.xii), which I now examine.

#### ***8.4 Sensuality, transcendence and jouissance***

Ralph Norman acknowledges *jouissance* as having been part of critical religious discourse since ‘Jacques Lacan developed Georges Bataille’s reflections on sexual orgasm and transcendence in *Encore*’ (Norman, 2008 p.153). As such, Norman asserts, ‘*jouissance* is often accompanied by religious language’ (Norman, 2008 p.154). Beth-Sarah Wright’s study exploring female rituals within the dancehall space, approaches *jouissance* as, ‘a seditious principle, self-generated and associated with emancipation, empowerment and the cunning of resistance’ (Wright, 2004a p.9). The notion of an emancipatory and resistant element within spirituality resonates with theologian James Cone’s ‘Black liberation theology’<sup>186</sup> and the idea that, ‘love in black religious thought is usually linked with God’s justice, liberation, and hope’ (Cone 1985 p.758). Cone notes that African American ‘blues people’ turned to the ‘honky-tonk’ dance space for hope and as a survival mechanism, thus ‘transcend[ing] their agony by facing it with stoic defiance’ (Cone 1999 p.x), in opposition to church

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<sup>185</sup> Ralph Norman (2008) provides quite a comprehensive overview of the different interpretations of *jouissance* in his investigation into its mysticism.

<sup>186</sup> Black liberation theology as developed by James Cone is about ‘the encounter of Christ in the struggle of freedom’ (Cone, 1997 p.100) and the reinterpretation of his teaching for the twenty-first century.

going religion. Likewise, dancehall serves as a ‘transcendent’ mode and ‘stoic defiance’ for its practitioners. Yet, unlike Cone’s ‘blues people’, which Kelly Brown Douglas (2012) conceptualizes as ‘blues bodies’, many dancehall practitioners incorporate and syncretize both Christian religious practices and African/neo-African spiritual ritual within the genre in obtaining transcendence.

In relation to the above dance field-notes, the ‘coupling up’ interactions within the *Hot Mondays* ‘early vibes’ section, exemplified by Lil Ville and Shelly Xpressionz’s sensual dancing (fig.50-51) represents Cone’s liberation and hope, despite the protracted wait for justice dancehall practitioners continue to endure. However, the slow transformation of both Lil Ville and Shelly, I argue, importantly facilitates the slow onset and progression of the transcendent myal state, leading to jouissance, facilitating an experience of the Divine. Noticeably, within the ‘early vibes’ section, Lil Ville and Shelly’s dance is kept within the hegemonic confines of decency, protecting the female’s dignity and status.<sup>187</sup> This may be read in the – *light, respectable, mimetic wining gestures* – of Lil Ville’s frontal engagement with Shelly. Their face to face wining may also be conceived as signifying normative regenerative procreation (Douglas, 1999).<sup>188</sup>

Wright’s interpretation of jouissance within dancehall ‘communication rituals’ (2004) supports the notion of dance being a transcendent form. Moreover, from a feminist perspective, Wright focuses on corporeal spiritual liberation, ‘feminine pleasure’ and notions of personhood. She argues:

The element of transcendence, that something old and reverent, transforms the body solely as an object of desire to a spectacle of ecstasy, [is] quite like the body in a ritual of spiritual possession. In spirit possession the line between object and subject is blurred ...

Wright, 2004 p.9

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<sup>187</sup> Wilson’s (1969) ‘Reputation and Respectability’ highlights the fact that notions of respectability are projected onto the female, as does Cooper (2004).

<sup>188</sup> Kelly Brown Douglas study, ‘Sexuality and the Black Church’ (1999) provides a detailed account of the body, where perception of sex linked to passion is regarded as sinful, as the only rational form of sex must be linked to procreation. Similarly, Wilson (1969) contends that sexual activity and procreation are both a symbol of male prowess and proof of the female’s fertility and therefore legitimacy as wife material.

I extend Wright's linking of the ecstatic to ritual and spiritual possession through corporeality by incorporating Beauvoir's reading of *jouissance* as involving the union of two individuals. The female, Beauvoir contends, '[b]eing more profoundly beside herself than is man ... longs to melt with him into one ... she retains her subjectivity only through union with her partner' (Norman, 2008 p.157). Thereby, *jouissance* through the corporeal 'coupling up' of dancehall dancers facilitates spiritual manifestations within the dancehall space. Lil Ville and Shelly's coupling up evokes Beauvoir's conception of independent bodies melting and combining in creating the overwhelming feeling of *jouissance*, namely desire, joy, pleasure, and ecstasy, through which transformation and transcendence may occur. Ultimately, *jouissance* is believed to lead to an experience of the numinous, the Almighty God, Jah, the Supreme Being.

### ***8.5 African/neo-African transformation and transcendence***

Lil Ville's – *arch[ing] back slightly counterbalancing his weight, his pelvis push[ing] forward, making full contact with Shelly's* – visually establishes their sensual engagement signalling their transformation, the precursor leading to transcendence. This serves as part of the sanctification (discussed in the 'early vibe' section) and preparation of the body for full coupling transcendence. Their coupling together is a visual marker of an internal transformation, which for many, leads to the external manifestation of transcendence. Some dancers physically transform in nature from a shy, quiet individual, into a daring, dynamic, humorous, braggadocios, and visually outlandish dance artist.

Shelly's – *presenting [of] her buttocks as Lil Ville wines against her ... [her] back[ing] her derrière into Lil Ville's groin region a[s] both wine together* – may be read as part of her transformation from Shelly (the individual) into Òshun – mumma [mother] Xpressionz – who as such, marries the African/Jamaican spiritual 'mother' or leader role, which extends to nurturing female elders whose wisdom and knowledge attract great respect with that of the Yoruba deity (Cooper, 2004). Within Yoruba culture, Òshun is the deity of love, the wife of Shango (deity of thunder and lightening), provider of fertility and potency. Shelly's later coupling with Crazy Hype

– *[adopting] a wide douplé stance, as if sitting on a chair, her pelvis/buttocks bouncing up and down in Crazy Hype's lap* –conveys and fits the image of the deity of love. Crazy Hypes' - *adopt[ing off] a wide douplé position as he wines behind her* – reflects the Shango/Òshun union, whilst strengthening Shelly's signification of Òshun (figs.53-54). Luisah Teish portrays Òshun as, 'Maiden, Mother, and Queen. Yoruba folklore attributes many powers to her. She has numerous lovers and is ... the personification of the Erotic in Nature' (Teish in Cooper, 2004 p.103). Òshun is also linked to water, perceived as, 'a river goddess as most female orishas[/deities] are in that part of the World [Yorubaland]' as Bakare-Yusuf affirms (in Cooper, 2004 p.104).



Fig.53-54 Shelly 'Òshun' Xpressionz coupling up with Crazy Hype.

Amongst Yoruba followers in Cuba and Brazil, Òshun represents the contradictory 'Madonna-whore complex' (Cooper, 2004 p.105), thus Shelly's sensuous flirtations with multiple male partners within the dancehall space, whilst affirming her myal transcendence as Òshun, by no means undermines her personal, normative commitment to her fiancée and 'life partner' as Shelly. Robert Farris Thompson holds, 'the Virgin Mary was sometimes equated with the sweet and gentle



aspect of the multifaceted goddess of the river, Oshun' (Thompson, 1984 p.17). Yet, despite Òshun's symbolic association with the Virgin Mary, Christianity's premiere female spiritual figure, Thompson negates and demeans her spiritual signification, by referencing Òshun's spiritual power as 'positive witchcraft' (Thompson, 1984 p.80). Most African/neo-African Yoruba practitioners regard Òshun's spiritual powers more favourably, as being a kin to myal spiritual power. Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome and Elisha P. Renne provide a more constructive description of the deity, informing:

Òshun (the originator of the waters/deity of the waters) is foremost of the women considered *àwon iyá wa* (our mothers), who have the power of life and death, control over the *orí* (essence of a human being), with the power of procreation, fecundity, and destruction ... Òshun is considered the source of potency for most male-dominated cults like the Egúngún, Orò, Gèlèdè, and Ifá.

Okome and Renne, 2017 p.109

Bestowed with the name Òshun by Orville Hall after performing the role in a local drama production, Shelly reports that the name stuck as a 'pet' name (nickname),<sup>189</sup> and she has subsequently gained additional aka's. A leading female dancer within the dancehall sector, Shelly is known and regarded as Mumma Xpressionz (mother of Dance Xpressionz), being the most senior female and a founding member. Therefore, whilst coupling up within the dancehall space, Shelly Xpressionz can be read as synthesising her multiple personas as she transforms and transcends into the myal state.

Conversely, Lil Ville and Shelly's coupling may be read by many dancehall dissenters as transgressive, with some even perceiving Shelly backing up her buttocks into Lille Ville's groin as possibly alluding to anal and other acts of gratuitous sex.

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<sup>189</sup> Peter J. Wilson's study (1969) explains the many uses of 'pet' or nicknames across the Caribbean and suggests: 'it stands out clearly that one of the functions of such nicknaming is the indication of status. They are used particularly among or between persons of implicit equality-on Andros Island chiefly among siblings for example (Otterbein 1966 p.118); in Jamaica 'pet names' are used between a mother and her children in particular, but the use of nicknames among males also is evident. Yet another variation occurs in Carriacou where 'church' names are kept secret for fear of obeah and a person is generally known by his or her 'house name' (Smith in Wilson, 1969 p.75). Suffice to say, the various uses travel across the Caribbean region and are therefore not restricted to the countries identified by Wilson.

From a religious perspective Douglas (2012) clarifies gratuitous sex as, ‘sex that is engaged in for other than procreative purposes’ (2012 p.78). The suggestion from the church’s perspective that sensual and sexual liaisons are only legitimate when performed for procreation fuels dancehall’s supposed denouncing, or fight against homosexuality, oral sex, abortion, and other forms of sex related acts that may be considered transgressive.

### ***8.6 Slackness and violence, transgressive culture***

Whilst the dancehall fraternity verbally and publically condemn transgressive sexualities the form itself permits and turns a blind eye to many transgressive practices. Michael A. Bucknor and Conrad James insightfully assert, ‘excess in public display seems to be a strategy to camouflage heteronormative and patriarchal complicity with transgressive intimacies’ (Bucknor and James, 2014 p.1). Dancehall man dem intricately plaiting their hair, wearing skinny-fit pants, bling jewellery and participating in skin bleaching alongside females who also wear figure hugging clothing with excessive displays of flesh are perceived as potentially inducing ‘transgressive intimacies’ in both thought and/or act.

Scholars have explored dancehall’s blurring of moral boundaries by approaching dancehall dance vocabulary and corporeal performativity, particularly coupling up, in relation to slackness and the promotion of public indecency (Hebdige, 2007; Watson, 2011; Hyman, 2012). This reflects the legacies of enslavement and colonialism in the subversion of Jamaican hegemonic values. Stolzoff suitably articulates this, observing, ‘[t]he ambivalent pattern of fascination and fear, of permissiveness and repression in regard to the slave dance, is a common thread in the development of the dancehall’ (2000 p.27). This is reinforced by Watson (2011), who foregrounds the negative influence dancehall dancing is perceived as having on Jamaica’s youth, citing research by Marcia A. Forbes:

In a study of the impact of music on adolescent sexuality, adolescent interviewees define slack music as “really bad dancehall videos with bad words (expletives) and or nudity.” For these middle-class

adolescent Jamaicans slackness is associated with scanty dress and very promiscuous dancing.

Watson, 2011 p.265

However, Forbes' study focusing on middle-class adolescents does not take account of the socio-politico-economic determinants affecting the creative processes of Jamaica's poor, the main creators and supporters of dancehall. Within dance studies, Sylvanus Kwashie Kuwor (2013) is rightly critical of cultural differences enforced on cultural expressions that are themselves unfixed in nature and argues it is inappropriate, 'that all cultures are measured by the same process of evaluation' (Kuwor, 2013 p.75). Watson herself, references Barrow and Dalton (1997) in recognizing the negative effects of increased poverty on cultural expression. This has dictated the aesthetic shift by many artists, from conscious reflections on the socio-politico-economic hardships of Jamaican daily livity,<sup>190</sup> to the often more lucrative escapist focus, 'on "new dance moves, slackness (sexually explicit lyrics) and sound clashes"' (Watson, 2011 p.265). Hall contextualises economic impacts on aesthetic choices, asserting:

You would have to be in the space to understan' what is happening in the space. ... When a girl comes to a party and gets \$10,000 dolla on any given night to dance, she already love the dancing, they might ask her to do some extreme things, but she is willing to make that sacrifice to earn that money, yu know! ... \$10,000 dollars is major money, for a little inner city girl that don't have a proper nine to five ... or go to work with bloodshot eyes, but earning maybe t'ree (three) times what she would earn, fi di (for the) week.

Hall, interview 2017, 0:04:52.8

Dancehall's financial gains are one important aspect that entices females at the lower socio-economic level of society to engage it. Despite the perceived demeaning role females are regarded as performing by outsiders to the form, many female dancehall practitioners exercise power within the dancehall space. They exercise power and control over their bodies in choosing, who, when and how they engage in

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<sup>190</sup> See: (Chapter 6, section 6.2).

‘coupling up’ and the attainment of jouissance with a partner, the still, and/or video camera. Aleia D. Walker succinctly delineates the complexity of dancehall culture further, stating:

... the method of dance popular in Jamaica, whining, involves erotic hip gyrations with a woman’s backside pressed tightly against a man’s crotch and two moving in tandem (sic). Whining implies sexuality while daggering blatantly states it ... Both variations are highly sexual and to the uninformed considered demeaning to the female participant. However contrary to the moral critics, for female dancers their participation elicits power because they choose to dance with their male partners. The exchange is mutually beneficial, for men also feel that their displays of prowess on the dancehall floor are their means to power’

Walker, 2013 p.11

Black liberation theologian, Michael Eric Dyson, further contextualizes the sexual, gender/power relationship inherent within cultural expression, contending, ‘black folk comprehended jouissance, [as] the sheer hedonistic pleasure and delight of experimenting and playing with black cultural forms’ (Dyson, 2004 p.381). Thus, jouissance represents a cathartic exploration and healing process for many corporeal dancing bodies representing the lower-socio-economic level of society. Thereby, as Shelly – *bends over touching the ground ... knees now straight, she presents her derrière in the air. Her pelvis moves subtly in a lateral, sideways rocking action echoed more overtly by Crazy Hype’s pelvis* – this foregrounds the connection between the dancers, as Shelly Xpressionz herself recognises, sharing, ‘if you have a partner that you are connected to in the space, once he, touches you, its, its automatic like, you know what to do or where to go’ (interview 2017, 0:10:53.8). Thereby the moment of jouissance occurs symbolically, as Crazy Hype – *arches backwards ... his pelvis push[ing] further forward achieving maximum contact with Shelly’s corporeality* – this immediately signifies a contemporary ‘experimenting and playing’ by way of ‘conjuring’ (Beckford, 2014), the ‘re-memory’ (Henry, 2002) of both Yoruba and Kumina significations. Shelly’s lateral pelvic action, echoed by Crazy Hype’s pelvis triggers a contemporary ‘re-memory’ of Kumina and thereby their transcendence in the myal state.

Dyson (2004 p.381) fittingly cites Michael Ventura, asserting, 'African cultures often overcame the Cartesian dualism of the West because they contended that there was no such thing as being mental and spiritual over here and being physically embodied over there'. The holistic approach of African/neo-African culture is clearly apparent in statements made by dancehall practitioners themselves. Taz Timeless connects the use of the pelvis within African/neo-African forms with its use within dancehall. He states:

... daggering, if yu look at daggering, if yu check Kumina, right! Dinkie Mini an all those tings, the man an di ooman come togetha an gyrate, they work, the pelvis area, they gyrate, they dance togetha. That is a form of daggering right there!

Taz, interview 2017, 0:17:11.0

Cojo Hotfoot makes a similar observation, asserting:

... yu have the Kumina now, where a male and a female will do it [couple up] together. Wining and gyrating up their pelvis and their waistline and they're on each other. They're moving aroun' and having a good time.

Cojo Hotfoot, interview 2017, 0:05:42.4

Both dance artists clearly demonstrate the fact that the idea of separating the material and spiritual duality of an individual, and thereby creating a mind/body split is an alien concept within both ancient and contemporary African/neo-African cultural expression. The holistic nature of African/neo-African practices makes it possible for individuals to experience *communitas* within groups of corporeal bodies dancing or *jouissance* between two persons in intimate connection within the dancehall space. However, *jouissance* requires a relinquishing of control and the handing over of power. Thereby, *jouissance* is associated with feminine approaches to intimacy.

Shana Goldin-Perschbacher recognizes the rock star Jeff Buckley's ambiguous use of the feminine to masculine vocal register as an act of, 'giv[ing] up control, to be

“consumed by the moment,” which makes him both vulnerable and orgasmically joyful’ (Buckley, in Goldin-Perschbacher, 2003 p.312). Scholars have highlighted the relinquishing of control as a prerequisite facilitating the male experience of the essence of jouissance (Norman, 2008). Many dancehall dancers frequently relinquish control, whilst coupling up. During Shelly and Crazy Hype’s coupling up, Crazy Hype noticeably relinquishes control to her as – *Shelly suddenly drops down into a split. Crazy Hype pulls back his pelvis and covering his groin region, quickly turns his head to look over his shoulder towards another male dancer* – Crazy Hype’s reaction foregrounds his sense of momentary exposure, demonstrating the subtle negotiation of control and power between Shelly and himself. This type of negotiation constantly takes place between male and female agents participating in sensuous and sexual artistic expression within the dancehall space. Thereby through the notion of jouissance, coupling up offers contemporary and alternative African/neo-African routes to experiencing the Divine. Having explored this route to transcendence and the Divine, I shall further explore transcendence through the notion of conjure.



Fig.55 Shelly Xpressionz’s split, Crazy Hype caught by surprise!

### **8.7 Dancehall as conjure**

The above thin descriptions of ‘coupling up’ may be read through Robert Beckford’s (2014) ‘conjure’ lens as evoking or summoning spiritual intervention, read through an African/neo-African prism, although defined in the OED evoking involves ‘bring[ing] or recall[ing] (a feeling, memory, or image) to the conscious mind; elicit[ing] (a response); invoke[ing] (a spirit or deity)’<sup>191</sup>. Beckford also incorporates Theophus H. Smith’s (1995) notion of conjure as the therapeutic use of biblical texts (figures, events, objects, places etc.), incorporating the magical practices and functions of African/neo-African forms to transform and re-present historical events. Thereby, conjure assists in foregrounding the multiple levels of transformation and transcendence occurring within African/neo-African cultural expression including, I argue, dancehall sessions/parties.

Smith foregrounds the healing tradition embodied within conjure, stating, ‘in contrast to traditions in which "conjuring" means transformation by means of witchcraft or sorcery, in black America a conjuror is also a folk doctor’ (Smith, 1994 p.31). This corresponds with the Jamaican myal practitioner. According to Odwirafo Kwesi Ra Nehem Ptah Akhan, the African American conjuror or conjure doctor derives from the ‘Hoodoo man’ of Akan origins. He, identifies Hoodoo as coming from, he asserts, ‘the Akan term *ndu* (oohn-doo) referencing “medicine” from “roots, trees, plants”. The term *ndu* also means to bring down a spirit, to become heavy with the spirit’ (Akhan, 2015 p.1). The director of the Ghanaian National Dance Company, Nii-Tete Yartey, substantiates *nduro* as being the plural for *eduro*, meaning medicine and/or spiritual powers (in conversation 15.09.2017).

In an earlier publication, Akhan (2011) traces the Akan religion through North America and the Caribbean and identifies its emergence in Jamaican as Obeah. Akhan upholds Obeah’s once commonly held derivation from the Twi words in Asante and Fante culture, ‘*obayifo*’ or ‘*bayi*’, meaning ‘witch’ as scholars such as Joseph Williams (1933) and Leonard E. Barrett (1976) formally propose. The word ‘*obayi*’, is problematic because as Akhan insightfully highlights, *obayi*’ is ‘often mistranslated as witchcraft in general’ (Akhan, 2011 p.3). However, Dianne M. Stewart (2005) affirms Obeah’s now more commonly accepted derivation, citing Orlando Patterson

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<sup>191</sup> See: Oxford English Dictionary online: [en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evocation](http://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/evocation).

in contending that the Twi term 'obeye', 'is a more fitting cognate in that it signifies the concept of "moral neutrality" in its original usage and because it is closer in terms of pronunciation to the Jamaican term "Obeah" than obayifo' (Stewart, 2005 p.49). Nonetheless, Akhan correctly records both conjure and Hoodoo as referencing the Akan term kankye, outlined as the spiritual healing aspect of conjure, as Yartey also supports and is clearly evidenced in its Ghanaian root/routing. He remarks:

The term kankye is vocalized in the Twi language of the Akan as kahn-chay. This term used by Akan people for over a millennium in West Afuraka/Afuraitkait (Africa) means to invoke, call the Abosom (Deities), Nsamanfo (Ancestral Spirits) and Nyamewaa-Nyame, the Great Mother and Father Supreme Being ritually.

Akhan, 2015 p.1

Thereby conjure, rooted/routed through the Akan religion translates to the Jamaican Obeah, the healing aspect of which is recorded by Stewart (2005) as the 'Myal' form, which later gained autonomy from Obeah following the Western criminalisation of Obeah during the early nineteenth century, as outlined in chapter one. This reinforces healing as a major component of conjure. Stewart also contends that Obeah and by extension myal embody 'life-affirming spirituality, values, and goals' (Stewart, 2005 p.183), that are foundational to most African/neo-African ritual practices. Hence, she rightly proposes that there be a re-framing of Obeah to align it to, 'its legacy in ancient Akan, Kongo, and other African religious cultures' (ibid). Conjuring therefore signifies an engagement of the myal spiritual healing process, linked to the 'myal-man' or 'myal-woman' and more relevant to this research, the 'myal possession state' subsumed within most Jamaican African/neo-African cultural practices.

With healing in mind, Beckford incorporates 'enchantment', effectively loading and embodying culture with the Spirit, which as a 'Pentecostal theology of culture' (Beckford, 2014 p.127) he argues, foregrounds the Christian 'Holy Spirit' of the Triune God. However, I extend the conception of 'conjure' and 'enchantment' by re-incorporating the full extent of its African/neo-African cosmology as signposted by Smith (1995). 'Conjure' becomes the act of evoking the myal spirit linked to the



bricolage of history, material objects and African/neo-African cultural practices. Thus, 'enchantment' is the transcendent myal spirit through which corporeality conjures embodied historical and ancestral knowledge, ancestral data (Stines, 2009), re-memory (Henry, 2002), contemporary physical experiences and creative possibilities. Thereby, transformation through cultural expression manifests a lived, cathartic, healing process, conjuring an experience of what Paul Tillich terms 'ultimate concern' (1980), that is to say, 'a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings' (Tillich, 1980 p.47) namely, the Divine.

In the dancehall space, often preceded by the female section, intense conjuring occurs in the coupling up section of the dance, as corporeal dancing bodies harness the energy of the female party vibes. The coupling up between Crazy Hype and Shelly Xpressionz, exemplifies this conjuring continuity. Beginning during the female section, Shelly's – *arch[ing] way back, her pelvis pushing forward as he [Crazy Hype] holds and supports her around the waist* – conjures the bricolage of symbolisms that flow into and converge with the coupling up of individuals. In her backwards arch, Shelly's chest is lifted and open, signifying her material presentation and connection to the heavens. Bending further backwards, her torso ends up upside down and her corporeality functions with gravity, signifying the ideological connection with 'madda (mother) earth'. Shelly's corporeality represents both sign and signifier of the material world, but it is through her kinaesthetic movement that the spiritual connection between the heavens and the earth signifies, and rejuvenation is conjured.

As an important African/neo-African cultural continuity and spiritual theme, rejuvenation is symbolically conjured in the ecstatic contact between the pelvic regions of the dancers and the transcendent feelings of jouissance and healing they receive in that moment. Through cultural expression, corporeal dancing bodies transcend gaining agency and/or 'smadditisation', because as Tillich expounds, '[e]veryone who lives creatively in meanings affirms himself as a participant in these meanings' (Tillich, 1980 p.46). Hence, creative expression enables enchantment in the attainment of self-actualisation, thereby leading to an experience of the Divine.

The conjuring of the myal state facilitates access to the African/neo-African cosmological duality of the material, and spiritual worlds. The spirit world comprises

of the Supreme Being,<sup>192</sup> the heavenly host, the earthbound, and the ground (ancestral) spirits, outlined in chapter three. Jean Besson and Barry Chevannes articulate African cosmology through Revivalism as the, ‘integrated world of living beings, God, the spirits, and the dead’ (1996 p.218). This perspective establishes conjure as a means by which spirituality signifies through material objects, practices and events. Hence dancehall corporeal dancing bodies: ideologically represent; artistically express; and physically fulfil the evocation and/or conscious manifestation of African/neo-African and orthodox spirituality.

### ***8.8 Ideological representation***

Dancehall corporeal dancing bodies ideologically represent spirituality, as inscribed with multiple religious categories they conjure both African/neo-African and orthodox spiritual symbols and signifiers through contemporary popular culture. This is well illustrated by Shelly’s signification of Òshun who is both a revered female deity from the Nigerian Yoruba perspective, but through the diasporic Yoruba lens simultaneously signifies the ‘Madonna-whore complex’, which links African/neo-African spirituality and Catholicism. Additionally, in her intimate, sensual corporeal dancing Shelly, as Òshun, connects with Crazy Hype, who in turn signifies Legba, guardian of the crossroads, as detailed in the ‘man dem section’. This ideological representation of Òshun and Legba facilitates both Shelly and Crazy Hype’s personal transcendence and that of others. Symbolically, it conjures the opening of the gateway between the material and the spiritual worlds as Legba’s connection with Òshun, inherently signals her crossing from the spirit into the material world, thereby opening the way for other spirits to follow.

Legba and Òshun together raise contentious discourses to do with race, class, gender, and sexuality etc., at both corporeal and spiritual levels. Dancehall dancing forms part of the subversion and challenge of Eurocentric hegemonic value systems, despite the spiritual Christian embodiment of jouissance argued above. Yet, it also divides opinion between scholars, African/neo-African practitioners, and artists

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<sup>192</sup> Chapter 3 provides a more in-depth discussion of how the Supreme Being subsumes all conceptions of the Divine from Christianity and Rastafari through to Islam and Buddhism.

within the dancehall fraternity. Orville Hall and Shelly Xpressionz narrate the contention and hostility received from Jamaica's dance fraternity resulting from his suggestion that Kumina practitioners perform movements that resemble dancehall daggering. He reports:

I started linking, what was happening in dancehall to Kumina because of the kind a spiritual nature! ... I was talking about, ahmm, the movement quality of daggering, ahmm linking it with the same thing of Kumina, and she [a prominent Jamaica choreographer and scholar] was saying to me, ahmmm, "how dare I make that kind a distinction between both [Kumina and dancehall] because the intent of pur, and purpose of the dance of, of Kumina, is different from dancehall" ... I know about the difference between intent and purpose, as apposed to what resembles what ... there is just something that happens in dancehall, that when, my females go back and look at it on a video tape, they were not aware of where they went with the dance. Yu know! That is when the music, tek dem to another place.

Orville Hall, interview 2017, 0:02:55.7

This statement demonstrates that ideological representation with regards dancehall culture is still very complex and reflects the Jamaican 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1994). African/neo-African practices such as Kumina now command a level of respectability as a spiritual ritual that is now linked to notions of Jamaican nationality and cultural representation. The fact that African/neo-African practices were once regarded as low-class and therefore, low-culture (Cooper, 2004), despite their association with Jamaica's African/neo-African lower socio-economic poor, their preservation as heritage practices now theoretically elevates them to that of 'national treasures'. Conversely notwithstanding its increasing globalisation, its economic and artistic strength and its contemporary appeal, dancehall remains decidedly low-culture in the perception of many. This is due, in part, to its continued association with Jamaica's poor, but more so, the slackness and violence trope bestowed on it by Jamaica's uptown 'brown-ruling-class' who currently fail to recognise the spiritual potential within dancehall culture.

### ***8.9 Artistically expressing the evocation of African/neo-African and orthodox spirituality.***

In defiance of Eurocentric hegemonic value systems many dancehall dance practitioners such as Cojo Hotfoot, Crazy Hype, Dance Xpressionz, Ding Dong, Global Bob, John Hype, Stacia Fya, Taz Timeless and others recognise the spiritual resonances between dancehall and African/neo-African practices, including Myal, Kumina, Revivalism, Jonkonnu, and others in their own performance. Shelly and Crazy Hype artistically express the connection of the spirit and material worlds through dance, as their sensuous and/or sexual corporeal engagement evoke the African/neo-African spirits within the dancehall space. Cojo Hotfoot observes the evocation of Kumina in dancehall's pelvic articulation, stating:

... as I said, the Kumina is, the movement of the waist, the pelvis. So dancehall should still have that waist, like that heavy waistline and pelvis movement. Once yu move from out of that form, yu not doing dancehall, yu doing something else.

Cojo Hotfoot, interview 2017, 0:06:45.6

The resonances between dancehall and Kumina are clear in this observation. Similarly to this and Hall's earlier comparison between Kumina and daggering, what can be classed as the kinaesthetic reproduction of dancehall's 'couple up', or 'daggering' movement was witnessed within my auto/ethnographic observations of a Kumina session in Dumfries, St. Thomas back in 2010. Although the intent and purpose of the Kumina dance event differs from that of most weekly dancehall sessions, nevertheless, the resemblance and phenomenological reading of the kinaesthetic movements within the coupling action of both forms are easily discernable. The Kumina records from my participant observation field-notes demonstrate the similarities between the ritual and the artistic expression of coupling up:

The singing was the main stay for a large part of the [Kumina] event, before a dark skinned female elder with short, straight permed hair, a

red satin corset type top and black shorts entered the space, and immediately started to dance, “inching” (contracting and releasing the toes to pull her along), negotiating her way around the musicians to complete a circle. Others joined in, filing behind her in a single line, both individually and in couples. The men tended to dance with their pelvis pushing forward to connect with the women, who tended to use the “Congo” [one foot flat and the other raised on the ball] and the basic Kumina step [feet flat inching along side by side], their pelvises pushed back in order to allow connection with the men. At times, the males would thrust and “break” [a momentary freeze] to the drum breaks [slaps] ... instantly reminiscent of the “dagging” action in dancehall. At times, couples would dance on the spot, both facing each other, or with the male facing the woman and the woman facing away, her pelvis pushed back, with the female pelvis rotating and the male pelvis moving laterally in Kumina fashion, pushed against the female.

Patten, field-notes 2010

The presence of many young people due to the youthfulness of the deceased, may have accounted for the lines being blurred between Kumina as an African/neo-African practice and Kumina facilitating contemporary artistic *self*-expression as part of the ‘Nine-night’ celebration of life. Yet, there were enough senior Kumina specialists upholding the integrity of the form. I interviewed one singer who has sung for both the late Imogene ‘Queenie’ Kennedy and Kumina Queen ‘Miss Bernice’ Henry, who led much of the singing that night. I continued to note:

One female danced with a male dancer, holding onto the steps and entrance to the house of the deceased, the male thrusting against her whilst maintaining the Kumina action. She then lifted her right leg, bending the knee, and hooking it around his waist, [she] “lock him” (grip[ping] or hold[ing] onto somebody ...). Throughout the dancing and drumming, rum was constantly used both spewed (sprayed) orally as libation, and[/or] drank by the musicians ...

After some time of dancing and numerous musician changes, the songs began to change, some of them were no longer sung in Jamaican patwa, but used “nation language” (the language spoke by Kumina initiates, believed to be Congolese) ... the female who had been dancing at the deceased’s door ... suddenly became possessed and went into [the] Myal state. Her sister quickly held her around the waist, using a red cloth (a red top), whilst a young woman in a pink top held her hands and the two of them started to dance, opening and closing her arms diagonally, on alternating sides ... a young man decided to try

and dance with her ... as he tried to thrust his pelvis forward towards her, she grabbed him and they danced in a wrestling type action, as if the spirit was angry. She pitched [pushed] him from side to side, he tried to hold her, but her sister maintained control of her centre, holding her waist with the red cloth. Eventually ... letting her go, the spirit continued dancing through her, her sister following close behind ... [she] enter[ed] the deceased's room through a back door ... She moved in a rolling type action on the bed before getting up and raising the rum bottle in the air flashing or splashing the rum all over the room and the observing crowd. Suddenly she dashed it (threw it) down to the ground, as the crowd turned and ran the flying glass splintered. She then dropped back down on the bed ... exhausted!

Patten, field-notes 2010

The daggering type coupling action of the pelvis thrusting forward and back within the Kumina space is identical to that described above in the engagement between Shelly Xpressionz and Lil Ville, Shelly Xpressionz and Crazy Hype, or the young lady in the black sequined dress sporting the ice bucket with her chosen partner. As an auto/ethnographic point, these coupling up performances are all representative of those witnessed performed within numerous dancehall events. Within both the dancehall and the Kumina session, the same kinaesthetic action results in dancers transcending, albeit with supposedly different intentions and purposes, as well as differing degrees, levels and depths of the myal state being attained. Yet, they transcend nonetheless.

Thereby, I contend that through artistic expression dancehall dancers conjure the re-memory of enslavement, colonialism and other traumatic events and experiences, re-playing them out whether ideologically, or physically. Artistic expression facilitates the evocation and conscious transcendence into the myal state, Beckford's 'enchantment' (2014). During 'myal/enchantment' African/neo-African healing rituals through artistic expression assists the attainment of smadditisation and jouissance. Thus, artistic expression facilitates the individual's experiencing of the Divine.

Orthodox spirituality manifests within the conjuring process, as part of dancehall's functioning in creating the feelings of communitas, identity and agency, shared between dance artists, as explored in the 'early vibe' section. In their inspired

and inspiring corporeal performance of dance, a dancer's transcendence becomes increasingly apparent as their corporeal articulations are markedly acknowledged and/or classified as extra-ordinary, which commands special attention and observation by others.

### ***8.10 Physical fulfilment***

The physical fulfilment of the evocation and/or conscious manifestation of African/neo-African transcendence, takes place at varying levels of the myal state. Individuals forcefully transcend within the coupling section, as Shelly Xpressionz's engagement as part of a trio with Lil Ville and Cutie Xpressionz illustrates. If Shelly ideologically symbolises Òshun, then Lil Ville represents the conjuring of the spirit of Shango. Associated with multiple female deities, the sharp dynamic daggering action of Lil Ville's pelvis, reads artistically as his 'enchantment' (Beckford, 2014) or transcendence into the myal state and Shango's spiritual power. Thunder and lightening are the material signifiers of Shango and are discernible in the performance of sharp, angular shoulder and/or torso 'breaks' (punctuated accent movements), articulated to the rhythmic musical pulse of the Nigeria, Yoruba Bata drums. Bata breaks may be executed with any body part as long as the sharp dynamic movements replicating thunder and lightening in response to the drum breaks are reproduced. Hence, it is totally conceivable for Bata breaks to be read through Lil Ville's pelvic action.

As Shelly and Cutie Xpressionz – *bend over touching the ground, their derrières up in the air [and] Lil Ville moves in and proceeds to dagger each in turn* – his sharp, quick movements replicate the energy of lightening. This is exhibited in the speed and precision of Lil Ville's movement execution. The evocation of Shango's power also stems from his – *impeccable timing, [as] he jumps between the females, delivering single and double bump dagger(s) to each.* – Timed to and accentuated by the 'sonic cues' between the recorded riddim and the Selector's directive voice, the inextricable link between Bata dance and Bata drumming is reproduced. Despite the shift in emphasis, now focusing on the corporeal dance breaks, the continuity between the music and dance remains unbroken, as in the African/neo-African ritual context.

The females – *brac[ing] themselves, wining, shaking or rocking their pelvises in-between each interaction* – serve to conjure the individual African/neo-African spirits linked to and represented within each movement style articulated by their pelvises. Beckford contends, ‘culture carries the potential to mediate the numinous’ (2014 p.128). Crazy Hype acknowledges this within his dancing and affirms, ‘Yeah man, the music a lead yu man, the music a drive yu, the music tek control’ (Crazy Hype, interview 2017, 0:31:43.6). What both scholar and artist articulate in different ways is the fact that culture has the ability to lead individuals to, and reveal the Divine, through its creative outputs.

Beckford cites Rudolph Otto in delineating a tripartite approach to experiencing the numinous, comprising of 1. *Mysterium*, conveying a sense of difference and ‘other worldliness’; 2. *Mysterium tremendum*, an overwhelming sense of terror created by ‘an overpowering religious force’ (Beckford, 2014 p.128) and; 3. *Fascinans*, the ‘experience of mercy and grace or attraction despite the fear and awe’ (ibid) of the religious force. In order for individuals to experience the numinous, culture is encoded with spiritual/religious symbolism, which, through conjure as a communication medium, must be decoded to impart meaning.

The female wearing the short black sequined dress, with a black ice bucket on her head – *daringly jump[ing] from a three to four-foot high speaker box, across a five-foot gap and land[ing] in the open arms of a male dancer* – serves to illustrate the sense of *mysterium*, the difference or ‘other worldliness’ that exhibits corporeally when the myal spirit overtly manifests within the ‘coupling up’, or daggering dance performance. This particularly features within ‘exhibition coupling’. The male dancer’s catching of the female, who immediately starts – *jerking her whole body ... as he spins her in a hundred and eighty degree turn ... her legs dangle[ing] ... as she manipulates and jerks her pelvis back and forth* – all signals her enchantment, having transformed and transcended into the myal state (figs. 21-24).





Figs.56-59 Enchanted female wearing a short black sequined dress.

In her – *[a]rching backwards ... effectively perform[ing] a handstand, whilst the male dancer daggers her ... his pelvis bump[ing] back and forth against her upside-down crotches (crotch) and buttocks in this daggering 'exhibition dance' (fig. 24) –* enchantment of the myal state, can dictate extreme, dynamic, and frequently aggressive interaction between male and female corporeal dancing bodies, as history, past and present experiences, traumas and pleasures, time and space temporarily collide in one moment. Raddy Rich gives some insight into the dancer's feelings, whilst performing exhibition coupling. He declares:

The dancers them, lif girls up, trow dem aroun' an jus, is jus all about fun. Is nuttin, nuttin to, like, nuttin to damage, the ladies. They will never do nothing to damage the ladies. Undastan? ... We trow dem aroun, we trow dem to a partna, yu kno! We, we switch girls, yu kno! is jus all about fun.

Raddy Rich, interview 2010, 0:09:38.3

Within Raddy Rich's description is a definite sense of difference, ecstasy and freedom expressed in the liberation from and transcendence of daily livity. Similarly, Shelly Belly asserts:

... when yu see Shelly Belly, jus kno seh anything possible, yu undastan? ... So, yu haffi expec anything becaus, me lif dem up [females], mi fling dem, mi swing dem, but mi careful wid dem, yu undastan?

Shelly Belly, interview 2010, 0:00:02.6

In the lifting, swinging and throwing of the female from partner to partner, the notion of *mysterium tremendum* is represented, as the playfulness of the throwing hints back to the fun, freedom and innocence of childhood ring games ‘inviting participation by triggering previous aural [and corporeal] memories’ (Jaffe, 2012 p.90). However, beneath the childhood innocence, African/neo-African practices embody historically contingent codes frequently linked to enslavement and colonialism. The gaming tradition maintained the threat and terror of discovery, and the potential weight of the oppressor’s might as many ring games and adult ‘ring plays’, as precursors to the dances themselves, conveyed encoded messages pertaining to the planning of uprisings in the African/neo-African quest for liberty. It was under the cover of dance that the Baptist wars were instigated and executed (Abrahams et al, 1983; Stewart, 2005; Hutton, 2015).

Within the dancehall space artists negotiate fascinans, the religious force radiating the ‘experience of mercy and grace or attraction despite the fear and awe’ (Beckford, 2014 p.128) of the Divine. As dancers such as Crazy Hype,  *rubs his pelvis up and down from [a female’s] ‘camel toe’ region to the top of her buttocks in incremental steps* – the Selector’s directive voice bellows like a church pastor or preacher, causing the entertainment within the dancehall space to increase in intensity. At this point a heightened energy enters the space and dancers get creative, as Ding Dong articulates:

... a riddim or, or, or a song tells my body what to do. It tells my body how to move. If, if, if you are not a dancer sometimes it will be difficult for you to undersrand, yeah? ... [S]ometimes when yu zone out and yu inna yu zone, is like de riddim a control yu body ... Yu not even know where it coming from, but it is within you from your ancestors coming down or whatever but the music just bring out dat inna yu.

Ding Dong, interview 2010, 0:23:09.0

Global Bob describes this energy and how it moves within and affects the dancehall space, sharing:

... when you si dancas get into the spirit, the spirit in the sense of, your dance moves are get[ting] aggressive, an yu si, the environment look very chaotic. An if yu go in the middle of dat you know dat you will get hit ova ... the spirits transform the dancas because its in the moment, in the heat of time.

Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:21:49.5

Detailing the physical manifestation of dancehall transcendence, he continues remarking:

... Even the dancers get into the spirit ... you wi see sometimes examples of dis, yu wi see some dancas, they climb, some high buildings, an when the spirit leave them, an they're to come down from the building, they don't even know how they got there in the first place. ... Yu have other dancas I've seen them climb into trees, an when they're to come, jump from the tree, they can't even understan how to ...

Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:21:49.5

Stacia Fya contextualises the spiritual build up within the dancehall space asserting, 'this is coming from, Kumina level, so, the ritual is still on that level' (Stacia Fya, interview 2017, 0:26:07.1). Thereby, the sense of fascinans, the experiencing of the spirit despite the fear of where it leads remains in the dancehall space, as Shelly Xpressionz reinforces, revealing:

In particular, one night we were in Spanish Town and we reach on a roof top and I don't know how I reach up there, and to come back down it was, it was hell!

Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017, 0:20:00.5

However, Hall (2017) offers a word of caution, as despite the sense of fascinans within the coupling section, dancehall dancers dance independently performing solo for the larger portion of the dancehall session. In the same manner that male and female dancers come together corporeally to mark the ‘breaks’, the snap-shot moment signalled by the musical breaks in many African/neo-African practices, dancehall dancers come together for the multiple ‘dagging breaks’, signalled either by the lyrical or musical emphasis within a track and/or the Selector’s directives. The perception of the wider society and the authorities is that coupling up is the major aspect of dancehall. Hall bemoans:

... they would link the whole dancehall session as being a dagging session when, it was maybe 15minutes out of the whole party, that this, this moment happen, but the dvd guys going to edit the video to show mostly that because that is what sells the dvd, yu know!

Hall interview, 2017 0:04:52.8

The coupling up ‘dagging’ movement, whilst it is part of the climax and culmination of many transcendent acts within the dancehall space, as Orville Hall indicates it is not the totality of dancehall culture. Like its genealogical forerunners, once dancers’ movements are identified as extra-ordinary, their classification becomes extremely subjective and ambiguous. Some observers may regard them as astoundingly creative. Others may judge them as technically skillful and daring. Still others will perceive their artistry as subversive, whilst many puritans may dismiss it as slackness. Nevertheless, I argue, a dancehall spirituality becomes manifest.

### ***8.11 Conclusion***

Within the dancehall space both covert and overt connections enable the experiencing of the Divinity of the Almighty, or Supreme Being. I have shown that through jouissance, as a temporal, orgasmic pleasure and healing process, individuals are able to come together and experience the Divine. I have also shown how individuals conjure up African/neo-African spirits or deities that through

transcendence and enchantment trigger a bricolage of experiences, histories and spiritual assistance, facilitating healing processes, leading to an experience of the numinous, whilst dancing within the many nightly dancehall sessions operating across the Kingston metropolitan area.

## **Chapter 9. Signing Off/revelation: *Findings and meanings***

### ***9.1 Introduction - A summary of the main research findings***

This chapter summarises and examines the central research findings from dancehall's 'early vibe', 'man dem', 'female' and 'coupling' sections to parse out spiritual meaning within representations of dancehall and the corporeal dancing body. Through the lens of spirituality it re-imagines dancehall as a spiritual practice addressing the three primary research questions that inform this investigation:

- *Is the spiritual worldview of African forbears reimagined within the dancehall space?*
- *Is the dancing body a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space?*
- *What spiritualities are emerging from dancehall?*

As chapter one demonstrated reggae/dancehall is under researched relating to the dancing body, what is missing is a comprehension of dancehall by way of spirituality. This chapter departs from whilst adding to the present body of dancehall knowledge in seeking to demonstrate a potential dancehall spirituality exists which sustains its participants through dance as a survival mechanism promoting spiritual upliftment, healing, smadditisation (agency) and liberation.

#### ***9.1.1. Chapter structure***

Discussing whether a dancehall spirituality is emergent and therefore meaning within representations of dancehall corporeal dancing bodies this chapter first provides a brief overview of the key themes emerging from the empirical chapters. It

will then put the emergent themes in dancehall's 'early vibe', 'man dem', 'female' and 'coupling' sections in conversation with each other demonstrating how they address each of the three research questions. Secondly, based on the findings it will focus on three key features that establish dancehall's signification as a spiritual practice. The first, Jamaican spirituality, will discuss the African/neo-African spiritual elements that have been reimagined, transferred and (en)coded within the dancehall space. The second, Christian spirituality, will similarly be discussed relating to those aspects that emerge as being reimagined, transferred and (en)coded within Jamaican and dancehall culture. The final discussion concerns the emergence of a dancehall spirituality related to both Jamaican African/neo-African and Christian spirituality, but manifests as a syncretic and distinct autonomous form, fashioned and structured both within and through the dancehall phenomenon.

This study is concerned with dancehall as a spiritual signifying practice, an aspect of dancehall that has not been seriously interrogated with regards to dance and the corporeal dancing body. This is due to the fact that: 1. Jamaican dancehall has been completely misinterpreted and approached through a Western gaze where knowledge is assigned to reason and corporeality is often dismissed or perceived as feminised (Burt, 2005), emotive, specialist and thereby difficult to read, interpret, to determine meaning beyond dance studies; 2. Reggae/dancehall has been mistakenly approached purely as an artistic expression with discourses developed in relation to its lyrical content and socio-politico-economic considerations, rather than as cultural expression retaining particular cultural (en)coding and significations; 3. Focus has only recently shifted to include dancehall dancing, emphasising individual aggrandisement as reggae/dancehall dance is increasingly commoditised rather than viewed as a group or community engagement and means to social cohesion. The potential material outcomes from this research, is a re-imagining of the black corporeal dancing body as a 'spirit body' and dancehall as a spiritual space.

## ***9.2 Dancehall analysis chapters and main research findings***

Exploring a potential dancehall spirituality in the preceding four chapters I have investigated the different features of spirituality and have shown many aspects to be

represented within the structure of the dancehall event in relation to both male and female corporeal dancing bodies. The multi Grammy Award winning artist Damian Marley proclaims, 'yu have a whole heap a dancehall music that is spiritual' (Marley, interview, 2013 0:06:14.6). This signals that social history, cultural memory, religious and cultural knowledge may be inscribed in song. I therefore argue below that similarly to songs, the embodied corporeal, sensual, historic, material, and spiritual experiences of dancehall participants are inscribed and projected through corporeal dancing bodies. However, as will be discussed below dancehall and Jamaican culture operate on a circular plan whilst academic writing is linear in form. Navigating the two has at times been difficult. Yet, it is important to highlight that in a research study focusing on spirituality, faith must be exercised and space allowed for spiritual inspiration.

### ***9.2.1 A summary of the main research findings***

In response to the research questions I coded the collected data focusing on the key words emerging from dancehall dance practitioner interviews and auto/ethnographic observations. Based on the initial research findings, sanctification, social functioning, transformation and transcendence were identified as key themes in relation to African/neo-African and Christian worldviews and were reflected in the approach of dancehall participants to the dancehall space and were thereby adopted in examining whether a dancehall spirituality exists. In chapters five-eight, analysing dancehall applying Ferdinand de Saussure's concept of 'signifying practices' (1966) I demonstrated that corporeal knowledge may be read and ascribed meanings that alter established conceptions of dancehall dancing. Detailing the dancehall space as a whole I adopted Gordon Lynch's (2005) functionalist theoretical framework consisting of: a) a social function; b) an existential/hermeneutical function; and c) a transcendent function.

In chapter five, the 'early vibes' section was approached as the sanctification of the dancehall space from which two key findings emerge. Firstly, in describing dancehall's structure the findings reveal the dancehall session to consist of multiple cycles that replicate both the birth to death life-cycle and spiritual cycle. Secondly, the



key resources and roles within dancehall's 'early vibes' were demonstrated as facilitating what I coin dancehall 'ritual paraphernalia', the existential/hermeneutic resources of religion providing a praxis based mode for participants to direct and live their lives.

In chapter six dancehall's '*man dem section*' two further key findings are revealed. First, dancehall is evidenced as representing religion's 'social functioning' as through corporeal dancing bodies moving en masse dancehall establishes the heightened, intense sense of social cohesion and kinship called 'communitas' (Turner, 1969) as the catalyst for spiritual transcendence. The second key finding is the 'spot-light' through which dancehall becomes a 'signifying practice' (de Saussure, 1966) as corporeal dancing bodies ideologically and/or physically illuminated occupying the dance-floor spiritually signify through dance as the gateway or intersection where communication between the mortal and spiritual worlds take place.

Chapter seven, the '*female section*' reveals religion's 'transcendence function' linked to transformation as key dancehall findings. Transformation is the first finding demonstrated as manifesting corporeally both physically and psychologically leading to transcendence. The second finding, individual transcendence is evidenced through female wining, revealed to be a spiritually transcendent act connected to the circle motif linking contemporary expression with historical African/neo-African themes and practices.

Dancehall's '*coupling section*', chapter eight further substantiates transformation and transcendence through a further two key findings. Firstly, 'coupling up' revealed to be a subversive resistance against hegemonic morality is evidenced as a continuity of the intimate dancing that manifests within all Jamaican popular dance forms going back beyond Mento and enslavement. Secondly, coupling, through the lens of jouissance (Norman, 2008) is demonstrated to be a cathartic healing process facilitating 'conjure' (Beckford, 2014), the evoking of African deities through corporeal dancing bodies transcending into full myal state as 'spirit bodies'.

### ***9.2.2 Spirituality chapter review***

Addressing the impossible task of defining spirituality, in chapter three I explored spirituality from four main perspectives: 1) Jamaican spirituality; 2) Christian spirituality; 3) Spirituality as a broad set of practices and belief systems; and 4) Spirituality in relation to dance and the corporeal body. This comparative approach assisted in identifying the key themes on which notions of spirituality have been established to inform the nature of any emergent dancehall spirituality. I shall now discuss the findings from the preceding empirical chapters to demonstrate if and how the spiritual worldview of African forbears is reimagined within the dancehall space. This will assist the second and third tasks of determining whether the dancing body is a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space, and what spiritualities are emerging from dancehall.

It is important to reiterate, as mentioned in chapter three, that any attempt to define spirituality is akin to trying to define life itself and would therefore undermine and limit the intricacies of an emergent dancehall spirituality. Moreover, as A. D. Appea (in Braffi, 1990) suggests, each individual has their own unique interpretation and comprehension of spirituality even if they share the same belief system, religion, culture, family, or shrine. Thereby, this is not an attempt to define spirituality, but to foreground the complexity of reggae/dancehall, whilst demonstrating that an evolving ‘dancehall spirituality’ may exist.

### ***9.3 Findings discussion***

The question as to whether the spiritual worldview of African forbears is reimagined within the dancehall space may be substantially answered by exploring what a ‘dancehall spirituality’ might consist of. Assessing the findings across the four empirical chapters some of the main words, ideas, and themes dancers interviewed frequently used to convey the important elements of dancehall are: culture and lifestyle; music, riddim and song; DJ/Singjay artists and Selectors; dancers, groups, crews, and squads; competition and antics; vibes and energy/hype; fashion and sexual/sensuality; community and unity; garrisons and survival; African/traditional and spiritual; smadditisation and upliftment; stress release and freedom.

Each of these words assists to advance a new framework for the establishment of ‘dancehall spirituality’ as the re-establishing of an embodied Jamaican spirituality that confounds both existing dominant and oppositional narratives within contemporary Jamaican society. The evidence indicates that dancehall spirituality institutes itself as a syncretic spiritual phenomenon, which is predominantly African/neo-African, but incorporates to a lesser degree Christianity and postmodern approaches to spirituality. Ultimately, I argue that dancehall spirituality provides a framework through which its participants attempt to reinstate individual smadditisation or agency and freedom, secured through the validation and ‘emancipation-fulfilment’ (Beckford, 1998) of the collective community, through corporeal dancing bodies becoming ‘spirit bodies’.

### ***9.3.1 Jamaican African/neo-African spirituality***

Having examined different approaches to spirituality, in mapping Jamaican spirituality it was found to comprise of a predominantly African foundation, but incorporated many features from Christianity. A substantial finding was the fact that most indigenous African practices seem not to distinguish between the spiritual and the religious, the sacred and secular, the spirit and the material worlds, as many indigenous scholars endorsed in chapter three (Mbiti, 1969; Idowu, 1973; Ajayi, 1998; Babawale and Alao, 2008). What was also apparent is that for numerous indigenous practitioners religion and spirituality are regarded as synonymous with both terms therefore used interchangeably. The same is demonstrated as true with regards most Jamaican African/neo-African spiritual practices in chapters two and three.

Equally important is the finding that African/neo-African practices, despite small variations, have been shown to manifest a cosmology structured around belief in a ‘Supreme Being’, whether referenced as The Creator, the Almighty, ‘Maasa God’ (Revivalism), or ‘King Zambi’ (Kumina)<sup>193</sup>; the dual spirit and mortal/material

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<sup>193</sup> For a more detailed context of the African/neo-African use of terms for the Supreme Being see: ‘Maasa God’ (Chevannes, 1994, p. 22 – 23), ‘King Zambi’ (Lewin, 2000 p.224). Although I have not accessed any recorded Jonkonnu terms for God directly, its incorporation of myal and Gumbay makes

worlds; a spirit community occupying three realms comprising of the heavenly host, the earthbound spirits, and the ground spirits<sup>194</sup>; humankind, responsible for maintaining harmony between the spirit world, humanity and nature (animals, plant-life and inanimate objects) (Schuler, 1980; Seaga, 1982; Ryman, 1984; Chevannes, 1994; Lewin 2000; Warner-Lewis, 2003; Stewart, 2005).

This cosmology has been established as being very similar to that of Haitian Vodou, Cuban Yoruba, and Bahian Condomblé and by extension the Vodun systems of Benin, and Yoruba practices of Nigeria (Deren, 1991; Desmangles, 1992; Daniel, 2005). Likewise, in chapter two, Emeka C. Ekeke and Chike A. Ekeopara (2010) identify the Christian cosmology as being the same as most African practices, but applying different names to the spirits and the spiritual realms, although they serve similar functions.

### *9.3.2 Spirituality as life*

Addressing whether the spiritual worldview of Africans forbears is reimagined within the dancehall space specifically I have shown in chapters two and three that spirituality from an African/neo-African perspective is integral to life itself. Hence, dance is incorporated within the cultural identity manifested by a particular individual or group as part of their everyday activities and functions of life. This is evidenced and foregrounded in the life-to-death celebrations that underpin their humanity (Idowu, 1973; Mbiti, 1985; Uzukwu, 1997). African spirituality is therefore the connection between the individual and their kinship community, those within both the material and spirit worlds. This worldview has been passed down by African forebears and became a continuity maintained by people of African/neo-African origin in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

The religious practices of Africans are therefore played out in the dances that form the life to death celebrations and festivals of its people (Mbiti, 1985), reimagined within Jamaican African/neo-African religious practices such as Jonkonnu

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it highly likely that Jonkonnu practitioners would adopt 'Maasa God' or even 'King Zambi' in solidarity with their local African brothers and sisters in reference to God.

<sup>194</sup> The spirit community comprise of deities, divinities, or 'lesser gods', equating to Christianity's archangels, angels, saints and prophets. See: (Seaga, 1982; Lewin, 2000; Stewart, 2005).

masquerade, Kumina, Revivalism and many others, as demonstrated within chapters two and three. The reimagined dance vocabulary within Jamaican African/neo-African practices have manifested and are further reimagined within the dancehall space. This is eloquently conveyed in an informal interview with a forward thinking Episcopal Priest I call MAJ (maintaining his anonymity). MAJ declares:

Growing up in Jamaica during the early 70s for me, the dancehall music served the purpose of uniting the people, it was a healthy diversion, it was a reflection of the culture, it was a challenge to the political system and even to the religious system. It became a prophetic voice, in my view.

MAJ, interview 2010, 0:01:03.0

This supports the notion that dancehall culture provides an alternative spiritual approach for many of its participants, similarly to those who have already replaced formal or orthodox religions with sport or what many Christians may regard as secular ritual practices. Whereas sport conceived as religion fulfils religious social functioning, as explored in chapter six, it does not pursue a connection to the divine or a conception of God, as Bain-Selbo and Sapp (2016) highlight. Club culture, approached as secular religion, enables participants to strive for social cohesion and the achievement of a transcendental state. But St John (2011) and others have emphasised a reliance on the use of pharmacology (recreational drugs) for an attainment of the desired mind-altering state amongst a large percentage of participants. However, as demonstrated in chapters five to eight dancehall both implicitly and explicitly retains the notion of divine intervention and is therefore not reliant on pharmacology for transcendence. Moreover, as many secular ritual practices focus on the ‘turn to self’ (Heelas, and Woodhead, 2005) where individual advancement becomes ‘ultimate concern’ (Tillich, 1959), despite the prominence of self-aggrandisement and smadditisation, dancehall practitioners have been evidenced as exemplified by M.O.B dancers<sup>195</sup> and Dance Xpressionz<sup>196</sup> to give primacy to the unification of the greater material and spiritual community.

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<sup>195</sup> See: (Chapter 6, sections 6.3 and 6.8.5)

<sup>196</sup> See: (Chapter 6, sections 6.3; chapter 7, section 7.5.5)

MAJ's statement also demonstrates how dancehall participants have reimagined the functions of the African/neo-African practices within contemporary dancehall culture. Importantly, this signals that for African/neo-African people spirituality through dance is fully functional. It actively promotes a unified social cohesion between the spiritual and material communities affirming the role of culture, whilst promoting praxis-based approaches against oppressive forces. Crucially, dancehall spirituality is affirmed here as offering healing, hope, direction, thanksgiving and liberation through dance for the survival of its participants, as I have demonstrated in chapters five-eight. I now shift focus to the dance itself.

### ***9.3.3 Dance and spirituality***

In chapter seven, I demonstrated the African perception of the arts as representing life itself and the central positioning of dance within artistic expression. This was revealed in chapter two by African scholars such as Albert Mawere Opoku, who determines dance to be 'the fullest expression of the African Drama' (1970, p.4). Similarly, in chapter seven, from a Jamaican perspective Revival leader Bishop Reid declared the power of dance, acknowledging, 'it is deliverance; it is life' (Reid, in Smith, 2006 p.65). Within the dancehall context the legendary dancer John Hype proclaims, '[d]ancehall is part of life, cause (because) many people survive t'ru (through) dancehall' (John Hype, interview 2017, 0:03:35.3). These testimonies and those of other practitioners and scholars show the centrality and reimagining of dance and its function within African life and in turn dancehall culture.

The concept of dance representing life itself has been substantiated in the central role dance occupies within spiritual practices as discussed in chapter three. This continuity is evidenced here as having been reimagined from spiritual dance practices on the African continent such as Adzogbo (Ghana), Gule Wamkulu (Malawi/Zambia) or Bata (Nigeria) discussed in chapters four-eight, through to Jonkonnu, Revivalism, Kumina and other Jamaican dances that sustained African/neo-African forebears during enslavement and colonialism, as discussed in chapters six-eight.

In chapter two, the development of Mento, Ska, Rocksteady and Reggae as popular Jamaican dance forms preceding present day dancehall have all been revealed

to have spiritual underpinnings. This indicates the long trajectory of dance connected to concepts of spirituality providing healing, upliftment and freedom for African/neo-African people. This demonstrates a discourse in which dance functions effectively not merely as enjoyment, although it certainly fulfills that role, but also in the African/neo-African mode as a spiritual means towards ‘unify[ing] dance, music, and worship’ (McCarthy, 2007 p.79). Dance therefore reflects both the life-cycle and the spiritual cycle within most African/neo-African societies in the upliftment of marginalised Jamaicans, particularly those of African origins.

#### ***9.3.4 Collective worship/reverence***

In focusing on dance corporeality is necessarily foregrounded as the body is the tool through which dance is manifested. Thereby the relationship between corporeal dancing bodies and ‘gesture’ (Uzokuwu, 1997), as discussed in chapter seven, is what communicates meaning through repetition, revealing cultural identity, whilst manifesting cultural (en)coding. In chapter two, Nii-Yartey demonstrates cultural (en)coding by referencing Ghana’s Asante people and their use of solemn spiritual dances as ‘worship and collective prayers’ (2013, p.413). Mbiti’s notion that, ‘[w]herever the African is, there is his religion’ (Mbiti, 1969 p.2), reinforces my conception of dance as ‘collective worship’ through the lived nature of African spirituality. As humanity is responsible for maintaining unity and balance between the material and spiritual worlds the centrality of dance may be read as collective worship.

Jamaican Revivalism and Kumina, both feature dance as the central means of collective worship. Within Christianity, Pentecostal churches also practice collective danced worship as part of their evangelical services, which Austin-Broos suggests, amidst testimonies and choruses serve to entertain and ‘draw unbelievers’ (1997). Yet, Yong and Alexander (2011 p.96) present a more praxis based (en)coding of collective danced worship as demonstrating ‘an expression of life that resists the dehumanizing effects of [white on black racist] violence’. As demonstrated in chapter two, Jonkonnu is a spiritual practice, which scholars have only recently recognised as being an African/neo-African religious dance expression, whilst also communicating

masked<sup>197</sup> resistance against oppression.

Jonkonnu's mistaken secular dance classification serves as an example of its Jamaican reimagining, omitting its public corporeal spiritual (en)coding for its survival during enslavement and colonialism. Thereby, Jonkonnu may now be reimagined and (en)coded in line with its genealogy of masquerade practices as a form of collective worship. Yet dancehall's reimagining of Jonkonnu movements is foregrounded in Fredrick 'Tippa' Moncrieffe's assertion, '“*Worl*’ [World] *Dance*” and “*Police Man*” is the same move yu kno!’ (2010, 0:12:02.3). This validates not only the reimagining of the movement, but its transference of spiritual (en)coding from the African/neo-African ritual ground to the dancehall space, along with its embodied corporeal meanings. Ironically, ‘*Worl*’ *Dance*’ signifies a free, relaxed, easy movement, whilst Jonkonnu’s ‘*Police Man*’ character signifies fear, incarceration and containment, particularly amongst women and children.

The role of dance has been shown in chapter two to be crucial to the re-memory (Henry, 2002) of cultural knowledge (Sklar, 1991), ancestral data (Stines, 2005), cultural memory (Buckland, 2001), and ancestral knowledge, manifesting African continuities within Jamaican African/neo-African and contemporary practices. Hence, within practices such as Jonkonnu masquerade, Revivalism (both Zion Revival and Pukkumina) and Kumina dance rituals, their reimagining of African dance vocabulary is evidenced in continuities that signify back to Africa, whilst being reinterpreted, repurposed, and (en)coded within Jamaican dancehall contexts.

John Hype’s ‘*Pon Di River, Pon Di Bank*’ as a global dance hit known by most dancehall participants represents an African continuity demonstrating the collective worship Victor Turner (1969) terms ‘*communitas*’, as discussed in chapter six. However, whilst the sense of *communitas* is dependent on individual bodies occupying dancehall’s liminal space, collective worship also accommodates those outside the space who may participate at a distance. This is demonstrated by informal sellers such as the jerk pan seller, the taxi man and passers-by who dance to one or two tunes before continuing about their business. Importantly, collective worship incorporates the spirit community whose involvement are ‘*conjured*’ (Beckford, 2014), easily evoked to facilitate healing and assistance through corporeal dancing

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<sup>197</sup> The notion of masking is earlier outlined. See: (Chapters 2, 6 and 7).



bodies' transforming and transcending in the myal spirit to become 'spirit bodies'.

In chapter seven, Shelly Xpressionz' explanation of dancing and 'get[ting] so laas (lost) in the routine' (interview 2013, 0:32:52.0), demonstrates the power of collective worship, particularly in her disclosure that 'there are certain songs that play in dancehall that, when they play, yu (you), is like a different kind a (of) spirit tek yu over (takes over you) all together' (Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017, 0:12:23.2). Conversely there are those for whom dancehall is purely about enjoyment and relieving life's pressures. Raddy Rich, discussing the power of Jonkonnu and Kumina drum riddims in dancehall remarks, 'dancehall, it doesn't, give you that spiritual feeling, but, dancehall, it make yu feel happy. It, it, take away stress' (interview 2010, 0:01:28.3). The focus on dancehall's provision of enjoyment, fun, and joy for many represents those taken away by 'd.e.l.i.g.h.t, the delight of dance', to use a phrase by Jamaican choreographer Jackie Guy a former member of Jamaica's National Dance Theatre Company.

Dancehall practitioners, like their Jonkonnu and other African/neo-African counterparts, employ masking techniques where the full intent and purpose of a dance is not openly revealed to all. Yet many dancehall practitioners interviewed openly admit to borrowing from the African/neo-African practices in creating new dancehall steps, giving them an African vibe within their dance. This important finding is demonstrated in chapter six by dancehall artist/dancer Ding Dong's acknowledgment of the African use of dance across all aspects of life and dancehall's adoption of them in commenting, '[I]ot a de (the) dances dem weh (that) we do in dis (this) time, is connected to those [African] dances, with we not even knowing dat (that) we doing it' (Ding Dong, 2010, 0:21:00.4). This demonstrates recognition by artists that their movements may be passed down ancestrally, as (en)coded 're-memories' (Henry, 2002).

In chapter six, the self-titled dancejay Cojo Hotfoot speaks of a 2002/3 dancehall riddim that had resonances with the Revival church rhythm to which dancers performed Revival movements. One of the movements recounted was the 'Shankle Dip', which whilst demonstrating he remarks, 'yu know how those people behave when, in a Revivalist church!' (Cojo Hotfoot, interview 2017, 0:00:13.1), thereby reinforcing dancehall's religious underscoring. This evidences both a

conscious and subconscious reimagining and (en)coding of Jamaican African/neo-African dance vocabulary within the dancehall space, based on cultural knowledge (Sklar, 1991), ancestral data (Stines, 2005), and ancestral knowledge, shared through collective cultural memory (Buckland, 2001). Likewise, Taz Timeless in interview (2017) connects dancehall wining with that of the Revivalist ‘gyrating’ of his grandmother. In relation to these findings I argue that dancehall has a spiritual dimension that is evidenced corporeally, but has not been recognised and acknowledged by many outside the dancehall genre.

### ***9.3.5 Dance facilitating transformation and transcendence***

As shown in chapters five-eight, the main function of dance, music, and the corporeal dancing body in the majority of Africa/neo-African practices is the facilitation of divine communication with the ‘Supreme Being’, or stated differently, pursuit of ‘ultimate concern’ (Tillich, 1959).<sup>198</sup> As discussed in chapter two and three, the material and divine engagement is mediated through the ‘myal possession state’ manifested during dance.<sup>199</sup> Yet, discussed in chapter seven, myal transcendence as Stines (2005) rightly argues is distinct from the trance state, as the former state requires active involvement whilst the latter suggests a passive engagement.

The ‘myal state’ has been shown to be a dynamic facilitator of divine communication with the spirit community providing psychological and physical healing, ‘teachment’,<sup>200</sup> strength and power, as acknowledged by African/neo-African practitioners within Jonkonnu, Kumina, Revivalism and some Pentecostal churches (Barnett, 1979; Bilby, 2007; Ryman, 1984; Lewin, 2000; Seaga, 1982; Smith, 2006; Hutton, 2015; Austin-Broos, 1997; Stewart, 2005; Beckford, 2006). Hence, Sterling Stuckey’s comment that enslaved Africans created ‘a form of spirituality almost indistinguishable from art’ (in Ramdhanie, 2005 p.10) is worth re-emphasis here.

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<sup>198</sup> Ultimate concern is the organising principle at the centre of the life of most individuals, as interpreted by Kelton Cobb (2005).

<sup>199</sup> Clinton Hutton writing on the Morant Bay uprising 1865 makes little specific reference to Myal by name, it is clear that Myal is implicitly included within what Hutton calls ‘feeding rituals’ and thus was used alongside Obeah, which supports the notion of the two being polar ends of one complex. See: (Hutton, 2015).

<sup>200</sup> See: (Chapter 3, section 3.4.3).

The Acom dance of the priests and priestesses of the Asante people (Ghana) discussed in chapter two, is a spectacular example of ‘myal’, involving the manifestation of ancestral spirits both corporeally and through oration, whilst involving acrobatic gestures as part of the dance. Discussed in chapter seven, and established above, although ‘gesture’ (Uzukwu, 1997) incorporates repetition as part of the (en)coded identification of the people or nation originating a particular dance, importantly, it is also through repetition that transcendence into the myal state is shown to occur. Thereby a feature of spiritual dances is repetition of movement to induce the descendent myal spirit to facilitate the dancers’ ‘performing [of] acrobatic feats’ (Lewin, 2000, p.178). This is reimagined and replicated in the dancehall space, as Hall’s (interview 2017) description of Shelly Xpressionz’ tree climbing myal experience evidences in chapter eight.

Shelly Xpressionz’ explanation of her own character when dancing, is that of a climbing spirit. She pronounces, ‘when them seh, "Which girl that up there so!" Is me. I love to climb’ (Shelly, interview 2017, 0:12:23.2). This suggests that the myal state enhances the normative state of dancehall dancers enabling individuals to do extraordinary things they would not and could not do in their normative state. This demonstrates that dancehall facilitates psychological shifts, producing altered states of consciousness in which the normative barriers and fear factors are removed or significantly reduced during dance.

#### ***9.4 Christian spirituality***

In addressing whether the Christian spiritual worldview is reimagined within the dancehall space, in chapter three the Oxford English Dictionary’s (OED) two definitions of spirituality were explored. The first, offered an open, personalised interpretation, whilst the second definition focused on religion as the organisational structures within which spirituality is situated. Spirituality in both definitions was shown to be similarly vague facing the ‘New Age’<sup>201</sup> spirituality risk of being perceived as selective ‘spiritual shopping’ (Foster, in Olupona, 2008 p.xx). Converse

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<sup>201</sup> Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead (2005) provide a good insight into ‘New Age’ also termed ‘alternative’ or ‘holistic’ spirituality in their exploration of what they state as the ‘spiritual revolution claim’ (2005 p.x).

to African/neo-African spirituality, most Christian scholars made a clear distinction between spirituality as devotion and religion as a structural framework (Price III, in Brown, 2010). It was also clear that Christian spirituality must involve belief in a transcendent God; human devotion towards cultivating the relationship between God and humanity; a spirit community; spiritual texts; sacred symbols and spaces; and a universal set of common or core aspects. It was also found that a hierarchal structure exists which privileges Western perspectives of spirituality, thus Christianity is perceived as the pinnacle of spiritual religious practice, representing multiple denominations.

Chapter three further discussed, Christianity's approach to religion and spirituality as predominantly a devotional pathway to an external energy or force referenced as – God, the 'Supreme-Being', Jehovah, the Almighty, the Creator, amongst multiple other names. Due to its focus on the relationship between God and humanity, Christianity places minimal emphasis on human corporeality, which is problematized by the elevation of reason over corporeality (Hood, 1990; Ajayi, 1998; Boisvert, and Daniel-Hughes, 2017). This inherent bias within Christianity was foregrounded in feminist and womanist theory, which highlights the privileging of the mind over the body as undermining notions of equality in relation to gender, race, class, and sexuality (Ruether, 1993; Douglas, 1999; Pinn, 2009; CERCL Writing Collective, 2017). Hence, Christianity was shown to exert patriarchal power over 'Othered' bodies.

Christianity's separation of reason and corporeality negatively impacts non-white races, particularly Jamaican African/neo-African people in relation to this research. As I state elsewhere:

Black bodies are produced in relation to place and defined by a dominant culture that negates their agency.

Patten, 2016 p.99

Definitions of black bodies often assign them to passion, enabling the exertion of power over black corporeality by white supremacists as demonstrated in early

writings on the introduction of Christianity to the Caribbean (Morrish, 1982; Abrahams and Szwed, 1983; Stewart, 1992; Stewart, 2005). Kelly Brown Douglas's identification of 'White cultural rhetoric' (Douglas, in Pinn, 2004 p.354) as constructing both an over-sexualised and hypersexual image of Black people is evidenced as being completely valid. Power and control of the body perception of a people determine their attitudes toward self-development as exemplified by the 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1994) exhibited in the Jamaican engagement of Christianity discussed in chapters two and three. The fact that many African/neo-African Jamaicans presently still hold public formal membership in the orthodox religions, but maintain private informal relations within African/neo-African religious practices (Chevannes, 1994 p.20) demonstrate spiritual double consciousness. As foregrounded in chapter three this reflects class-based attitudes towards involvement in African/neo-African religious practices, frequently perceived as heathen and un-Godly by the uptown ruling-classes.

Yet, the reimagined spiritual worldview of Africans has infiltrated Christianity, instituting alternative modes of ministry and representation through music (Austin-Broos, 1997; Pinn, 2003a; Beckford, 2006; Hodge, 2010; Farquharson, 2016). The findings demonstrate this in the development of 'dancehall gospel' as a whole new musical genre, discussed in chapter five. Inscribed by race and viewer prejudices black bodies, particularly dancing bodies, are shown to have become 'canvases of representation' (Stuart Hall in Hall et al, 2005 p.474), as discussed in chapter four. I evidence the body as 'canvas' in dancehall's physical, visual manifestation, which creates and displays (en)coded culture, creating community and kinship, whilst subverting the Western gaze in chapters six-eight. Many African/neon-African Jamaicans institute oppositional resistance through cultural expression, fortified by the concept of Christ's incarnation, offering a redemptive reminder to African/neo-African Christians and dancehall participants that as material beings all humans represent the embodiment of the Supreme Being (Genesis 1:27).

Anthony B. Pinn also clarifies, 'God in the human gives the human ontological importance' (Pinn, 2009 p.23), which reflects the Rastafarian notion of 'I and I',<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Chevannes (1990), Nettleford and Salter (2008), and Morgan (2014) all provide explanations of the term I and I, which signifies God in all (human kind), you and I, or you and we, as a sign of humankind's Godliness.

God residing in the individual as presented in chapter five. The implication is therefore clear; the body through cultural expression offers alternative ways in which spirituality may be read. Yet, despite this reconciliation of the body and reason, Christianity nevertheless represents for many African/neo-African Jamaicans the pursuit of a transcendent God, predominantly presented through the Eurocentric gaze as Caucasian, mediated by spiritual texts, sacred symbols and spaces, and core themes projected as universal. Christianity as an institutionalised organisation is therefore seemingly incompatible with Jamaican dancehall culture.

However, the conception of spirituality as ‘ultimate concern’ (Tillich, 1959) is shown in chapter two and four to provide an alternative approach relating to the inherent beliefs, values, and religious concerns contained within cultural production as embodied in dancehall’s ritual paraphernalia. Thereby, Fredrick de Saussure’s (1966) signifying practice provides an alternative route through which dancehall culture’s engagement with Christianity is mediated and read. The Christian notion of the Holy Trinity is the mode through which many African/neo-African concepts are reimagined to enable African/neo-African people to engage Christianity by way of the Holy Spirit, prioritised over the Son, as a means to accessing the Father (Chevannes, 1994). Thereby, albeit to a lesser degree than African/neo-African practices, the movement of the Holy Spirit is foregrounded by African/Jamaicans engaging the Baptist, Pentecostal, and other charismatic religions (Austin-Broos, 1997; Butler, 2005; Yong and Alexander, 2011).

Through ultimate concern, it is not only the Holy Spirit that offers a means for African/neo-African Jamaicans and dancehall participants to engage Christianity. Christian existential/hermeneutic resources are reimagined and (en)coded with African/neo-African signifiers, particularly through proverbs and biblical quotes, providing dancehall’s ritual paraphernalia through which many of Jamaica’s poor attempt to organise and live their lives. Robert Beckford’s (2006) adoption of a ‘dub’ approach to the convergence of church hall and dancehall employs ‘mission’, ‘recognition’, and ‘praxis’ as interfaces to deconstruct theology and the black church to transform and reconstruct religious doctrine by way of music. Thereby Beckford’s use of cultural expression as ‘**spiritual** warfare’ and ‘**spiritual** weaponry’ exemplifies the use of Christian existential/hermeneutics to instigate and implement spiritual,

socio-economic and cultural change for the upliftment of the poor, as shown in chapter three. Yet Beckford stops short of exploring the corporeal dialogue that may harness the cultural, social, political, and ultimate liberation potential that takes place in the inextricable connection between corporeality and music. Dancehall ritual paraphernalia includes dance to facilitate the manifestation of ‘spirit bodies’ evidenced within dancehall spirituality in chapters five-eight.

### ***9.5 Dance and the corporeal dancing body***

Spirituality is highly dependent on performative action in its manifestations as the corporeal body is the main conduit through which spirituality is mediated from an African perspective. Spirituality is a process in which an external energy or force enters the individual, causing them to negotiate control over their own corporeality. Biblically, King David’s dance (2 Samuel 6:14-16) demonstrates the centrality of artistic expression within spiritual worship. Spirituality requires the personal physical and emotional surrender of one’s will in the ecstatic expression of joy, in praise of the ‘Supreme Being’. The corporeal body ritualised in dance and music expresses an active subversion of Western values through the Holy Ghost Spirit, as signifier of God residing within humanity and humanity representing an extension of God. This bestows on the body a level of importance.

The ability to transcend to the myal state is a prerequisite for most high-level African/neo-African spiritual posts. Myal is achieved through dance within the dancehall genre, facilitating ‘feelings of ecstasy, or being transported outside of the self in rapturous contemplation of the divine’ (Delgado de Torres 2010 p.3). Donna P. Hope articulates dancehall ecstasy as, ‘spiritual rituals of self-affirmation and renewal’ (2006a p.128). Yet, Global Bob in describing his own experience of dancing asserts, ‘in terms of my body, I completely leave my body an (and) enter into a spiritual realm’ (Style and Bob, interview 2017, 0:33:49.6). Thus, spirituality necessarily involves bodily manifestation of the ancestral spirits or deities through the temporary displacement of the spirit of a living human being via the myal state (Deren, 1953; Lewin, 2000; Daniel, 2005; Ryman, 2010; Patten, 2016; Patten, 2018). As demonstrated in chapters six-eight, corporeal dancing bodies during artistic

expression become spiritual conduits, dancehall's 'spirit bodies'.

### ***9.6 'Dancehall spirituality' an emergent spiritual practice***

The question concerning whether the spiritual worldview of enslaved Africans is reimagined within the dancehall space may be answered through a discussion of the overall structure of the dancehall session/event. Having auto/ethnographically followed the general format of the dancehall session a significant research finding is that the structure of most dancehall sessions replicate and reimagine both the human birth to death life-cycle, and the spiritual cycle within Jamaican African/neo-African and Christian religious practices. On the basis of the findings arising from the data analysis, in drawing together the common features analogous to Jamaican African/neo-African and Christian spirituality outlined above, I shall also attempt to set out an approach to a potential 'dancehall spirituality', conceptualising the dancehall event as a ritual space.

#### ***9.6.1 Sanctification***

From the fieldwork data gathered exploring dancehall spirituality, dancehall is shown to draw heavily on Jamaican African/neo-African spirituality, being similarly integral to the life of its participants with dance and music also being central modes of artistic and spiritual expression. Notably the 'early vibe' section, approached as the sanctification of the dancehall session or event, is demonstrated to function as such on multiple levels, from the transformative cleansing of locations, the careful and correct placement of ritual resources, to the setting up of the sound system set and speaker boxes, serving to define dancehall's ritual space.

Whilst the 'man dem section' demonstrated dancehall's social functioning, with the 'female' and 'coupling' sections representing the transformation and spiritual transcendence taking place within the dancehall space, this sectionalised approach is incompatible with dancehall's flow in reality. The sectionalised approach was adopted purely to assist the reader to more easily comprehend the different components of the



dancehall session. In reality, significant overlapping and blurring occurs between each of the social and spiritual elements comprising the dancehall genre. The multiple layers of spiritual symbolisms dancehall potentially represents operates within each section throughout dancehall events. Thereby, in discussing dancehall spirituality it is necessary for me to reconnect many of its elements and move quite fluidly between the component elements.

Sound system-crew members, dancers and academics highlighted the importance of the ‘early vibe’ sanctification set up of the sound system (set), the quality of sound, and the music policy in establishing dancehall’s hyped spiritual vibe (Stolzoff, 2000; Seaga, 2004; Henriques, 2008; Stanley-Niaah, 2010). Through a spiritual lens the sound system set fittingly institutes the ‘centre post’, or ‘seal’, signifying the spiritual centre of the dancehall space, discussed in chapter six. Hence, the dance space is established directly in front of the sound system set. Orville Hall’s explanation of dancers positioning themselves directly in front of the Selector, or ‘[i]n his direct line of sight’ (Hall, interview 2017, 0:26:25.0), evidences the sound system’s representation of dancehall’s spiritual centre, the ‘seal’, as well as the inextricable link between music and dance, an embodied and reimagined continuity from dancehall’s African/neo-African genealogy.

Despite scholars including Stanley-Niaah (2010) presenting dancehall as a ‘liminal space’ (Turner, 1969) and subversion of hegemonic hierarchy, the mere establishing of prime positions amongst dancers demonstrates a re-establishment of hierarchical structures. Furthermore dancers view themselves and are perceived hierarchically. The legendary John Hype describes himself as, ‘the heritage and the prestige of the dancing’ (interview 2017, 0:01:27.8), whilst Crazy Hype remarks, ‘I could say that I’m the danca (dancer) ... in dancehall that have done, the biggest ting internationally’ (interview 2017, 0:01:33.8). Braggadocio, linked to ‘smadditisation’ (Mills, 1997) is a confirmed part of dancehall culture.

The inextricable embodiment of music by dancehall corporeal dancing bodies is apparent as a key finding throughout this research. Henriques (2008) highlights the technical ‘fine tuning’ of music frequencies and body penetrating sonic dominance, whilst Selector Camar ‘Fire’ Reeves foregrounds the importance of creating the correct vibe as, ‘[d]e dancer dem react affa (the dancers all react to) certain songs, ...

certain riddim gi yu (give you) a vibe' (interview 2010, 0:03:46.1). Dancers such as Dansa Bling affirm, 'Yu (you) go inna di (inside the) club [or street party/session] an the vibes alone, as yu reach yu kno seh, yu know (as you arrive you know that, you know), tonight di (the) dance a go mad!' (interview, 2010). Bling's comment foregrounds the spiritual energy most dancers are quick to sense on entering the dancehall space and the important intensity of feeling, energy and vibes, dancehall music facilitates. This demonstrates that dancehall riddim must penetrate and disrupt participant's corporeality to engender emotion towards spiritual upliftment on entering the dancehall space.

I have shown in chapter five that dancehall's sanctification goes beyond the physical transformation of common space and place in the temporary establishment of dancehall's ritual ground. Stolzoff (2000), Stanley-Niaah (2010) and Henriques (2011) each explore different aspects of dancehall's transformation of location. Stolzoff's (2000) in-depth ethnography through the lens of the music production industry and the sound system crew provides accounts of the growth, development, and socio-political transformation of Jamaican and dancehall culture. Yet despite the inextricable link between dance and music Stolzoff makes little reference to dancehall dance although I have evidenced written accounts demonstrating the motivating impact of dance on each era of Jamaican popular music (O'Brien Chang, and Chen, 1998; Bradley, 2000; Ryman, 2003; Seaga, 2004; Hebdige, 2007). Importantly, the thick descriptions produced from the auto/ethnographic observations and interview data all evidence the centrality of dance in dancehall's development.

Stanley-Niaah's (2010) investigation of dancehall foregrounds its extension and transformation of private and unorthodox alternative spaces as a geographical ritual space. Critical to this research, in focusing on the birth to death celebrations dancehall facilitates, she does not pursue dancehall as 'a call to Spirit and the ancestors' (2010 p.90). Conversely, employing observation, interviews, and discussions with numerous dancers I have demonstrated dancehall's manifestation of spirituality engaging ancestral data (Stines, 2009) and ancestral knowledge. Henriques' *Sonic bodies* (2011), is a really detailed and technical analysis of how dancehall music affects the body and manipulates its internal structure in transforming it into a corporeal echo chamber. However, dancehall's corporeal potential is not fully realised as the

transcendent corporeal reverberations through which the material and spiritual worlds potentially collide is left unexplored by Henriques. Yet the musical control of the corporeal dancing body is a recurring theme articulated by dance practitioners such as Ding Dong, Crazy Hype, Stacia Fya, Orville Hall, Shelly Xpressionz and others.<sup>203</sup>

### ***9.6.2 Dancehall ritual paraphernalia***

The ‘early vibes’ section not only involves the transformation of the dancehall space as part of the sanctification process, but also establishes reggae/dancehall as replacing the existential/hermeneutical function (Lynch, 2005), what I coin, ‘dancehall ritual paraphernalia’, normatively facilitated by formal religions, as discussed with regards Christianity in chapter three. Dancehall dancing and its associated performative and symbolic features observed during this research, function as ‘dancehall ritual paraphernalia’. Drawing Christianity’s existential/hermeneutic resources together with Revival ‘iconography’ (Smith, 2006) and incorporating the ‘thematic repertoire’ (Cooper, 1993), ‘dancehall ritual paraphernalia’ contains the shared indigenous worldviews that enable the (en)coding and decoding of Jamaican cultural symbols outlined in chapters three and six. Inclusion of the associated activities within dancehall’s informal economy such as, food and drinks, complete dancehall’s ritual paraphernalia function.<sup>204</sup> As chapter five evidences, many elements of dancehall’s ritual paraphernalia are continuities reimaged from Jonkonnu, Kumina, Revivalism, and other African/neo-African spiritual practices, alongside aspects of Christianity, Pentecostalism in particular. Altogether, dancehall becomes an embodied signifier of genealogically (en)coded knowledge and meaning-making through which individuals make sense of their world.

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<sup>203</sup> See: appendices 1, 3, 5, 7, and 13.

<sup>204</sup> Amongst the many elements that function as ritual paraphernalia are: the dancing bodies; the dances and antics; culture; music – riddim and songs; ritual objects – the sound system set, the video-light, lighters, mobile phones, flame throwers, drinks bottles, ice buckets, bling-bling jewellery, and so forth; myths; sartorial dress; masquerade/masking; language; the centre-post (usually ideological); the spot-light; locations; visual imagery; and informal economies – food, drinks, confectionary/knick-knack sellers, taxi drivers, and the use of herbs (adopted from Rastafarian practice) as part of the cleansing procedures, and the building of communal or social cohesion.

### ***9.6.3 Physical and psychological corporeal transformation***

Transformation has been demonstrated to occur within the dancehall space physically, psychologically and ideologically in chapters five to eight. The ideological transformation of street youths, middle and low-level workers into dancehall dancers, groups, crews, and squads, flossers,<sup>205</sup> artists, sound system crew-members etc., is beyond the scope of this research, although an important area for further research.<sup>206</sup> Nonetheless, Taz Timeless's first tour to Japan aptly exemplifies the psychological adjustments dancers face:

... dem introduce mi an mi deh pon di stage, di amount a Japanese people weh mi si a, a, a, a raael fi mi an put up dem han! Mi haf, mi haffi really stop an seh to mi self seh, 'Yow! "A me dis? Di likkle yute weh a come from one likkle community a Jamaica now, a likkle ghetto, inna one likkle board house, a me dis? Deh right yasso?"

... they introduced me and I am on the stage, the amount of Japanese people I saw a, a, a, a shout for me and raising their hands! I hav, I had to really stop and wonder to myself, 'Yow! "Is this me? The little youth coming from a little community in Jamaica now, a little ghetto, in a little boarded house, is this me? Right here?"

Taz, interview, 2017, 0:24:12.5

Taz's experience evidences the 'psychology of stardom' (Hickling, 2009) explored in chapters seven and eight and the fact that psychological transformation goes hand in hand with the dancers' physical transformation as performers. In chapter seven it was shown how female transformation is established through sartorial dress in the careful construction of dancehall identities and performative behaviours. Dancehall females skilfully negotiate profiles and livelihoods as dancers, Dancehall Queens, models, entrepreneurial women, and 'auxiliaries (designers, beauticians and vendors)' (Fullerton, 2017). Conversely, physical transformation in relation to male corporeality has been less well documented.

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<sup>205</sup> Flossers are the male high visibility patrons who along with the Modellers, set dancehall's sartorial fashion. See: (Hope, 2006a; Bakare-Yusuf, 2006).

<sup>206</sup> For an in-depth analysis of dancehall masculinity see: (Hope, 2010; Ellis, 2011; Philogene Heron, 2012).

Hope's (2010) exploration of dancehall masculinity identifying five key approaches is to date the most extensive investigation into dancehall male corporeality. Although the sartorial male transformation has not been a focus within the scope of this research, Hope's (2010) 'fashion ova style' was noticeably the most prominent of dancehall masculinities. However, as evidenced throughout this thesis, the sartorial transformation and daring of dancehall participants have occurred in the pushing of normative masculinity into a transgressive 'masking', which connect with African/neo-African spiritual masquerade traditions as demonstrated in chapters six and eight. Dancehall's stylistic flamboyance has been recorded and evidenced by multiple scholars (Bakare-Yusuf, 2006; Hope, 2006a; Hope, 2010; Stanley-Niaah, 2010; Ellis, 2011; Philogene Heron, 2012). Dancers in articulating their wearing of tight pants and close fitted clothing argue it is necessary for the production of clean dance lines. This demonstrates a 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1994) Western influence where concepts of clean-lines inherently reference a classical ballet aesthetic, whereas most African/neo-African dances emphasise feeling, timing and riddim, often attempting to connect to ancestral knowledge as evidenced in chapters six-eight.

#### ***9.6.4 The circle and/or cycle motif***

The research findings evidence that the structure of many dancehall sessions consist of multiple cycles, essentially replicating the human birth to death life-cycle, and the spiritual cycles within many Jamaican African/neo-African, and Christian religious practices forming dancehall's genealogy explored in chapter two, five and six. These cycles underscore the worldview of most Jamaicans of African/neo-African origin as Ryman (2010) and Stanley-Niaah (2010a) have shown. In chapter five the multiple cycles within the dancehall session, is clearly demonstrated by Hall's (interview 2010) reference to the 'sectionalised' nature of dancehall events, which breaks down into the four main sections represented by the preceding empirical chapters, the 'early vibe', 'man dem', 'female' and 'coupling' sections, as affirmed by dancehall participants and scholars interviewed.

Dancehall opens a whole discourse on circularity. Fredrick ‘Tippa’ Moncrieffe’s delineation of the Selector’s repetition of musical riddims developing mini playlists or musical cycles repeated with multiple track changes in creating each of the four sections identified by the empirical chapters, Hall’s sectionalised structure, reinforces both the circular and cyclical themes within the dancehall session. It also demonstrates the importance of ‘repetition’ (Uzukwu, 1997) to cultural/ethnic identity and African/neo-African continuity (Alleyne, 1989; McCarthy, 2007). As discussed in chapter seven and above, the symbolism of repetition linked to gesture establishes modes of moving that for Uzukwu (1997) represent group identity, or cultural expression. Importantly, the use of repetition, despite variation existing in each repetition both singularly and in ‘call and response’ (antiphonal) mode can induce transcendence (Alleyne, 1989; Hyman, 2012).

Repetition is shown to underscore notions of ritual, whilst both the aesthetic and symbolic importance of the circle is demonstrated as being reflected in the repetition of the circular action recognised as dancehall ‘wining’ and other core dance actions in chapters five and seven. Dance embodies a major part of African/neo-African existence and the circle is of key symbolic importance within African dance. Alphonse Tiérou (1992) emphasises the centrality of dance in African culture and its ‘depend[ence] on the circle, the symbol of life which is both spiritual and temporal’ (1992 p.36). The circle is acknowledged as the rejuvenation and renewal of life in its historical and spiritual connection to the waistline and its circling pelvic action, which I demonstrate to be central to Jamaican popular culture in chapters six-eight. This is further evidenced through the reimagining of the circular pelvic wining action mapped from pre-enslavement Mento dance through to the ‘rent-a-tile’ (White, 1984) coupling of Rocksteady and Reggae to its (en)coded prominence within dancehall’s circular wining.

The findings also evidence the corporeal dancing body’s diverse circling and/or undulation as replicating the circle’s signification of ‘perpetual motion and completeness of being’ (Nii-Yartey, 2016 p.3). The circle is clearly prominent within dances such as the ‘Bogle’, ‘Nuh Linga’, and ‘Gully Creepa’, analysed in chapter six, alongside many other dancehall dances including, ‘Dutty Wine’, ‘Stookie’, and the

spinning action of ‘Tek Weh Yusef’. These dances all have resonances with African/neo-African practices such as Yanvalou (Haiti), Vodou (Benin), Mbalax (Gambia/Senegal), Kumina (Jamaica), and Adzogbo (Ghana), where the circle remains an important spiritual symbol. Dennis O. Howard's contention that, ‘[c]ircularity is an essential component of Jamaican cosmology’ (2016 p.xxv), affirms dancehall’s reimagining of the circle. Mervyn Alleyne strengthens this continuity asserting:

... the circle is central to the conceptual framework of the Jamaican worldview ... the corpus of dancers move in the circle (as we have seen) and the gyrating hips of the individual dancer carve a circular pattern.

Alleyne in Howard, 2016 p.xxv

The circling progression of dancers and their ‘gyrating hips’ all demonstrate the aesthetic and symbolic centrality of the circle motif established across chapters six-eight. Within dancehall dancing the prominence of the *douplé* position’s relaxed knee stance, the slight forward tilt of the torso and bent elbows all provide further evidence of circular aesthetic representations being a continuity reimagined and (en)coded from African/neo-African practices (Tiérou, 1992; Nii-Yartey, 2013; 2016). Devoid of beginning or end, the circle is demonstrated to be a unifying and stabilising symbol and continuity within dancehall. In chapter six the circle is reinforced as a key finding by Stacia Fya Edwards’ psychological and corporeal response to hearing the dancehall riddim, to ‘immediately, kick into ... win[ing] up yusef (yourself)’ (interview 2017, 0:19:23). This indicates that ancestral knowledge leads the holistic, spatial, and corporeal entanglement of time during dance. Thus, dancehall spirituality enables participants to make sense of their African/neo-African experience, as Cone (2010) advocates black liberation theology does for black experiences.

### ***9.6.5 Transformation and transcendence***

Approaching the '*man dem section*' as dancehall's religious 'social functioning' (Lynch, 2005), the findings demonstrate that through groups of two or more individuals engaged in dance, '*communitas*' (Turner 1969) is generated. This was shown to represent a spiritual connection between dancehall participants on multiple levels, initiating low level transcendence progressing into the '*myal state*', as discussed relating to African/neo-African transformation and transcendence above. Although discussed in relation to male corporeal dancing in chapter six, *communitas* is not a gendered phenomenon. The kinship feelings ingrained within *communitas* was also shown to be experienced in the interactions between the man dem, male and female and female only dance interactions.

Ramsay Burt proposes, 'dance functions as an expression of community and shared cultural values', (Burt, 2005 p.161), which Brenda Dixson Gottschild aptly articulates stating, 'Danced religion and dancing divinities reside in African[, Caribbean] and African American history as well as in the Africanist collective memory (2003 p.224). This is certainly evidenced within most dancehall events in the ecstatic feeling of *communitas* and collective worship generated by mass dancing. Whilst, collective worship may begin with *communitas*, '*conjure*' (Beckford, 2014) is the process through which the full *myal state* is demonstrated to be evoked, facilitating communication with the spirit world through corporeal dancing bodies transcending into '*spirit bodies*'. The onset of *myal conjuring* is often observed within dancehall's female section in their competitive engagement of each other. Conjure would most certainly be evident in the female '*liberation rituals*' (Cooper, 2004), and '*communication rituals*' (White, 2003; Wright, 2004) discussed in chapter seven. Although Cooper, followed by Wright/White initiated the fertility and liberation discourse within dancehall, they have not progressed it beyond the discourse of sex and sexuality, as this research has attempted. Thereby, the temporary spiritual healing facilitated by *myal transcendence* of corporeal dancing bodies into '*spirit bodies*' is an important and crucial research finding and feature of dancehall dancing.

Within the research findings Stacia Fya and Shelly Xpressionz affirm the idea of spiritual transcendence within dancehall culture. Shelly Xpressionz confirms certain songs as causing 'a different kinna spirit [to] tek yu all togedda (a different



kind of spirit takes you over all together)’ (Shelly Xpressionz, interview, 2017, 0:12:23.2). The inextricable nature of music and dance, raised once again, cannot be overestimated in conjuring and evoking (Beckford, 2014) the manifestation of *communitas* and the *myal* state, causing dancehall corporeal dancing bodies to transcend. Thereby, ‘spirit bodies’ facilitate healing, the passing of messages of hope, upliftment, and ‘teachment’,<sup>207</sup> between the spirit and material worlds.

#### ***9.6.6 Dance, music and transcendence***

In chapter six, dancehall riddim was shown to be an important and key element in generating feelings of *communitas* and full *myal* transcendence. As I record elsewhere:

Submerged in ‘sonic dominance’ (Henriques, 2003), ... participating bodies often transform during the intense dialogue between music and movement that takes place within the reggae/dancehall space.

Patten, 2018 p.172

The volume, intensity, and vibration of dancehall music, is crucial to the depth of feeling and embodiment dancers experience. For example, strong lyrics remain dependent on a ‘bad’ (good) intense riddim because, as Hall states, ‘if it is not placed on a riddim that, goes into the system [the body], then the dance move is not created’ (Hall, interview 2010, 0:37:09.9). Hall suitably evidences the impact of music on dance through the ‘Gully Creepa’, proclaiming:

When you listen to the riddim, of 'Gully Creepa', an look at the dynamics of the dance, yu realise ... that was not because of the lyrics, that's purely because a di riddim

Hall, interview, 11.08.2010, 0:37:09.9

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<sup>207</sup> ‘Teachment’ represents knowledge from the spirits. See: (Chapter 3, section 3.4.3 and note 113).

This underscores the spiritual connection in the corporal engagement of music, as sonic dominance is a requirement because the musical riddim must be felt as well as heard to give the dancer the vibe. The riddim must penetrate and enter the corporeality of the dancer. An embodiment of the material and spirit world, alongside that of nature, facilitates the connection of history through the African/neo-African forms, whilst reality manifests in the expression of present day experiences. Hence, Gully Creepa represents modern day experiences, drawing on re-memory (Henry, 2002) in the reimagining and (en)coding of the Haitian Yanvalou, ‘conjured’ (Beckford, 2014) by the dancer’s corporeal embodiment of the music.

Based on the research findings, the evoking of African/neo-African spirits within dancehall culture is evidenced by dancers such as Cojo Hotfoot, Ding Dong, Global Bob, Orville Hall, Shelly Xpressionz, Stacia Fya, Raddy Rich, Taz Timeless, and others who acknowledge the borrowing, transferring and (en)coding of African/neo-African spiritual movement vocabulary by themselves and/or others in the dancehall space. Tipapa’s comparison between the ‘*Worl Dance*’ and Jonkonnu’s ‘Police Man’ dance is a prime example of dancehall’s cultural reimagining. Dancers, such as Cojo Hotfoot, Global Bob, and Raddy Rich amongst others verbally denied the idea of dancehall being a ritual (which Global Bob links to witchcraft), but later provided corporeal examples of African/neo-African spiritual ritual movements within dancehall.

Orville Hall, Shelly Xpressionz, and Global Bob, recount examples of artists like male dancer Shelly Belly’s<sup>208</sup> climbing of high buildings ‘an when the spirit leave them, an they’re to come down from the building, they don’t even know how they got there in the first place’ (Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:22:52.9). This demonstrates the myal spirit at work within the dancehall space. Hall’s describing of spiritual resonances between ‘Gully Creepa’ and the Haitian Yanvalou dance, or the spirit manifesting during Shelly Xpressionz’ myal experience, climbing and hanging upside down in a tree, echoed by a similar incident described by Global Bob, and resonating with my own auto/ethnographic observations at a Kumina session, reinforces the manifestation of the myal state within dancehall.

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<sup>208</sup> Shelly Belly’s myal transcendence has been cited in conversation by multiple dancers. See: Appendix 10.

Equally, dancers like Crazy Hype, John Hype, and many of Dance Xpressionz also indicate and evidence Christian spiritual influences within dancehall. John Hype remarking, '[e]very day, di almighty God is wid us, a fi him spirit. So if mi inna di dancehall it de de' (John Hype, interview 2017, 0:38:31.3), underscores the spiritual belief dancehall practitioners transfer and (en)code within the dances they perform in the dancehall space. The Christian reimagining and (en)coding is doubly reinforced by dancers creating spiritually themed dance movements such as '*Praise the Lawd!*' by Crazy Hype and '*So Rifical*' by the Rifical Team, not to mention the Christian themes deliberately incorporated into performative actions and gestures in dancehall culture.

The inclusion of Christian features within dancehall spirituality is inevitable because, reiterating Global Bob's earlier assertion, 'the people who attend dancehall are God fearing people ... when songs play of such nature [gospel and/or dancehall gospel] ... everybody can relate, to what the songs are saying' (Global Bob, interview 2017, 0:20:37.0). This demonstrates not only the prevalence of signifiers to Jamaican cultural memory (Meusburger, et al, 2011) built into the dancehall genre, but the ability of its participants to accurately (en)code and decode its spiritual themes (Hall, in During, 2001).

### **9.7 Conclusion**

As explored in chapter two, most Jamaicans have been raised to approach the Supreme Being or the Almighty, as 'numinous' (Otto, 1923), the experiencing of Divine energy. Therefore the Holy, is accepted as 'mysterium tremendum et fascinans' (being both dread filled, and enthralling greatness). John Hype's reminder that the spirit of each individual 'a fi him spirit' (is the Almighty God's spirit) (interview, 2017, 0:38:31.3), demonstrates the African/neo-African approach to spirituality as being an inextricable part of life. Hence, dancehall dancing provides a ritual space and a means of attaining spiritual transcendence and healing through the myal state. This inherently focuses on the experiencing of the 'Divine', or 'ultimate concern' (Tillich in Cobb, 2005), the 'Supreme Being' (Mbiti, 1985).

This chapter set out to discuss spiritual meanings within representations of the corporeal dancing body within the dancehall space in relation to the research questions. Foregrounding the central findings from the research data, I have demonstrated that the emergent themes in dancehall's 'early vibe', 'man dem', 'female' and 'coupling' sections relate to each of the three research questions. Veteran DJ Adija 'Vybz Kartel' Palmer scribes, 'Though a lot of us who are dancehall professionals may have a definition, it does not really matter because that will be superseded by what *Society* says Dancehall is' (Palmer, and Dawson, 2012 p.122). I have attempted to give voice to dancehall dancers and participants in this thesis. Focusing on Jamaican spirituality, it has discussed the African/neo-African spiritual elements alongside Jamaican Christian spirituality and their reimagining and transference of (en)coded meaning within the dance vocabulary in the dancehall space. Finally, I explored the conception of an emergent dancehall spirituality related to both Jamaica's African/neo-African and Christian spiritual practices but as a distinct synthesis as a spiritual signifying practice.

Based on the research findings what is demonstrated is that dancehall ritual grounds offer a space within which dancehall participants commune, experience liberation and ultimately the Divine. Thereby, this space frequently forms an amnesty space for warring neighbourhood and/or garrison area members and a haven for others. Within the dancehall space, dancehall spirituality facilitates the dancer's embodiment of the African/neo-African and Christian cosmologies, combining history, trauma, joy, pain, the material and the spiritual communities between which dancehall corporeal dancing bodies gain the freedom to '[l]et the music take control' (Crazy Hype, interview 2017). Thereby dancers 'get lost' (Shelly Xpressionz, interview 2017) in dancehall's sonic dominance (Henriques, 2011) and transcend into the myal spirit to become dancehall 'spirit bodies'. Thus dancers transform and transcend through what many of them articulate as their God given talent or gift.

I therefore contend that the spiritual worldviews of African forbears are reimagined within the dancehall space. Hence the dancehall corporeal dancing body is a vessel for the transference of spiritual (en)coding within the Jamaican dancehall space. Thus a dancehall spirituality is emerging that represents the re-establishment of a particular Jamaican spirituality, which confounds existing dominant and oppositional

ideas. Reggae/dancehall achieves this by establishing itself as an African/neo-African spiritual phenomenon within which individual smadditisation, liberation and agency is secured as part of a collective validation.

## **Conclusion Chapter. Dispersal – *recommendations***

### ***Thesis rationale***

This thesis brings together the theoretical concepts from theology and religious studies, dance studies, and cultural studies in exploring the role of the corporeal dancing body in the construction, performance and performative actions of dancehall participants and their engagement of dance in what has emerged as ‘dancehall spirituality’. As articulated in chapter four, the inspiration for this thesis arose from observing the ecstatic expression of a sister at a Mighty Diamonds concert, displaying ‘as if she, “catch the spirit”’ (Patten, 2016 p.102). Although I noted her response at the time, I did not pursue it. Whilst I began this thesis with a description of my sudden transformation from the Jamaican dancehall setting to a Ghanaian spiritual ritual decades later, it was only when tasked with trying to ground spirituality in addressing Jamaican cultural expression that I connected the two incidents. Together they marked the significant resonance between the functioning of dancehall culture and African spiritual rituals.

In summarising and drawing this thesis to a conclusion, Jamaican dancehall has not only been demonstrated to be underscored by an embodiment of the spiritual worldview of African forebears reimagined through Jamaican religious practices, but also an alternative way of life in which corporeal dancing bodies become vessels through which the transference of spiritually (en)coded movement vocabulary occurs manifesting an emergent ‘dancehall spirituality’. Thereby, I reject the slackness and violence discourses surrounding dancehall scholarship at the outset of this research as the primary interpretation of the dancehall genre. Despite the perception of dancehall held by many outsiders to the genre being that of a deliberate ideological shift from the cultural and spiritual philosophy of the Rastafarian associated ‘roots rock reggae,’ (Stolzoff, 2000) this thesis has demonstrated the contrary to be true.

This final conclusion draws together the empirical data collected through participant observation field research, informal interviews and ‘reasonings’ (talks/debates) with dancehall practitioners and culture bearers to address the central

role of dance within dancehall culture. I reveal how identity, smadditisation, survival and freedom are constructed and negotiated through the intersection of religion, culture and popular culture (Lyden, in Lyden and Mazur, 2015) in the transformation of corporeal dancing bodies through transcendence into the ‘myal spirit state’ of possession to become dancehall ‘spirit bodies’. I will also assess key findings from each of the empirical chapters in demonstrating the original contribution this research brings to the disciplines of theology and religious studies and dancehall scholarship.

### ***Summary of Thesis structure***

In concluding this study I want to summarise the chapters, drawing out the two-part structure of this thesis. Part one, consisting of chapters one to four, provide the contextual background to Jamaican popular culture generally and reggae/dancehall specifically. Part two, consisting of chapters five to nine, focuses on the dancehall space, the corporeal dancing body, and its signification of meaning within time, space, and place.

In establishing the socio-politico-economic aspects of dancehall culture, in chapter one, amongst the main discourses to emerge through the mapping of dancehall culture and dancehall scholarship, was the theme of slackness and violence. Yet, dancehall is demonstrated in this thesis to be a subversion of the hegemonic structures reflecting Jamaica’s Eurocentric historical legacies of enslavement, colonialism and the ensuing oppression African/neo-African Jamaicans faced in their wake. Hence, in chapter one I have shown dancehall dancing bodies to represent an alternative, cognitive, subversive, oppositional, resistance to this embodied historical corporeal and psychological trauma.

The African/neo-African and European roots and routes of reggae/dancehall’s embodied spiritual coding is mapped through its ‘genealogical’ antecedences, which reflect the intersection of the African and Jamaican dance classificatory systems outlined in chapter two. This revealed and underscored Jonkonnu masquerade to be a spiritual rather than a secular practice. I thereby argue that Jonkonnu masquerade should be reclassified as a spiritual core form. Importantly, this realigns Jonkonnu’s functioning with that of its African masquerade and masking antecedences, despite the

noted European influenced characters that assisted in facilitating its secularisation.<sup>209</sup> Thus, I further contend that dancehall represents a contemporary continuity of Jamaican masking techniques through which cultural expression facilitates a protected platform for the socio-politico-economic issues of poor marginalised and oppressed African/neo-Africans to gain a voice in resistance against their oppressors. Like reggae before it, dancehall amplifies the voice of the oppressed by giving it a global multi-media platform.

The transcendent myal state of possession identified and outlined in chapters one and two, is evidenced within Jonkonnu, and is also maintained, reimagined, transferred and masked across most African/neo-African practices. Thus, I conclude that by extension the transcendent myal state is also (en)coded within the African/neo-African dance vocabulary transferred to the dancehall genre and thereby dancehall itself. This demonstrates that despite the trauma of the ‘middle passage’ slave-ship crossings (Smith 2011), African forebears transferred, reimagined, and re-embedded their cultural expression and spiritual practices within their daily livity in Jamaica and other diaspora destinations.

In chapter three, working towards a definition of spirituality and its parameters unlike Western concepts of spirituality, Jamaican African/neo-African perspectives like most African worldviews positioned spirituality as a central and integral part of life. No distinctions were made between spirituality and religion, the sacred and the secular, or the spiritual and the material worlds. Jamaican spirituality was thereby demonstrated to comprise of African/neo-African, Christian, and postmodern secular religious practices and/or features. Furthermore, due to its facilitation of the myal state the central role of dance is explicitly evidenced within the worldview of African/neo-African practices such as Jonkonnu masquerade, Revivalism, Kumina and other Jamaican forms establishing dancehall’s genealogy.

Similarly to African/neo-African practices, formal charismatic Christian religions such as Pentecostalism and the Baptists are demonstrated to overtly engage dance as part of their worship services to encourage the working of the Holy Ghost Spirit. Conversely, Anglicans, Catholics and other formal religions attended by

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<sup>209</sup> Sylvia Wynter (2015), Sheila Barnett (1979) and Laura M. Smalligan (2011) all provide in-depth descriptions of Jonkonnu and the European influences incorporated within its form.



Jamaica's uptown ruling classes<sup>210</sup> infrequently employ carefully chosen, modern contemporary, or classical dance as entertainment, but do not engage or regard it as a mode of accessing the Divine. Thereby, I conclude that the use of dance to accompany and underscore humanity's major life-to-death celebrations within Jamaican spiritual religious practices is a continuity that has been reimagined, transferred, and (en)coded predominantly from African/neo-African and charismatic religious practices within dancehall spirituality, as demonstrated and discussed in chapters five to nine.

It is important to note that Christian approaches to spirituality, although projected as universal, convey and maintain European cultural perspectives and thus, in many respects are often in opposition to African/neo-African approaches, particularly relating to the incorporation of cultural expression. I am therefore in agreement with scholars who have evidenced Christianity as being mediated through an African/neo-African lens within Jamaican spirituality generally and dancehall spirituality more specifically.

In presenting my methodological approach chapter four functioned as the bridge between the contextual historical chapters and the empirical chapters focusing on the hidden meanings embodied within dancehall's signifying corporeal dancing bodies. This facilitated a critical reflection, serving to clarify the black African/neo-African focus on corporeality and dance within this thesis. Thus despite the hours and months of reading, observing and analysing of fieldwork diaries, video footage, written data, research findings and theoretical approaches, like many prior dissertation writers I have had to omit large passages of the work covered in narrowing the scope of this research to a manageable size. An example is embodiment theory.

Having spent almost five months reading around the work of scholars such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2002), Anthony B. Pinn (2010), Adesola Akinleye (2012), Angela Pickard (2015) and others, due to embodiment being comprehended quite differently in theology and religious studies to its conception within dance studies, it was impossible to retain the full extent of the dance studies theory. It became necessary to narrow down much of the dance perspective concerning embodiment

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<sup>210</sup> For an ideological explanation of 'uptown'/'downtown' class distinctions see: (*Introduction chapter*, note 3).

theory in order to accommodate the other theories that underpin this thesis. Likewise, issues of gender, transgression, and sexuality as well as the growth of Japanese dancehall were all areas researched and considered in contextualising Jamaican dancehall within its wider diaspora. Much of the work omitted could quite easily form the basis of further research related to various areas of the dancehall genre, which will be highlighted within the concluding recommendations section.

The second part of the thesis comprising chapters five to eight, is summed up and discussed in detail in the preceding chapter nine, therefore I shall provide just a brief elaboration on some key elements. In exploring and analysing the layout of the dancehall space, chapter five demonstrated the establishing of the temporary dancehall ritual ground through dancehall's 'early vibe' section, representing the sanctification of the dancehall space, and its physical transformation of common space and place. This builds on dancehall's locational transformations and corporeal impact formerly explored by Stolzoff (2000), Stanley-Niaah (2010) and Henriques (2011). I further reveal dancehall's main objects and functionaries to represent its 'ritual paraphernalia', that is, the existential/hermeneutic that underscores the ways in which dancehall practitioners organise and live their lives, which reinforces the conception of the dancehall space as a ritual ground.

Investigating the social functioning of the dancehall space, drawing on the notion of 'communitas' (Turner, 1969) chapter six, evidenced community cohesion to be a key component of dancehall culture. I therefore argue that dancehall be recognised and read as a 'signifying practice' (De Saussure, 1966), as dancehall is replete with new, alternative, (en)coded and reimagined meanings and connections. Dancehall's plethora of (en)coded signs and symbolisms facilitate the reading of its hidden danced and performative meanings as corporeal 'remembering' (Covington, 2008), 're-membering' (Henry, 2002), 'cultural memory' (Meusburger, et al. 2011), 'cultural knowledge' (Sklar, 1991), and 'ancestral data' (Stines, 2009). These elements I contend collide in the formation of what I call 'ancestral knowledge'. Hence, ancestral knowledge is a catalyst by which dancehall participants attain the low-level, first stage transformation and transcendence within communitas, demonstrating its subversive oppositional resistance to Jamaican hegemony.

Moving beyond the first transcendent stage of social cohesion, the transformation of dancehall participants from their normative selves in ‘let[ting] the music take control’ (Crazy Hype, interview, 2017) to progress and transcend into the full myal state was demonstrated in chapters seven and eight. Thereby I conclude that the myal state facilitates feelings of liberation, smaddification, healing and the ecstatic experiencing of the Divine, through the powerful communication that takes place between the spirit community and individual corporeal dancing bodies.

Drawing on the contemporary theorisation of ‘conjure’ (Beckford, 2014) discussed in chapter eight, I further argue that it is in the midst of dancing that the evoking of the myal state takes place, facilitating the entry of the spirit community within the dancehall space and their occupation of corporeal dancing bodies. Based on dancers’ testimonies I conclude that only the privileged few possess the ability to access their special ‘God, gif’ [gift/given] talent’ (Taz Timeless, interview, 2017, 0:00:58.9) to transcend and become dancehall spirit bodies. Those who do so are predominantly the premier dancers, Dancehall Queens, and artists. These individuals achieve notoriety and become known, precisely because of their ability to transcend.

Within dancehall’s coupling and exhibition dancing section, transcendence enables the joining of two individuals as one ecstatic, orgasmic, unified partnership through the notion of jouissance (Norman, 2008). The exploration of dancehall coupling facilitated a dialogue relating to dance, spirituality, and sex in chapter eight. Dancehall’s coupling or partnering, was shown to signify an engagement of African/neo-African deities and their attributes during the myal state. This extends conceptions of dancehall as liberatory female fertility rituals (Cooper, 2004), to that of both male and female corporeal liberation. Combining the signifying power of female fertility and ‘communication rituals’ (White, 2003; Wright, 2004) dancehall’s ‘wining’ action and the symbolic manifestation of the deities, dancehall reconciles sex and spirituality particularly through the explicit and sexualized enactments within ‘dagging’ jouissant coupling, by foregrounding the importance of procreation and renewal. This signals dancehall’s provision of the possibility for eternal life through the replenishing of the lives death expires, assuring the continuance of both future generations and the ancestors through the calling of ancestral names, as discussed in chapter nine. The link between procreation and immortality provides an important

source of hope for individuals residing in volatile inner-city areas, particularly garrisons communities where lives are prematurely expired with staggering regularity.

The signification of African deities within the dancehall genre, I argue, demonstrates its African/neo-African holistic resistance to the Western Cartesian dualistic split. I thereby reject this mind/body split, as the African/neo-African holistic approach demonstrates dancehall spirituality's unification of the pleasure, delight, and ecstatic components of procreation, as simultaneously challenging death, whilst fulfilling a spiritual healing and survival function through play and cultural expression (Dyson, 2004).

### ***Key findings***

During the course of writing this thesis it has become increasingly evident that most dancehall dancers, artists, practitioners and adherents have a clear idea of what dancehall represents for them. Based on this and the research findings, I assert that dancehall must be perceived through the lens of dancehall practitioners as it represents their reimagining and (en)coding of their own worldview. Thus, dancehall is the means through which its practitioners organise the way they live their lives and engage the wider Jamaican society and the global world of which they are a part. Hence, the definition offered of dancehall in chapter nine is developed from that expressed by the dancers and participants interviewed.

Many of dancehall's genealogical danced continuities are evidenced as signifying back to African dance vocabulary, both via Jamaican African/neo-African practices and as a direct reimagining, identified through my auto/ethnographic participant observation fieldwork. The identification by Tippa (interview 2010) of dancehall's '*Worl*' (World) *Dance*' and Jonkonnu masquerade's '*Police Man*' steps as being almost identical demonstrates the (en)coding of movement vocabulary from the African continent to its diaspora, as these movements may be found within the Malawian '*Chadzunda*' dance and other masquerade characters within 'Gule WamKulu' or 'Nyau' practices in Central Africa. It can therefore be safely concluded that Jamaican dancehall dancers make direct physical and ideological links to dancehall's genealogical antecedent African forms, although most are often unaware

of the specific practices, nations, or regions the dance movements originate from. Nevertheless, many dancehall dancers recognise an African spiritual vibe within their dancing, as Ding Dong verbalises in chapter nine and displays in his *'Fling Shoulda'* dance creation, which resonates with the Yoruba *'Bata'* dance of Nigeria, reimagined closer to home in Cuban Bata.

Although dancers often recognised a spiritual element within dancehall dancing, most connected it to their African ancestors rather than Christianity, despite the existence of movements such as 'Shankle Dip' and 'Chaka Chaka', which Cojo Hotfoot links directly to Christianity through Revivalism, as discussed in chapter six. This demonstrates and affirms a recognition of dancehall's Christian spiritual underscoring, whilst evidencing the primacy of the African/neo-African worldview within dancehall spirituality. I thereby restate my argument that dancehall culture should be read as a spiritual signifying system. At its foundations are the African/neo-African worldviews that African forebears never lost, but as shown throughout this research, reimagined within new practices established in Jamaica and other diaspora regions. This includes Christianity, facilitated by the Holy Spirit and postmodern secular religious concepts such as the 'turn to self' (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005) discussed in chapter three. However, the spiritual underpinning of Jamaican dancehall is not so remarkable when considering the Jamaican national anthem is structured as a prayer.<sup>211</sup>

Despite being part of a contemporary society influenced by global, ideological, and philosophical ideas and approaches to spirituality, dancehall spirituality continues to promote belief in the metaphysical 'Supreme Being' and the unification of the material and spirit worlds within its functioning, as does most Jamaican forms of spirituality. This runs counter to the Western world where many individuals having turned away from the constraints of formal religion, Christianity included, now adopt numerous secular ritual practices. Thereby, the primacy of the community is maintained as a central theme within dancehall spirituality, alongside individual smadditisation and liberation, as the braggadocio amongst many professional dance artists exemplifies.

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<sup>211</sup> See: Appendix 26.

Throughout this research, dancehall dance has been shown to be a means through which participants, particularly male dancers, negotiate social mobility and liberation, avoiding the perils of violence, gang warfare, and drugs in establishing themselves with incomes to provide for their households through cultural expression, on their own terms. It is therefore crucial and necessary that dancehall be reviewed by those stake holders responsible for youth provision, community development and community cohesion, such as the state authorities, educational institutions and the churches, towards devising a means by which Jamaica can benefit from the economic and social impact dancehall has developed and offers, including the expanding potential of dancehall's tourist industry.

Many outside the dancehall fraternity perceive contemporary dancehall to be the '*daggering*' dance, thereby dismissing it because of its explicit and aggressive style. Yet, those who dismiss dancehall's wining and/or daggering movement vocabulary are effectively reducing dancehall dance expression to a mere simulation of sex acts by failing to recognise its metaphoric rejection of Eurocentric influenced hegemonic value systems, as a spiritually healing survival and liberation mechanism.

Although this research begins the process of listening to, observing, seeing, and addressing the corporeal cry for smadditisation and empowerment through dance and dancehall spirit bodies, further research is needed. It is important that future research attempts to identify how dancehall corporeal dancing bodies and the genre as a whole might provide a means through which initiation into male and female personhood may take place to institute alternative modes to the patriarchal dominance that presently instigates and promotes slackness and violence as a self-hate or aggrandising response by many of Jamaica's poor and marginalised people.

Dancehall dancers negotiate and push the boundaries of Jamaica's heavily policed gender normativity through both their fashion and stylistic trends. Their transgressive sartorial choices eventually filter down to mainstream society through their performance and flamboyant performative behavioural actions, which frequently challenge and opposes hegemony. This too is another rich area for further research and development.

### *An outernational view*

Elsewhere, I have contextualised dancehall's migration and development outside of Jamaica as a process of '*adoption, adaption and assimilation*' (Patten, 2016; 2018), a pattern which has taken place in Japan (Sterling, 2010; Huisman, 2011), Europe (Koehlings and Lilly 2012), Africa (Ogunbowale, 2012; Charry, 2012), and other parts of dancehall's diaspora. The *adoption* phase involves the introduction of reggae/dancehall through outernational dance workshop tours by Jamaican dance artists. The *adaption* phase features the development of home grown/local talent mimicking the styles of the Jamaican reggae/dancehall dance artists through workshop attendances and pilgrimages to Jamaica to experience the dancehall genre and space first hand. Finally, the *assimilation* phase entails a shift from touring Jamaican dancers, to local artists establishing themselves as dancehall dancers and teachers in their own countries, whilst entering dancehall dance competitions to become dancehall kings and queens. However, dancehall dance *assimilation*, as I argue elsewhere:

... involve[s] the fusion of Jamaican and other popular or influential dance vocabularies within a particular country/region. This signals an attempt to gain autonomy from dancehall's Jamaican origins. However, due to the nature of dance, where pushing the boundaries of the stylistic features of a genre too far may cause one to step outside of the genre, full autonomy from the Jamaican vocabulary has proven difficult.

Patten, 2016 p.107

Within the British context, dancehall's assimilation may be mapped through three main strands, 'Lover's Rock'; British dancehall and; dancehall within African People's dance (APD), now termed Dance of the African Diaspora (DAD). The former two represents the routes through which most dancers of Jamaican origins learn and engage dancehall within social settings, whilst the latter represents the professional training route and that of outsiders to the form. Cultural arts practices transcend national boundaries, although they are inscribed with local ideas and meanings. Presented devoid of its historical context through the globalisation process

dancehall, like many cultural practices, is reinscribed with new meanings that reflect outsider perceptions rather than its indigenous purpose.

Sterling's (2010) insightful scholarship on the Japanese dancehall phenomenon, alongside Huisman's (2011) subsequent offering clearly outlines the Japanese *adoption*, *adaption* and *assimilation* of dancehall, brokered initially by reggae's outernational<sup>212</sup> popularity through the prism of the late Bob Marley and marginalisation. However, as part of the assimilation process, Japanese dancehall was particularly adopted by Japanese women who identified with the liberation of the female form dancehall affords (Cooper, 2004; Wright, 2004). But as Sterling reveals, the misreading of the dancehall female form as over-sexualised desire has led to a number of Japanese 'reggae dancers' being employed within the sex industry as queens of porn, rather than dancehall queens.

Whilst sex, sexuality and sensuality is an intrinsic part of dancehall's contemporary urban culture, as in most countries, despite sex workers and 'go-go' dancers<sup>213</sup> being present within dedicated clubs and bars in Jamaica, the sex industry has been kept clearly distinct from the dancehall party scene. Although one or two appearances of a mattress and/or public sex in the midst of the dancehall space has appeared on the internet, this has not been repeated and certainly did not feature any professional dancehall dancers. I therefore suggest that the spiritual underscoring of dancehall within the Jamaican context is what has safeguarded dancehall's progression from the pornographic industry. Thereby, dancehall dancers are tasked with the responsibility of teaching the background context of dancehall in addition to the dance steps in order to maintain respect for the genre by outsiders to the genre.

On the African continent dancehall has gained increasing popularity as African artists musically reconnect with their diaspora brothers and sisters, whilst incorporating dancehall within contemporary forms such as Ajegunle Raga (Ogunbowale, 2012), Hiplife (Anim-Koranteng, 2018)<sup>214</sup> and Kwaito (Stanley-Niaah, 2009). Africa has produced a sizeable number of successful dancehall DJ artists from

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<sup>212</sup> A Rastafarian word, which subverts the Western 'international' terminology. See: (*Introduction chapter*, section V, note 15).

<sup>213</sup> 'Go-go' dancers perform in specialist nightclubs to entertain audiences. Some may additionally strip and/or engage in public sex for money.

<sup>214</sup> Osei Alleyne (2017) provides a more detailed exploration of the development of Ghanaian reggae/dancehall as an act of reclamation.



across so many countries that it warrants greater in-depth research than space permits within this thesis, particularly in relation to the development of the dance vocabulary that carries so many African resonances in Jamaica.<sup>215</sup>

### ***Final Conclusion***

This thesis aimed to give voice to dancehall participants generally, and dance practitioners specifically (dance creators, choreographers, dancers, performers, and teachers). Based on the findings and quotes given by dancers interviewed in chapters five to nine, it is clearly evident that dancers have the ability to articulate their individual journeys, thoughts, and ideas about the dancehall genre. Most can also share the genealogical history of dancehall dancing, albeit many new skool dancers noticeably begin dancehall history from the advent of Gerald ‘Bogle’ Levy to the present. However, when questioned more deeply they reveal their connecting of dancehall dance and the African/neo-African dance movements of African forebears.

I therefore reject the notion that dancehall dancers are unable to speak intelligently about themselves and their own work. The view that dancehall practitioners ‘are “semi-literate and illiterate noisemakers masquerading as artists’ (Edmondson, 1999 p.62) projected by some members of the Jamaican public, and state authorities is demonstrated to be untrue within this thesis. However, many dancers lack the confidence to explain their own practice because the power to speak on behalf of dance practitioners tend to remain with those who can comfortably converse in standard English. For this reason I have deliberately left the dancers’ voices in the Jamaican language, as even the rhythm of their pauses and stammering seemed to demonstrate a spiritual underscoring as very often they stammered in threes and fives, spiritually significant numbers. However, that would make a whole other PhD study.

Dancehall dancing affects dancers on a deeply emotional and spiritual level, beginning with its social community cohesion enabling unifying feelings of upliftment, kinship and support from others sharing similar lifestyle situations,

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<sup>215</sup> See: appendix 27.

through to transformation into the myal state transcendence engendering feelings of smadditisation, liberation and freedom. The spiritual undergirding of dancehall manifests on multiple levels, from the adoption of Rastafarian principles and speech patterns by dancehall participants, through to the conscious (en)coding, incorporation, and execution of African/neo-African spiritual movement vocabulary as a means of memorialising the ancestors and their cultural heritage, as evidenced in Bogle's 'Bogle' dance, or John Hype's 'Pon Di River, Pon Di Bank' and the other dances explored in chapters five to eight. I therefore conclude that African/neo-African spiritualities are emergent within the dancehall space, which form part of an emergent dancehall spirituality, through corporeal dancing bodies. It seems fitting to conclude with the voice of a practitioner. Dance Xpressionz' featured artist Dansa Bling (2010) aptly articulates dancehall and his own transcendence in remarking:

... is a higher energy, is like, wi nuh care no more ... inna di las part a di party yu doan care, yu not even business if yu pants waan tear when yu a dance ... So yu know seh yu haffi go ard, den yu go home, yu get wha mi a seh? So yu jus go ard! Go ard! Go ard until di party finish, an nuh care wha waan appen! ... The vibes weh di selecta a give yu, yu haffi go ard. ... [Is a] crazy vibe, yu jus a dance an yu cyaan stop dance ... the song dem a gi yu di energy and dem time de the selecta a go hype up an gi yu di energy ... Once yu name start call inna a dancehall it bring off a hype and gi yu a strong energy!

Dansa Bling, interview 2010

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## **Bruk Down**

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## **Appendix 1.**

### **01 Interview with Orville Hall Artistic Director of Dance Xpressionz 11.08.2010**

0:00:00.8 H - So, yeah, today is the 11th [August 2010] and hmmm we're in Half Way Tree, hmmm at Limelight, talking with Orville Hall. So, Orville if I can just attach this to you? (O - Yeah man) So you can speak free. (O - Blessed). Yeah, so hmm, first of all I just wanna clear hmm, is it ok for me to use anything we talk about and discuss within this interview for research purposes?

0:00:29.5 O - Yeah man you can! you can!

H - Ok good. So can you give me your full, your full name and what you do here, hmm, like your profession etc?

0:00:40.5 O - Ok, full name is Orville Hall, arrhmm, I used to be a lecturer at Exced Community College. Presently I am the artistic director for my own company called 'Theatre Xpressionz', that deals with hmm, mainly dance and drama. Hmmm I am seen as a dancehall expert or specialist, because I do a lot of fieldwork in, in dancehall, and I am also an actor. I'm presently in a production that is running at 'Green Gables Theatre.

H - Ok, and can you, can you tell me, how did you really get into the dance thing?

0:01:16.5 O - Well is really, I've been dancing all my life you know. Is, is, that is the talent that has been bestowed upon me. You know, and I've been doing it all along until I got, I got formal training when I went to Exced Community College, and it started with Patsy Ricketts, who when I was doing the, the associate degree at Exced College, she is the first person that because I was, I was always dancehall oriented based on where I grew up, in the inner city, arrhmm in Molyne's Road, so, I was always a dancehall oriented person, but when I went to work, Exced and started to do it formally now I started to learn more about, hmm, traditional folk forms, hmm creative folk forms and, about modern technique, where Patsy taught me about first position and second position and demi-plié and all that. Hmm after which I got a, a scholarship, hmm to go to Stella Maris dance Ensemble where I spent four years, and

did some work with them I, was, also like a junior choreographer that I would, choreograph, hmm sections of some of the, the bigga choreographies. So that's, that's that's pretty much weh, weh, where it came from.

0:02:28.1 H - Right, so can yu, can you tell me, really wha, what I want to find out about is the dancehall scene (O - Hmmhmm) and what the dancehall scene is all about. What does dancehall mean to you?

0:02:40.1 O - A, dancehall for me is what dancehall has become ova the las couple a years. It has been institutionalised as almost like a, a culture within itself that dancehall now is not jus the dance anymore. Dancehall has to do with the language, it has to do with the dance, it has to do with the dress code, it has to do with the, the, the physical persona. How, how yu carry yuself is the, its a walk, yu kno! So its, its, its actually now, a lifestyle, that doan (don't) jus entail any one area. There's the music, the dance, the language, an, and, all of these things, so it is, it is pretty much a lifestyle for me now because I am, kindda submerge in all a di areas of dancehall. Yu kno! Because I also host a dancehall session every Thursday night here at Limelight Club, so I have to be, in the field for two reasons. For, for the reason of, studying the, the, the, the craft some more, and also, to be able to promote my own event.

0:03:44.3 H - Ok, so can you kindda **define, define** hmm the dancehall form? What is dancehall? And hmm, What are the parameters?

0:04:00.2 O – Alright! hmm, there are couple of things in dancehall, that hmmm, is, is kindda a, against certain kindda lifestyle. Dancehall is, is pretty much wide based on, where dress code is concerned. So, if there's a particular dress code that is let's say, hip in America, JA, dancehall will take it an tweak it. An this has been happening from, from far, as far back as hmm, the rocksteady era. Hmmm Jamaicans have a way of taking other fashion statements and tweaking it, to suit them, and then it falls under the umbrella of dancehall. Aarhmm the, the language comes straight out of the inna city, yu kno? Slangs and jargons that is used in dancehall a whole lot. Aarhm, dancehall lifestyle is, aarhm, not patient to the, the gay issue. Yu kno! So the, its, totally not into it at all. So at any given time, at any given session, yu wi always hear a Selecta, or a song, that bashes, gay lifestyle. Whether it be homosexuals or lesbians.

So that is one thing about dancehall that yu can always know that is de, definat (definite). And from the emergence of dancehall it has been so, tu, tu, present day.

H - Right, ok. Right, bu, but can you give me a, a, a **definition** of what constitute a dancehall in terms of the party scene now, because some people seh, we going to a party and then (O - Hmhmhm) others are referring to it as dancehall. Some people (O - Hmhmhm) referring it, to it as, the outdoor, some, hmmm...

0:05:58.9 O - Alright, a dancehall session, a dancehall session, as opposed to a party, if you look at a place like 'Fiction Night Club', if yu look at a place like 'The Quad', if yu look at a place like 'Asylum', these are some of the places that will keep a party. When you are going to a dancehall session now, you can expect to see, a number of the dancehall artists, as long as they don't have a, a performance that night being at this particular session. And it is riddled with primarily dancehall music. When yu go to a party now, it is more sectionalised where you will hear House music, you'll hear Hip Hop, yu kno! This is jus, filter music, in a dancehall session. But you, you hear, a strong arhmmm, presence of Vybz Kartel, Mavado, Bounty Killa, Beenie Man, Bugle, Busy Signal, Assassin, arrhmm, Aidonia [dancehall deejays]. So th, the dancehall sessions bring, an an and then the dancehall dancers are usually there to keep the vibe. The females an the males. There's always the, the presence of the videolight. So this is what you use to constitute that you are at a dancehall session. Parties don' usually go fa, fa (for) videolight so the, the video-man himself now, is now, arhmm, a integral part of what happens in the dancehall, because these, arhmm sessions are done, so you can have, have them taped for the international market, or for a local channel we have out here that we call 'Dancehall Channel'. So, yu,yu,yu,your session, as opposed to yu party, arhmm the party have a more, wha we wouldda call out here, 'Uptown feel', where the, the dress code is not, is for more party like, where is light, more light kinna dancing, as opposed to the dancehall session where dance is the nucleus of what happen. The crews them are always there and always, showing off them routine always in the videolight. Aarhmm, the females trying to get a, a, a slice a di cake tu. Yu wi se a girl on aarrh head-top, yu wi see a girl doing stunts an, an different stuff like that, that you might not have at a party. Parties are more, like you may have a ATI weekend, dat kind a thing yu know yu kno, those are where yu have parties.

H - Right. So, wha, what about hmmm, would, what about, sessions at hmm, at a, a place like seh Quad, yu kno like, do they have like dancehall nights? An if they have dance, specific dancehall nights, are those considered part of....

0:08:56.5 O - Aarrh, the Quad, don't do, so much dancehall dance, hol' on deh! Edgar. Yeah, they don't really du dancehall night. The Asylum used to have a night, where you would have a, a dancehall session. So like when dem have a, ladies night on a Tuesday night, yu know that that is going to be a dancehall session, yu kno, but the Quad, I think, kinda more cater for that, middle to upper groun', (H - Hmmhmm). Yu kno, so, because, the dancehall scene, in Kingston, is, is, is what is the, the spread around Kingston. So you can, yu have at least, three dancehall sessions, per night, every night a di week from Sunday to Sunday. So places like Quad and Fiction night club an Asylum to a lesser extent, try to cater to now, fi dat party going crowd, dat doan (don't) necessarily want to stand up an listen to jus dancehall music, (H - Hmmhmm), fi di, fi di whole night. Yu kno? They'll, they'll, they'll go deep into, into into, arrhm hip hop, into contemporary, arrhm into wha dem call alternative music, yu'll, yu'll hear a whole lot a dat evenly spread out. You'll hear soca music, yu kno! Yu not gwain necessarily hear soca music at a, at a dancehall party. (H - Right) Or, if yu, if yu hear, if yu hear hip hop music, it is what is most popular, weh fine (find) its way into the Jamaican market because it's a number one song in the US. So yu wi hear a, the latest Usha (Usher), the latest Chris Brown, yu kno! So these are the, an yu jus hear them fi a couple seconds. Yu play that section very quickly an get right back into, what is Hardcore dancehall. (H - Hmmhmm). And hardcore dancehall is not songs that necessarily mek it to the airwaves either. So yu might not hear these songs if yu turn on, if y come to Jamaica an yu turn on yu radio, yu turn to 'Fame Fm', or yu turn tu, tu tu 'Cool' or yu turn to one of those stations yu might not necessarily hear some of the songs that yu'll hear, in di dancehall. Because yu have dancehall songs dat, di hardcore, hardcore dancehall are not fit for airplay. An wi have a new, rule now with the Broadcast Commission, where, a song could be played on the radio, if yu bleep out what would be considered to be the, the, the profane language, but now the broadcast commission has imposed something on there that says, no bleeps. So once the song have any kin' a profanity in there that yu have to bleep it out, to put it on the radio station, then it cannot be played at all. So there are a number of songs

that you will not hear on the radio stations at all, that you will come an hear in the dancehall.

H - An that's the Broadcast Commission, who has done that?

0:12:09.6 O – That's, yeah, it has imposed that now.

H - Right, Ok. Well, hmm, so the Broadcast, Commission imposed, hmm, a law....

0:12:23.1 O - That states that, err, hmmm, and it started when, when the whole daggering scenario came aroun (H - Hmmhmm), say yu cannot use the word daggering on the radio, you cannot play any song that refers to daggering and yu cannot play any song, any more, where hmm, there is profanity, that yu have to bleep out. At one point, that was ok, once yu doan hear the word an we beep it out, but they're saying now that we know that that is what it is, so we're taking it out. (H - Yeah) So there's still, there's still a fight because there are songs from the US, that is being played in Jamaica dat have certain type a profanity that is bleeped out, but is still being played. Yu kno, so you have a body of Jamaicans that are, that are questioning that with the, with the Broadcast Commission. Yu have a song call hmm, 'I kissed a girl and I liked it', done by a woman and people are saying then, I mean "what are you promoting in that song that, when we say certain things in our songs", cau we cannot, we cannot bash gays and lesbians in our songs, on the the, on the radio, but you can promote it on the radio? Yu kno, so that's the question that we're asking. (H - Hmmhmm) We cyaan bash them yu said, to each his own, but, can they just, blatantly push it in our faces so and you help, to sen it through the airwaves, yu kno, so the battle is still on.

H - Right, ok. Good, well can yu tell me, can yu give me a brief overview of dancehall in terms of, weh it a come from, the hiss, the historical development ...

0:13:57.8 O - Arright, (H - weh it reach now) dancehall, went through different phases, I think the serious emergence of dancehall came about in the late 70s coming into the 80s. Because, as yu know we had the, the, the Mento era, we had the Ska era, we had the Rocksteady era, we had the Reggae era. Now coming out of the reggae era

to get into the dancehall era there was this, this era that they call 'Rub a Dub' in the 70s, where yu would play the flip side a di tune (H - Hmmhmm) an, an just listen the rhythm of it. So, yu kno, men an women got closer in terms of dancing. Coming right out a dat now, aahmm, we got into what dancehall was, an I think one of the first, dancehall song that made it onto the international, international level that, created this whole dancehall thing was a song done by Supercat called 'Boops', that got international recognition and then the birth of dancehall came out of that now. Now dancehall came up on constant resistance, because, it, it it, it was like, is like Mento music. The, the upper echalon (echelon) of society saw Mento music as crude and unsophisticated music. In a country music, in, in, in, in this age and day people si dancehall music as ghetto music. Inna city music, so, people who are considered the upper class of society doan, didn't necessarily gravitate to dancehall because them see it as, ghetto people music. So dancehall, was born out of a resistance. The likkle man pon the corna (corner), weh, who seh, string up him, him, him box, an him have a likkle stall an him use di, di music fi draw people aroun (around) di stall, fi buy two hot bear, an, two Guinness an whateva, whateva (whatever). So as time progress now, 'im buy a little igloo (thermos box), and 'im buy, instead of half create a beer him buy one crate a beer now an a man come an him drink a beer an 'im rock to di music an im realise how important the music is, so, out a this now, the, the gathering started. It started from a little gathering in the street or inna somebody, back yard (H - Hmmhmm) 0:16:15.8 until it started, somebody recognise now that "mi can mek a money from this", but right through that time, we had to contend with the law, aahmm shutting it down. And as, as we move along we started to realise that, the law would shut down what happen, inna di depth a di inna city, but when Carnival became a part of the Jamaican society, the same law would march with them through the streets, of Kingston, half naked, because them use to bash the dress code in dancehall say it is too, it is too, skimpy. But when we started to see, Carnival in our streets, then wi realise seh, dancehall not skimpy yet, Carnival is what is skimpy, but carnival get, aahmm, assistance from some a di biggest, hmm, private sector companies in Jamaica.

H - Right

0:17:12.6 O - And yet, you, the, the carnival will be happening in, in the heart of Half Way Tree, and other places in the street a Kingston, yet a police go down a di, di, di bottom a, a, of, Hagley Park Rd inna a likkle corna an turn off a man sound system. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno! So, dis is what, we, dancehall, decided dat, at whatever cost, we're going to try and fine, ways an means for the, fi, fi, fi, dancehall to, be heard because this is authentically ours. (H - Hmmhmm) Other music we had to, we had to, share with, yu kno, when, when Ska became big, we coulddn' own Ska one hundred percent because people say is a merge between Mento an R&B, that gave us Ska, yu kno! An everyting (everything) else was a spin-off of dat. Now we are saying dancehall is exclusively ours that is born out of the people. So there was that fight, tu tu keep dancehall going. Aahmm, an then the songs started to represent the situation, that is happening, in, in, in, in the ghetto. That made it, dancehall again, because we would talk about, inna city, social ills. We would talk about what the, the upper class doing to the lower class. We would talk about the lack of, schooling, the lack of, aahm, health care, the lack of these things that, that, that, happens in our society. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno? So, it it went through different, stages. It, it got, rebellious at one time. Extremely rebellious, where the songs would reflect da kindda ting deh. Di gun songs dem. Bounty Killa seh "anytime, mi hungry again yu a go si mi, ma, mi nine. Poor people fed up, to how di system sheg up" (H - Hmmhmm) Aahmm, aarhmm, an den now, wi flip di scrip' now, where it started to, to pick up di real, dancehall party vibe, where the songs, became more instructional an dance oriented, and dat's where dancehall became very lively an upbeat again - Blessed mi dan (Orville greets someone passing by)

0:19:33.1 O - became very upbeat again (H - Hmmhmm) because, aahmm, Elephant Man, Voicemail, RDX, these are the groups that came forward and started doing dance songs. 'Pon di riva, pon di bank', aahmm, 'Blazay blazay', aahmm, 'Gully Creeper' all, all a dese songs weh dem used to du. Ahmm, these are the songs now that, that tells you that you're at a dancehall party, because it is n, it is not, angry anymore. It is more light spirited, but we still haffi be going through the whole, thing of, dealing with the police, where, dancehall, danc, when you can leave, an go into Fiction, at 10 oclock an 11 o'clock, an go to Quad at that same time for a party, when you're coming to a dancehall session yu haffi tink about 1 o'clock, so yu know you are going to a dancehall session, once yu si somebody wake up, at midnight or wake up at



1 o'clock, and decide that they're going to get ready now, to go out, you are going to a dance. Because you would have already been at the party, at 1 o'clock, (H - Hmmhmm) yu kno? So, dis is what constitute dancehall, but, aahmm, the powers that be now, shutting down dancehall events, midnight, during the week, an 2 o'clock on weekends. An wi still trying to fight to make that different because, why mi seh dancehall is a, is a, is an institution, is a lifestyle, is that people earn from dancehall an wi not jus talking about the, th, the promotas (promoters) a di dance, we talking about di peanut vender, the cigarette vender, the likkle man weh sell 'im drinks out a di front, yu kno! Di hustlers, earn from dancehall, the soup man, the man weh come sell 'im curry goat an rice, all a dese people earn from dancehall. 0:21:39.7 O - Aahmm, when I keep my session here so, I pay about 8 or 9 people at the end a di session. Yu kno! Including the likkle yute dem weh park di car, roun' a di side, yu kno! So people earn from it, an look forward to it, on a, on a Thursday night. An dis is how some a dem hustle from dance to dance, every night. (H - Hmmhmmmm) So somebody run from, 'Uptown Mondays', tu 'Hot Mondays'. Den somebody, run from 'Bleedaz Tuesday' come a 'Boasy Tuesday', an then somebody leave from 'Weddy Weddy Wednesday' come a 'Teen Wednesday'. An den dem leave from Allianz 'Happy Thursday' an come a 'Xpressionz Thursday', an den somebody leave from, ahmm, 'Day Rave', an go, aahmm, 'Dutty Friday' an yu have a 'Cadillac' ting weh happen on a Saturday and Sunday, yu leave from 'Passion Sunday' and come a 'Bounty Sunday'. So from Sunday to Sunday, an I don't know dat it happens anywhere else in the worl', there is at least, t'ree parties every night. An mi jus a talk bout di corporate area. Mi jus talking about Kingston an St Andrew. We nu go St Cathrine yet, we nu go Mo'bay yet, which is a nex party capital, we nu go Negril, we nu go Portlan' (Portland) yu kno! (H - Hmmhmm). So, an, an we talking about hardcore, dancehall sessions, because dancehall promoters are also venturing into, the rural areas, wha kinna hungry fi di sessions, an keep a one off ting. Yu kno?

H - Right. (mutterings) Alright, can you tell me about the dance now, uhmmm, like seh, the development of the dance and how that has manifested itself, what yu si within the dance?

0:23:30.2 O - Alright, the, th, th, the dance, fi me is, what I would like to call, 'noise in the blood', is, it, it very, Afro-centric. Is things that, I think we brought from Africa,

that fine it, seep it way into the people. So is like, yu doing things that, that has been in your blood from birth. So the dance keep, aahmm, they keep developing on the dance. So on any given, any given week, you'll see three four new dance. Whateva (whatever) yu, whereva (wherever) yu going yu si, a dance tonight. Next week you hear about a next new dance. But is re, is the more popular guys, that are able to establish a dance that will catch on. Because it work hand in hand. If a danca du a dance that is, catchy, and a DJ see it like Elephant Man or Voicemail or RDX, then what they'll do is say, "Alright, what's the name of that dance?" and they'll do a song, to fit that dance, and that is how the popularity of the dance, and the individual, yu kno get, get, fi get some amount a national and sometime international recognition yu kno! Hmmm Ovamars, the name Ovamars people wi know, because Bolt did, 'Nuh Linga', during the, the Beijing Olympics. (H - Hmmhmm) He also did 'Gully Creeper', that give Ice, some, the late Ice, some recognition. He did one dem call 'Nineties rock' dat Shelly Belly did, so, dat is how, dem get a chance fi get, on the international scene. An when dat is coupled by a DJ, endorsing the dance, then it helps. But is, is, is something that, is, is apart of the base of dancehall now. The dance! Because dancers are now, inna city dancers without a solid education, are travelling all ova the worl' now because a di dance. 0:25:46.7 O - When they're seen on the DVDs, an the DVDs are sent to Englan (England) and sent to the US, a promota up dere look an seh "woow, wha da group de name?" So yu even fine dat di male dancers are now fighting the female dancers fi di video-light. Literally pushing them out a di way, becau this is now, possibly my ticket. We hav dancers going to Japan, we have dancers going to Englan', and we're talking about dancers dat doan even have a formal, formal education! But are able, to come back tu Jamaica and pay down pon a likkle cyaar. Becau him get a extensive run a Englan' an earn some poun'. Or 'im get a extensive run inna di US an, an, an earn some US dollars. So, they are, coming to a dancehall session every night a di week fi dancas, is not seen as, partying, its seen as work. Work wi come. And once di video-light goes up, which is very integral in dancehall now, dancers gwain mek sure, an den some a di Selectors help, by calling out a particular danca name, so the video man hear dat, an di video man swing 'im, 'im camera onto that group an dat group get, aahmm, twenty, thirty seconds fi show what yu made of an then 'im call a nex' dance group name. So dance group who are already popular, are jus keeping the popularity alive an dancehall dancas who are not established, come into the space hoping that they'll be seen, an a Selecta wi seh, "yow,

checkout da group ya". 0:27:21.9 O - That's how Dance Xpressionz started. We, we had to be going into the dancehall space, an, dancing fi di Selectors to see us, an then the Selecta, the first thing the Selecta start, is by saying "hol' on, a who da group deh? Weh dem name?" Yu shout out yu name fi 'im an 'im hear. The following week yu haffi go there an du, wha yu di, did du, did du the week before, or, betta (better), so 'im can seh, "wha unnu say yu name again?" An sometime di name, it doan stick wid dem, but when yu repeatedly do it, then afta a while, di name becomes secon nature fi dem. Where even if yu not at di party, they'll be calling yu name. Yu kno? So that is the level that dancehall dancas want to get to dat, when dem du dat, an a Selec, because Selectas as well, when dem get a chance fi travel, they will tell promoters about a particular dance group. Far sometimes the, the promoters take up a pack, package. So dem seh, "Alright, yu a di selecta, you know who your vibes people are, which dance group would you take?" An 'im wouldda seh "alright, mi a go carry rae, yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm) Or, or a DJ wi do it sometime. Yu kno Beenie Man is responsible fi John Hype? BeenieMan use fi jus carry John Hype anywhere 'im a go. An Shelly Belly. First him used to carry dem up as, I think they were called, 'Boasy Squad'. An dat was made up of, Blazay, John Hype an Shelly Belly. 0:28:51.4 O - An dem go up, an dem du dem ting wid Beenie Man, dem earn dem money an dem come back an dem break, half a dem have dem own crew now, so Boasy, have Boasy and the 'Boasy Squad', John Hype have, John Hype and 'John Quad', Shelly Belly have, Shelly Belly an, aahmm, weh 'im call dem again? I don' even rememba wha him call 'im crew. But, aahmm, everybody is abl to break off an, get some yute unda dem wing an, get some tours fi some a dem tu. Yu kno, Ding Dong, get a major break tru dance an now have him an 'Ravers Clavers' an im a travel wid Ravers Clavers, dem du di Englan ting, du di US ting an, him gaan di route of music now, which makes it even better fi im. He can now du a set fi himself, an doan dance if im doan wish tu. Ding Dong is now calling out dancers. So im call out Ravers Clavers come dance to his songs, im doan even haffi dance fi imself. (H - Hmmhmm). Yu kno? So, aahmm...

H - Because, oh sorry, go ahead.

0:29:49.6 O - There are many different, areas that, that, that, constitute the dancehall yu kno, that we all have to tek into consideration, the issue, the major issue that I'm having is that I don't think that our government, the powers that be, are taking the

time out, to realise, the contribution of dancehall, to the, to the country or, tu pull out, help to pull out, what danceha, what dancehall can be. So instead of getting, assistance we getting resistance. Yu kno? Because Hmm, whatever dancehall became internationally, nuh have nutt'n fi du wid di government, absolutely nutt'n. It, it is the, is the raw fight, that is why, if yu notice how dancehall DJs talk and how dancehall dancers talk, with a certain level of, strong overtone when dem talk to people, this is, this is how they were bred. We, w,w, we doan jus, we don't think that yu mean us any good, we think that yu want to use us, so if yu waan use us, pay us for, for di use. Yu kno wha mi a seh? 0:31:01.1 O - Uhhh, we were not indorsed by, by, by the government really. Wi, wi, we know seh police come come lock aaff the dance every minute. We kno seh, dem want it end at a certain time. We kno seh dem jus walk inna di dance and decide seh everybody, haffi, go up agains' the wall an get search an a black truck come an yu, who yu feel like fi put inna di truck, yu put inna di truck. Sometimes dey doan fine nu weapons pon nobody but dem jus decide, "mi nuh like how you look, go up inna di truck". Yu know? So, is a tremendous amount a resistance we, com, come up agains' and dat is why dancehall DJs talk so, so stern, because wi doan feel like, like sports, that is a nex', thing, from Jamaica that, help with the whole development and international recognition of we country, I don't think that the powers that be are assisting. Because rememba, because dancehall come out a di inna city, some a di, the, the the things that happen, uhmm, where violence and crime is concern, is, is thrown on, inna city people. Yet, if you check th ratia, an si where, violence an crime is concerned in Jamaica, it doan happen in the dancehall. Some of it happen while dancehall, happening. Somebody gaan somewheh (somewhere) gaan, snuff out somebody life or somebody an somebody out dere suh (there so) a fight, but it doan happen inna di dancehall session because dancehall create dem own orda (order). Promoters realise now that this is my bread an butta (butter) so how can I have you fighting in my venue? So, we, put things in place to ensure that that doan happen in the dancehall session. We have to be extremely aware, especially right here suh, at Limelight, to ensure, that, nothing of the sort happen. 0:33:03.0 O - Si di, that wall? That wall is what borders us from the police station. Si di police station deh! (H - Hmmhmm) That's the police station. Anything at all happen, an this, that's the parking lot. That's the parking lot, so anything at all, if these windows are open when, Xpressions Thursday a gwaan, kno seh the police gwain come ova, an tell yu fi turn it aaff, because, yu kno weh mi a seh? So we have to put

things in place, an we haffi mek sure seh, because any incident that happen here, the police can come an recomen (recommend), that this place doan use as a dancehall venue. So we are aware of that, an we are saying, some a, some a di rigours that wi haffi go tru, to get, a permit, to keep a dancehall session is ridiculous, because you now have to come, yu haffi buy, pay \$3500 dolla an mi here seh it raise now, \$5000 dolla. Once yu going outdoors, yu haffi pay \$5000 dollars to get a permit, an the \$5000 isn't even the issue. The fact that you have to move from one place that yu might haffi spen three hours, an go to a nex' place where yu might haffi spen a nex t'ree hours an then come back to the police station, an if a police decide seh 'im doan feel like give yu a permit, yu not gwaan get it. An he can keep that, they tell you to do it within a three week period, 'im can keep that piece a paypa (paper) until the day of your event an tell you 'im naa, mek yu keep yu session. Yu kno? An by this time you'd have, advertised yu session, weh yu pay thousands of dollas fi du, yu'd have allocated yu likka (liquor), weh some people go buy dem likka (liquor) demself fi mek a, a propa profit. So me might spen (spend) sixty, seventy odd thousan dolla wort' or ting pon mi likka (liquor), an a policeman jus gwain look at mi an seh, "mi, mi naa go mek yu keep yu session - Why can yu give mi a scholarly reason why? - No, yu not getting any reason. Mi jus not gwain give it." So this is the way dem wheel powa (power), an den mek we now haffi almos seem like wi breaking di law, tu survive.

H - Hmmhmm

0:35:02.7 O - Now, if we look pon it dis way now, t'ree sessions, every night, from Sunday to Sundy, in the corporate area. Yu don' give us the run aroun', yu jus seh to us seh, each session mus pay, \$5000 fi dem session go on, each session. Du di maths, an si how much money you get an this is jus, corporate area, we nuh gaan rural yet. So don' give us di run aroun, go to the police station, pay yu \$5000, if yu even waan seh \$8000, pay \$8000 dollars, get a receipt. Bam, so if a nex (next) police come an decide seh, yu violating the law, yu show him yu receipt. "I paid for my permit, an mi session supposed to go on til (until) X time." Du di mathematics an si how much money yu'dda mek offa di corporate area alone, instead a stifling it an not giving them a chance when yu, you already si seh is an institution by itself dat, it not going anywhere, it not going anywhere, der's one a di Caribbean countries, dat have aarh, a

big, 'House of Pleasure' dem call it but is really a whore house, dat the government, have shares into. I think is in Curaçao or one a dem place deh! Dem have shares inna it because dem realise seh, it bring revenue fi di country. So they work, with the people instead a against the people. Dancehall not going anywhere anytime soon, so mi jus feel like seh, especially the government fi try fine a way weh wi can work wid it, an stop labelling us like seh we, is we breed, criminals. Yu know wha mi a seh?

H - Yeah, yeah. Alright well, well hmmm, time-wise now I know yu hav (O Yeah) to go, but, just tell mi now about hmmm, the dancehall as a danca now. When yu, when your going through the movement, the inspiration an, the vibe, what do you feel? Where the, (O - Alright!) what is the manifestation of the....

0:37:09.9 O - Yeah, again, again, fi me it is very African based, as it relate to, a di riddim do it. The riddim, because no matter how, how the lyrics bad. A man might write a, a bad lyrics an wi seh wooh, th, the, the lyrics and bad in this context means good, wicked. Hmmm, but if it is not placed on a riddim that, goes into the system [the body], then the dance move is not created. When you look at a dance like, let's use 'Gully Creepa', when you listen to the riddim, of 'Gully Creepa', an look at the dynamics of the dance, yu realise that, that was not, that was not because of the lyrics, that's purely because a di riddim. When dey embody, when yu hear di, di, di riddim so la, fi me, largely is when mi hear di riddim, I can decide. Now, when di song go on it, if the song is an instructional song that tells you what to do, yu fine sections in there weh yu, yu, weh yu do, but is not the whole song weh him do instructional. So yu might mek, couple moves to wha di, di, di, di artist a seh pon di riddim, but largely, is di riddim dat drives how, di dancas, do dem ting, pon di music. An, an an, yu, your, yu can know because it comes from within. When a danca create a, a, a, a, a certain dance an it becomes popular, is because a wha di riddim du to him, an it comes out a di body naturally. Dat gives it dat unique look, when yu see it. Dance like 'Gangalee', dance like 'Move dem up', dance like, aarhm, 'Move', 'Watch yu step', 'Stay clear', is, is, is based on, di ting deh, the females them have a, hav a dance out there weh dem call 'Tempa wine', weh is, is, is riddim do it, riddim, cau many times, aarhm, in the dancehall space, when a new riddim a go buss, before anybody, any artist go pon it, a Selecta seh, "dancas, we have a new riddim, walk out pon it, do a new dance pon it." An den di, riddim alone play and di dancas dem listen, an dem might have a dance

weh dem a try wid fi a long while, but it, happen to fit on dis particular riddim, an dem start. 0:39:36.5 O - Selectas de deh, watch it, aarhm, artists de deh watch it an seh hmm, mi like dat. Call ova di danca, ask di danca, "wha da dance deh name?" Him say it, him go voice a song pon di riddim, fi suit di dance. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno! So it, it, i, it is born out of, rhythmic pattans [patterns], rhythmic pattans an wi getting more, wi getting more an more, African sounding beats inna wi riddims now. If yu listen to some a di songs dem weh, weh Busy Signal du, aarhm, 'im have one calla a 'J'African, err, 'Is a J'African ting', "oo lala oo lala" an is, is, is harden, African sound dat is in it, yu kno! So, so wi going back tu, to what was, yu kno, mi jus feel like di, di, di, di whole is di, di, problem is, dancehall dancas, will not be able to articulate verbally, weh dem, yu kno, weh dem coming from wid dem dance. But, if yu waan kno, jus come inna di dancehall. Dem wi talk to yu t'ru dem dance. Yu know weh mi a seh? But if yu sidown (sit down) an doing a formal interview like this, an dat is why me try mek sure seh me, I, I am one to be able to articulate for them, from an authentic point a view, not jus, yu kno? So I, I couldn't (could not) be sitting at home, an try undastan dem. I haffi bi out there wid dem an live it, because, I am di one dat, many times, people ask me fi articulate fi dem. Yu know weh mi a seh? Weh, where was Ice coming from when Ice du 'Gully Creepa?' Di dance weh look su much like di dance weh dem call Yanvalou! from, from Haiti, yu kno wha mi a seh? Where was Ice? Wha, wha, what was his head space like? Weh him did deh? Yu kno! When Docta Bird du ' Move dem up', weh him did a think bout dat, that fluid move dance, an yu haffi be able fi articulate fi dem an not mis-interpret weh dem a come from wid it tu. Yu kno, an dat happen wid, sometime yu jus sidown an reason wid dem. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno, so is, the da, the dance is, highly influential based on the riddim, the riddims.

H - Hmmhmm. Ok, an, one las thing now. Hmm, because, could you jus briefly talk mi t'ru, the, the, the, the night, becau, I see, as, a kind a pattern to how the night evolves, when, when yu go a dancehall session (O - Hmmhmm) An then I, I notice that hmmm, is, well I don' want to seh too much tu put any words in yu mout, but can yu talk mi t'ru di dancehall session an,,,?

0:42:15.6 O - Alright, (H introduce daughters to Orville) 0:42:27.3 O - Yeah man, so aarhm, alright, the progression a di night, one secon 'H', Blessed love ..... (Orville takes phonecall).

## **Interview part 2**

### **02 Orville Hall 11.08.2010**

0:00:02.1 H - Yeah

0:00:03.3 O - Alright, arhmm, the, the, the patterns vary, but ahmm, this is what yu will si, generally. There is a, there's a early vibe that if you go to a dancehall session early early! The earlier dancehall songs you'll hear, you'll hear the Jimmy Cliffs, you'll here the Bob Marleys, you'll hear the Dennis Browns, the Burning Spears, yu might hear some a dem ting deh. You might hear even some a di oldda, R&B songs. When the party start getting more into it now, you have a section ya, it is sectionalised that, an the, and the flow might be different, depending on the turn out. Yu have a section that is dedicated to the dancas, straight, jus di dancas, weh yu get the dance songs and di dancas get mad an get fi du dem ting. There's a session, a section that is, dedicated to now the gangstas, where the gansta music dem an di man dem fire di, dem shot inna di air, the finga (finger) shot dem weh dem jus put up dem finga an, get serious an. There's a section now that is dedicated to, the females, weh di man dem stan back an watch di females dem du dem ting an get mad. An den there's a section weh dem call the couple up section. Now the couple up section, is where man an woman, the daggering ting wha dem used to talk bout, man an woman a dance an rae rae rae. Den now yu have di, exhibition section, that sometimes is mal, females alone or, male and female. Yu kno? So, an, is, is, part of what people used to call daggering, but daggering is different from exhibition. When dem, dem, when dem hole a girl a particular way an a yute go up on a box an dive ova an spin an lan ontop of arr, that's exhibition, that's not daggering. Daggering, takes the form of, man an ooman, dancing close. Whole 'eap a pelvic action, that is what, is known as daggering. But, this is the format an it, if, if at a particular, time a di night, there are more females in the dance, than male dancas, then yu get the female section coming out first, weh di woman dem jus get mad an jus du dem ting. But if is the reverse, an there are more, male dancers



there an yu look out, an di party look like it don' have a vibe, den the, the, the, the Selectas start, playing, more dance dance music. ... (Interruption by passer by making enquire) 0:02:35.0 O - Yeah! So, what you si at 'Allianz Happy Thursday', you might not see it when yu come to Expressionz Thursday, because Allianz Happy Thursday, people might come out dressed, jus to stand up an listen some music an not, necessarily get mad. Or yu might not have the dancas them going around' to Allianz Happy Thursday, because dem might haffi pay, but when dem come a di gate a Xpressionz Thursday, dem know dem a go come in free. So once dem reach upstairs a different kinna vibe altogedda (all together). An di Selectas wo, work from dat tu, becau di Selectas want di hypist (most hype) party, an di dancas are, are, a very important part of how, energetic the party get. (H - Hmmhmm) 0:03:19.4 O - Yu kno, so dem always pre, dem always watch, who mi have more of now? Ok, si TNT Squad deh, si Bermuda Kid deh, si M.O.B deh, si Dance Xpressionz deh, so mek mi jus drop some dance tune an, lively up di party. The persons who don' want to dance will watch. If yu have a whole 'eap (heap) a foriegna (foreigners) inna di club dem a go stan up an be entertained. Dem nuh move from di, di man dem an wi seh, woman time now, an di woman dem run forward an di woman dem get mad an do dem ting an yu seh couple up time now, an di man an di woman dem get serious. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno? An then, yu also have to, play for, when mi seh gangsta now wi go, when wi seh gangsta wi borda on, some a th, the tugs dem from the community or, the DJs cau the DJs waan here fi dem music tu (H - Hmmhmm) yu kno, so yu drop couple Bounty Killa, far Bounty Killa inna di party an Bounty Killa is spending. Bounty Killa buy two bottle a Hennessy, a \$9500 dolla fi a bottle a Hennessy. Yu kno, an wha yu haffi pay fi yu, weh, who yu consida (consider) yu tugs now, yu tugs are yu spenders as well, these are the guys who gwain buy a Rose Malt fi \$12000 dolla, who a go buy a, bottle a Hennessy, who a go buy a half case a Guinness, a half case a Cranberry. So, wi haffi cater to all a dese people an di Selecta have to be instrumental in watching, because any how yu si, a crew of, 8 or 10 man come into the club an dem start buy dem tings, an if yu not playing right, an yu si him wheel out a di club, yu jus lose some revenue cos 'im naa go, maybe 'im naa go come back a di club come, come, party dereso again. So yu haffi mek sure seh yu even it out, even it out. An sometimes di tugs doan waan si tu much man a dance tu. So yu quickly gi di, di, di male danca dem a likkle ting, an den yu quickly gi di female dancas so the, the thugs them can

stan up an be entertained. Cau dem waan si the woman dem a wine up demself an du dem ting. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno?

H - Right

0:05:02.8 O - So is a strategy, an i, i, i, what happen this week, might not happen next week, is not the same format.

H - And, but then what about the energy? I, I noticed, what what do you feel, what, **what goes through you when you're actually dancing?**

0:05:17.7 O - Is a, is a state of, wil' abandonment boss! Is, is, is weh di music du to you, depending on di selection cos, there are times when a Selecta jump from one, place to a nex place an it t'row yu off completely because that's, that's not the energy that you were feeling. So, 'im drop di ketch, 'im drop di vibe, him drop the energy, yu kno! But, there are some selectors that undastan what is happening and dem watch your vibe becuase dem si seh yu gaan to a place where, yu are now totally consumed by the music, an 'im keep it in that vain. But is a moment of losing yuself (your self) an establishing who you are, an many times telling your story, t'ru, t'ru yu body language an yu dance (H - Hmmhmm), yu kno? Showing that you want, to be a part of what is happening within the dancehall. You want to show that you are worthy of, being there. Yu kno! So if the, the, the energy is cross! Yu lose yuself sometimes. Hol' on (phonecall interrupts).

0:06:35.3 O - Yeah man, so

H - Hmmhmm, right, right, ok then. Well tha's really soun like, oh, there is one thing I wanted to ask but I maybe, I don't kno if maybe tomorrow, yu free tomorrow at all?

0:06:49.7 O - Tomorrow is wha, Thursday?

H - Hmmhmm, because I'm doing something with Patsy, but I'dda like pass it t'ru you tu, becau I si someting (laugh) maybe yu doan even notice it yuself, but I si certain tings (O - Aahaa) I writing a little papa tu tr, try an look at ho Rastafari kinna

influence popular music, an hmmm, like seh, trying to look at what is the relationship at the moment. Because, (O - Hmmhmm) because yu kno with Reggae it had, it was always very clear.

0:07:26.0 O - Yeah man, an, an an di fact, the fact that Rasta dominated reggae, an dancehall came almost immediately afta reggae, the influence is still there. The influence is there with some a di steps, the influence is there with how wi talk, aarhmmm, a whole heap a di yute dem seh Jah kno star, a whole heap a di yute dem, aarhm seh Ja, if dem a, if dem a talk bout, aarhmm, the Almighty. The Average city yute a go seh, "no man a Jah me rae, rae, rae!", yu kno wha mi a seh? So that influence, because wi came directly out of reggae into dancehall, yu kno! An is the same people. So even if it bran, even though it branch out into ting deh, into dat, cos some of our stronga (stronger), reggae/dancehall acts are, are, wear locks. IOctane, Sizzla, aarhmm dis yute here, aarhmm Taurus Riley, yu undastan wha mi a seh? So, so, so the, the, the, the knot is still there, the knot is not severed, it is still there. All, all a di dancehall yute dem a go seh, if yu seh, Jesus or Jah, a Jah dem a seh. Jah, which is coming straight out a di vain of Rasta, yu kno! So the, the link is still there, very strong. Is jus that, mos' a dem not gwain grow dem hair, mos a dem not gwain adhere to all the rules and laws of what Rasta is saying now, yu know wha mi a seh? But they will tell yu that dem a Rasta inna dem heart. Yu so there's a very strong knot there still.

H - Hmmhmm, alright. We will hav to tek that one further, (O - Yeah man) because there's some contrary (laugh) discussions that I've heard that (O - Yeah man) And also I want yu to know, because all the, the link with, with hmm, the traditional forms, I' like to talk to yu about that (O - Yeah man, yeah man) But I know time-wise, both of us the time a beat wi now, so I (O - mi call yu an tell yu) tanks very much an we're ending the discussion for now. Alright? Respect!

## **Appendix 2.**

### **24 Interview with Tippa 25.08.2010 (0:49:25.6 duration trans - Scramble)**

0:00:00.3 H - Ok, so today is the 25th

0:00:04.5 T - Today is the 25th (H - Yeah), of the 8th, 2010.

H - Right and we're (T - Yeah man) here at the Pegasus, I'm talking to Tippa. So hmm Tippa, can you start by giving me yu full name an an explaining, ummm, what you do.

0:00:23.8 T - Ok, hmm, well as yu say earlier on, explain myself, mi, my name is Fredrick Moncrieffe, aka Tippa. Hmm yu might be wondering why I get Tippa. Hmm, I used to walk on my ball of my foot on left foot and flat on one foot until when it get better I still do it, so they give me da name deh from 1980. So I've been having that name from 1980, Tippa. That soun like bout 30 year ago. (Laugh) Mi nuh so ole doh. (Laugh)

H - Right, right! (laugh)

0:00:51.5 T - Alright, hmm, What I do? I am a,. Well currently I hold 4 titles under my belt. Arrmm, I'm a dancer first, I'm a choreographer. I am a teacher and I am a entertainer. Each category is different and each category can be fused into each other, because if you employ me tro be a dancer, I can dance, whilst I putting choreography together or if yu say Tippa man, demonstrate a dance routine or come an demonstrate a dance move, which is teaching again, I also can do dat in that field. So currently I'm holding four titles under my belt as Tippaa, the dancer, the choreography, the teacher, the entertainer.

H - Hmmhmm, alright. So, in terms of the field that you're working in, you're working in Jamaican popular dance?

0:01:47.0 T - Yes, the most, yes popular dance. Yu have popular dance, yu have popular music, yu have popular dance places, meaning where yu go to, to enjoy yuself. So I'm actually there, in the sense of I've been there from before, meaning in

the early 80s, early 90s the dance move that come out, hmmm, in Jamaica, I know them from, from those time until now. An even the fresher ones that are coming out now, I still can do them. Even, no matter how new it is. So I would say the popular dance, I'm very, familiarised with what's going on right now.

H - Right, so can you tell me about the dancehall scene an, and hmmm

0:02:24.7 T - Yu mean the space where we keep, where the music play?

H - Yeah, about the space as well as, as hmm, what it is. Ok you, you explain what dancehall is to you then.

0:02:35.3 T - Alright! Well, a lot of people look at dancehall several differently way in the sense of, dancehall can be, uhmm, a fashion,. Alright dancehall, let me tell yu, dancehall is music, dance fashion an the venue. That is dancehall. Want me to break it down smalla? Music! we haffi use the music to perform, we have to have the space where people come together. Hmmm, see people dancing along with the music. Then you'll say is a fashion now because y, yu dress the hottest. Yu try to dress the hottest cau there'll be music, they'll be someone there to videotape, so yu want to look hot on the video. So a jus four categories. So music, dance, fashion an the venue. I would say yes, if somebody say what ia dancehall? I will say, dat is dancehall, those four stuff.

H - Alright, an can you tell me how dancehall come about, where it come from?

0:03:31.1 T - Alright, it a come from really way back, in the sense of, a Ska, yu know the song 'Jamaican Ska, skanna na nah na!' Yu know that song? Yeah. It really a come from deh so. Even before that, it a come from Jonkunnu days, cau yu have some of the steps that's in Jonkunnu, we, we use them in the early 90s. Like the 'Police man', I gwain show yu it later, but like the 'Police man', they call the 'Policeman', we have it on the dance name, hmm, weh yu, weh yu swing to the side so we call it, uurrr, it nuh inna mi head right now, mek a see now. Da da da da da da da. Yu have 'Police man', yu hav 'Arsehead' (horsehead), yu have arrr, Jon, arr 'Jonkunnu step', yu have 'Inching', yu have some of those Jonkunnu moves where, if yu fuse them with then an now, they look simila, some of the moves dem look simila to what, Jonkunnu. So yu

know, an Jonkunnu is coming from way back. Years, years a back, so, I would say, I would say with the dancing now an then, is jus some slight changes. Probably jus some smooth arms, or a little different with the foot. Or a little different with the head. Yu know, but actually, if yu look at it, if yu know dancing from then, if somebody, who know, Jamaica cultural dance from a earlier, an den l, look at what they doing now, they almost look alike. So dats why I would say dem nuh really deh far from each other. Yu kno?

H - Right, right, Ok. So can you tell me then in terms of, well, can you take me through the different eras them.

0:05:05.5 T - Alright, so you have. I would say Jonkunnu first, right? Dat a weh wi, weh, weh, weh mi know of some a de moves dem. But, really from weh me know, from Ska, then we have Rock Steady, then yu have Reggae, then yu have Dancehall. An mi nuh tink it a go go nuh furdda. Or befor, before the reggae, well the reggae we'd a call it 'one-drop', so you have de Sk, yu have de Ska, yu have de Rocksteady, yu have the Reggae an dan yu have dancehall. Why some people would say, how yu fi seh Reggae and den yu say Dancehall, whats the difference between Reggae and Dancehall? The difference between Reggae and Dancehall, Reggae is like the Bob Marley sec, side of it. The 'one-drop', the the the the the, the one-drop riddim, we'd say is like the Reggae side, but the uptempo beat, I would say is more Dancehall.

0:05:52.6 T - Why I would say there's a difference between the Reggae and Dancehall? Becau the Dancehall is more uptempo. The beat kicking so yu intend to, with the, with the, with the Regge now yu wi jus, yu kno? Rock yu body an jus, meditate more to the music. Then with the Dancehall now yu intend to move yu foot, yu han' yu elbow, yu shoulda, yu neck, yu ches', yu eye, yu nose, yu lip, yu toe, yu knee, yu ankle, anywere can move. 0:06:16.2 T - Yu kno, yu intend to do that once its dancehall. An if the rhythm is more going fassa than a 45 rotation, yu intend to, to move yu body more to the dancehall. As a say, while with the reggae now is more a one-drop with the Bob Marley scene, the the the the, the Louie Culture scene, the the, the the the, the Peter Tosh section yu kno? The Sanchez, them artist deh, yu kno? Wid de one-drop yu can undastan seh dat would be like the reggae side of it. (H - Right) A desso me'da really seh me know it from. From me se, from dose four section come up.

H - Right. Ok, so hmmm, some people might argue, cau I've heard it argue dat hmm, **reggae and dancehall** are not related, and that they are two diff, separate things.

0:07:10.4 T - Yeah, thats what I was saying earlier on, say the reggae is more a one-drop. One-drop mean ass I say, li, like how yu'da listen to a Bob Marley, Do do dudo do do du do. Thats more a one-drop. Yu, yu yu wouldn' really like, dance out haqrdcore to that. Yu would more like, rock yu body or rock yu shoulda or give a likkle small side to side skank. But wid de dancehall now, like yu, yu'da, 'pon de riva, pan de bank, kick out yu foot becau yu foot dem nuh', yu kno? You would prefer like, yu waan move di wholla body for dat one. So I wouldn't say the two a dem is the same, but one is coming from one. Cau there was reggae first before, yu have di dancehall. An we not sayig that the reggae is done, or finish. We're just saying the two a dem is fused in the sense that one is more uptempo, so i, if somebody play a song now and say alright Tippa, which, weh, weh yu'da classi classify this as a reggae or a dancehall? Just by listen to di beat, yu can know, if is a, yes is a reggae, song.

H - Hmmhmm

0:08:08.8 T - An den if yu hear a different one now, yu can say ok well this a dancehall, why? Because the beat is more uptempo. Yu can do a lot of stuff to it. No, not saying that yu cyaan do a lot of stuff to the reggaei yu kno! But the more uptempo people who, go more is jus to see dat. Yu kno? So that's why I would say, I would say it's separate in the sense of the beat, but not in the sense of the music. (H - Ok) Yes.

H - Right, so its separate in terms of the beat, but the music (T - The music, yes) is the same.

0:08:36.4 T - Cyaa yu can sing a song on a uptempo beat, an den yu can, mix it on a down tempo beat yu kno!

H - Right.

0:08:43.9 T - Cu if I right a song I can say, ok, mi waan do it on a uptempo beat, you jus haffi sing it likkle faster, but if yu want dem put it on a one-drop, on a reggae

beat, yu can sing it a little slower. So the difference is jus withiin the beat (H - Hmmhmm), putting it to the reggae an di dancehall.

H - Right, right. Ok, so tell me is, is there **dance for reggae?** Was there dance?

0:09:04.7 T - For reggae? Yes. An di dance is to be yu stay, yu don' really ackle up yu body. Yu don' really move aroun so much, is like yu stay one place. They call it 'rent-a-tile'. Yu jus stay one place an jus do a uppa bo, uppa body rock an yu might do a one skank wid yu foot, but not much, yu don' move all over the floor as if it was, a dancehall weh yu know yu run up an down or, yu do some move weh yu a, yu, de space hav to be wide, for yu to move. Han , foot, everyting in one. Yu kno? Like dat so, (H - Yeah), yeah, so basically dat mi da seh f, for dat right dere, yu kno!

H - Right. Do you remember any of the, any particular, hmm **eras in terms of the reggae** itself then?

0:09:53.2 T - Weh yu mean? Music wise? Alright yu have music dat pl, music (H - Music dance wise) Alright, yu have dancing song dat are, dat is in reggae yu kno! For instance, before the uptempo used to have a s,s, on a down on a one-drop beat dey call 'one foot skank yu do di one foot skank, everyone inna di dance do one foot skank', and dat is a one-drop, but, dat, dem used to dance den before di upempo now, so I would seh, well yu used to have dancing then, but on a one-drop beat, but tru the uptempo beat now, they switch from dat, an come more uptempo with dat, an they give a different name. So with the, with the one-drop now, yu have dancing song fi dat. Yu have like di, as I say 'one foot skank', yu used to have a ting dem call de 'Della Move', its almost on a one-drop beat as well. 'Du di della move, du di della move', thats almost like a one-drop, but it was almost changing ova. (H - Hmmhmm)

0:10:46.3 T - An if yu listen to some a Yellow Man song, yu hear the transaction from the change ova from the reggae tu, the dancehall. If yu coulda get a hmm, hmmm a a Yellow Man CD you'll hear d. d. de trans-formation from the reggae to di dancehall, because he sing some of the songs in reggae, an sing, some of his song, in dancehall. So yu know? Yu can use a lot of some odda artist as well. Arrmm, de de de de de de de ded de, Arrmmm, some a those long time artist such as arr, General Trees, yu coulda use some a fi him song weh yu hear di difference. Some a di



Admiral Bailey songs, arrmm, arrrr, but more, more those long time artists from in the early 80s, yu can listen some a their song, Buju Banton, yu can listen some a fi him songs to as well, an yu'da ear. Even, even singgas. Some, some of the songs that Sanchez sing, yu have some people skank to them as well, bu, but they are mainly on a one-drop. Yu kno? (H - Right) Yeah

H - Ok. So now, if yu tell mi about the dancehall itself now. An, can yu begin to outline and **chart the progression of dancehall** as it came into the form that we have now?

0:12:02.3 T - Alright. For me now, mi a say well the dancehall, start tek ova from the, from in the 90s, like 90, 91 step up, becau one of the most popular dancehall song I would say take the dancing to aneva, another level is the song called Bogle. Arrr, I think Buju Banton sing that song. Bogle, 'Bogle a di arder fi di day, the wickedest style from outta JA, Bogle, mi love to see di yute dem a dweet so rock so. Yeah, yu kno dat song? Yeah! An dat came out in 92. Dat came out in 92 weh di worl look at and seh well, Jamaica come in with a new dance, but yu have dances befor that, cau yu di have, 'Dela Move', yu di'ave, hmm 'Tatti', yu did have 'Worl dance' as I waas saying, it an di, it an di 'Police Man' is de same ting. Worl dance and 'Police Man' is the same move yu kno. Is di same dance move, an dat is Jonkunnu move, but yet still we change di name an wi call it 'Worl dance'. But, I would say from in the early 90s, from 90 91 come up to now, I would say di dancehall wid di moves, have changed.

H - Hmmm. Sorry yu say worl dance and which one?

0:13:12.7 T - Worl dance and Police, yu know Police? Di dance weh name 'Police'? The one weh go like dis? (Demo) Dirt, dirt dirt.

H - Ok, right.

0:13:20.2 T - Yeah, dem hav dat an call i' 'Worl dance', a di same step, but wi kindda jus lift di foot a likkl higher, so yu kno? But yu same, same, same, same set a steps. Same st a, same set a walk tru , same set a, stuff like dat, so mi nuh kno. Hmm, mi a seh from desso it start, then mutually artist dem start come up wid songs. Especially

in 2000 now weh, endorse, dancing, fah yu have a lot a song weh sing about dancing now yu kno. Yu even have a song weh have in 24 dance moves. Jus one song change wid 24 dance moves in, within the one tree minutes. Yeah, a it name stop an, di song, name 'Stop an go'. So yu have a song which has 24 different move within the one song. So yu, yu fin' seh a lot a artist now start singing song about dancing. An another ting pertaining to that withiin the dancehall setting, there's two ting dat mek di dance, or two tings dat mek di dance, really come alive. I'm talking about the venue now. The dancing, one, the place where its keeping two, and, the songs that are played there to endorse the dancing, or the dancers. The songs what are playing to endorse what the dancers are doing. When yu go to a dance right now, widout dancing within the dancehall setting, is, is as if it not goin' be nice.

H - Hmmhmm

0:14:54.8 T - Cau yu wi have people come an stan up and not doing nuttin. Stan up an jus lidten to the music only. While yu wi have p, dancers there weh can dance, as yu hear a particular song dem jump inna di middle a di ring. Like how yu'da have, yu know like how yu'da have di, di long time set in, weh yu have di, like yu have a nine night and yu have people inna di middle, (H - Yeah) a dance? An a chant when yu hear a particular song? Well de, a ring mek an den de dancers dem go out deh an start chant to di popular song.

H - Hmmhmm

0:15:22.4 T - So if yu, if i, if yu, somebody like yu know, weh would kno from dem time deh how di, ritual setting pertaining to a (H - hmm), yu kno? Pertaining to like all a, weh yu call i'? like a Revival setting (H - Yeah), how yu'da have di people dem wid di pencil an di rum an di cangle an di ting pon di table an everybody dance roun it? Sumhmm like dat, but wi do'n have di cangle ting and dem ting deh setting like dat again. We jus have a open space, a particular song play or several popular song play, di danca jus jump out, chant to di song, sometime we even have face-off fi dancers who waan show a nex' danca seh, him can dance betta dan him or, him have di move much betta dan 'im. Yu kno, so (H - Yeah), sumhmm like dat. Pertaining to di dancehall setting, yu kno?

H - And, some dancing dats called the **face off!**

0:16:10.0 T - Face-off, yeah, weh yu have a open space an a particular set of song playing, an a danca wi go out an do a likkle ting, an den the nex daughta, danca will go out an try to du someting betta fi get a good crowd response. So who get di bess crowd response will be like di winna. We don' win no money naa nu'hn yu kno, but, once yu get a good crowd response, yu wi get di, yu will be a winner, right there, Or yu might get couple girls fi yuself or, yu know what I'm saying? So, tru yu perform good (H - Right), yeah, Yess

H - Right, so tell mi someting, as a danca now, **what mek yu dance** when yu go to the dancehall, or, or why do you go to the dancehall?

0:16:50.9 T - Alright, hmm, yu know there's a time an a place for everyting? (H - Hmmhmmm). Time fi food, time fi eat, time fi drink, time fi party, time fi enjoy yuself. Well for me, I used to be like, more laid back when mi go to di dancehall setting, cau yu usaully go dere fi see what's going on. (H - hmmhmm). Yu see the steps an yu see the dancing an yu see dis an yu see dat. Yu see di fashion, yu see di latest shoes, di latest hair style, di latest close, di latest, bangle, watch, hat, so yu fine dat when yu, I used to be a person who go dere, but don't dance, just laid back, an, it used to be boring to me. Yeah, I decide that, yeah ok, anywhere I go now, mi jus a go start it an once you start some, yu, yu wi fine seh odda people come in. An join in wid yu. Yeah? (H - Hmmhmm). So when yu, when I go to a dancehall setting now, as I seh, as I seh earlier on is jus about the music, for yu wi hear a particular song playing weh yu like, an yu feel like jus move yu body, move yuself, an get involve an den people will come an join yu, if there's dancers there. Nobody dere, people jus come stop, tek a picture, cau dem like how yu dance. Video it cau dem like how yu, yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm). 0:17:59.0 Do it, do yu stuff, but odda from dat,. I am more like a, as I seh, I have four tings unda mi belt so, ,i wi go out an daance, if am not dancing I am teaching, if I'm not teaching I'm choreographing, if I'm not choreographing I'm entertaining. An sometimes I go out an give a likkle joke, pertaining to entertaining. Yu kno? So. (H - Hmmhmm, but), If I'm not dancing I'm being one of those three stuff. (H- Hmmhmm). Yeah!

H - But I want to focus a little bit on the dancing right now, (T - hmmhmm) becau I want to know, when yu seh yu hear a song dat yu like, what, what is it about the song dat yu wi like an how yu feel, what yu, **what yu feel when yu dancing** to it? What happen to yu.

0:18:45.4 T - Ok, alright, yu kno dat, everybody love different different type a songs, some people love soul song, love hear a souls song, cold bump come up on dem skin or dem feel energised, well is di same way. Hear a jazz song, yu love it, yu cold bump, yu fe, yu hear a nice, calypso song yu hear one nice hmm, western song, well is same wid us in di dancehall. When we hear a popular song dat we like, is like a lot a energy, yu jus get a, energy jus come tu yu body, yur, yu, yu feel energised, yu feel, yu'r on top of di worl' because dere's a song, der's a part in di song or some several moves in di song, dat you like, you know you can do. So what yu do, yu go out an do it, show di publick dat you can do it. Or show the setting where you are that you can do. Far majority of di songs, di dancing song right now, they ar, they are demonstrating, meaning, they tell yu what to do. A song might say, 'alright, fan dem off, fan dem off', an yu do di same ting as 'Fan dem off'. Yu don't try to, do what di songs, is not saying. So if di song say, 'Wave, cut a wave, wave' or 'Falla tru, falla tru' or 'Moo', 'Tump [thump] di sky, tump di sky', yu know yu can do that, that movement. So weh yu do, if the song is playing yu say ok, me know everything bout this song, so I'm gonna do everyting dat the song is saying. So you feel energised at dat moment, yu feel powerful at dat moment, yu feel like yu should be on the floor showing these dance steps. That's how I feel when I'm at the dance and yu hear some song playing dat, well this is a song that I thinnk I should go out and perform it. Said like how a soul song id playing asnd yu seh, yu cyaaaqn dance the soul song but, yu can sing out di song. (H - Hmmhmm) 0:20:26.6 T - An yu, yu, lets say is a Witney Houston song yu try fi be like, sound like Witney Houston, because yu love how di soun' yu love how di, yu love how yu mek it feel at dat time. (H - Hmmhmm). So that's the same way with the dancing. If a song is playing dat yu feel like you should be dancing yu jus, go enjoy yuself.

H - Uhaa. An then what is, **what is the process you go through** whilst you're dancing then?

0:20:48.0 T - Well, I, is not even a process, yu, yu, wid me, there's not a set ting. There's not a set ting. If song is playing, cau remember I told you that there's several, probably over 200 dancing song right now, where, it don't matter which one playing, you feel energised to that one, cau, look, Bogle sing in ni, de song. 'Bogle a di order a di day' sing in 1992, well right now if yu hear dat song, yu want to do it becau it have a, it have a body language to it once yu doing dat move is jus, yu jus feel good doing it. (H - Hmmhmm). So if dere's a song weh yu like, lets say, lets say, pan di river pan di bank weh Elephant Man sing. 'Pan di river, pan di bank', yu, yu have certain c, moves dat yu du to weh di song or what he's saying about di song. An yu know yu can do dem, so once dat is, song is being played, yu try to do whatever the artist is saying within the, on the song. So is not like, is not like, yu hol' back fi seh ok, alright, yu not gwain do this or do that, once the song is playing yu track, yu actually, moving to what the song is saying. So is not like is a process.

H - Hmmhmm, right.

0:21:57.8 T - Or, or once dat song play yu can stop and wait til anotha song weh yu like aggain playing, while you'll have anodda dancer, the song yu that yu not dancing he like dat song, or she like dat song, she wi seh ok mi like dat song, far yu have certain songs weh male dance only (H - Hmmhmm). An yu have certain songs weh female dance only within the dancehall setting. A figot to mention dat. Yu have certain song weh, male dont dance dos songs, but is a dancehall song.

H - Right.

0:22:24.3 T - Yu get, yu get weh mi aseh?

H - Yeah.

0:22:27.5 T - Yeah! An yu have certain song weh, or mos' a di song dem weh, right now, or mos' a di daance moves right now, are male/female. Yu know dat? (H - Hmmhmm). Yeah but some a di song dem dat some a di artist dem sing is really for females. Because a a a artist is singing a song seh, 'alright, go down pon yu head girl,

hol up yu foot' yu, no man naah go really go pon him head! (H - Hmmhmm). An open him foot an. Yu see what am saying? (H - Hmmhmm). Dat's why him say it about a girl, a female. Him say ok, well, 'all a di gyal dem, if yu know seh yu look good, ki, put one foot inna di air! Alright if yu know if yu look good split mek mi si'. No man naah go waango go down go split, because him, he saying it, to di ladies. 'All a di ladies do dis', yu kno! It a go look a way fi si im a seh it to di ladies, an den a man go do it. So yu have songs weh, is only for female and yu have songs for male an female.

H - Hmmhmm.

0:23:19.6 T - So, a song wi a play now weh everybody can du, mean male or female, 'pon di riva, pan di bank', male an female can dodat song. An den yu have a song now weh seh, 'wine gyal wine like a gypsy'. No man nah go really wine like a gypsy.

H - Hmmhmm.

0:23:32.7 T - Yu get what I'm saying, cau yu si, gypsy a di, a di, queen, di likkle, genie wid di, wa do di Egyptian dance. (H - right). Yeah, although man do it yu know but, (H - Di belly danca?) Yeah, a dibelly dance a way, so yu naah go fin' seh a man a go really do a dance weh a female fi du. Him a go leave it up to di female. So if 'pan di riva' play first, den him, di ar, arrmm, di selecta wi play a female song, an den di female dem dance. Yu do', yu leave di space an leave di female dem, (H - Hmmhmm) for dem to shine. (H - Hmm) Yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm). So, a da, a da level deh mi see it at.

H - Yeah, but then the thing is though, hmm, whilst yu saying it's instructive then, how t, how does the individual p, get t o shine then? If yu only doing, the, the instructive songs?

0:24:21.1 T - Yeah! Yeah that's what I'm saying, with all a di dance move, yu wi have some people can do di dance move good. Some people can do di dance move to a tee. Meaning acurately, meaning perfectly. An yu have some people cyaan do it perfectly but they're still trying. (H - Right, right). Dat's where I step in now. I step in, when I say I step in, if yu need to learn the move to a tee, I can break it down in syllables,

like how yu'da have a long word, an yu haffi break it down when yu spelling it? Dat's how I do dance move. (H - Hmmhmm). I break it down as small as possible so no matta which nation, no matta which country, no matta where yu from, I can do dat. Break it down as small as possible. For you to learn it. No matta how it look hard, alright, yu might be watching a video an say' O my God, how dem do dat dance move?' Trus' mi, it's very easy. Very easy. That's my job to show you how easy it is. For right now, right now in Jamiaca, I am the only one, right now can show yu, can break down the movement as small as possible.

H - Hmmhmm.

0:25:26.0 T - I have proven it several times, arrmm. People have even come here from London, America Canada, an, an I've shown them how, I can break down the moves as possible, as small as possible, an then from there now they say Ok, well Tippa, we need fi yu to come an show some other people how to do this. (H - Right, right) Yu kno so, (H - right) I've done, I've done some workshops.

H - So that is the teaching side of it! (T - Teaching side) What a, what about in terms of the performance? Because the thing is hmm, the some, you were talking about the instructive, but **all the dances are instructive?**

0:25:59.8 T - Not! Some a dem who, ar, hmm they might be instructive but they sing about the song, or let's say, as I say about the, as a say about the, the, the, the, 'Stop an go', it has 24 different dance moves in it, some a dem tell yu what to do, but some a dem, yu know what to do already so yu don't do it, yu yu yu don't, yu automatically do it already. Arr one a dem yu seh tambarine! Yu know what is a tamborine? (H - Hmm) So yu know seh yu set yu han like a tamborine to do it. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu get what I'm saying? (H - Hmmhmm) One a dem seh, one a dem might seh, dew rain, an yu know how, rain come down! Down like this, so yu du yu fingers like dis. (H - Hmmhmm) Ok? While yu did have one, yu wi, yu did have one say ing, alright, "fan dem off", what is a fan? A fan is sumn dat spin like dis, but weak. (H - Hmmhmm) Fan, off, so yu a tell di person fi move or tell di ting to move (H - Hmmhmm) So is a fan off. Alright yu have a next move call, 'climb di ledda', how yu climb di ledda? Wid yu foot. So what wi u, wi do it wid our hands, wi seh, "climb di ledda, climb di

ledda", yu hear? So difference. Alright dey seh, in, in di song dey seh, "sunlight!" How yu, how as a danca yu show what is a sunlight? We doo in di air like dat, an mek a big circle, so yu clap yu han togedda an den draw a big circle, dat's sunlight. Yu know what I'm saying? If dey say, alright, we even, we even use sports in dancing . We even have a dance name 'Iverson Bounce'. Yu know di Iverson? Iverson di basketball player? We even have a dance call 'Iverson Bounce'. Cau yu know when him bounce di ball suh before him du di tree [three] pointa? (H - Right) We look at dat an say dat woulda be a dance move yu kno! An we take dat from the, an wi call it 'Iverson Bounce'.

H - Hmmhmm

0:27:37.7 T - Yu get what I'm saying? So yu have several songs weh wi tell yu what to do, certain, certain moves wi tell yu what to do, an den yu have certain moves weh automatically yu shoul be, yu should know, how to du it already. (H - Hmmhmm) Dat's why when yu sen dem a while ago about di instructional ammm songs, is not all a dem instructional. Some of them. Alright yu might say signal de plane, (H - Hmmhmm) If yu on a, if, rememba how a, if yu all a airport an see di guy wid di two, ting like dis, an he is doing like dis? We have a dance wid dat in yu see! But yu do it wid a vybe, yu do it wid a up tempo. We don't do it same way like how him would a seh, im would a du like an du dat an, wi du wid a, wid a vybe, yeah? So yu bring yu han togedda, so, is not all a dem, if him seh signal di plane yu automatically know, ok how yu signal di plane? Yu hands togedda or call it or what. So dey have a way of doing each dance move! (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno? So, is not all a dem, gwain tell yu exactly seh yes. Like di tamborine now, him nuh tell yu how fi shake di tamborine. Im jus seh tamborine. Aarrmm, wi, wid di, wid di shakka know yu have di ting weh yu shake, wid di stick wid di two roun' ting, weh yu shake. Yu have a a dance name 'shakka' [shaker], how di Rasta man dem shake it? Yu know? So we have a dance to dat as well. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu get weh mi a seh? "Shakka, shakka", yu jus stamp yu foot an sha, do like yu have a shakka. Yu hav one name higher clap, yu clap so don't? When yu inna church. We seh, 'highya clap', so yu put yu han in di air, so it highya dan normal (H-Hmmhmm) So if yu say highy clap it actually tell yu wha fi du arready. Yu clap high, insteadda! Yu see it? So some a dem wi tell yu automatically what to do an some a dem, yu haffi learn dem. (H - Hmmmhmm) Some one a go seh,



o da dance deh name, da dance deh name 'Back to basic' if cert, yu say du back to basic fi mi, nobody nuh kno what is dat. What is back to basic? Back to basic is a step weh yu, same han, same foot go togedda (demo) see it? dat is back to basic. Yeah? If somebody seh do Bogle cau Bogle out long time, yu lean to oneside, put di body wieght on the right foot, an mek a wave motion wid di upppa body. Yeah? an point in di sky.

H - Uhha

0:29:42.8 T - So, some a dem wi tell yu seh a so Bogle, far if yu seh du Bogle, nobody nah go know, what yu mean Bogle? Bogle nu one bredda from di, nuh one Jamaican, weh, weh, weh he fight fi Jamaica earlier on an ray ray ray? Nobody nuh kno what is it, but some people wil. An some a di move actually tell yu, weh fi du, an some a dem don't. (H - Hmmhmm) So, a dehso it de right now.

H - Right. But then the thing is then, how do you as a, becau, becau dey, its al, **its also competitive. Is i, is it?**

0:30:11.0 T - Yeah! yes its competitive caa, some people have a, if ther's a new dance movement out, some people will try to show that they have it much better than you, although everrbody is doing the same ting.

H - Is it, is it that people only want to show, that they have it better or is it that people waan, (T - Perfrom it?) **create a movement for themself?**

0:30:31.8 T - Yeaah becau dem want a name, yes they want a name for themself. Each, each dancer naow want to, put out a move, weh dey can call their own. Cau I even, I even have several a dem. But is jus dat, which one wi more, out on di road more. Yu unda, yu get, yu try, yu get wha mi a try seh? Alright somebody, lets say we're here right now an yu seh, "alright Tippa, tink up a new dance or buil' up a dance move righ now. An mi seh alright, can buil' yu a dance move call 'Level di grass' yu know. Yu see how, yu see how di grass look level? (H - Hmmhhmm) Mi jus come up wid a idea, 'level di grass'. Dats di name of di dance first! An when mi seh who gwain help mi put sumhm togedda now, an den wi call it 'Level di grass'. Cau see it? It cut, it

cut to a level now weh even. How wi a go du dat now Tippa? Well me now, would a stan' up an seh, "alright, come Tippa, tink up summn, tink up summn, tink up summn, tink up summn. Tink up summn. An mi da seh alright, dis mi a du. "Level di grass, level di grass", yu see wah mi a seh? 0:31:28.8 T - Cau dem, everyting deh pon one level, so a, yu know seh mi jus buil' dat a whaile ago? Mi jus come up wid a new dance 'Level di grass', (H - arh ha) 'Level di grass' or 'Level di playing fiel' [filed]. Mi coulda even call da dance now, 'Level di playing fiel'".

H - Hmmhmm

0:31:42.0 T - So people, alright, mi jus come up wid da dance de now, in order fi me get it on di street an di worl' fi now it! 1. It can be, a artist sing di song, sing about di dance. 2. A go inna a dancehall setting an do it, an tell di selecta, dat dis is a new dance name 'Level di playing fiel', an den once everybody start do it, den yu know seh it reach, its going. (H - Hmmhmm) Get weh mi a seh? It will reach, don' matter how far, if is even two year after mi jus start it, it will reach. Japan, America, anywhere, it will reach. Worse if it go into a new music video. If it go inna a new music video, yu know it tek aff. Far everybody, usually everybody inna di worl' waan know di latest music video come out a Jamaica.

H - Right.

0:32:27.4 T - Right? So, dat a one a di market place fi di dance move. So mi jus come up wid 'Level di playing fiel'. So, an mi a go, mi a go work pan it yu kno! As simple as yu see it, mi a go work pon it. (H - Hmmhmm) The 25th of the fourth, 25th of the 8th, twenty ten, Tippa come wid a new dance move name 'Level di playiing fiel'. (H - Righ!) Yu see it? Simple as yu look pan it. Me a go push it yu know (laugh). Mi a go push it man!

H - I wi seh I was there! (laugh).

0:32:56.2 T - When Tippa build that move, yeah man!

H - Eehi! Alright, so yu either **get the artist to buil' a song on it (T - On it) or yu,**

0:33:03.9 T - Yu carry it to the dancehall setting, the space where di, an den yu ask, yu tell di selecta dat dis is a new dance move, everybody. An im push it i now, seh 'Everybody! Yu need fi du da movement deh as, weh it it name 'Level di playing fiel' come everbody, eehy!" "Level di playing field. ahy ahy, ahy. Level di playing feel" (sung). Yu get weh mi a seh? Den everybody start folla you know. An den once it look good an like everbody can work it, nuh matter if a man or ooman, dat a di key ting when dancing. Once male or female can do it, it will reach far. Di female alone can do it? Only di female alone den, will do it. But a once is a move weh male an female can du, it will go far. Worse if kids love it. If kids love it, it gaaan!

H - Right.

0:33:43.4 T - Gaaan mean it wi, it will tek aff. Cau sometimes di pawa an di slang. True mi know you a Jamaican, yu wi undastan it, mi a seh still (laugh)

H - Right, yeah man. (laugh - both speaking not clear)

0:33:56.3 T - Undastan. Yeah, undastan, yeah undastan yes, but odda from dat, a suh di dance move dem get to move from one place to the next.

H - Hmmhmm. So yu might, you have just created that here, we are not in a dancehall setting,

T - That's what I'm saying.

H - But, do you go through that process spontaneously?

T - Yu keep going at it.

H - No, but I mean that, er, er, do people do it spontaneously, within the dance, dancehall?

0:34:25.9 T - D, Dancehall setting?

H - An jus create a dance on the spot in the dancehall an then,

0:34:30.6 T - A lot of people du dat. A lot a people always du dat. But is jus dat, in arda fi it out dere, people haffi know it an si it. People haffi bi, haffi be talking about it. People have to be talking about, yu move for to go, alright see it, two a wi deh right yasso now, (H - Hmmhmm). In arda fi me push dat, mi haffi go tell a nex' (next) danca seh "Yow, mi hav a new ting yu kno, name 'Level di playing fiel' yu kno! Watch it" (demo) "Level di playing fiel', yow, yow, yow, level di playing field" (sung) Yu see it?

H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm.

0:34:58.5 T - An den d danca seh "si see how news seh Tippa come up wid summn new? Tippa summn new yu kno, name 'Level di playing fiel' yu kno, so it deh ya". An everywhe it go til it start spread spread spread spread spread, till a danca see it now an seh yow, "It bad Tippa, yow, mi like it", an everybody inna di dance start do it. Yu see it (H - Hmmhmm) an everybody start do it now, everywhere yu go, dem a do it. Till a artist here it now an pick it up an seh, "Yow mi like dat, dah dance move deh yu kno, it bad", an start say it an boom it inna one a im song dem whe him sing. An den from desso now, (hand gesture) tek arff. Yeah man. Tek arff like rocket man, like rocket, zoop!

H - Right! **so di artist haffi see yu**, see it,

0:35:37.9 T - See it first (H - And then), sing bout it. (H - Sing about it) 'Bout it yeah! Once him sing about it, den everytime yu hear da song deh, an di song a play, dem a go waan do di move to di song.

H - Hmmhmm, yeah, but I, I notice **there's a energy that moves within the dancehall as the night goes on**. The energy, the ene, there's a energy that moves in the dancehall an I don' know, yu can talk a li, yu know what a talking about?

0:36:11.0 T - Well if yu coulda bruk it down likkle more weh yu mean by energy, cause a seh onc, once, once a particular song,

H - There's a vibe that, that, like seh is also linked towards the selecta as well, when **the selecta start, and then start play one type a music early on and then as the night go by them start,**

0:36:29.6 T - Dem play a nex' set? Yeah, wha would cause dat, wha would cause dat is, sometime di artist weh dem a play right! Alright, lets say dem a play a set a, probably Vybz Kartel song, or a set a Mavado song or a set a Elephant Man song, or a set Bounty Killa song, or a set a Beenie Man song, or a set a Vegas song or a set a, yu kno? up, once yu hear dem artist deh, yu kno dat di riddim gonna be uptempo. So, an den 'im play a several artist on it (H - Hmmhmm), alright, seh him have uptempo riddim playing, yu ave all seven or six artist pan it. An each artist, fi dem song soun good on di one riddim. Is a big vibe dat right desso. Is all five to ten minute wort a vibe, jus desso, jus becau, di riddim weh him a play an di artist dat is on it. So yu fine seh is a nice likkle fifteen minute roun deh, nice, high tempo, seh it a push it, yu kno? An, sometimes a tings weh him seh tu, mek di vibes all get uptempo sometimes is stuff weh him seh. Becau yu wi have seven or ten artist on di one song, an tree a di song dem outta di ten, reffa tu female. An di odda (the other) seven, reffa to male an female. So if im wi play all tree male or female song an den im squeeze in one a di female song, an when im squeeze in one a di female song now, yu know seh yu haffi open di ring an leave di ladies dem. Cau when man si di ladies dem a wine up demself an ting yu kno, a bigga energy dat yu kno (H - Hmmhmm). Yu kno what I'm saying? So if, if, if yu have dem man dem pon di outside, ladies on di outside tu yu kno, but yu have certain song when ladies hear it, dem inna di ring an man always a go waan si how a lady wine up arself (H - Hmmhmm), or jig up arh body or, so yu fine seh when dat now a man a go, buy arh summn or, buy summn fi himself cau di energy level high now. An mi naah talk about smoking naah drugs or nuttin. A just di vibes that is in the dancehall setting why dat energy dere lift. An it doan mus haffi be, alright let's say the energy lif right desso, an yu wi have a nex song now which is on a one-drop riddim 0:38:33.8 T - weh, once yu hear dat song di energy lif again. An dat song yu don' haffi really, inna dancehall seh, a jus di vibe weh wi have at di time, an jus a rock to di beat. Weh yu'dda seh yow, mi like da selecta ya, mi love how im, im, im, im

structure him songs dem, so everybody can feel comfortable. So im wi play a likkle hip hop, im wi play a likkle soul, him wi play a likkle, disco, bout two calypso, an den im go back to dancehall again.

H - Hmmhmm.

0:39:03.4 T - Den im switch it roun again, reggae, den im go to hip hop, yu know jus foriegn hip hop song dem weh, yu kno a gwaan yeah? An den im come back to reggae, den im come back to dancehall. So i, widdin, widdin di dancehall setting, im wi du dat aroun tree to four time. Once im du dat, dance done! (H - Right) Yeah? So once him du, so each one a dem section, section deh can tek, at least a half an hour to a forty-five minutes. (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) So im wi play some soul first, yu know di hottest sets a soul song dem. Di girl dem wi scream about dat. Cau if di latest soul song play yu girl a go waan scream an yu no waan dance wid nuh girl. Di latest hip hop song dem play. Den some reggae, like some one-drop weh, everbody like an waan listen tu. Den, yu wi have di latest dancehall song dem, so dat wi all tek a nice forty-five minutes to a hour. (H- - Hmmhmm) An once yu du dat, yu go roun again an do a nex set, but different song yu kno, yu nu play di same set a song each time. (H - Hmmhmm) Each time yu go roun is a different set. So yu wi ha four set a dat for di wholr night. So di dance, usually di dance start 12 o'clock or 1 o'clock, so by 4 o'clock it finish (H - Hmmhmm). So dat energy deh weh wi ave widdin each one a dem four hour deh! Yu kno! Yn yu, yu a go always ave a set a energy widdin da hour deh. An if is even twenty minutes out a dat, but each set, each one a di set is a vibe yu kno, but is a different flow a vibe. A different flow meaning di, well yu have soul music as a was saying earlier on. Soul music is a different flow dat again yu kno! An den yu have di latest, like jerk an dem song deh yu know everbody like dance it. Yu know di jerk song weh di two bwoy them sing. "Jerk, suh mi a go jerk", 'spenky legs' an dem song deh? People wil, skank to dem song deh (H - Ok), as well.

H - Right.

0:40:48.6 T - Yeah! So yu change roun di ting again an yu do to likkle, di likkle one-drop song an then, yu kno! An den the next time when im come roun im might say, no man mi naah, mi a dro, mi a go drop some Bob Marley now (H - Right) An den im

drop some Bob Marley, im go inna dah likkle era deh, den im come inna some ole, ole, soul, but dem popula at di time. An den im come inna a likkle, one likkle reggae, couple likkle reggae and den im seh alrigh, latest song dem again. (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) So, yu fine seh, widdin a four our setting, yu wi, always fine, fine a twenty or a half a hour uptempo vibe.

H - Hmmhmm. Right. right (T - Yeah man). But I notice though that, for example when yu go a 'Hot Monday', (T - Hmmhmm) like, or even in, Xpressionz Thursday, yu yu si, at the end is like if there's a, a vibe weh, is almost like, **everybody go wile! [wild!]**

0:41:41.6 T - Yeah, becau di dance soon finish, (H - Hmmhmm) so di, ar, di selecta realise seh now, hi have 10 mins before, (H - Hmmhmm) di ting done. (H - Hmmhmm) So wah him waan du know? Play di hottest set a song dem peace! Peace a dem. Piece, piece, piece, piece. So him wi play like 30 second to 45 seconds. Him wi seh, alright yu know seh mi have 12 song lef? An mi a go play 45 seconds out a each one a dem. (H - Hmmhmm) So 'im wi try fi du dat an hype up di crowd, so when, everbody a hear an seh, "Yow, yu kno seh di selecta! Mi love how him juggle cau, him gi yu a nice likkle vibe before wi go weh yu kno? 'Im mek everybody dance an swet an enjoy demself an, promota feel nice an, yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah man! So, yu wi always fine' dat at di end a a session. Yu wi always fine' dat a one end a, each session. Wedda I' indoor or outdoor. (H - Hmmhmm, right). Yu kno?

H - Ok, armm, can you tell me, for you now, at that moment when, when, those short short selections coming an di dance get hot, **how you feel den? What, what do you go through?**

0:42:49.5 T - Two ting yu can du! Is eeda [either] yu dance, for the twelve 45, fi each a di 45 seconds weh 'im a go du. Or, dem hav a ting dem call name 'Buss a blank'. (H - Hmmhmm). Yu kno weh wi mean by 'Buss a blank?' (H - No). Pow! Pow! Pow! Pow! (H - Right!) Like tru di song, full a vibe, yu decide seh, yu kno! We juss a go bus a blank, but wi nu really waan promote like, gun ting, I'm jus saying, in orda fi (H - Hmmhmm, yeah) fi you seh, mi like da song deh! An di selecta naar go hear him seh, him wi seh (high pitch) 'Selecta mi like da song deh!' Him naar go hear yu, but if

yu seh 'Yow, yow! Pow, pow, pow, pow! Him realise seh yow, pull up di tune, play it ova again. (H - Yeah) Pull up di tune an play it ova again becau di vibe nice. So yu a buss a blank inna di air. Bow, bow, bow, bow, bow, bow, bow! (H - Hmmhmm) Or yu can seh "pull up, pull up, pull up! Or, yu can seh "money pull up", far yu have a ting in di dance now, freshly call 'money pull', weh yu pay di selcta, fi play back di song. (H - Ok!) Weh yu gi 'im a 500 dollar an seh "Yow! Play back da song deh fi mi". Or yu gi'im a1000 dollar an seh "play back da song deh fi mi". Money pull up, yeah, weh yu have, yu kno! (H - Right) A song might soun' good, suppose you de deh now an yu hear a nice Bob Marley! A wicked wicked Bob Marley n yu seh "yow! pull up da tune deh fi mi, a tune. Yu fi do wah, 500 dolla gi him an 'im pull it up. By time di dance done a nuff money 'im mek yu kno!

H - Right, right.

0:44:08.4 T - Sometime dem give it out back yu kno! Sometimes dem give it out to di girls dem, inna di dance yu kno? Sometimes. (H - Hmmhmm) Sometimes dem give it back out in di crowd like dem might seh "Any gyal can come out ya so now an dance da song ya wicked! Wi get t'ree, [\$3000] dolla or \$2000 dolla. (Talk over so inaudable)

H - right so that, that money is what dem get paid fi, (T - To, yeah!) for mi hear dem all along, an...

0:44:28.8 T - A dat, a, dem, yu hear di beat in deh don't? (H - Yes, yes, yeeeah) Any girl can come yasso come dash it out! Yu know what dat mean tu? (H - Hmm) Wha dash out out mean? (H laugh) Yu nuh know man! Yu kno (H laugh)

H - Is when dem start ....

0:44:40.4 T - Yu start, get raw wid di song, wid di music (H - Yeah) Dem start get outrageous. (H - Explicit) Not, yeah! not, not in di sense to say, it slack yu kno! is jus dat! Is jus a vibe (H- Hmmhmm) Cau dem might split an split is not, spli, split mean a ballet. Split mean, is a different dancing tu. (H - Yeah) But in the dancehall setting, tru dem might dress certain way (H - An spirit might - inaudible) Yeah, upside down



an pon dem head an pon dem neck an, roll-ova an, an dem might wear some scimpy scimpy close, yu might say it slack, but it nu really slack. When iee, when iee, when iee inna a theatre setting, people do it inna tights, full tights an split same way! An jump inna di air an split, an all dem sumn deh so?

H - Cau inna ballet, dem only have on di leotard ....

0:45:20.1 T - Den, al-right, nuttn at all, yes so, mi wouldnt say, like, yu kno, so yu'da seh, yu'da fine seh any time dem seh, alright, "Any girl can come up yasso now come dash iee out, wi gi dem \$2000 dolla". An dem wi play all a, all a, all a, all a, a song weh, females alone fi dance. (H - Hmmhmm) An once dat happen, yu kno man a seh, "Yow! Money pull up again", an him trow all anodda \$1000 dolla gi di selecta fi pull up di song. An dat usually 'appen, when di ting a dun as well tu. Eeidda before, likkle before, or when it a finish dem seh alright, money pull up. Yu kno?

H - Right (T - Yeah, yeah, yu kno?)

0:45:56.2 T - Yeah man. Dancing not, dancing is very nice man, there's summn weh, summn weh keep mi going yu kno? An I have been dancing for a long time now. (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah man, long long, long time now. Mi a dance from when nutt'n naah mek from dance fi mi yu kno. (H - Hmmhmm) Becau di dancehall, (H - Right) Mi a du it from when nutt'n naah, yu naah mek nutt'n from it. (H - Hmmhmm) Hmmhmm an di training weh mi go tru, mi go tru a small set a training, meaning, tru di JCDC! Jamaica Cultural Development, yeah (H - Right) Mi did, mi did enta one festival competition wid dem (H - Hmmhmm) inna 1990 an from desso now, yu fine seh, mi get likkle training now an dem tell mi how fi, use up di stage, how fi perform, how fi, yu haqve t'ree tings to a performance, yu have di start, yu have di middlean yu have di end, yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm) An dem show mi, how fi, execute dem t'ree ting deh, yu kno? So (H cough), mi get fi grow inna da, setting deh so yes, once, yu performing, an it has, it has grown wid me up to today because, aarrmmm, a perform wid artist already, alright? An while performing wid di artist, mi ova perform, wid di artist. Mi nuh know if yu get weh mi a try seh to you? (H - Hmmhmm) So like di artist is on stage performing, an den me inna di backgroun a perform, an a me di people dem a notice instead a di artist. (H - Hmmhmm) Becau tru mi use da, da, da,

da, dat t'ree D performance de, in di sense of, a start a middle an a end. (H - Hmmhmm) 0:47:25.7 T - So once mi start, mi a summn weh di people dem, haffi, yu affi look at mi whenmi a do it. An den mi have a even likkle middle section before mi done perform, an den when, mi a go leave di stage now, so yu need fi come out wid a bang! When leaving di (H - Yeah) stage. Yeah! So mi, any time mi a perform, mi always use dem deh. (H - Hmmhmm) Mi always use dat t'ree ting. (H - Hmmhmm) An mi always come out, Good, mi always come out, perfect an mi always come out to be a leada or a winna. Mi neva lose nu contest yet. (H - Hmmhmm) When mi du dem likkle ting deh so.... (H - Hmmhmm) Yu fine seh yu kno! Well dat a jus me, pon a one an one an a nadda ting tu, mi kno know if yu can jot it in? From 1980 to todeh (today), I tink dere has been nine hundred an ninety four or ninety, no, nu ninety, nine hundred an probably bout eighty odd dance move, from 1980s to tedeh! which is 2010!

H - Nine hundred an,

0:48:15.4 T Nine hundred an probably bout eighty four. Yeah!

H - Different dance,

0:48:22.6 T - Different dance move, yeah. An mi can do all a dem.

H - An yu know all a dem?

0:48:32.0 T - Aaall a dem! All of them. (H - Right, right) From 'One Foot Skank' come right up. 'One foot skank', 'Della Move', 'Tatti', 'Worl a Dace', 'Ova Di Wall', 'Skip Tu Ma Loo', hmmm 'Shankle Dip', hmmm 'Pan Di Riva Pan Di Bank', whole heap a dem, whole heap, dem nameless man, dem name less. (H - Hmmhmm) Name less, name less. (H - Ok) An mi can teach each one. Syllable by syllable, or, or inch by inch. (H - Hmmm) Hmmhmm!

H - Alright. Well thanks very much, I think, maybe if wi end here an then we can go to the video. (T - Oh go to the , yeah man). Yu have enough time?

0:49:17.5 T - Yeah man we good man (inaudible).

H - Good, good. Well let mi jus. Summn like dis woulda good.... 0:49:25.6

### **Appendix 3.**

#### **25 Interview with Ding Dong DJ and leader of Ravers Clavers Dancers**

**25.08.2010**

0:00:18.6 H - Intro to Ding Dong and date dispute 25th or 26th, turn out to be 25th August 2010

0:00:40.5 D - Well yu know seh a Ding Dong dis, Ravers Clavers by stage name yu kno, hmm Kemar Ottey by birth an yu jus deh, yu deh a Nannyville, yu deh, yu deh ya pon to vi, actually yu deh pon top a Ding Dong roof a do da interviw ya, so yu done kno a Ding Dong, Ravers Clavers, fi life.

0:00:59.5 H - And just to check, hmm yu know with the material, hmm the interview that I'm doing now, is it ok that any of the information that you're giving now I can use it for research purposes and for a short documentary?

0:01:14.8 D - No problem

H - Ok, good, so really I'd just like to kind of get from you a little brief outline of what you do and the form that you work within.

0:01:29.9 D - Arr, me, I am , I am a, a member of the dancehall society, hmm, started out, started out dancing professionally like from 2004, 2003 professionally. Umm, been dancing from a tendra age too, but not until dat time a took it personal, yeah. Umm, I got my break from Tony Matterhorn in 2004, 2005. Got mi break from Tony Matterhorn an I was introduced to Tony Matterhorn, up by Uptown Mondays an umm, from dat we go Asylum, from dat im tek me from Sylum to Passa Passa, hmm, usually par up wid Voicemail dem. Yu kno? Do one and two routes wid Voicemail dem an get familiarised wid de routes saw wha 2000 them, yeh? then there comes passa passa, Passa Passa break down all barriers, all walls, yeah? Fi, fi, fi, fi danca, all over de world, yeah? So Passa Passa was one of de main ting dat distributed me to de world. Umm visually. Umm, was there then I link with Elephant Man. I did 'Bad man forward' first for Ricky Blaze! I did 'Badman Forward' for him. That song was a massive hit, yu know! everywhere, but it wasn't, me DJing at that time wasn't a professional ting, it was me just waring out inna de studio wid de riddim and everyting yeh? So I didn't tek DJing personal or serious until I did 'Dip Again' wid

Elephant Man., because I stand out on the, the track wid Elephant Man so I was like, yu know Elephant Man is one of the top artist in Jamaica, so I was like, if I can do this wid Elephant Man, I must can venture off and do it by myself. So I went out now, I jus, I just started to go on the riddims dat I know dat de big artists are on, like Elephant, Bounty Killer, Beenie, Kartel, Mavado, yeah? And stand out on, on on all a dem, so it was until dat time I jus tek it serious, up until now, still doing it, an, an I voice even more hard dan I used to, caus like a every odda day or every week ting for me voice now. Umm, doing a lot a good songs, a lot a good songs, but I still dance as a well. So is like I have two career an I have to know how to balance dem because, its hard yeah? but its, its, its within my nature. So I tink I can manage it. Dats my contribution to dancehall and my partake in dancehall and in professional what I can do.

H - So, can you tell me? Or can you give me an **overview of what is dancehall** then?

0:04:21.5 D - Ummmm, other people tend to mix up dancehall with reggae, uhmm, I tink is two different tings. Dancehall is a stem from reggae, yeah? As how hip hop comes from regggae as well. Emm, but dancehall is a more, I wouldn't say vulga, but a more rougher side a our Jamaican culture. Yeah, Umm, dancehall, yu kno, Jamaica, reggae music is Jamaica's first baby, yu hear me? so we tend to dwell on reggae music a lot. Dancehall just emerge an, an it becomes umm, so huge now dat not even we as artist can really believe dat dancehall is so popular now,. Dancehall is a very popular, popular, popular type of a music all over the world right now. Everybody want to be a part of dancehall music. Whether Japan, I been to Japan, hmm Brazil, England, Canada, everywhere, all de islands, an is dancehall music cya [carry] mi go to all dem places deh.

0:05:26.2 D - Dancehall music has grown over the years, hmm. I think couple years prior to now, dancehall was more like a vulga type music. A lot of people, look at dancehall music as,, dat, dat install violence within de youth them brain an negativity an everyting, but I think now, these last days, ummm, dancehall been more smooth and more vibing and more party-like, prior to couple years ago. Umm, simply because of the direction change, from, from, from holiday song. Dat a did ummm, G Whizz, 'Life soon Sort out' song an ting yu kno? Caus at dat time, before that it was like a whole heap a violent song did a sing. So I tink it was dat, at dat point where we

have a, a sense a changing and direction a our dance and music, whe people can look pan it and say alright, we can vibes to dis, we can dance to dis we can party to a Vybz Kartel song or a Mavado song, Bounty or Beenie wha ever, yu know! So, dancehall now is like, is my life, I don't kno, I can't talk fi nobody else, but dancehall is my life an, an, an our culture is well grown all over this world, because everybody, wants to do what we doing and is what we have naturally.

0:06:43.3 D - An sometimes its, its so depressing because, de heads of our country don't support dancehall music the way they should. 0:06:52.5 D - Yu get me? becuse a de negativity weh it did have couple years ago, but its, its, it's one a our main attractions right now because everybody have sand and beaches now, every island have sand and beaches, but dem jus don't have our dancehall culture where yu can go a one party and yu see man a jerk chicken or yu see dances or dancers doing dances or yu talk our music or whatever, other countries don't have dat and we tend not to dwell on dat and we tend not to look at dat, to uplift dat, we try to pop it down like. We turn down de sessions. We lock aff de sessions dem weh a keep out door sessions weh a keep, de dancehall sessions. Ummm, we, we ban a lot a de musici dem, which is understandable in dat case, cause some a dem is really, yu know! bad fi de children dem hear, so, I nuh have nuh problem wid dat, yeh? But I have problem wid yu turning off de music at night, cause dancehall is like life to a lot a de people,

0:07:49.1 D - It, it support a lot a people family, believe it or not cya a lot a people gain from dancehall sessions and de music, fi send dem kids to school. Yu get me, but I guess higher heights or de higher heads dem nuh see dat still. It, it help a lot, yu get me? So dancehall music fi me and a lot a people is like, as I should say is my life, yu hear? caus a it give me everyting where me ask fa, Dat me have fi seh.

H - So, yu can tell me den, hmm, for yu in terms of de dance now, in terms of de dance now, **what is it dat yu tink has allowed dancehall to get such a stronghold** all over de world now?

0:08:37.3 D - Hummm, de music is good yes, dats for one, but de dance , de dancing has bring, has, has bring it a far way as well, yu get me? Umm, if yu buil a song, if yu do a song an nobody dances to dat song or nobody can groove to dat song or whats-so-ever, dat song not going no where. Umm, dancers has, has been a major part a dis movement or dis growth of dancehall music. Or de population of dancehall music,

because de dances dat we dancers has create to the songs or to the riddims that is being played, or the DVDs, people watch de DVDs to see the type of dance moves that we do from Jamaica and try to emulate it, whedda, if dem come from Japan or England or wherever, they try to emulate what we do as Jamaican dancers. So our dancing has been a key factor wid de growth of this dancehall hmm, spreading to this world.

0:09:33.6 H - Right , so can you tell me then, hmm how, how does a dancehall session, what constitutes a dancehall session and how a dancehall session really develop, like if you went there, **how you would expect the night to develop?**

0:09:57.7 D - Well! a dancehall sessionis, is like,, first and foremost, if yu keeping a dancehall session, sometimes, is popularity, yu have to be popular, hmm yu have to be supportive if yu a go keep a dancehall session because yu haffi go a other people session go suppport them and ting. Amm, if yu have popularity, yu name good, yu can keep becau yu attrac a lot a people. Ummm, yu keep a dance, sometimes yu haffi go straight to de police, beause yu haffi get a permit or whatever. Yu pay fi a permit, den now yu haffi to have sound system, yu haffi have good selectore, hmm, yu haffi have likka [liquor] an everyting selling, yu knno? Hmmm, time frame now we get, caus onetime Jamaica, yu get dances inna Jamaica go till aall 7,8 o'clock inna de marnin. Yu get me. Now we only have a timeframe of probably only 2 o'clock. Sometime just might barely go over fi 3. Yu get me? So right now we jus, when yu go a one session, once is a good selector dere an a crowd a people, yu know woman mek party nice an everyting. So once a bag a woman deh deh, party nice, yu know a man buy a likka an whole him corna, good selecta play an people jus party and enjoy demself. 0:11:11.8

D - Yu get weh me a seh? Yu give forward to songs weh yu tinkl is bad. Some not, yu get weh me a say? Some people a dem side a music weh dem preffa, and some side dem artist weh dem prefer more dan some artist, but a de end a de day, dats what, dats what make de, de business so real, because, yu know, yu have choices, is not like is jus a one way ting weh yu haffi jus hot in pon a one way or a one artist or whateva, yu have chooices weh, yu can go to dat person or yu can see dat person. Yu get me?

H - Hmmhmm

0:11:43.1 D - Dat mek de competition even betta, dat mek de rtist dem haffi find song fi please their fans. Yu get me? So, dancehall a de bess.

H - Right, b, but if you go on any night to a dancehall, **how would you expect the session to progress**, in terms of musically and in terms of dance. How like from when it start, what kind a music, what dance?

0:12:13.0 D - Oh, ummm, the vibe is, if you go a one dance an yu go early, yu have the early juggling and we play, yu have a selector who probably play early, yu know? A early juggling until, like, probably like, if a session finish like 4, 5 oclock, yu'd a get a early juggling from like, 1 ago 2 oclock, yu'd a get early juggling and den yu go mid juggling like 3 to 3 oclock and den de4 hyope session start like 4 a go to 5am. Umm, I normally go de parties dem when it a reach mid hype. If it a finish 5am I would normally reach bout 4, like 3 o'clock so I get a good 2 hours inna de party, cause sometimes I have al ot of different parties to go to before that last party, yu hear me, so I have to leave, stop a da party deh, stop a da party deh, so I get like a nice, two good hours of it, yu know? Ummm, dancers tend to just warm up, yu go wid de groove a de music, so if is early juggling a gwaan, dancers tend to do some early type a dancing until yu get de mad part a it, dancers get mad an ting, but, yu haffi, yu haffi de deh from early fi experience all, sections of music whe play, all de changes whe mek, happpen within danehall and de music and de session. So if yu de deh from early, yu experience everyting, but if yu go like prime time like how me'da go, yu naa go see de early guggling part a it, but some people like fi go deh cau dem like de early juggling part cau it more calmer an dem can drink an, yu know? E, ei, it varies for different people.

H - Right, so yu as a dancer now, yu can tell me what yu feeling, how yu feel when yu in de dancehall? How yu feel when yu dancing?

0:14:00.7 D - Umm, when, when me a dance till I dance inna my freedom? Like, like a lot a people tend to tek tings, tend to tek dis personal, but is not even a personal issue, like yu might deh infront me an a seh hi to me or wha'ever an mi don't see yu, mi eyes dem wide open, an mi don't see yu, because I'm inna my own zone, like dance yu know, a like, my total freedom, no care weh me a go tru, from music a play an mi inna a session, an mi a party an a dance, I dont tink of anyting else, but dat moment so. Sometimes yu might jus stay infront a me saying I'yah our whats-so-eva an a don't see yu, because mi jus inna my seh, my own zone, dancing. Yu understan?

H - Hmm hmm



0:14:41.5 D - Ummm, a lot a people go dancehall sessions, becau dem can go de to hustle, like hustle up a money, yu have some people who go deh fi beg! yu have some people who go deh wid all a little stall an dem sweetie an dem ting go sell. Some people sell a little cigarette outside, or walk tru d, d, de dance and sell weed. Some people wi amm, sell all jerk chicken and soup an dem ting deh, outside a one party, so a lot a people go a sessions fi different reasons. An go party fi different reasons. I go dere sometimes as well to maintain my status, or maintain my name within dancehall, or keep my name current within dancehall an dance, and fi display my dance moves tu. People or promoters can see it outside, so is like a audition ground fi me, or is like a work place fi me. Is a audition groun fi nuff people, but is a workplace fi me, because me go deh fi dance fi impress promoters , so promoters woulda book me fi show. Dats how we get our bookings as dancers, yeah.

H - Ok, so, so, yu go deh to impress an to maintain a profile?

D - Yeah,

H - Alright, so can you tell me the whole hmmm. Ok, so yu can tell me wh, when you are dancing yu say yu go into a zone, can yu can explain a bit more about that? What yu mean by that?

0:16:09.0 D - Ummm, is like everything else jus blank to me, ummm good music yu know n when I drink an whatever! Everyting is like nuttin else jus, nu matta, or let mi jus say seh inna my head, at dat time because mi jus inna a zone, mi jus inna my, inna my freedom, yeah! An, an as it done, as mi done an whaever or mi stan up again, Boom! is jus, is like me jus go back inna reality, is jus like da whole time deh when me a dance an everyting, it jus tek mi outta reality, until mi done, mi jus go right back.

H - And hmm can yu tell me then, wh, how do you feel as an artist because you are in a unique position, because you, you're a dancer, you are a dancer first, then you became an hmmm an artist a DJ too. So you walk the two sides.

D - Yeah!

H - So umm, yu can tell me the difference between the two, how you feel when doing the two?

0:17:13.9 D - Well yu know, funny, funny to tink bout it! Is like, aaahhh, yu can be an artist, yu can be a good artist, an yu can be a good performer. Artist a artist an a performer is a performer. I'd a classify Beenie Man a performer, I'd, I'dda classify Elephant Man as a performer, I'dda classify Bounty Killer as a artist, yeah, because Bounty Killer don't dance! Ummm, DJing ting mesh good wid dancing, because music mesh good wid dancing, so if you can dance to illustrate some of your songs our whatever, worse if yu sing dancing song to illustrate some of your dance moves, it jus mek you, tops up better. So worse if you can dance before you tun DJ an den, yu have de qualities of a real artist, is jus a big plus fi you as how it is fi me, because a lot of stage shows want performer, a lot of artists have very good songs, an dem get nice forwards fi de songs an everyting, but is not a performance forward it get. an a most a de places him might go a jus a performing ting an perform. Yu hear me, so he [God] made me a good performer an I tank God fi a big plus deh, umm, Lexus was a dancer before he was a artist.

[H - Hmmm!

0:18:34.0 D - DJ Lexus, an Beenie Man couldda dance before him become a artist as well. Ummm a lot a people tend to start dance after dem become a artist. Like even, Serani, him try to dance after, because de two ting dem match a l, a, a, a, a woman love a man weh can dance, yeah? An, an most a de artist go out fi, fi, fi, fi female audience most, becau if yu get female audience, yu good. So, yu know? Is, is jus a good collaboration and once yu have de two a dem, is a very big plus fi yu as an entertaina. An I tink me a one a de artist wha bless wid dat. One a de few at least.

H - Right, so how do you feel like you were saying you laas in a zone when you danceing. So what happen when yu DJing hmmm?

0:19:33.9 D - Ummm, I love DJing. Umm, I get to love the studios. Ummm, the difference with me an most artist, I don't write songs, yeah, I jus talk, naturally what come off a de top a my brain. I will jus listen a riddim, an jus me an dis tune ya an jus vibe it an rae, I don't write down music or premeditate, a song, or have song written an yu know? So, is a whole different feeling comparing to dancing, I mean I haffi focus while I'm DJing because yu haffi know how fi fine some note, yu haffi now how fi dis, yu haffi know fi keep da key yah. It's more complicated then dancing, yu get me? Ummm, but is two totally different feeling. Its nice when yu inna de booth an

yu fine a line weh yu say jeesum, then, this bad an yu fine a song weh say yes dis bad and rae rae. Is a toatally different feeling, is not my sense of freedom zone dat, yu get me?

H - Hmm hmmm.

0:20:29.0 D - Dancing is my sense of freedom zone, but its, its a very good feeling as well, but its not as much as dancing. But I stress to me, I don't know bout a particular artist. I don't know about anybody else, I haffi talk fi me.

H - Right, ok. So just to find out though, in terms of the route of the dance then, if you have to look at dancehall and the roots of the dance now, where the inspiration come, come from for those?

0:21:00.4 D - Umm, I wanda talk, whether we waan believe it yes or no, a lot of movement from us within dancehall, it come from our ancestors dem. Ummm, if yu, if yu, if yu check de ratio, if yu check de history of it, ummm, inna Africa dem dance a lot. Dem dance fi call down de rain, dem dance when somebody a married, dem dance fi jus nuttin at all. Celebration, ceremony, sacrifices everyting dem dance, yeah? Ummm, lot a our dances dem come from their movements, de Ska an, an, an, an all a those dances come from those times, yeah? Lot a de dances dem weh we do in dis time, is connected to those dances with we not even knowing dat we doing it. Or we not even purposefully doing it, connecting it to those dances, but it jus naturally is. Because its jus inna our stream. Yu get me? So our dances dem is a connection to, to, to de way back, is jus a, a, ummm, a changes or ar, ar, ar, arr, we seeing it inna a different light right now because we young, younger set a generation, twenty years from now, yu a go see dances, weh we a go seh a come from de dances weh we build now, but we a go jus see dem inna a different way, because you have different minds and younger minds doing it. Yu get me? So is jus one a dem ting deh, is jus a stages ting weh, it jus come down to differrent generations but it coming from, de same roots, all a our dance moves.

H - Hmmm hmm. So yu tinik is an ancestral ting?

0:22:43.8 D - Yeah, is jus, it jus pass down within we stream.

H - Hmmm hmm. So therefore, when you are dancing now and you create a new thing then

D - Hmmm hmm.

H - if you're saying that it is coming from the ancestors and ting.

D - Yeah.

H - But then also on the other hand you are saying that ymm, you being lost in a zone! So what do you think happ...

0:23:09.0 D - Because guess wha now! Yu see, the thing is, Bob Marley tell you when music hits, yu feel no pain, an, an, an music is power. Music, mean a riddim or, or, or a song tells my body what to do. It tells my body how to move. If, if, if you are not a dancer sometimes it will be difficult for you to undersrand, yeah? Ummmmm, I can shut my eye an listen a riddim an my body jus flow to it. Is as simple as dat, I can jus flow with a riddim. Cause riddim tells, even in a DJing ting, a riddim tells yu what to say. Riddim is very powerful, music is very powerful yu know. A riddim tells you what to say, so is jus within you naturally, yu get me? Is like if I say, 'pam., pam, pam, pam, pan\_pan, pam, pam pam pan'. It, it ,it gwaan bring words inna yu head, dats why yu have artist dat can write songs or build songs pon de spot, or whatever, cause riddims tell yu what to do. Yu get me. So sometimes when yu zone out and yu inna yu zone, is like de riddim a control yu body an yu jus naturally do it because it is within you. Yu get me?

H - Hmm hmmm.

D - Yu not even know where it coming from, but it is within you from your ancestors coming down or whatever but the music just bring out dat inna yu. Dats how, an I like, if yu come pon my corna or whateva, yu can neva see me a practice fi dance or deh practic da dance move or we a choreograph dis, is jus when we go inna one party an den dance an de music a play an everybody start dance we jus, an everting else jus come. Yu get me? Dats how it is.

H - Alright, so one last ting then. I notice, you do it, most of yu do it as artist now. You don't move alone, yu move in a large crew. So, yu can tell me how dat go now?

0:25:04.1 D - Ummmmm, staying in truth, is like, is a growth. Artist attract people. Ummm, I tink is a, is a, is a, is a, is a ting right now, that is install in dancehall, is gonna be around fi a long time, yu get me? A artist like to feel dat coverage, when he

goes out in de street. If yu check out, I might par with like 15 people or 13 people. Sometimes I all par with like 20 people, sometimes I par with 4 people. Sometimes I go out pon de road an only me an two person alone go. It depends on which part me a go, cause if a certian place me a go, me a go heavy, yu hear me? A lot a artist like all Courage, yu know seh him have a lot a him friend dem round him an people him trust, don't? So if anything, yu know! him alright. Artist tend to like, some artist tend like, like moving dat way. If yu check out a Mavado, Mavado all walk wid all 50 odd people. Kartel, 50 odd people. Killa, same ting and den Beenie Man pon de other hand, always go pon de road wid him an two persons, or him alone wi go pon de road. Yu hear me? Is jus, like where I come from, all a my dancers dem come from the same area. All a dem come from Nannyville, all a dem base a Nannyville. So de whole a we a dance an every ting. Ummm, yu have a whole lot a yute weh I pick up round me, dat didn't have any ting else to do or didn't see any way out. Yu hear me, dats de big difference, dats de plus of me dancing or whatever, because, I wi give yute an yute hopes. I wi give dem ideas and ways to get out a it, an not by jus picking up a gun an, try rob somebody or, picking up a knife and try rob somebody an kill somebody. I gi dem a hope, cause a lot a yute did turn to gun man ting if yu notice, an bad man a walk, yu see hundred man behind at, yu hear me? Because dem feel seh dat a dem way out. So now if me can get up as a, as a yute weh come from de inna city an mek it inna life tru dancing or whatever, dem go feel like dem can do it, so dem a go par wid me fi try learn weh dem can learn from me, fi do weh dem can do. So is like sometimes is like a ontorage ting but sometimes is like helpful ting to me, because I take youth in the streets an mek dem see what it is like outside. Yu get me. 0:27:27.0

D - An sometimes the coverage just good fi know seh yu deh somewhere, because earth a run red right now mi dan an sometimes a man might jus see yu an feel seh him can jus rob me or whatever the case may be, so when a man see yu wid all 20 odd people, a man naah go try dem ting deh. So easy yu hear me? So is a two way street when it comes on to the crowd.

H - Right, hmm hmm. Ok..... Ok, thanks very much for that, ummmm. what I was going to say is if we could stop the audio one and we go to the video one now, alright?

#### **Appendix 4.**

##### **29 Interview with Selly Belly Dancer Xpressions Thurs 03.09.2010**

0:00:00.0 H - What yu go thru as dancer

0:00:02.6 S - A de vibes yu know fi tell yu de truth then, alright, when yu see Shelly Belly, jus kno seh anything possible, yu undastan? A nuh like seh is a programme dance weh yu si mi do one type a dance, me is a all rounda, yu undastan? See me come so bum n me an mi fren dem dance, an hear de gyal song dem? Yu kno seh a gyal mus get de bladda. Boom de gyal, yu undastan? So, yu haffi expec anyting becaus, me lif dem up, mi fling dem, mi swing dem, but mi careful wid dem, yu undastan? So yu haffi expec anyting.

H - So how yu feel inside when yu doing it? What compel yu,? What drive yu?

0:00:43.5 S - How yu mean, how mi feel inside? When it come on to woman man, mi go all out. Mi feel nice, extra nice. Worse when mi come so an approach di girl, an she willing, mi jus feel good inside. Yu undastan?

H - There's any other time when yu get da feeling deh?

0:01:02.3 S - Yeah, like, deh pon mi phone and call mi woman and she come link mi. An, when she reach a mi yard, either mi go meet arr a di gate, or meet arr out a de lane, an mi get fi feel a vibes again (laugh).

H - Aright,

0:01:27.7 S - Seh dem fi tell yu di truth when it come on to the ladies dem, caus memba seh a dem bring mi come ya yu know! Yu cyaan be a one type dancer, dat nuh look good fi a dancer, yu undastan? Yu haffi be a all arounda, yu haffi please di woman dem tu, mek dem feel good. Yu undastan? Yu cyaan please yu self inna de dancehall, jus stay so a dance yu an yu fren dem an a floss yu an yu fren dem. Dat nuh look good! De ooman dem want yu expresss yu feelings to dem tu. Yu undastan? Caus same so dem see yu a do wan likkle dance deh name swagga, dem want yu

come swagga wid dem. Yu undastan? Caus, a nu joke ting when Bogle seh waist haffi a move yu know. Yu undastan? De girl dem love fi se when yu, yu waist a move. A same way mi ha a dance call '90 Rock' whe mi come so, an mi boom mi foot dem and jook mi waist, de gyal dem love it. All me ooman seh dat a arr best dance she ever see. Yu waist haffi a move so de gyal dem love dem ting deh. Alright, first of all de girl dem look pon yu n admire yu off an seh, I bet yu, yu cyaan gwaan suh! Yu know weh dat mean. Di way yu a move yu waist, I bet yu yu, a bet yu yu cyaan gwaan so inna bed, so dem jus love fi si dem ting deh, so yu done know seh, when yu come so and see de girl dem dere king, yu king haffi alright out deh, yu undastan? Yeah man dat's why a mi a go suh. Alright den, blood haffi buss arr up inna arr ting. A nuh ting weh yu drink, arr malt, arr waata. Yu know de ting weh she dash out? A desso she get de blood af, yu know sheet haffi change when yu done? Desso mi kids deh! Yeh man. Shelly Belly! God know why him name mi Shelly Belly. Mi represent fi de girl dem.

0:03:00.3 S - Shelly Belly have di most fans, nuff a dem have wrongs, but me have fans. Yu undastan? When yu check, when it come on to de girl dem? A dem seh Shelly Belly! Yeah man.

H - Alright, we see.

0:03:15.1 S - An a de girl dem gi wi, jus gi yu de vibes fi gi out deh go go harda. Yu see me? Becaus, a dem a watch yu yu know! So when yu see dem come so and look pon yu an smile, yu know weh dat mean. Yu undastan? Wen de girl dem come so, an imagine yu, an yu know seh she a imagine yu, an yu come so an lookpon arr, like yu an arr eye mek four an she come so an laugh, res, you a doa dance and yu see seh she love it? Yu know seh yu nuh fi stop do da dance deh. Yu undastan? Becaus, from de girl love it, everybody a go love it. A di girl dem pass yu.

H - An how yu, how yu get de inspiration fi create a dance, or any particular dance?

0:04:01.8 S - Alright, fe Shelly Belly, dance jus come easy. Yu haffi jus know how fi name yu dance. Cyaa a dance jus can build so, like how yu a put dat desso, an I give aarf a talk, yu can say dat da one ya name, 'Seh sumhmm'. Like mi use mi han an go so, 'Seh sumhmm'

H - Hmmmhmm

0:04:19.5 S - 'Seh sumhmm', yu haffi do di dance, but yu haffi know weh fi name it

H - Alright!

0:04:25.2 S - The name haffi, fit, seh, look pon any dance weh mi do, de name haffi connect. Yu see mi? Look how mi seh, 'seh sumhmm', anI look likle yu fi seh summhmm doo?

H - Yeh,

0:04:38.0 S - Cau like me a hol suhmmm an seh 'seh suhmm', is a dance dat. So dance jus come so easy. Yu undastan? A jus di, see it deh man, a jus de creata man.

H - Oh, good

0:04:51.2 S - Yu undastan? Live here an still a dance, yu know how much dance mi create? A jus tru mi nuh like talk. Me fi tell yu some dance mi create, yu wouldn't believe seh a Shelly Belly, but yu done know, a jus how unnu know mi. Bill, yu undastan? From Shelly Belly, Chakka Belly, Bermuda, One Dan, an whole heap a dem stylee, yu done know seh, a me create dem an mi naa go tell yu, a dance weh mi create weh, a nex man did own. Mi nuh de pan da suhmm deh. Cyaa me an da dance, mi nuh deh pan dem fuse deh.

H - Hmm

0:05:19.6 S - Yu undastan? Haffi jus do mi ting as a tren setter from mawning, becaus look out fi Shelly Belly new movie yu know! It name gansta nuh play yu kno! Yeah man

H - Alright



0:05:30.6 S - Inna da month ya! Yu know seh .... (overlapping dialogue). Can look out fi it pon YouTube. So yu done know seh da yute ya,. Jus straight an don't stop, caus mi wi neva let down non a mi fans dem. Like no wrong doings, a jus straight. Yu undastan?

H - I can ask dat anyting that I have recorded today from you. I'm alright to use it for de research?

0:05:56.3 S - Nuh arguement nuh inna dat! We no go wrong way, we nuh even say wrong saying. Undastan? A desso it deh man. A da yute ya name, nuh secret a road man. Can ask anybody man, ova de world man, wha mi seh? Nuh secret a road Nuh bwoy, nar nuh girl cyaan seh nuttin bad bout da yute ya. A jus suh mi nice, so mi realness.

H - Hmmhmm

0:06:16.6 S - Yu undastan? Mi keep it real, caus mi a Rasta yu know! A tru yu nuh see de locks, yu know. Yu undastan? Look pon mi body, yu see nuh tattoo? Look pon mi face, yu see it bleach out? Da yute ya keep it real. Yu undastan? Like mi a tell yu seh, real, real, real, real. Yu cyaan hear seh, 'mi hear seh!' when it come on to Shelly Belly. Nuh tru yu see mi dance so and mi gwaan so, mi serious to everyting weh mi du.

H - Hmmhmm

0:06:43.4 S - If mi neva did a dance, mi coulda did tun a real gangsta, like serious, like any ting, any ting possible. Yu undastan? But mi seh dancing, becau, a dat jus keep mi outta trouble. Yu undastan? A suh mi tell yu, mi tek everyting serious. So if yu a go seh nuttin bout mi out de bad? Me a go tek it up serious. An mi a go attack yu serious. So anyting a go come out a it. Yu undastan? Dat's why mi keep it real, becau, Shelly Belly a dance 11year now. Yu a go have yute weh jus born, a go whaan be like Shelly Belly. So wha mi haffi do? Mi haffi keep it real fi dem.

H - Hmmhmm

0:07:18.2 S - Fi know seh, mi a set a trend, weh yu know seh yute can live offa. An yute can seh, yu a hear mi? Shelly Belly yute dem ya! Shelly Belly yute dem ya. Like how mi seh Bermuda Squad, an mi have a whole heap a yute ya seh Shelly Belly, so yu done know, mi jus haffi keep it real. An mi haffi big up Bogle, cau dem man deh, a dem man deh inspire me. Yu see mi? Mi naah tell yu nuh lie. Par wid John Hype, but a Bogle mi learn from.

H - Hmmhmm

0:07:43.5 S - Yu undastan? Nuff people nu know dat but, a fi get fi know mi and get all da interview wid mi, yu haffi know di truth. Yu undastan? Far mi neva love dem ... (over talking). Dem dance deh, nuh girl naa go out a road go do it. So when yu see de gyal dem a come so, a Bogle dance now. An dem long time Bogle dance deh, a dem ting deh de, de girls dem love. So a dem ting deh mi did connect to as a likkle yute. Whole heap a Bogle long time dance man. ... (over talking) Well yu done know, a jus so it go.

H - So wha bout the traditional dances, the Jamaican traditonal dance dem an ting?

0:08:17.7 S - Eh?

H - Yu did learn any of the traditional dances when yu did small?

0:08:22.9 S - A dat mi a tell yu seh, a Bogle, inspire, yu undastan? So, a jus him. Mi nuh like nuh more dance, more dan Bogle dance.

H - Alright

0:08:35.5 S - So mi nuh, minuh, mi nuh check no more dance. Yu undastan?

H - Hmmhmm

0:08:40.7 S - Like, whole heap a different, mi nuh try, fi tell yu de truth

H - Like de Kumina an Dinkie Mini, Quadrille, all a those?

0:08:49.1 S - Alright, alright, yu see whe mi creative, mi can do it yu know, mi naa go tell yu mi cyaan do it, but dem ting deh, a nuh my style. Yu jus deh pon dem ting deh every minute, mi like fi creative. Yu undastan? Do some simple dances or even some hard dance, far me a de energy dancer, yu know. Mi love fast dance too yu know. Mi love simple dance, so yu done know seh anyting possible wid Shelly Belly, yu undastan? Yu see me come so boom, mi fuck de gyal dem, yu see mi come so boom, do a bag a fast dance, you see me come so boom, a do some simple dance. So yu know seh, jus look out fi da yute ya inna de future. Undastan? A desso it deh man.

H - Alright, tanks

S - Everytime.

## **Appendix 5.**

### **070 Interview with Dance Xpressions and Dansa Bling 18.04.2013**

0:00:44.8 - Kent Robinson aka Dansa Bling (born Barbican), Nacole Trowers aka Energy-chronic-Xpressionz (St Anns), Kavanaugh Scott aka Little Vill (Almond Town), ?? aka TC (Duhanney Park), Samantha Manahan aka Cutie Xpressionz (Maxfield) Shelly-Ann Callum aka Oshun Xpressionz (Mountainview) Carrie Ford aka Goodie Bop (Manchester), Sophia Macinson aka Fluffy Xpressionz or Malibu Xpressionz (Meadowbrook Estate).

How yu get into dance

0:02:49.2 Dansa Bling - '92 sound name traffic force, si big man a dance, use to collect bottle si big man but he did hip hop and break dance, but couple man did dancehall steps. Back in those days dances never had names as such never pre di names, but mostly Bogle steps. Some a Bogle movement is what he did.

0:03:57.4 Energy Bunny - started through exced dance, recruited by Orville, but also do modern, but 2006 became official member opf dance Xpressionz

0:04:36.0 – Kavan/Likkle Vill Xpressionz - Well I got into dancing when friends after school call him. Drama was his thing from school, Nacole used to teach him, but deh roun group 'Sashi Empire', Nacole call him for battle thing for Xpressionz, did the work now member of Xpressionz. I love it.

0:05:20.0 TC Xpressionz - Start dance from a baby. When come out of mother belly doctor say how she move suh. Went to Dancin' Dynamite where Dance Xpressionz choreograph all her routines and, I'm officially a member now.

0:05:48.6 Cutie Xpressionz - Cutie Xpressionz again, from Maxfield, an yu know Maxfield is a dancing society. Started dancing from baby stage as well. I usually dance for treats and other competitions, known as the baaby. Went to Norman Manley, got president of the dance school which inspire me. Went along to Queens. Entered the Dancin' Dynamites competition, Sir helped me, Dance Xpressionz as a

whole helped us. I was told one day that I'm a part of Dance Xpressionz, which I couldn't believe but I'm glad. Yeah

0:06:34.6 Shelly Xpressions, mumma of the group, I officially started dancing from birth, I mean dance was my love dance was my life. Ahmm, danced from basic school primary school, straight into high school went and, stop dancing at that time and went into cosmetology and found out I was good at it an, really love the whole art of it. I, wanted to be a make up specialist, however, that part of it didn't work. However, I try an du my little thing on the side. Being at Exced Com College I enrolled in the performing arts department and I saw that I could move further into dancing like that, with sir, Orville Hall as my teacher, he said, "ok, wi formalising a group, this is what the group is, who an who is in the group and all a dat and officially now Dance Xpressionz, and officially now the operations manager and the mother of the group, which I am so delighted. That's my end.

0:07:45.3 Cara Xpressionz again, the Rasta girl of the group. Started dancing from a child, used to entertain family members always want me to dance. In High Sch when original 'Harlem Shake' was out she was know as the Harlem girl of the school. That's how became popular, entered competition and that's what I used to kill the other girls in comp. When came to Kingston attended Excelsior Community College, where taught by Orville Hall and of course I was one of the leading dancers in my group, so that's why chosen. Started as a junior member and I'm now a principal dancer. Been in the group eight years and loving it, enjoying every minute.

0:08:38.4 Malibu Xpressionz - Fluffy Xpressionz, UPT uptown, ahmm actually, honestly I did not prepare to be a dancer professionally with a group, but, from days at basic school was always singing, dancing , doing drama, up until went to prep school,same thing ... Mom start send her to dance classes, so went to praise academy, then dancing in church. Holy Jesus (laughter) ... I knew nothting about dancehall, I literally knew nothing about dancehall until 2010, TC Xpressionz, she, we went school together an she told me about a Sean Kingston concert that they needed a lot of dancers for, so me her and few more of her friends said, "yu know wha? I go try du this", because we the fluffy one, is not easy to get through, yu know, a lot of those stuff. An we went and yu kno a few months afterward, Shelly Xpressionz, Oshun

Xpressionz, the mumma a di group, call mi an she seh, "is it possible?" No I remember, it was lunch time and she text mi an she said, "please attend, auditions to be a part of the group", an I said alright, I was nervous, I went, became a part of the agency because of course yu have to go through some stages. Ahmm became a part of the agency until, 2011, I was part of the production that we did for schools every year, and that's when I became an official member of the group. The official UTP of the group. I honestly did not expect to be a part of this group so (she claps) to God be the glory, (Someone else shout - Amen)

H - Yu keep using this expression UTP...

0:10:40.0 All members - Up Town...

0:10:41.9 Fluffy Xpressionz - They call mi di uptown girl, I don' know what's wrong with them but they call me the 'up town girl' (Shelly - Yu can hear it from how she talk - laughter)

H - Well is funny that dem call yu up town because the thing is at the end of the day when the dancers them that came over from the UK saw unnuh dance the other night, an when thenm si Team.. (Xpressionz - Team Craze!) Ehheh, they say unnuh was the sophisticated dancehall and dem was di ghetto. (Shelly - We have class) Yes, that's what they meant. That they could see a sophistication in unnuh movement and that unnuh classy and unnuh, although yu du some a di same ting like dem, when yu execute it, yu still look classy.

0:11:37.3 Shelly Xpressionz - When you are taught frere with usom, Mr Hall, Russian Professor! Trust mi I mean the group is all female, I mean there is another member, she's not here with us, which is Stacey Xpressionz, Stacey was, Stacey dancing from, she come outta arr madda belly. I mean she is dancing all arr life an has been with the group from inception. Ahmm, when you're taught by Orville Hall, you are taught. Especially with dancehall, because of knowing the raunchyness of it that people say that it is, we, as a female group are the class. There is no way that we could dance, especially with him at the head, there is no way that we could dance and look dirty, no.

0:12:26.6 TC Xpressionz - We get dirty dough [though] yu hear! (Discussion)

0:12:31.9 Stacey Xpressionz - But even when look, we get dirty, it still don't look dirty. It look, I mean wi dirty up wi self an whateva yu kno, but in terms of whateva movement wi do in dancehall, it don't look, cupid, it look, it look classic. It look classical, there's a classicalness to it that, it don' look, like if yu do a broad out, it jus don' look like how a ordinary girl wi du broad out.

0:12:56.1 Fluffy Xpressionz - An because Orville is so choosey wid who he takes into the group, because he's very observant, very, so he makes sure that he scopes you out and then it takes time to come into the group. As I said you have to go through a process, a part of the agency until yu become a part of the group.

0:13:16.2 Cutie Xpressionz - Yeah that is so true, for example, I was re-socialised because, as I said in Maxfield, the dirtyness, of dancing, I learnt how to contain myself when I'm dancing (Claps and laughter)

H - what dancing mean and how feel when dancing?

0:13:42.8 Nacole Xpressionz - For me its a relief for me, when I dance, especially when going through certain phases as a woman of course. When depressed its a medium that I used to take out that, feeling that I'm having on the inside. I love the stage definately and grounded I think in the performing area with dance music and drama, so for me especially for dance, to know that your not able to speak but to use your body as the tool or the vehicle to allow your audience to understan your emotion, it is very, for me it is very, very internal as opposed to the other areas of the arts, because yu kno in drama yu can say yu feeling this way or for music can sing it, but dance for me is jus a relief, stress, method an it allows me as an individual to depend on my inner self, so that is what dance basically does for Nacole.

0:14:42.6 Cutie Xpressionz - Well it builds my self esteem and let me challenge myself in different areas, for example, when sir gives us different genres, like, African jeees, have a warm time wid African yu kno! Shelly...

H - You Cutie, yu have a warm time with African?

0:15:02.5 Cutie Xpressionz - To the technique part of it. So, it builds my self-esteem for me, Cutie Xpressionz

0:15:14.1 Fluffy Xpressionz Ahmm as Nacole Xpressionz seh, the Energy Bunny, its a strong sense of relief, when yu going through certain phase of life, depression an all that. Not necessarily for depression because yu have to go through a lot of different stuff for that, but when yu going through certain stuff, its what allows you to ahmm, there's nothing else that can touch yu soul like music, so being able to connect with music through, yu know, body language and all that, it helps you to relieve yourself because honestly I know there are days when a lot of us, especially me, I come in here, my head is not here, and when I get here, an I hear the music and the moves are, yu kno, put to me, I'm gone like I totally forget what I was going through until some other day or something, but music an dance is definately a, way for you to vent, yu feelings.

0:16:15.2 Dansa Bling - Nacole an everybody else who talk already, done seh everyting arreddy [already].

H - But Dansa Bling yu can say a little more.

0:16:23.3 DBling - Nooo! Alright, mi nuh like dancing, mi love it, (laughter) no, love it an, fi tell yu di truth, dancing a one ting yu kno, when yu si mi go out a night an mi party, party, party, a jus fi stay offa road, cause when yu si mi party all night, mi go sleep out di whole day. An when mi sleep out di whole day, mi a go en' [end] up come up a di studio, an den mi a go, stay at di studio, probably Orville have someting fi mi du or summn yu kno! An den mi go back home go sleep again or probably if mi look, cau mi du graphic design, probably mi a go do a posta or summn. It really keep mi offa di road, fi naah idle pon di road yu kno? So dat a one ting fi dancing wid me. What's inside Nacole seh it areddy so...



0:17:08.3 Kavan - Yes same ting like weh Bling seh, Nacole everybody else seh di same ting. But for me now! Dancing a my frien' my girl my everyting becau, when all a my frien' dem gaan, it still deh ya, when all a my girl dem gaan, it still deh ya. No matta who waan gaan, it still deh ya.

H - Nice, nice. Ok! So what give you di inspiration then? ... how that come?

0:17:47.6 - As Cutie Xpressionz seh, it helps you to buil' yu self esteem and Energy Bunny seh it helps to keep you strong and build yu, an, the Professor, Mr Orville Hall is always saying that we have to uphold dancehall, so, seeing that it builds you, helps your self esteem and uphold dancehall, that answers where the inspiration comes from. An then team work on a whole yu know so yeah.

0:18:21.7 - Nacole - For me the inspiration is non other than Orville Hall, cause if you don't inspire by dat deh man well, weh him want 'im work fi be done an look a certain way, yu nuh have no inspiration (laughter) So Orville Hall is my inspiration ... also to se where he was born an knowledge he has ...

0:19:08.0 Shelly Xpressionz - My inspiration come from everyday life. Ahmm, where I grow, ahmm, being aroun' my peers, ahmm my mother, me ahmm knowing how much when I decided to do, really do performing arts, becau, not everybody sees dancing as, money making an yu want to prove, ahmm there is a level that you want to reach to prove to everybody that, hey, yu can make something out of it. It is a job, it is, it is a lifestyle, you can do, you can make, you can make a person out of it, when yu decide to do it, so, I mean, my inspiration comes from, everydaylife, everyday living, what I see on the road, what I see happened in the group, because trust me, everyday, this group goes through a process, everyday, every minute, every secon'. Sometimes somebody might not be in a good mood but the level of what you can give that person an seh, "bwoy, yu kno, nuh worry bout it!" That level of inspiration that you jus give to that person motivate you fi seh bwoy when yu step inna a class, yu can motivate other persons, not tru talking to them but jus by moving, jus by moving an what you, how yu move. Yu kno!

0:20:37.8 Cara - As Shelly said my inspiration is everyday life, used to watch two guys dance on the way home from school - see them now admire me is great inspiration - motivation from peers - someone can come an say "you're my idol!" thats the most overwhelming feeling .....

H - what family background was.

0:22:12.1 Fluffy Xpressionz - Basically, I grew up in church of course, my mother was like, every Sunday, I had to go to church, especially because every Sunday I was on the programme to dance. Ev-er-ry Sunday (H - What type of church was that?) Pentecostal, whether it was me, but from then, I was in prep school teaching younger kids dances for church on Sunday ... my mother, single mother of course and my aunts who sometimes help out ... I made it through.

0:23:02.4 Jivanni? - I'm a Bishop's daughter [said in US accent] A lot PEOPLE SEH PASTOR, BUT MY DADDY PASS DA STAGE DEH LONG TIME, so I'm a Bishop's daughter actually, grew up inna church as well. Born inna church, grow up inna church until I was 18. Used to do every ting inna church. Sing dance act inna church an then come a Kingston an then everything caanna change, when I came to Kingston. In household was able to listen R&B but not allowed to listen any dancehall in father's house. Could listen Celene Dion, love songs as well but no dancehall. He was very strict, was New Testament of course, so never wear pants or shorts, so now that's why I live in them. (H - So is a rebellion?) Yes, yes, no skirt no dress.

0:24:04.4 Bling - Bling again! Mi grow up inna church tu, but, yu si di day my mother set foot pon di plane an fly out, I always (indistinguishable), that's the time mi start go by 'Traffic force' ahmm the guys dem a dance an den start pick it up an from desso, one an two time mi go back a church, up til now. (H - Wha kine a church?) Pentecostal! .....

H - So really you were held in the church because of yu madda! (Bling - Yeah) But once she was out a di way...

0:24:41.9 Bling - Up tu now she still a try fi get me (Number of members - Back into church) She's still a Christian from den until now [laughingly].

0:24:51.3 Energy Xpressionz - An di thing about it is Cutie Xpressionz, Fluffy Xpressionz an Energy Bunny were Christians, (Bling - Amen) Filled with the Holy Ghost, Fluffy an Energy were filled, an now wi gyrating.

0:25:07.1 Fluffy Xpressionz - Yeah again, church, Pentecostal. Yeah, I was baptised in five grade and backslide in sixth grade, because ... I remember in sixth grade I was in heels, skirt, everything dancing, so more than likely I was, I group up around a nuclear family. My father was strict with church and everything on a whole. I did drama, everything at church, especially dancing, but on the other hand I wanted to do a lot of parties. Me now, my mother, my father usually inna whole heap a argument as my madda usually mek mi go to the parties so, yu can si weh the dancing come from. ...

0:26:06.0 Kavan - Well for me, living inna di garrison from yu young, as yu si Sunday day come yu haffi go a church nuh matta weh yu waan du, haffi go a church. Well mi neva really grow inna di church still but, yu kno mummy an daddy, yu kno if yu have di elders dem a go a church yu haffi go deh wid dem nuh matta weh yu waan du. Yu waan 'ide [hide], yu waan go kick ball, nuh matta weh yu waan du, yu haffi go a church. (Female - Not only church, Sunday school) Yeah, an yu haffi go early, yu cyaan miss nuttin, cau when yu reach homle yu haffi tell mummy an daddy weh yu learn. ...

0:26:39.8 - Nacole - Golden text ...

0:26:49.3 Shelly - I used to go to church, this is Oshun Xpressionz, but I didn't grow up in the church. My background is more quiet, though I come from Oliver Road, which is ghetto, but ahmm, my home style was quiet, mother father brother. Ahm cousin, thats the background of my family ... where my dancing come from is both parents, they have a love a dance, love for dance ... there was a club called 'Turn Table', that every Thursday night, they would be there so, yu can, for me dancing was jus in born for me, it was jus there, I mean my fmily backgroun' is quiet an yeah, but

rules an regulations yu kno yu have to abide by. I mean as Kavan, like Kavan on a Sunday yu know Sunday morning church, 10 o'clock Sunday school. Yu know when yu come home them ask weh yu learn a church, but as yu grow up the lifestyle just got different. ...

0:28:04.7 Kara Xpressionz - I didn't grow up in church but go now and then. Grow with mother. Read and follow bible from home. Not whether you go to church but how you live your life.

0:28:42.6 I grew up in church. Grew with mummy and older sister as father died when she was baby. ...

H - What happens on the dancehall floor? what happens between dancers when battling? Between members of group, crew or squad?

0:29:58.8 Bling - Challenging at times, but tru me a one a di simple one an nuh pre when di groups dem come out an a kill up demself or even a solo danca come come kill up demself, mi jus go out an du my ting an when selecta seh Bling an mi know seh a my time dat, mi jus go out an play my part. Mi nuh really jus go out an dance dance, mi dance from ya still (pointing to the heart), mi dance from core, (H - From?) Core! (H - Yu core) Yeah! Yu kkno, so mi jus dance an give mi all an when mi go home mi jus get a good night's rest, an jus know seh mi go out las' night an enjoy miself an a help lif' up dancehall. Yu kno wha a mean?

H - So when yu seh yu dance from yu core, wha yu really mean by that then?

0:30:44.0 Bling - Yeah cau some people jus go out a road, ahmm, go a dance a night time an jus dance. Mi nuh know if a love dem love it or, yu kno? Mi jus dance like mi really really love it, mi dance from mi soul! Mi really really love it, from really in yassuh (pointing to heart) Yu kno wha a mean? Desso my ting deh.

H - So when yu dancing what, are you thinking an if so what are you thinking or is....

0:31:10.6 Bling - When me deh a dancehall yu kno, a jus me an di music yu know. Nobody else nuh deh roun' me. A jus me an di music. The only somebody a go deh roun me unless me couple up an start dance wid a female. but when me a dance is just me an di music, mi jus mek di beat take me wherever.

H - An when you say it take you wherever, it take you like, how it take you?

0:31:31.1 Bling - (Laugh) When mi seh it tek mi wherever still, a still inna di dancehall mi deh yu kno! (H - Yeah, mi know dat, but) But, yu know wha a mean, yu jus to a far place like a, as weh Nacole did seh sometimes yu have some tings a yu yard weh, yu know wha a mean? So it, not even too memba di tings a yu yard when time yu deh deh a dance an yu tek, it tek my mine [mind] from negative stuff an move it to even a positive . Yu kow wha a mean? So a jus desso mi deh when dem seh it really tek mi weh, someweh else. Even a betta place. Yu still waan know di place doan? (laughter)

H - If there is a way yu could express yuself, if not mi wi accept dat.

0:32:20.0 Bling - Ushai wi can explain, far mi seh it tek mi tu a betta place.

0:32:25.6 Kavan - Yeah is like, someweh fi relax an, yu kno? Medditate yu kno weh a mean? (H - Hmmhmm) A nuh really no, far away weh yu can seh alright, mi gaan a Halfway Tree or nutt'n like dat, a jus my zone mi in. Yu kno wha a mean?

H - Hmmhmm, alright, ok.

0:32:52.0 Shelly - As a group, for us, being coordinated. Having a synergy, being a unit, being one, dat is for us, whether is a corporate wi work for or, just being in the dancehall space. In the dancehall space, is a little different. In the dancehall space yu have, yu have challenges where as, yu have other groups, or mek mi seh other females, individual females that feel like, "ok, da group ya gwaan like dem too bad or too hype or whatever it is so, mek wi jus run out an du wi ting, but, in a case like tha, for us, it is a battle, becuse at that time, we now take on a different persona to say it is battle mode. A mean, battle mode going into, still, can be coordinated but, we get, a

little dirty sometimes, especially if it get to the point where, yu have to get dirty. So, we stan' up for ourselves as a group, and even as a individual going out there in the space sometimes, knowing for, fo, for other people, or other persons to know, "Ok, is not the mumma of the group but is Malibu Xpressionz or is, that is the Energy Bunny or that's Goody Back or whoever it is, so at that point it gives, at the battle point it gives each of us a chance tu step out an seh "This is who I am, this is who I represent". As Bling seh, when yu in the space an dancing, a mean, it tek yu tu a different place, meaning yu zone out, is like, there is nobody else aroun' yu. Tu how the music mek yu feel is like you are just in, space. An is jus you, di stars, di moon, everyting at dat point in time, dancing. There is nobody else (smiling) There're times even when, as a group yu know yu start du routine and stuff an yu get so laas in the routine and carried away, sometimes the group stop and is you one. An den when yu group si dat energy, everybody else jus run in, an pick it up back, suh yu know from there an then, on, there is the synergy, so, one person stop but everybody in the group si seh she continue, or him continue until yu jus jump in, yu join in cause, that person is sen'ing off an energy dat say, "It nuh stop yassuh, mek wi continue!" 0:35:32.3

Shelly - So, even in the dancehall space, a lot of persons have a level of respect for us, as a group, because of one, the synergy that we have, two, the coordination that we have, even though sometime they might see two or three persons on the dance floor, it doesn't matter.

0:35:49.9 Nacole - The professionalism that we exhibit, because what happen is we doan dance with everybody in the dancehall, a lot of people, especially guys, when they start, for example a selector is playing the ladies' roun' [round], a lot a guys in the dancehall believe seh, "Alright, yu deh ya so yu suppose to get stabbins, or daggerings", yu kno? So we , the level that we're at now, at for, we're not that type of group that everybody can just grab up an run wid and jook off a boom box wid an dive off an den all a dem summ'n deh, no! (Bling - We a danca) We are ladies an even though we go into the space, as dancas, we, show seh we are ladies. We are very classy I'm sorry! Not butu, don't even like that word. So when we go into the dancehaqll space, when Xpressionz step in dem know seh, oh yeah, hmmhmm, dem professional one dem walk in. An Shelly can tell yu back in the days dem used to stick on pon Xpressionz, 'Uptown Group', based on our ora when wi step into di

dancehall space, so we a nuh dem loose type a girl deh, when yu look yu si panty desso aahh, no! No! So...

0:36:54.4 Shelly - Even how we dress, fi go di space. This our thing, it has to be a dress code, so if is red an black fi di night, is red an black, with a red top black tights, whatever it is. Even down to the clothes is coordinated. So, for some people, when we step in the dancehall space, they get intimidated. Which is not, to walk in the space is to intimidate, but we show the level of professionalism, as Nacole seh, when we get into the space. And that, exactly, 1. Thats where we stand out, 2. Thats our standard. So, nobody cyaan seh, "No sah, some likkle rae rae from, No! We show the professionalism, of the dancehall space, even when we battle. And, I want to tell you, we balance the two well. Corporate worl' dancehall space. So if yu ask us to do something for corporate Jamaica, yu would never know that is the same group that is in the dancehall space because we try to allot both worlds and we try to balance it in ahmmm, as a rounded group. whether it be dance, ahmm, dancing, singing, acting, it doan matta.

0:38:03.7 Nacole - And based on the fact that we're teachers, we're all teachers, we teach high school kids, so I guess we have to, we have to be an example for them an to let them si, because people think that dancehall is very boysterous and very, lewd, so when Xpressionz, Xpressionz, I think one of the Xpressionz aim is to show that, yu can still do dancehall and be and be, classified as being, a lady and to be classy. So we have to set examples for the younger ones coming up to show that, also ther's a career path, even if yu not out there all the time in the dancehall, I'm not always out there, however I teach, so I'm still at , a nex institution teaching dancehall. So we're teachers so we have to exhibit that, type of behaviour that shows that way, even though we can go out theres so an dash out, professionally, we're able to, as Shelly seh, we're able to multi-task, so we're able to du both effectively.

0:38:51.9 Shelly - And, four, five members of the group, are qualified in what we do. Ahmm other members are noew asserting themselves to be qualified and to know more about the professional business. That's Mumma Xpressionz. ...

H - With your name, Mumma Xpressionz, Oshun, so that name, what it mean?

0:39:23.9 Shelly - Well, Oshun means goddess of love and sexuality. How I got that name was in a play, done by Mr Kenny Salmon, it was called Marcus to Marley. And ahmm, I played, the role I played in that ahmm play, the characta I played in that play was ahmm, a girl that really didn't know any thing about Marcus Garvey, or Bob Marley for that sense, cause that was, that was what the play was about. And I was schooled in the play, I mean about Marcus Garvey, I wore some things in the play that showed the character of being, ghetto girl that really just doan care about, life or whatever happened, but after being schooled and I mean well read into the whole thing of the Marcus Garvey and Bob Marley, ahmm, I transformed into being Oshun, which was the empress, of the, the play. So, that's how I came by the name, cause, in, in in turn, the, my boyfriend that I was dating in the play, he was the person that, helped to school me, in the play. An he was the person that gave me that, Oshun Xp, Oshun, rather.

0:40:38.5 Nacole - However, the name Mumma, is the oldest one and she secure all a dem ....

0:40:45.4 Shelly - I'm the oldest one an very proud of being the oldest one, I'm 33, don't look my age but I'm very proud of it, thank you. ...

H - You take Oshun to be what again?

0:41:18.8 Shelly - Well thats the meaning that I got ... Goddess of love and sexuality.

H - Right - Oshun is all of that but importantly she is the River, the river mother....(explain Oshun link to water and Shango - Shelly says she is link to water as Aquarian - Thank you - Wait Dansa Bling how you get that name)

0:42:13.5 Bling - Firstly mi did jus name Bling, because, yu si when mi a play basketball, if yu know the song weh Cash Money sing "everytime a come around I see my bling bling" (sings). Everytime 'im shoot mi used to seh Bling! No, for real, evertime it play, mi breddren, everytime, everyday now wi start play basketball mi



bredren used to seh, "pass di ball to Bling, pass the ball to Bling man", from dere [there], him name is Richard an so, the dansa jus automatically come on.....

H - Respect, so, thanks very much then. (Nacole - You're welcome 'H'.

## **Appendix 6.**

### **004 Interview with Cojo Hotfoot Dancejay 06.03.2017**

0:00:25.5 C - Clearance for use of info

0:01:21.3 C - Stage name Cojo Hotfoot, but right name Shevon Anthony Chambers

0:01:36.1 C - Cojo Hotfoot professionally dancing with MOB. Doing solo career with brand Cojo Hotfoot. Dancing from 2003, going around Shelly Belly and others.

0:02:33.9 C - Just all about Hotfoot and Cojo, a cool calm person

What is Dh

0:03:27.9 C - Dh is Jamaica, is the people of JA and is everything this little country do. Dancehall come way back from slave music - Dh is way of life and joy. No one meaning for Dh

What does Dh mean

0:04:41.4 C - Dh is my everything, dh is my food, when I sleep and wake dh is what I live and breath

How dh relate to what go on before

0:05:42.2 C - Before dh, there was reggae. Reggae was like survival music, its a Ital music. Dh more raunchy and violent. Before Dh was Mento and Ska, those music was joy for the people. Things got harder, when it reach to Reggae music it sings about the ghetto, poverty and trying to get better for life. Coming up, people get rebellious to fight for their rights. Dh come with two things aggression and sexiness, because dancehall is half for ladies and half for men. Change th music from just the base, give people the power to express themselves. Because the music in the venue they just call it Dh.

0:08:48.3 C - The music change as reggae was mostly with the guitar and that heavy bass. So they took that out and put in more drums and a faster tempo.

0:09:12.0 C - Dh always keep in a little venue where people come together, so that is where name Dh come from

0:09:43.4 C - The name Dh, I think came about because of how the parties used to be. They used to be in a little venue, then DJ up there talking and nice up place. The Lee Scratch Perry etc.

Is dancehall a ritual?

0:11:04.2 C - "A ritual? A ritual in what way like? Because I don't really think it's a ritual. I don't think so"

Were you part of traditional practices?

0:11:38.5 C - No yu that in my area as you know, I am in the 90s, I grow in Dh. Yeah we know about the traditional, but we grow on dancehall and dancehall dances. Yes we know some of the moves we do is coming from there, but I didn't really venture in like any one of them.

What about parents?

0:12:42.6 C - My mom lives in Maiami so doesmy dad. I have 3 sisters 2 brothers, my grandmom lives in Stoney Hill. We are all from St Mary and Portland, thats where my family is from. My father side of family is from Manchester. We grow up in the inner city rough life coming up. Mom worked as cashier until she opened a little stall for herself. My dad was unemployed so he did whatever he could do, so growinmg up wasn't easy. Wasn't easy at all. Some say dh is pure violence, but check level of each dh artist, how they start the songs they sing when they start and when coming up different to when they succeed as the life they see, that's what they sing about. When them start to make money, uplift their life and family, they no longer see the killing anymore, they are not in poverty anymore, their music change. So dancehal;l not just about violence, but what they sing about what they see.

0:15:11.6 C - They sing uplifting songs when its hard as well, as when in the pressure you want upliftment so you sing seh you want it. But remember now, most inspiration that they're going to get will be some probably negative inspiration. So they will sing mostly negative things with some positive along the way.

Have you been part of religion, grow up in any church?

0:16:25.7 C - My grandmom is full fledged christian, so is some of my aunties and uncles, but I didn't. I grow up in a christian home but I didn't take it up.

What does lit do for Dh?

0:17:27.6 C - Well, in some sense that kind of help Dh as they reach out to people who probably wouldn't look towards dh. Those writing books they don't really do it to help dancehall, as they don't come and try find a body to help dancehall. These people on a different level should help dh and move it from one point to a next point.

What is spirituality?

0:19:29.1 C - Well spiritulity is, is that feeling you feel inside, connection with the father. Its not the flesh, is something we cant see, something more than us bigger than us. We can only feel it and know that it's there. And make sure its a good and not bad spirit.

Can you expand on the father?

0:20:21.7 C - The father, that's the Almighty, the one that 6created us. He is the only one that can really, tell you about the spirit world. He's the one that gives us life and even the spirit that w're talking about now. As matter of fact he is the spirit that lives in all of us. I am not a Christian, but very Godly, you know!

How does this affect you?

0:21:19.3 C - It doesn't affect me because its not like a religious form where you have rules. The Lord say, come to me as you are. This is how I am. This is how I go to him.

Is there difference between spirituality and religion?

0:21:52.5 C - Hmmhmm! Religion is division, spirituality is togetherness, because good spirit always come together. Religion division, Christians, dont like Muslims,

even the same Christian dont like Christian. You have Seven day and they dont like each other. I dont believe someone should go to school and learn what to preach and then come say it back to me. Is not the father talking to him, he didn't get the gift, he went to school and learn about that.

0:23:16.3 C - Learn from a priest who learn from someone who is not a priest, as the person who taught him might not have been a priest, but a teacher. They are not spiritual. They're educated about the book, but not spiritual. The priest must "have a spiritual connection with the Lord".

When dancing, how do you feel inside?

0:24:46.3 C - Wonderful, joyful. When I'am dancing, I feel my spirit moving. That's why at one point in MOB we created a dance called 'Rifical, Spiritual', because we moving spiritually. Yeah, yu have to have a spiritual connection man, have to have a spiritual connection with the Lord. And you can see that when I'm dancing, when you look at my face you can see that. You can yu can feel yu body moving. When people watch mi dancing, them want to move, because they can feel my spirit moving with them. They can feel whatever I am doing.

Tell me more!

0:26:13.1 C - As I told you before I feel wonderful, tremendous. Its a feeling like no other. Even like, a few nights ago I was standing in the party and my ankle was hurting real bad, and as I started to dance, I felt nothing, nothing. But as soon as I finsh dancing, here comes the pain again. When I'm dancing, its like I'm in a different world. The feeling inside is different, different. - Then right as I finish dancing, the pain is back in the ankle.

H - Something said earlier, something about the coming together, that the spirit is about coming together, is there any connection with that in your dancing?

0:28:22.4 C - You see that, thats how, thats why when dh party keep you have so many people there. You feel a different vibe, yu feel a different spirit. Dancehall is like, is like a church. Only thing yu not here worshipping the Lord like full fledge worshipping the Lord. Even though in dh yu still have that segment that we give to the Lord, because in Dh we play Gospel, yu still have Dh artists that sings, about the Lord. So you do have that in Dh as well.

Explain a bit more?

0:29:36.1 C - Because in everything you do, you have to put the Lord first, and remember as I say, dancing, music, is a spiritual thing, because there's some people like far countries in life, Reunion Island. They don't know English but they feel the message and vibe from Dh music. They can sing some of the songs, but if you talk to them they don't know English. So that's where the spirit connects. That's how powerful it is. Dh so powerful that you can have two communities having war and the enemy from both communities will be at the one party having fun in one place. That's how powerful it is. - If the government should see that, the place would be better, stop trying to hold down Dh and lock off the Dh parties. - Dh is for poor people, used to elevate ourselves. When you lock off one party you know how many food you stop? You have the man that sell peanut, the jerk chicken man, the sound man, the dancers, the artist, the light man, the video man the camera man, you have so many people that you're stopping when you lock off one party. Much less if you trying to hold down the whole movement that's dancehall.

0:32:19.9 C - When party keep in the community the place is nice as everyone in the community and spend in the community shop, bar etc. This prevents people doing other things to survive.

0:33:21.3 C - Most Dh artists from ghetto, so when they make it you know how many people get help? Their whole family and their family help friends and so on. How many people come from one home when one artist make it.

Is there anything else you want to say?

0:34:20.0 C - I just want the government to stop fight and help us to move Dh. Right now most of the funding within tourism come from tourist that come for Dh. Therefore Dh helping the country.

When you say most tourists coming in for Dh, what do you mean?

0:35:14.2 C - Yes because even the dancers now, dancers have a whole heap of Europeans coming in for classes. Dh have a whole set of Japanese, people from all

over the world coming in to experience the vibe. They always say how come a country in so much dept enjoy themselves and we can't enjoy ourselves in that way?

0:35:56.3 C - Its not about the beaches and jelly anymore. Tourists coming in for the music, dancing and the lifestyle.

0:36:33.9 C - Well Dh and the youths? Dh is very influencial on the youths. Thats their exscape from everything, school stress, parent stress, they use it to get away from everything. Some start to use it from they're in school too. They use it to uplift their lives. In the ghetto, in the garrison, Dh is what they look to. As a youth in the garrison, Dh is what I look to for everything ... then you want to stop dancehall? That mean yu don't want me to eat, and yu not providing jobs for the youth. Dh provide so many jobs for so many youths. Not only in just that you dance or yu produce or yu sing a song, in so many ways

What do you think of the female dancers?

0:38:35.8 C - Well as I said before Dh is half and half half for males, half for females. The females are very relevant in Dh. Because they are the sexiness in Dh, otherwise from the music and the dance, the females are the next attraction, for Dh, because the females, they dress a certain type a way. Yu only get that in Dh. So the females are important, very very important.

Can you talk about their movements.

0:39:23.0 C - Well the female movement is mostly like, yu know the pelvis, they wine their waist and shake their rumps, shake their bottoms. It attracts the males. It even attract the females because females will look and be like, "I want to move my body like that". Yes, so the female movement is mostly moving their waist and shaking their buttocks, in the way that yu never seen before. Going on their headtops, splitting, you think a female dancehall dancer is like a gymnast when yu see them and they never been in a gymn before. - Wining their waist, moving their pelvis and shaking their bottom. Ca yu know Jamaica ladies are know for having a lot of attitude.

Why do they focus on shaking bottom?

0:41:07.3 C - Because, a female, when you look at a female you look at their face, their breast and their waist. They can't really just shake the breast, yes, they pretty up their face, but they have to shake their waist, move their waist, and sex sells. So as long as they look sexy, dress a certain way, move a certain way, that will attract people. So that's why they focus on moving their waist and shaking their arse.

females who do like male steps as well.

0:41:55.3 C - They can't just shake their breast, they have to make it look more like a body movement. So when they move their waist, their whole body is moving.

0:42:11.4 C - But you do have females that do male steps as well, you know, they can mix it but male doesn't do female steps. That's a wrong one, that's a no, no in dancehall. A male doesn't even should be dancing to a female song. [As exemplified in the 3rd elimination Dancin' Dynamites 2017 show in Kingston, where an all male crew were asked to re-choreograph their dance as the original was performed to what was considered a female song]. 0:42:30.4 C - That's why it's called a female song, cos it's for the ladies.

What's the difference

0:43:00.0 C - Male songs about, males, it's not telling you to move your waist or to shake your bottom. Female songs is telling the females, it's talking about a woman. A woman's body. That's a female song, it's not talking about a male in no way, so it's not for you. You shouldn't be able to even think to dance on that song. The only way you should be thinking to dance on a female song, is if you're dancing with a female. ... That's a big no, no, that's a big wrong back, inna di dancehall book.

0:44:54.8 C - Well the male dances, it depends on the mood they create in the dance. The male, you can have an aggressive move, you can have a joyful move, you can have a smooth move or you can have like, a daily move, something that you do, like how you go, you know the athletes they do skiing, we have a dancehall move call ski. You get me? So it can be something from a daily move or something you do on a daily basis ...

0:45:38.4 C - It can be an aggressive move, it can be a joyful move, it can be a smooth move, can even be a spiritual move, or it can be a move that something a regular person do on a regular day. Brush your teeth, comb your hair.



A spiritual move like what?

0:46:07.1 C - A spiritual move now like. Yu know in the church they say when people get in spirit, yu know they shake and do things like that. And we have a dance now call, 'Chaka Chaka', where it take the same form where we shake in that spiritual move like, we whole body move like, we being taken over by the spirit of the Lord. So thats how yu get a spiritual move, like how we had, in MOB we had the 'Rifical Spiritual Move', where the move it, like this. When we do that move people always say, "that move has me, have me like looking, like, I'm doing it", because they feel it spiritually. ... so yu just moving spiritually.

H - So the Rifical move now that one is called what?

0:48:03.3 C - Rifical move, there's a number of movement that come together with it ... Yu just moving like, is not you. Your spirit, bodies taken over by something else, yu jus let the music moves you.

Are there other times yu feel like that?

0:48:49.2 C - Yeah, a whole lot of times, we have a whole lot of dance moves thats really touching like that. Maybe not just remembering them off the top of my head just now, but when yu in dancehall, is jus, the vibe is jus different so there's a lot of times you can feel like that. Even when yu not dancing and the music is playing, yu jus feel like yu in a different world, yes.

H - Your saying that even when yu not dancing

0:49:27.6 C - Yu can still feel that spiritual vibe.

When that happens? What create that?

0:49:42.8 C - Just the song that's playing, how touching the song can be. It can be an artist singing about his life and you can just feel it because your living the same thing ... so your just there listening the music and your like lost. Your in a crowd of people but yu feel like your there alone. ... Yu feel like your alone because yu just reflecting on the song and the vibes that its giving you as an individual.

How yu create the movement?

0:51:04.7 C - Inspiration comes from many thing, many things. I could be here ... Hotfoot, hotfoote was created in an angry way. We were doing a dance called 'Paper Note', and was out there doing it, but in that time in Dh it was getting real physical, where its rough, and we couldn't be doing the Paper Note just simple as it has to be done and we start doing it a different way, walking and aggressive with it. And when the party finish we realised, that wasn't 'Paper Note' we were doing, that was something else. When we reach home, me and my brother Cash Banga, worked on it and get it to be Hotfoot, yu get me? ... Dancing, is just the vibe your in, thats just the product of the dance you'll get. ... Did it stronger and more aggressive.

Cash Banger a yu real brother?

0:53:06.0 C - Not my blood brother but we grow like brothers ... Dwayne Dunn.

What other dances have you done?

0:53:48.9 C - Like motion now, that was a dancecreated a few years ago, that dance was created on just pure vibes. So that dance was like drinking and having a nice vibes, listening to some music when I created that dance called 'Motion'. And yu have other dances like 'Bank Robber'. Yu know the shoes Clarke's, you have version with a man on it like a bank robber, with a bag on his back, so we call it bank robber.

(Explains and demonstrate dances)

What about 'Clouds'

0:55:57.1 C - 'Above the clouds', that was a MOB dance move ... That was created by hmm, Ringo that was iin MOB, so he would have to give you the story of the vibe he was in when he created that dance move. A dance move, the finish product is normally totally different from how it start as you have to work on it work on it perfect, it totally different from what you have before. ... 0:56:51.6 C - For me I think Ringer was smoking some good weed and he got floss and think he was above the clouds. And he like, "yes, I am up there", for me, I think that's how he created that dance, because when he came to us he had the name and everything.

Dances incl: Hotfoot, Rifical, Chaka Chaka, Motion and Bank Robber.

How do you feel now your solo?

1:00:52.1 C - Well I don't really feel now way, because even though I am not in MOB I was part of all of those movements. We all can use everything from MOB because we were MOB ... You started as a group and you know that's more powerful and it's less work on one person ... When it's all on you one, then there is more pressure ... promoting yourself, doing everything on your brand. It feels good as before people see you they say yow MOB! But now they say yow Cojo! You feel good for individual recognition.

## **Interview part 2**

Cojo Hotfoot\_VORC005\_06.03.2017

0:00:02.1 C - When it comes on to Dh you have the New School Dh, what they are doing is Dh mix, with, Hip Hop moves and, some other move. It's not straight Dh, you can see it in their moves. Dh moves it's a flowing movement of the body and mostly, your pelvis, has to be moving, because it comes from your waist. Because remember, Dh dancing is coming from Africa. When you used to do the Kumina, is like a waist move. And if you see an African dancing, most part he's moving is his waist. And is the same thing that comes up in Dh. But me now, I don't really move from the root you know, most of my dance is coming from Bogle days. Now the New School dancers now, they are doing more like a mixture, because they watch us and try to mostly build performance dances. So when they see us perform or they see something they like, alright, that is how it should be done, that is Dh, we have to make it look dynamic and we have to do this, no, that's only when we performing and we have to make a choreography. We add some things to it. 0:01:47.8 C - But when we dancing in Dh, it's run, it at the root. Throw in movement of the body, you pelvis, you waist moving. ... And the new School is more of a popping movement of the body, you have 1, 2, 3 you know, moving almost like a robot. And a lot of dynamic things they add to it.

You mention Kumina, tell me a bit more about that?

0:02:49.0 C - Well Kumina is one of the traditional folk dances from before Dh. Well Kumina is, is where you have that heavy drum roll, that heavy drum bass, you know, it's a unisex dance for females and males. It's a very spiritual move, spiritual move as

well. Kumina is not like, its one name and people think is like, one dance. But its more like, a whole, syndicate of moves, but your body is like, just in one form, with that waistline movement and that foot move. Yu get me! So that's Kumina. ... Like its not just like one move and you doing one thing, tru its called Kumina, yu move, yu can do it on the spot, yu can move around with it. You can do all forms of different movement with your body with it. So its not just like one little dance move going. Kumina is like a whole syndicate of yu body jus moving.

What yu mean by the spiritual?

0:04:33.3 C - Because if, if you should watch a video now of someone back then doing Kumina, you will see and feel what I am talking about. You will get that feeling like, you don't understand what they dancing tu, what the dance is about, but yu can jus feel it, if yu see it like first hand, watching a video back then of someone doing the Kumina dance move. And then yu can get a nex' feeling from it like this happy feeling, of a man, or a male and a female dancing together. So thats the spirit of it now. You can get the spiritual form and the spiritual feeling from it, and then you can get a different feeling from it which is joy, happiness and laughter. ...

0:05:42.4 C - the spiritual form is, like when you see, like someone single and just a group of people doing the Kumina with that spiritual vibe, in it like that slave, they dancing like, like, like like how the slaves used to dance. Cause when they doing the Kumina, they like chanting. And then on the other hand, yu have the Kumina now, where a male and a female will do it together. Wining and gyrating up their pelvis and their waistline and they're on each other. They're moving aroun' and having a good time.

Why did you bring that up in relation to Dh?

0:06:45.6 C - Because the relation of it is that, Kumina, Dh is coming from, those type of dance move, and as I said the Kumina is, the movement of the waist, the pelvis. So Dh should still have that waist, like that heavy waistline and pelvis movement. Once yu move from out of that form, yu not doing Dh, yu doing something else.

H - Thanks a lot – That's Cojo Hotfoot

### **Interview part 3**

Cojo Hotfoot\_VORC006\_06.03.2017

Revival link to Dh?

0:00:13.1 C - Well as, as, remember Revivalism is a spiritual thing yu know, and I told you the spiritual, thing is a high part of Dh. At one point in Dh, I think it was bout, 2002 or 2003, where yu had this Dh rythm, that was, similar to the rhythm that yu wi hear in a Revival church. And we had all those Revivalist moves doing back then. The 'Shankle Dip' and the, yu know how those people behave when, in a Revivalist church? So all of that man, Dh is, is a mixture, as I told you, Dh is the culture for Jamaica, so Dh is a little of everything.

0:01:46.0 C - 'Dh is the culture of Jamaica, its a little of everything' Cojo quote. ... That's it now man.

H - Respec!

## **Appendix 7.**

### **001 Interview with Crazy Hype CEO of M.O.B Dancers at Dancehall Origin**

**18.03.2017**

0:00:06.6 H - Intro to project and explanation to artist, incl the release.

0:01:33.8 CH - Ok, so my name, my birth name is Michael Graham, Aka Crazy Hype. Yu know wha a mean. Hmm, leader founder and CEO of Dance Move, M.O.B dance group, which means Men Of Business. Hmm I start dancing yu know for ever since yu kno, I dance out of my mama and still dancing, yu get mi? So, hmm, I could say that I'm the danca in, in Jamaica yu kno that create the most dance moves, and also the danca in dancehall that have done, the biggest ting internationally, I mean on stages, as well, as well as start this whole workshop movements, yu know this whole dancehall workshop movements thats happening all over in Europe and, Russia and so on. I'm the one that really start it like, in terms of I was the first one that, that have orgnise and give the trust to say yeah, I'm going to book this danca yu know! And from then I start mention like different danca's name and they start working with different people as well, yu know ahmm. 0:02:44.5 CH - I'm also a recording artist, song writer, ahmmm, yu know ahmmm, I release a song last year, last year we released two songs, 'MVP' thats Crazy Hype, feature Oceana and 'Brace' Oceana feature Crazy Hype. Hmm, and I write on both songs, hmm basically hmm, and it was also the first time Bounty Killer really, really like dance in a music video and it was my music video, MVP, yu kno. Cau Bounty Killer, he go in video and he move and flex, but he really yu dance in the MVP video, yu get mi and, dat was a big accomplishment as well. Ahmm, when I was saying earlier that I did the biggest stages, yu kno like, yu check out 'Juste Debout' which is the biggest urban dance event in the entire world. And the first year it held, it kept in Paris, Mercy Arena, was 20014, which I was the chief judge. And then this year, I was the host and it was the most successful result for dancehall in Europe, yu know wha a mean, since it has started, because, even the organiser of Juste Debout was saying that, yow, Dh killed Hip Hop, House, everything yu get mi, because of the energy, we bring something different dat di people dem neva really experience or wanted to experience, yu kno wha a mean. 0:04:14.1 CH - Ahmm, currently now, I'm jus working, focusing on my music, yu kno wha a mean. Working on lots of new songs. As yu si earlier inna, in my

class, lots of new steps, most of these new steps are created just a few days ago yu kno and hmm, yu kno, talking about M.O.B, currently now, MoB, MOB is a group but more of a group of family, yu get mi? And when I say dat, it just featuring at the moment yu know. We have, Cash Banga, we have Tall MOB and we have Unknown, yu get mi, and myself, complete MOB. Yu know wha a mean,? So, dats where it is, I've been jus' taking Dh around the worl' yu know wha a mean! Whether is in the middle-East, the Far-East, Europe, yu get wha mi a seh? South America, yu kno! Jus taking Dh all ova di worl' in different places weh, yu kno wha a mean, Dh is now like a house hol' word, like a part a people life. Yu get mi? Cause, when I danceyu kno, I dance to make people happy and also to change lives, yu kno! make people feel good about themselves, make people want to dance, yu kno! So, is jus ahmm, a likkle about me 0:05:33.9 CH - and, I have to talk about Bogle. Yu know Bogle was, before Bogle died yu kno! May his soul rest in peace an, when Bogle fir, when I first met Bogle I was just dancing, I don't know bogle and Bogle just saw me dancing and he came to mi and he was like, "No! who teach yu to dance?" I was like, yeah I saw you on Tv dancing as well yu know man, but, yu kno wha mean! Nobody neva really teach mi fi dnce dem time deh, cos mi born wid danceing yu get mi? But, going to high-school, I remember yute like Colo colo and Sadiki, dem used to really show mi some steps, yu know wah a mean? So mi haffi big up dem yute deh inna real life, yu get mi?

0:06:12.7 CH - Big up Shelly Belly same way, cau yu know yu kno, me was a part a Shelly Belly group an, Shelly Belly help fi show mi di way tu, yu kno wah a mean? Big up Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka is mi, is mi long dancing partner weh, weh wi, we change dancehall, yu get mi, dancehall dancing because, like, like, like with my brain and my t'inking yu kno, I was like yow, to start a new group wi haffi go in di street different, so yu kno MOB put the colour inna dem hair an lots of carvings, designs, write wi name inna wi head an, yu get mi? Like, everyone was doing like, follow mi leader kinna ting like dis ting call government global where John Hype du one ting an everybody follow. Den me an Sri Lanka really mek, I was like yow dawg listen, we going in di street different, we create someting an wi du di same ting at di same time an, yu kno, it really changes the game becau today day, everybody is doing it. Everybody have to be doing routine or choreography in Dh right now, yu get mi! So, I can seh that in real life, afta Bogle, an, yu, y, yu might find people that say different yu kno but, like lots of people outside of Jamaica, cau yu kno Jamaica is a really bias place yu know, yu get mi? But I would, I could say afta Bogle, I'm the biggest Dh

danca. Yu get mi? An I could say this in a crowd or ontop of a building, yu kno wha a mean, because what I have done in Dh, ova di years, is, yu kno wha a mean, which, mi nuh really get di credit fi it fully, but mi nuh really need it sometime yu know wha a mean, cau mi need a credit mi jus go buy a digicel phonecard, easily yu si mean? Yeah man but, dats jus a little about CH life yu kno, yu get mi? An it jus goes on and on I jus keep working an working an, yu kno wha a mean? I kno one day the worl' gonna appreciate, apprecilove, an really discover an understand everyting weh mi du and still doing, for Dh, yu si?

H - Explain that I have to go thru specific questions. 1. Define Dh

0:08:51.6 CH - Alright, Dh is a lifestyle, Dh is a culture, Dh is a movements, Dh is freedom, Dh is happiness, Dh is, Dh is unity, yu kno wha a mean? Dh is Jamaica, yu kno wha a mean? Dh is Jamaica ahmm, ahmm, Dh is like Jamaica spreading some people di worl' it kno, our motto is 'Out a Many One People' yu kno, yu get mi? Which is a very important ting yu get mi? So, is like Dh is from Ja, is for, is from Jamaica to the worl', yeah? Basically dats wha mi waan seh. Dancehall is from Jamaica to the worl', yu get mi? Dh is mainly supported and practiced by the yute of the inna city, yu get mi? Di yutes dat don't have di patience fi go tru college fi take care of dem family or take care a demself, becau, yu kno wha a mean? We grow up poor and some a di time di eas, not, not ,not saying di easiest way yu kno, but, is like, is a way weh yu qualify your own self, yu get mi? 0:09:55.6 CH - Because is how yu work pon di Dh fiel' yu get pay, yu get mi? So yu kno seh, wha yu put out is wha yu get, yu get mi? So, dat is Dh for mi.

H - So how yu work, on the, in the Dh fiel' is what yu get back!

0:10:16.1 CH - Basically yu kno, what yu put out is wha yu get yu kno, yu qualify yuself in the Dh worl' yu know, yu get mi? So you go fi wha you want. Is not like, yu kno, but overall, Dh is a cultural lifestyle, yu get mi (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah man!

0:10:34.5 Ch - Is a way of life man, yu si mi?

H - 2. Does thinking and theorising inform Dh



0:11:03.2 CH - Ahmm, alright, personally, mi neva read wha, one a di book from any a dese journalist, personally seen! But, I guess in some ways, alright, dey gonna reach people, yu get mi? People gonno understan' what they're saying, but then, then itsgonno pull people also to research on their own, which is to go to the source, which is Jamaica as well yu kno wah a mean? An try to find out from different source, but , whatever research people do and spread the word Dh once it's not in a negative way, and even if its a if its a negative way yu kno, yu nko becau, people gonno still wanna find out fi demself. Yu undastan mi? So it does help Dh when people like, likel, like spread it all ova di worl' an ting. Yu kno wah a mean? I don' know if I answer yu question properly?

H - Hmmhmm thats fine (Interruption). 3. What does Dh mean to you?

0:12:50.7 CH - Dh? One word mi can use, Dh mean everyting to mi. I t'ink dat explain it. Dh mean eveeeryting, yu get mi? Mi cyaan live without Dh, so it mean everyting. Mean life!

H - (Explain may use somethings as direct quote). 4. Social and cultural side of Dh?

0:13:34.2 CH - Alright the social and cultural side of Dh. The cultural side of Dh fi mi now seen, is when yu just dancing from yu heart and yu flow, yu still grounded and yu keep the real Dh groove, yu get mi? Ahmm, yu don't dance because a business or dance because a money. Yu get mi? Yu dancing from yu heart fi jus free yuself. Yu go inna di party an yu have some stress, yu get mi? Yu smoke a wa, yu smoke a weed, yu kno wh a mean? Yu have a drink an yu jus dance the night away. Yu nuh memba nuttin bout yu stress, while, while yu in di party. Yu get mi? Ahmm, the social side a dancehall now, is like, is like the evovling of Dh as well, yu get mi? Wid di sharing of Dh in, in different places. Yu get mi? So, for example now, like like in Europe now, yu have lots of European teaching Dh, yu get mi? Which is also a part of the social side a Dh, yu get mi? Because the spread of Dh has reach, but lots of these people don' really understan the cultural part of it. Yu getmi? So, the, the, they more have a social energy towards it like, yu, like, yu get wha mi a seh? Like, mostly like people who will be doing battles an, yu get mi? Which is good as well yu kno, because it

help the culture and it help Dh to grow as well, yu wha a mean? So, yeah man, naturally.

H - Right (Repeat the end of last line - so lots of these people don' really understan the cultural part of it, they just teaching the social)

0:15:03.7 CH - Yeah, so we are, we ar the ones that have to help them to understan an, forthem to get the culture part of it, they have to live it. They have to go to Jamaica, an not jus for a day or 2 weeks, they have to be in Jamaica and understan, yu get mi? And see how di yute dem dance, like dem relation to dancing, an yu realise seh yow, Jamaican, most Jamaican, not all. Most Jamaican an dancing, is, one ting, is like de can't seperate, yu get mi? They are jus like this, if they lose the dancing, or theye lose the Dh, their life is done. Basically. Respec' hear, Bless (to participant passing by).

H - Good. How yu feel within yuself when yu a dance?

0:15:54.2 CH - When mi a dance yu kno, mi feel like mi a di bes' [best] man pon eart' [earth]. How yu doing? (to participant passing by). 0:15:59.5 CH - Yu know, when mi a dance mi feel like seh mi a di bes', bes' person pon eart', yu kno wah a mean? Like the dancing jus tek ova and, yu get wah mi seh? Cos most a, mos' a di steps dem wah mi do inna dancing, I create them on my, I create them myself, yu get mi? So, yu kno, creating something, an dancing it an, yu jus feel happy, yu jus feel like, yu kno, yu just flowing wid [with] di wind, yu kno wha a mean? So! I feel myself like I'm di best person on eart' when I'm dancing, yu wha a mean?

H - (Summary - So yu create most of the steps yu do)

0:16:31.9 CH - Yeah man almos' everyting weh mi do a me create dem. Yu get mi? What, what mi nuh create, mi wi do mostly Bogle dance move dem because, when yu talk about Bogle dance moves seen, no one cannot do Bogle dance moves, that is living, better than mi, no one, yu get mi? Like real talk, undastan mi? So, an, an, an if yu si lots a my dance moves, yu kno! The groove and the feeling of it, yu could picture Bogle doing some of my dance moves, yu get mi? Because the groove an di

feeling an di texture is still authentic, yu get mi? 0:17:07.3 CH - Yeah man, naturally man.

H - (question/clarify texture of movement)

0:17:16.1 CH - Yeah man, the authentic, yu kno the real dancehall, yu kno wha a mean? Rib cage, pelvis, yu kno wha a mean? Dancing from a to z, from yu head to yu toe, yu kno wha a mean?

H - So you could picture...

0:17:27.8 CH - Bogle doing mi dance move dem yeah, becau is not like seh yow, of course mi have a few dance move weh mi kno seh yow, is not really Bogle kinna dance move them becau Bogle is a man, weh, him dance, thing is is yu kno, yu have dance move, yu get mi? Yu have steps. Yu have steps an yu have dance move, yu get mi? An, I'm a danca, i'm not a steppa, yu get mi? Dancing is when your whole entire body is moving, an steps is what lots of these new school dancers are doing today yu kno! (Interruption). ... Steps is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, yu know yu count dem. Dance move is yu body flowing, yu kno. Yu flow, yu don't count it. Yu haffi feel it. Yu get mi? ...

0:18:30.8 CH - The old school, the old school is the foundation, but most of the new school dancers today, they do steps an not, an not dance moves. Yu feel mi? Yeah man. ...

H - (Interruption) What are main social activities in Dh?

0:19:16.0 CH - Alright, a part of Dh seen, Dh space could be like a church, where the selector is like a pastor. The selector is thee person who decides how the vibes inna di party go. An when yu talk about the real Dh space, yu talk about the dancers, because they, it cyaan do without di dancers them. I'm not just talking about male dancers, it cannot du widout di female dancers dem. Yu get mi? Di female dancers dem, dem an di male dancers dem togedda, yu kno wha a mean? De man weh sell di peanut, di wriggles [chewing gum], di sweetie, di, di, di, di weed, di grabba, di likkle tings dem weh yu need. Yu get mi? De man outside weh a sell di jerk chicken. Even di taxi man dem, cau [because] yu have some taxi people, weh is like Dh taxi dem, weh dem

work wid di Dh people dem, yu kno wha a mean? (H - Hmmhmm) Ahmm, yu talk about di vi, di video man, yu kno wha a mean? 0:20:21.2 CH - Back inna di days, di person wha, who deh a di gate yu call him gatie, yu kno wha a mean? (H - Hmmhmm) An, jus di whole atmosphere, di dancing, di selecta a talk, di videolight, di whole a dat put togedda, yu kno wha a mean, dat's di social activities, in Dh. Yu kno wha a mean? Gyal a chat gyal, yu know wha a mean? People a floss, people a try fi, see who can buy di mos' [most] drink, money pull up, yu kno wha a mean? All dem ting deh togedda man, social activities in Dh.

H - (Explain and catch up writing). What Dh holds dancewise?

0:21:28.7 CH - Alright, what does Dh hold dancewise? Alright, right now, Dh, today, is like, Dh is taking ova everyting basically, yu get mi? Dh, Dh is taking ova everyting cau di, di, di energy dat is in Dh, yu don' fin' it in no odda parties. Di connection, di togeddaness, within a Dh yu no really fin' it inna other genre a dancing, yu kno wha a mean? So, Dh hol' life, Dh hol togeddaness an, yu kno wha a mean, jus, jus a good vibe, good vibe yu kno! ...

H - Do you belong to church or religious group?

0:22:28.6 CH - No, I don' believe in religion, cau religion is division. I believe inna di Almighty God. I give it mi life, yu kno wha a mean? ...

H - So what yu believe in then?

0:22:52.8 CH - I believe in life, I believe in the Almighty God. I mean I believe that there's a God, that there's a creator. There's someone that give us life, there's someone that make di earth, make the earth turn. There's someone that make the tunda roll, di lightening flash, there's someone that make, that make all this possible yu kno wha a mean? An I don't kno who that person is becau I've neva seen this person, I've neva seen this bein' I've neva seen this, this ahmm, this spiritual individual, kno wha a mean? That people refer to it as well, but I kow that there is, there's a creator that create me and create even you! So that's the person I give, I give, give t'anks and praise to, "Praise the Lawd!" ...

H - What is relation between your faith and Dh?

0:24:01.6 CH - Ahmm, I, I, ahmm, the thing is yu kno, with my faith an dancehall, I have lots of faith in Dh and, an, yu know yu si because I am part of the development of, of Dh in the dancing worl' as well, yu kno and, an I kno, I kno I'm going to change it musically as well, my faith in Dh is strong an its real an' I believe Dh is gonna, is gonna, is gonna become the leading, genre of music one day in this worl', yu get mi, dat people wi' look up to on a different level dan what dem looking up, to it as, as today yu ge t mi? HmmHmm....

H - How does what you believe fit in with Dh?

0:25:24.3 CH - But, bu, alright, th ting is yu kno, Dh is part a my life! Seen? So, so ,so, basically ... Dh is part of my life an ting, yu si mi? So, the belief inna Dh an, bwoy! Cos, is, is, is a bit of a tricky question fi mi yu kno! Yu nko wha a mean?

H - I'm asking, does your beliefs come out within Dh?

0:26:41.0 CH - So, so how my belief marry with Dh? (H - Yes) Is jus basically that ahmm, Dh, Dh is my church, yu seen! Dh is my worl' is my, way of freeing myself, yu get mi? I hope that answer the question now, cau if dat no answer it mi no kno how fi answer it at all! (laugh) Yeah man.

H - Are there ritual aspects within Dh?

0:27:24.6 CH - Not, not not that I have know of. Not weh mi kno of.

H - What it mean to get lost in music?

0:27:49.3 CH - Well, me fin' myself inna di music yu kno! Mi mek the music tek mi ova an ting yu kno! Yu si mi? Mi no kno how dem, how, how, how dem laas inna di music and ting yu get mi? Cause mi, mime, mi mek di music tek control, is a difference yu kno between laas and mekking di music tek control, because, when yu

mek di music tek control, dat mean seh, yu naah try fi du weh di music, naah, yu naah try fi go inna a direction weh di music not sending yu, yu get mi? Di music, di music moving yu, an di music grooving yu. undastan mi? So, yeah! (H - repeat last sentence) Cau yu kno dem seh when music hit yu yu feel no pain.

H - Define spirituality for mi?

0:29:11.6 CH - Ahmmm, spirit an' spirtually, (H - An spirituality) An spirituality! I neva experience it so I caan, really, I can't explain it cos I neva experience it.

H - What yu mean when saying yu mek music tek ova?

0:30:03.8 CH - Alright, the music playing seen? An yu listening to the music, seen? Is like, is like for example, yu eva look pon somebody a dance an dem face expression is like seh, yow! Dem jus inna a different worl'? is like, the way how dem a enjoy di music yu kno, yu get mi? Yu an di music married together, yu andi music jus, jus togedda like dis. No seperation. (indicepherable) Yu eva si some people a dance off di beat? It look like dem naah really enjoy dem self? Yu undastan wha mi a seh? So, Dat a di difference, when di music, when di music tek yu ova, cos like, like in di song wid me an Oceana we seh [singing] "Let the music tek control, let it take ova your soul", yu kno wha a mean? So the music tek control, yu kno wha a mean? (H - Hmmhmm, yes). Yu know, alright, me can a dance to a song, seen! An, when is, when is time to change di variation, I dont have to think about it. Yu get wha a mean? 0:31:13.1 CH - Even if yu use, even if yu used to do the, do the dance move a certain way before, when dis music playing yu kno that yu haffi jus change here, or yu haffi mek a pause, or someting, but the music drive yu to, to, to, to what you're gonna do. An the moment yu try to go against that, you're losing the dancing. Yu get mi? (H - Right) Yeah man.

H - The music leading yu!

0:31:43.6 CH \_ Yeah man, the music a leadyu man, the music a drive yu, the music tek control.

H - How has dancehall affected your social development?

0:32:04.3 CH - I grow with Dh, yu know, an Dh mek me the man I am today. Yu get mi? T'ru [through] my contribution in, towards Dh t'ruout [throughout] the year, Dh has been paying mi, yu kno wha a mean, significantly, yu kno truout the years an yu kno, it only getting betta, yu get mi? Becau I jus keep working an improving, an, trying to be creative, trying to go out di box, an ting so, me an Dh married, yu get mi? We, we are family, yu get mi? Me an Dh are family.

H - What do you feel about female dancers then?

0:32:56.7 CH - I thin that they're the centre of attraction in Dh, I think that they are everything in Dh, yu get mi? I tink Dh cannot do widout dem. An di day, di female danca dem get absent from Dh, dat the day when me an Dh, divorce, cause I'm not gonna go in di party wid one bag a man.

H - So di day dem go missing...

0:33:22.6 CH - Yeah man, di, di da, yeah man, dats di day me an dancehall done, cos, alright! Picture a garden widout flowers. Is it a garden? Is it jus a piece of land? Yu get mi? So, Dh cannot be without the females dem. An a jus in todays day where yu si the male them more dominant in the middle because, the female dem get a little more shy, but, back in the day if, if your a Jamaican from long time and yu deh a Jamaica yu undastan wha mi a talk bout. Back in the days, is th woman dem dem, dem de inna di middle a di Dh, an di gansta dem deh one side a drink dem likka [liquor] an a pre [watch and admire] di gyal dem like so, Yu get mi? ...

H - I asking the same question about di man dem

0:34:47.1 Ch - Alright, the thing is, the male danca dem still yu kno, cause is, is yu know, is two component mek di worl' yu kno, is either good or bad, negative or positive, yu kno? A boy or girl, man or woman yu kno! So, so both a dem together, combine, fi mek Dh, becomes Dh an mek Dh what it is, yu kno wha a mean? So the male dem play dem role, yu get mi? Di male dem play a signifcant role, and ting in Dh

same way. Yu get mi? Cos if yu even check the, check the Dh yu fin' mostly male selectas, or all male selectas. Yu get mi? The video person dem a mostly male, yu get mi? So, both a dem play a very important role, but fi me, di woman dem play a more important role inna di Dh. Yeah!

H - You mention most of the selctas are male.

0:35:40.2 CH - Yeah man is jus, is jus about two female selecta yu, female selcta yu si a Jamaica, an is a gril call Naz. An, an, maybe few more, yu kno wha a mean, like yu wi si certain DJ Sunshine, Electra, yu kno wha a mean? An a few more a dem.

H - So there's only two of note...

0:36:08.4 Ch - Nas, yeah, cos thing with she now, she's a selecta, dat, dat plays in some Dh parties differently. Cos, mi an yu wi talk bout, talk bout, talk bout di radio people dem, yu get mi? Nas is like the only female selecta mi si really, yu get mi, an shi no, shi nuh play pan a regular eitha. Yu get mi? So everybody play dem role. Di ooman dem play dem role, the man dem play dem role. But the ooman dem is the most important factor in Dh. Point blank!

H - Who was the other one [female DJ]

0:36:57.5 CH - Yeah, I was talking about Sunshine, but, but, but these people are radio celebs, sel, selector dem yu kno! Cause yu have, yu have Sunshine, yu have Electra, yuhave dis girl call Jade. Yu have a few a dem pon di radio, but dem nuh really deh inna di streets, but they are still apart of Dh same way, but, yu get wha mi a seh?

H - Can yu explain the DJ and Selecta roles?

0:37:24.3 CH - Di DJ, di DJ is the person, seen! Di DJ is the person weh talk, like a MC, seen? Dat's di Pasta [Pastor/Preacher], like for example yu have a church an yu have a Pastor, dats weh di DJ du. Yu get mi? Di Selecta is the person, weh, haffi gi the selecta vibe, becau, the selecta is the person who selec di music, yu get mi? Who's



playing the music. Yu get mi? So, this person no, now play one a di mos' important role inna di party. Because if, if the selecta play, a play stupidity, di DJ naah go get da vibe deh fi gi di people dat energy. Yu si mi? (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah man!

H - So, so you're saying the selecta is the one that plays the music. (CH - Yeah) An di DJ is the one that give the people dem the vibe.

0:38:29.9 CH - Yeah, is like di, is like di MC, but, but the thing is yu kno, inna Jamaica dem jus seh Selecta, yu si, yu get weh mi a seh? But, but yu kno seh a DJ is di person weh du dis, weh du dis, yu kno wha a mean? Yu nko seh is a bit contrary? Di DJ, yu kno wha, lets leave out da first, yu si di DJ? Is the man whadu dis, is the man wha play di cd dem, who a play di record. Di Selecta, ... Di Selecta now, is di man weh a talk den. Yu si mi? Di Selecta is the man weh a talk. For by right this is a DJ, yu si mi? So di Selecta is the man weh a talk, yu si mi. An den again, we call a Dh artist DJ again! (H - laugh - A dat mi was gwain...) Yu get weh mi a seh? Cau inna Dh we have DJ an wi have Singjay, an if yu work with a Rapjay. (laugh) Yu kno wha a mean?

H - ... Rapjay as well?

0:40:03.5 CH - Yeah, because if a Jamaican work on rapping him call himself a Rapjay as well.

H - Phases of Dh and impact on current style?

0:40:32.8 CH - Alright so, di different phases a Dh an we a talk Dh, an wi a talk bout from in about '92 now seen! We Bogle a du.

H - The different phases for you start from '92?

0:40:47.0 CH - Yeah, wi a go start from '92. When, when, when, when, when Bogle create di, di, di Bogle dance move, an di Bogle dance move tek di worl' by storm. Seen! So, dats when people start fi really, dats di first commercial, dats di first Dh dance movement dat go out dere in di world. An di, dis was on BBC, here in England.

Yu get mi? Dis was something huge, yu get mi? [But Chucky dance performed to 'Irie Feelings "Skanga/Feeling High"' by Ruppie Edwards] An dose [those] time it was jus about, bout, about your soul an' yu heartin the dance, yu get mi? So people can really feel it. Yu get mi? An, coming up, coming up, yu have like John Hype dem come wid a different style a dancing. Yu get mi? More easy, an, an, an it more like, like step, cause like count. Yu go 1, 2, t'ree [3] an' yu go rain a fall, yu kno wha a mean? So, so fi dem dance move is like 1, 2, t'ree, 1, 2, t'ree, yu kno? So, so dancing change right desso, yu get wha mi a seh? An den, yu fine people like, like people seh yow! Ding Dong, Ding Dong come wid, wid, wid, wid wid almos' the same style of, of, of John Hype, yu kno wha a mean? Wid a likkle twis, twis as well [interruption].

H - Yu saying that Ding Dong du di same ting as John Hype!

0:43:05.9 CH - Yeah, yeah, Ding Dong style was a bit, was a, was a bit similar, yu get mi? Cos really from desso Dh neva change, Dh neva really change much until, really, M.O.B come about. Cos w,w,w, when we come about we use like one dance, one dance move, fi mek a routine yu kno! (demonstrate movement 'Calm Dem Down') Like one dance move, like this is one dance move yu kno! Yu get mi? We could start from like this, we mek 'Calm dem Down', yu get mi? An is one dance move we, mi, mi still doing yu kno? But it, it have so much different parts, yu get mi? An dis was the uniqueness that, that even help fi change Dh an mek nuff, lots of dancas today almost doing the same ting yu kno, like Dh, like dance move have lots of different, variation until, yu kno is like one dance is a, is a, is a routine. Yu get mi, yeah! ...

H - Do you participate in any other Jamaican form?

0:44:37.6 CH - No yu kno, it, di ting is, I appreciate it an I try to understan as much as I can aboout, about, the different, the different dance dem, yu kno wha a mean? Because, alla di ol'a [older] paf, all a di ol'a, di olda, the hmmm, dance dem, is what transpire to become Dh today, yu kno wha a mean? Because the, the dance, not jus the dance change, yu kno, the music change yu kno? Cau when the music change the dance change. Cau if, if, before reggae become, before reggae give birth to Dh, yu couldn't have a Dh dance, yu undastan mi? (H - Right) Yeah man.

H - What changes in society has most affected Dh then?

0:45:44.4 CH - Alright, the government, the government dem don't support Dh, seen, becau Dh is fi di, fi di ghetto people dem. But yet still Dh is the biggest revenue of income in Jamaica, ova di years. Becau Dh attrac' lots of tourist, yu kno wha a mean? An not, an not jus Dh, but, di music pon a whole, yu get mi? Di music pon a whole attrac' more tourist than anything else. Yu get mi? Yeah man cos, bu, but the government dem, dem don' try enhance Dh, dem nuh try fi put Dh as a, as a priority, an, dey don' really show so much love to di dancehall artist dem an di music itself because, yu kno like, like, like deh tinkin like, they have to go through college, university, do so much years of study, take 20years fi buil' a house an a dancehall artist can fin' one song an buil' a house right nex' door to dem. (H - Hmmhmm) So dey don' really support dancehall that much, (H - right) yu get mi? So that's just the really down fall, cos if the government had supported and protected dancehall, dancehall would be like, on a different level yu kno? ...

H - What is Dh role in popularizing Jamaica?

0:47:30.4 CH - Alright Dh role in popularizing Jamaica seen, for examplenow, Dh open the eyes of lots of people. Yu get mi? Because, when we want to say something, we put it in the form of a song,, an then like, people can hear that, yu get mi? An people can relate to it, an den, people, people who are not really from Jamaica sometime, but follow di culture, when dey look, when de look at a, look at a, at a, at a stage show event, or dey listen to some radio programme an dey get someting from the dancehall people dem, yu undastan mi? So, is , is like ahmm, is like a ting weh, is like a ting weh ahmm, is like a advertisement, yu get mi? So, dem dem perform an dem advertise demself, seen. An den like, people from outside now, dem listen back to the music and dem trying fi undastan weh di people dem a go t'ru. An dem realise seh, "oh di music is really connected to the life style of the people an what the people going t'ru", yu undastan mi. 0:48:54.6 CH - So den now, yu fin' people like Shabba now, weh proud enough fi go pon stadium an seh "Is me man, big dutty stinking Shabba Ranks" yu kno wha a mean? An, an to capture, capture capture di eyes an di, di attention of people, like international people, yu get weh mi a seh. So dats, dats, dats how dancehall really, really get fi ahmm, an is not jus Shabba yu kno, but is, but

is lots of different dancehall artist, yu get wha mi a seh? But that jus the way it is, becuse, once yu have the voice, dancehall is the voice of the people, it have to be someting popular. Dancehall is the government fi the people dem, an the goverment have to be a popular person. Yu get mi? ...

H - Anything yu would like to say?

0:49:58.5 CH - Well, wha mi a seh still, again, dancehall save lives, dancehall is life, dancehall is a lifestyle, dancehall is happiness, dancehall is everyting. Simple!

## **Appendix 8.**

### **002 Interview with Global Bob\_Dancehall Origin 18.03.2017**

0:00:08.8 H - Intro to Global Bob and disclaimer

0:00:46.5 GB – Alright! My right name is Chad Torrington Aka Global Bob. Originally my first dancing name is Sponge Bob. After I created the Scooby Doo dance, the Sponge Bob dance. So I was more popular known as Sponge Bob cause dat is my established danca name and den, since the past 5 years, I change the name to Global Bob. So Global Bob now, I reposition myself now, not jus as a street danca, but also as a teacher, international teacher an a lecturer. Now, in my history of dancehall, apart from creating hit dance moves, I am known for being the best. I won the award for best dancer in music videos, cos I did top music videos, like Cecille 'Hot Like We', Voicemail 'Gangalee', Shaggy, Brick an Lace 'Bad to Di Bone', Bob Sinclair an Dollar Man 'Everybody Scream', MiA 'How Many Boys', a whole heap a music video. So I went on to win dat award, for best danca in music videos. Then, in 2009. I won for t'ree consecutive years, 'Number 1 international Dancer', from Carivibes TV, where they chose 10 dancas who aroun' the world, that are representing dancehall, an, we took the trophy home to Jamaica, t'ree years, so, that's, that's in a nutshell.

H - That's Best International Dancer?

0:02:10.1 SB - Yeah man! An in Jamaica now we giving back to Jamaica where, we, I train, the government of Jamaica, JCDC, they hire me, the Ministry of Culture, they hire me to train the dancers for the Japanese were winning the title for t'ree years. Japanese won the title for Best dance Crew in Jamaica. So, we went back home because they did their groundwork and they realise that the Japanese trained with me as well, an they, they got , a good recommendation from Orville Hall. Orville told them that they need, a danca like Global Bob to train the Jamaican dancas, in the 90s. So, we started to train the Jamaican dancers an we start to win back the trophy again, in Jamaica. So since 2014, Jamaica has reclaimed the trophy, from the JCDC. So, in a nutshell that's everyting.

H - Ok, (GB - Yeah man!) thank yu. (Explain set questions to run through) ... define dh

0:03:18.9 GB - Dancehall is a way of life, dancehall is a culture, dancehall is a lifestyle. Dancehall is beyond the dance, dancehall is a community, which entails every man, every woman, every single person inside, the dancehall community, makes up dancehall what it is today. Bu, it not jus about dancas, not jus about Selecta, not jus about artist produca, its about the, man who selling ganja, the marijuana on di street, the jerk-chicken man, the peanut man, the man weh a pick up di bottle, everybody, because everybody get a chance to survive, everybody get a chance fi eat a little food. That's dancehall, dancehall is a place that, it should be a environment that, one can go an relieve stress an get the soun' system, the hardcore culture of Jamaican music (H - Hmmhmm) so, yeah man.

H - Is, is interesting yu seh an even the man that picking up the bottle.(GB - Yeah, because is for everybody) Becau plenty people figet bout dem...

0:04:14.2 GB - Everybody eat a food, yeah, dem jus fi lick dem, figet jus di, di basic, the grassroot of it. (H - Hmmhmm) Over-look everyting an seh, artist an selecta an, (H - Yes, yes) dat a jus di surface.

H - How does theorising of dancehall inform the music? (explain Cooper, Hope etc write on dh) ...

0:04:39.8 GB - Well its good yu kno! Because its good when yu have persons that are actually, trying to conduc' propa researches. What I hope is that, when they make their, their factual statements, that its actually what they have been seeing first han and not only by what they're witnessing from internet or anything as such. So, I trus their judgment an, an I trust, when they speak about dancehall, I trus when they speak about dancehall its from a first han perspective. That's the only (interruption from tannoy speakers) So I, once, as long as they are gathering their information from a first hand perspective, then I have no problem about it because, sometimes we need persons in that kind of structure to represent dancehall, its not jus about persons in the street, or anyting of such, because I myself is seen, as like for example, the Sean Paul

of dancing, because many people know that my bran' is a international bran. So many people will even say di same and say, "but Bob, Bob, Global Bob doan live in di ghetto or Global Bob", dey see me, dey, some people because of my skin complexion they even say, dat it work to my advantage, but many people doan even realise that many times yu at a dis-advantage like that. So, is jus how you turn negatives into positives. So, for me I have no problem with like the Carolyn who am, Cooper an, Dr Hope an di whole a dem, once dey representing factual statements, its good for me.

H - Good, so hmm, what does dancehall mean to you?

0:06:07.4 GB - Well, di definition I gave earlier about dancehall is my personal definition, what it means to me. When I tell you dat, in everyting in life, yu have, yu have to do it 100%, an dancehall for me, is a source of passion, a source a, dat if I'm feeling sad I can use dancing to express myself. I use dancehall in my everyday life, so I try to get the positive out a, aspec' (aspect) out of, out of dancehall because, in anyting you do yu can have good, yu can have bad. So it depend on the individual an how they obsarb (absorb) it. For me I try to take di positive, so I use, like the, the positive side, the perspective to change the perception of Jamaica. So I use this to enhance Jamaica bran', bring back people to Jamaica, because, even though ironically, I am the danca who always tell people dat I don't care to travel, but ironically I travel the moas (most). I am di moas toured danca, an, reason for that is because I don't go an represent Global Bob I go an represent Jamaica. So that is what dancehall is for me. Once you're a selfless person, an yu represent a bran dat is bigga dan yu, because representing my country, is bigga than myself, so I don't go an represent Bob, I go an represent Jamaica. So dat is dancehall for me. Jus keep simple, keep grass root, doan dilute di culcha. ...

H - Can you tell me about the social and cultural side of dancehall?

0:07:34.1 GB - In terms of the social yu mean like, with the social media influence an? (H - The social side and the cultural side of dancehall, what is that?....) The social, the commercial side! Alright, the commercial side now, it is dominated by females. An sometimes, they go by what they're learning from internet, becau the females aroun di worl', they are more the ones who, want to learn the male steps an all a dat.

Di culcha of dancehall in Jamaica is dominated by males. Its male dominated, so its even 100% different. Now, commercially, we realise that, most of the songs that are hot in Jamaica, yu have to be careful when you go represent internationally, becau sometime dese artists, nobody even know dem, in di worl', but in Jamaica they can be, some of the most famous ones. In the worl' commercially, they are more hearing the commercial songs, maybe more even the Rihanna, more the Justin Bieber, (tannoy interruption) so di social verses the cultural is that, yu have to always tell people in the social worl', make sure you visit Jamaica to get the cultural experience. But at the same time, the social one too, it can benefit Jamaican, because sometimes dese guys do soun tracks, so the producass dere can get benefit from dat, if they have right copyrights to their ting, an get the credits, an, exposure. Sometime these markets open up new markets for, Jamaican own the artist so, it jus depends, it have the advantage an di dis-advantage. Di dis-advantage is dat, mos a dese shows now an festivals, yu not seeing di real Jamaican, di autentic Jamaicans, headlining dem. Maybe di, di autentic Jamaicans are the backup singas, ore di opening acts for dese entertainers, for dese artists, who are coming into dancehall now. 0:09:19.2 GB - So everybody is using dancehall mainstream, to get de fame, to get the popularity, because everybody is gravitating towards di beat, towards di dance. Because even, two months ago I did a, I di, last year I did a, a, a big, function, a big lecture in Fr, in France, South France, an in di class was the choreographer for Justiin Bieber, an, she sat there an she hear some Jamaicans mis-represent our cultcha, an she took what they said, and she went back and choreograph Justin Bieber 'So Sorry' video, an when everybody in Jamaica blaming the girl an saying she doan give credit to Jamaica, people don't know behin' di scenes dat, is di same Jamaicans who were wid her, told her that, she can du as she please wid dancehall. So, sometime, dat is di disadvantage now when wi have bad Jamaicans representing di culcha, an take it to the social worl'. So the, the, the people in the worl' they have no clue about the real culcha, an di real problems. An mark yu, dat happens to, were dere's a cultural difference, sometimes dese people when they misrepresent the culcha, when, the persons in the social worl visit the, the real culcha, they have to get a culcha shock because they're not seeing the same dance moves, they're not seeing, the same songs. They're not hearing the same songs, it's a whole different, different approach.



H - Right, ok. So, hmm, how do you feel within your body, within yourself, when you're dancing?

0:10:42.8 GB - What I feel is freedom. A sense of, of, of seeing how, others can jus smile, others can jus feel soul, their souls connec' to my soul, even if we speak different languages, we see that when we share dancehall, the passion that we share is equal, an its the same. So that's why sometimes I tell people dat, dancehall is no discrimination. It doan matta yu skin colour, doan matta yu genda (gender), what mattas is the characteristics an the person an who you are, an how you can interpret music. (H - Hmmhmm) So what I feel from it is jus love an passion.

H - Hmmhmm, so what matters (interruption from Stacia Fyah. I recap ... what matters is, is the feeling.

0:11:28.9 GB - Di feeling, di undastanding, dat is it, dat is it. (H - An understanding) Dat's why I teach, my era, my, what I feel, what I'm connected to. I'm connected to de old school, to mid school. (H - Hmmhmm) Becau dese are the songs and the music with longevity (longevity). (Interruption - H) The substance, music with longevity, my era when I see Bogle create a dance move with, one dance move will las at least one year two years. Not like in new t, time now where one dance move lasting one week, two week. Back den yu neva need a specific song, to do a hit dance move yu wi du a dance move all night any song, any riddim.

H - Alright! Yu seh, Bogle had di hit moves dat laas fa a year. Laas for years.

0:12:23.8 GB - For years, longevity, dance moves with longevity. Even today date, once yu go inna a party an you play dese songs, di entire party is gonna be dancing. (H - But di new skool) Di New Skool is a specific set of dancas only. Mainly probably even only di dancas you will si du di dance. If no dancas in the party, nobody dancing, cause people don't kno what to do to it, cause too many dance moves now. So people, dere body doan know how to reac' to it.

H - Right. Ok. ... What are the, the main social activities, in dancehall?

0:13:14.5 GB I, i, it depends, Crazy! The main social activities is like, we have, we have, di Boom [TV] Badda Dan [billed as, The Ultimate Dancehall Dance Battle Competition] dats (that's) going on for dancas, that, the dancas can benefit from dat. Dancas win \$10,000 US, so dancas are preparing for that. Yu have in the world yu have other dance festivals that are keeping, so some dancas in Jamaica they are focusing now, to, to, to try a new venture of teaching. So dancehall new markets are opening up for teachas, new markets are open up, for artists are know collaborating with Afrobeat, Afro artists, so dancehall I tink is venturing into new markets to create, to create new opportunities, new, new aspects, new, new people, new fan base. ...

H - Repeat collaboration with new genres.

0:14:08.8 GB - Becau if you listen the commercial riddims now, they're not really dancehall. They're fused with other beats that you, you can't really, categorise it as fully dancehall. (H - So they're not really dancehall they're all... Is a mixture, dancehall influence! (H - Repeat) ... But is not the authentic dancehall.

H - What does dancehall hold.

0:14:56.8 GB - What, what it holds? Dancin', dancin', is a very important part of every Jamaican life because, if you check the, the history of it, from, from, basic, everybody is dancing from the old to the younges. So what dance hol', dance holds, a peace of min' where, it can bring unity, it can bring segregation. So it depends on the environment an' how it is being use. Dancin today has brought opportunity also for Jamaica, because now we are seeing there's a increase in tourist, visiting to Jamaica, so, dancin now, has contributed, through dancehall, to the tourist industry, that now we have more foriegn exchange. Mary Jane on the corna [corner] her shop can be selling more, because foriegners now, are no longer going to 5 star hotels, they radda [rather] stay with a local, and get the local experience. So now its about community tourism. So that more what dancehall an dancin is bringing into it, into Jamaica. (H - Becau is ore community) 0:15:58.5 GB - More is in, being involve because more foriegners is staying into local community.

(Interruption as building close) ...

0:16:41.8 H - Do you belong to any church or religious group or body?

0:16:45.7 GB - A religious group, me, I don't, my, my religion is, I'm Christian oriented, I believe in God, and of course Jesus, but, I don't, I'm not belonging to no denomination to say I'm Baptist or Catholic, I'm non-denominational so! For me I'm not, I don't, I don't care if someone worship on a Saturday, Sunday, whatever, I don't get in depth [depth] of that, but I'm very spiritual. I believe in God 100%, because everything I do I pray, and I have a spiritual connection before anything I do. So even some of my travels that I have been doing, it's even, led by the almighty I'm sure, because I have also, been the first Jamaican to Israel, and I have conducted lectures, in Jerusalem so, just to do things like this is beyond my calling. It's beyond a, a physical moment, it was more a spiritual calling and a spiritual movement so, yeah man! Definitely.

H - So you think it is a spiritual calling and a spiritual movement?

0:17:48.2 GB - And a spiritual movement, yes, definitely. Because I use the, the power that I receive now, to use, dancehall in such a positive way to impact on people. I have to keep praying for more knowledge, more wisdom, more understanding, to even better understand my own culture, so that I can, execute it properly and keep reaching out to people so that they can, change their perception that they can just see Jamaican music and Jamaica as a whole as, friendly, warm, welcoming and, just hear the music for what we hear it as. ...

H - What is the relationship between you, your faith and dancehall?

0:18:48.1 GB - Well if, as I tell you before, anything about the relationship between, I move between my faith, myself and dancehall is that, first it's my faith [faith], because everything I do, I pray before I do it. And, you get the wisdom and you get the power, from the Almighty to, begin, to confidence in yourself and have the faith in yourself. If, for example I am booked for a country, and it doesn't work out, I just say, "it was the Almighty's work why I am not, going to that country. So, things like this I don't, try to, over do things and, I just try, I work very professionally and my work ethic is very high standard, high quality, so if something happens to disturb my travels, I know that it's for

a greater reason. That one incident, the only time I push something was once, my passport was stuck in an embassy an I was travelling actually on the holiday, an needed my passport, an, I have to make some good connections, to get the embassy to re-open to grant me my passport, so that I was able to fulfil my travels, so sometimes, tings happen, an den when I went, on dat travel, I was the first Jamaican to go Equador, an duriing that travel, 500 people died, in the earthquake. Is good ting that I went into a propa restaurant, a 5 star resturant, where the building was, was propa structure, or else I could have been in, among that statistic. So, sometimes when I look back a it I say "now I see the reason why, my passport was stuck in that embassy. Maybe the Almighty neva wanted me to go on that, embark on that tour, but, yu know sometime, yu waan di money, or yu want to, to go some new places yu neva been so, yu try to push tings. So, my level of fait' and myself, I just realise dat, I jus leave tings in God hands an let everyting jus manifes from dere. (H - Right)

0:20:37.0 GB - An you will see dancehal space is a very spiritual space as well, because dancehall, many people who atten' dancehall a di same people tu dat even also demselves go tu church on a Sunday. Because most people in dancehall are God fearing people. So, as much as how yu might see people do antics, an dey [they], might do illegal tings, maybe they smoke or, tings dat detrement to their body, but tu each his own but, at the end of the day, most of the people who attend dancehall are God fearing people. This why even when songs play of such nature, you'll si a lot of signals go up. Hands go in the air because everybody can relate, to what the songs are saying. So, yeah man! That's a natural part of the culcha dat. I am proud to embrace di spiritual aspec'.

H - Right, so, therefore you said that the spiritual side, is a natural part of the culcha!

0:21:28.9 GB - Yes man! God fearing people.

H - Right, ok. Thannk yu. Right, so that leads me into the, into the next question. Are there any ritual aspects within dancehall?

0:21:49.5 GB - Dancehall is a, there's a moment, there's aspects, of course there's a ritual aspec' in terms of, because its a culcha. Sometimes you will see, if yu don't understan di space, yu might, yu might, take it as a ritual, because when you si dancas

get into the spirit, the spirit in the sense of, your dance moves are get aggressive, an yu si, the environment look very chaotic. An if yu go in the middle of dat you know dat you will get hit ova. Because the spirits transform the dancas because its in the moment, in the heat of time. (H - Hmmhmm) So, music is powa, an many people don' know dat so sometimes even di music itself dat dey're dancin' tu, transform the bodies, so, its, its more, is a ritual, but not a ritual in the sense of like, witch craf' or anyting of dat nature, a ritual in the sense of, its a spiritual ritual. So a ritual, only in dancehall spirit.

H - Hmmhmm, ok. ... So you were saying there's a ritual aspect, (GB - Yeah) Hmm, and....

0:22:52.9 GB - Even the dancers get into the spirit, when they, you wi see sometimes examples of dis, yu wi see some dancas, they climb, some high buildings, an when the spirit leave them, an they're to come down from the building, they don't even know how they got there in the first place, so they are looking for ways to come down an they cyaan't come down. Yu have other dancas I've seen then climb into trees, an when they're to come, jump from the tree, they can't even understan how to come, move from the tree. You have seen dancas who, roll on the groun' an they have no hurt, no feeling, an dendi nex day, they feel bruise an batta all ova their bodies, but when their body enter that form, that spiritual form, an the spirit takes yu ova, its a ritual movement.

H - Right, hmmhmm, so yu seh yu si dem roll on di groun'

0:23:46.3 GB - Yeah man! Sometime is a show dat some people put. An some people put that piece togetha, but yu have some dat is really genuine. Dat dey jus caught up in the music, the vibe, the spirit, the energy!

H - Right, ok, good. An den hmm, what does it mean tu you, to get lost in the music? Or you mention, (GB - To get lost?) yu said caught up in the music, what does that mean to you then?

0:24:15.8 GB - To get lost in the music can have two interpretation for me. To get los' in the music can be, some people, when dey go to a party dey're jus, focusing on the music, they jus go in a trance, they jus, they jus, is jus them themselves an di music, no body aroun dem mattas [matters]. So sometimes even yu wi see someone standing in the middle of the party and their eyes are closed, but their enjoyment that they're feeling yu won't understand it because, they're connecting their souls with the music, and di soun', so they are lost in the music. 0:24:51.2 GB - While another term in Jamaica, we, we si artist laas in the music, yu can say that [laughingly] they are no more making hit songs, so we can say they were pro, probably pass hit makers, but now you can say that they're laas in the music because maybe they still have the same style, as before, and its not really working in the current tren' [trend], the current market. So, sometime, it have two meaning, two interpretation, for me. (H - Hmmhmm) So it jus depends.

H - That's good, I, that's a good way to describe it as well.

0:25:19.6 GB - Yeah [laughingly], so you can say some people are laas in the music because, where are they now? Yu listen to their style, its outdated.

H - Right, (repeats) is outdated.

0:25:33.9 GB - Right! While anodda set [another], while the other side of it can be lost in the music an yu enjoying the music fully, as a patron. (H - Lost in the music) Yeah! Is jus you, the music, an, an yourself.

H - Is jus, (GB - Yourself an the music) you, the music an yuself. (GB - Thats it). Thats a nice one. That one I probably will use as a quote yu kno! (GB - Yeah man). Alright, can you define spiritual or spirituality for mi?

0:26:19.0 GB - Spirituality for me is when you listen to the inner voice. A inner bein' [being], inside you. That first voice that tells you, to, to go forward, mix, spiritual, spirituality to me, it works wit', without speaking, you jus detec' something without, you don', you understand it an yu detec' it without even have to speak. So it can be, work in the sense of energy, you can have, persons in your environment that,

spiritually you jus feel, a bad energy, an you juskno dat yu don' even have to seh anyting to the person, even if the person have a smile, you can jus detec dat. That's spirituality for me. Spirituality can also be, you connec' with someone natural, an, everyting it, it, it jus, everyting is happening is like it already existed before. So, spiritually you can maybe even see some places that, when you see it in real life its all, like you already been there before, but spiritually you visited it. (H - Hmmhmm) So spirituality takes a deep form, deep form for me, an sometimes many people are living, but they themselves don' even find their own inner spirit. (H - Hmmhmm. So is like, yu kno them before) 0:27:35.8 GB - Before! You see places that you, you think you seen it before. You pick up on bad energy, before. Spirituality can even be yu get call tu, to go somewhere an your, your, yu, your, your vibe jus tell yu don' go. (H - Hmmhmm) Like yu subconscious thought, all a that tie in with your sapiritulity. Because your level of faith, determine everything that will happens for you. Becau if you believe in yourself that, "Yes, I'am a spiritual person an tings", then yu will attrac that kin' of spirit. So if you're a positive spirit, yu, attrac dat, dat kin of energy you attract. A negative person, yu attrac negtive spirit to negative energy. So spirituality takes a deep form wid di mind.

H - So your spirit will attracts hmmm, the (GB - energy) energy that you send out. (GB - Yeah, what you transmit) Transmit, hmmhmm. (GB - Hmmhmm) Ok, thank yu. (GB - Yeah man!) How has dancehall affected your social development?

0:28:51.7 GB - Dancehall has affected my social development in terms of, it make me want to become, a better person in life, because, as a danca, I broke down all the stigmas that dancas are un-ed, un-educated, an all of dat. It made me want to excel in school, so that made me push, while I was in school. So, I was very successful in my CXE's, at Woolmers Boys, I went on, tu, to Six Form, an raise the standard again because that was when I was in my prime as a danca, an den, I was, I became a role model for my peers because, a lot of youngsters looked up to me in my generation of High School. So when they saw me in Sixth Form, many persons started to say "wow! if Bob can do it, we can do it too". Den it motivated me also, when I went t'ru University. So now I am the only street danca who has a, Batchelors degree, at the University of Technology [UTech] in marketting and banking an fi-nance. So it has, helped me to develop mainly as a person. I have learnt how to be dicipline, my social

development, I have learnt to be a team, team worker, team builda, is not jus about, so even though I'm a solo danca, I more preffer [prefer] to engage in projects that its about team work. 0:30:00.7 GB - Jus like teaching now, I don't walk an seh to people, " Oh I'm the only danca who teaching", I give my respec' to my peers, who I share it wit', because, its a team, its a collective effort. So even though I'm playing my part an teaching, other persons are doing it as well. So is not a individual praise, its a movement that takes not jus one person or two. Its a handful of the authentic Jamaican dancas who are tking it, well not even dancas, practitioners I call dem because what we are doing, its beyond dancing. (H - Right, right) We're delivering a culcha dat we are ambassadors for. So it has a lot of positive impac' on my soical development. 0:30:45.1 GB - I have started, I have also launched a guess house in Jamaica for tourist. So I've started to create employment for my Jamaican people. I also host a camp, a cultural camp. Not a dancing camp, a cultural camp in Jamaica, so persons start visiting Jamaica jus to see Jamaica itself. (H - Right, hmmhmm. So, you give employment) Yes! Is employment, an t'ru I try train the young dancers. I train the young dancas, to become, better teachers, better dancas. I train them, they're winning, I train dancas, two three years now they're winning, big competitions winning \$10,000 US, \$1,000,000 Jamaican dollars, tings like this. So they get to better their position.

H - Right. Dancers and teachers, (GB - Right) Good ... What do you feel about female dancers?

0:31:50.0 GB - Female dancers are the bes', if there is no female danca then I will exit from dancehall. Cos, dancehall can neva exist without, female dancas. Female dancas, I am so proud of them, but what I want, I want more females in the new generation, to embrace thierselves as women, to be proud, to j, jus be a feminine. They, most of them are jus doing tu much of the male style, they're dressing like the males and dance like the males. I want dem to feel proud to can wine, jus a basic wine. Most of these girls , some of them don't know how to do it. So, I am one of the dancas who big up the females, I hate to see, a female become overshadowed in a party. I am the one who will tell the dan, the male dancas to leave, exit the ring, an let the female dance all night because I don't want to see the male, in the middle, I a want to see the female enjoying arr self, whether she can dance, or not, jus let her be a part of it.



Because we men, we can neva live without them, an dancehall should neva exist without women. 0:32:52.5 GB - So female in dancehall, for me females are dancehall. (H - So you said tu many of dem are trying to do the male dance) The male steps, they don't need that, they need to be more women. Women need to go back to the days of being sexy, this is why some of the men are taking them an t'rowing [throwing] them all into walls, an running in, in, in wheel-barrow wit' them an all these crazy ting, because they're degrading themself. Woomen take it back to di roots where they are respected, where the men have to caress them an romance them, an not try fight them like a kung-fu movie.

H - Ok, ok thanks. Hmmhmm, the same question in terms of the men, what do you think of the male dancers them?

0:33:43.6 GB - Yeah. Is good to have the male dancas, the ones who are, trying to maintaine the standard an preserve the culture, but what they have to do is give respec to the roots an they have tu study. The male dancas in dancehall, some of them are really learning an trying to help themself, to betta demself, but the ones that, don't have respec for the roots or respec for, the persons who were before them, them, I don', I don't care for them in dancehall, an dancehall, they're not, they're not needed because they are the ones that misrepresenting di culcha. But the ones that, I focus on the good, the ones that are learning, the ones that are trying to improve themself, I give them a t'umbs [thumbs] up, because its not all of them that are bad. There's some good ones coming up. An they keep, some of them keep the parties alive as well because, they will be inna di party, whether they have money or not, they're going to fin' the party and they're going to shell the party, so, its good.

H - Good, ok. ... Can you explain the DJ an Selecta roles, and the difference between them?

0:34:53.0 GB - Well a DJ is more, we refer to a DJ as, as, a persomn that plays on the radio then. A Selecta now is more, the one that plays in the street, the dancehall party. So yu won't really refer tu, a, a street Selecta, a street, a person who plays music in the street as a DJ, yu refer to them as a Selecta, because di Selecta is the one who talk, vibe up the party, yu won't hear on the radio, "Hol' da gyal deh ova desso, rae, rae,

rael!" Is not di culcha, so a DJ won't be in a dancehall space. However, yu have some DJs, who, who, who, make dat transition from being a DJ by day, an becoming a Selecta by night. So when dey [they] go to a party they make that transition. But its not, its, the culcha is different. Is t'ree [three] a Selecta, radio have DJ, so DJ wi play in the club, DJs will play on the radio.

H - Right, ok. An then, what about the artist them? (GB - Hmmhmm) Because, theyre also refered to as DJ, so?

0:35:55.9 GB - Oh thats how yu mean, with the artists? (H - No, I'm jus throwing it out there) Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah! (H - I want) I thought, (H - to hear the distinction) Yeah man! (H - between, but now, where does the artist....?) But DJ, yeah man, yeah man. But DJ it have, it have two meaning, two meaning like dat because you can, you can say for example you can say, in the, its the culcha for a Jamaican to say a DJ, but if you go, in the worl an you say a DJ, most, the first ting that come to, a person min' is a man who mixes music, when you say DJ. So it was from an international perspective I was giving, but from Jamaican perspective, the DJ, (H - Hmmhmm) is, is the, is the artist himself. Now the DJ an di Selecta, mos of them are destroyiing the music an destroying the culcha in Jamaica because, they're paying the Selectas to play, their songs, an some of their songs are not even properly mixed. An dat song that is not even properly mixed is being played 20 times, jus because of the fi-nancial benefits, dat the Selecta is receiving. So this is killing, the young artist who probably evenhave a masta [mastered] copy of an excellent song, but the partywill nev hear it, because its who is spending the most money for the night. Or who is more creative and who is more, have more marketting strategy, to reach out to get his or her song to be played, more than the other. 0:37:08.3 GB - So right now the DJs, they have, every DJ, build a connection with their favourite Selecta. An they programme that Selecta that when they pose at any party they will show up at the same time, an they will create a marketting campaign to promote their song at the same time. So its a hand in han they work both ways. But what music needs to go back tu, is when yu song is good, it will be played. (H - Nuh matta [matter] what) No matta what! Dat's what dancehall needs to go back tu. So even when yu go iin a party you'll hear one hundred songs dat you yourself don't kno it, because is one hundred new songs an non of dem relevant. Sometimes is the, is the first time its even being listen tu, the Selecta

don' even hear it fi himself. So before you wil neva fin' dat. A song would have to be, of real quality, ready, for the road, an people ready to premiere it. But the Selectas, the DJs use the Selectas to get also the break, you can't have a current song, an you don't go to di streets. Yu have tu go di streets to promote it. Because they want the song to be hot in the streets, an then naturally the radio an everywhere wi gravitate towards it.

H - Hmmhmm. So once it gwaan spread in the parties, it, an therefore the streets, (GB - Yeah) I mean an therefore the hmmm, progress to radio.

0:38:34.3 GB - That's it. Now mos, most Selecta and mos' DJs, they are focusing more on social media, because they kno that it reaches a mass audience like that. So is not jus abut going to the street no more. They are targetting all elements that they have at their disposal. So whether it be online, they have campaigns online and say, "the best female danca to dis song, winning, anywhere she's from, she will win \$100 US. So is like dis type of strategy, pulls a much wider market to listen your song an dance to your song. So even the female sometime, they themself, don't know the artist, don't kno the song, but jus for the money, they will do di, a mad video, an den dat video go viral. So it give the artist a push, give the danca a push. ...

H - Mad video, to give the artist, a push.

0:39:28.4 GB - Yeah. Cos even now, myself as a, as a, practitiona many artist, my inbox is full with artists sending me songs, because they see the power that I have when I go, in the worl' an teach. They want me to play their song because they see that, I have, a lot of people from different, different continents all ova di worl', dancing to dancehall music, so, now yu would tink I'm a produca di way my inbox is filled wid music, from, from, known artist to unknown artist. (H - Right) An when I get di chance I wi' [will] listen tu it an if I like a song, I use it.

H - International classes (GB - Yes) Ok, because that help tu push dem. (GB - Yeah man) Yeah, so hmm, can you explain the different phases of dancehall an the impact of the current style?

0:40:29.1 GB - Yes. Different phases in terms of old skool, mid skool, new skool. Ole skool, from the 80s up to the 90s, up to 1999. Mid skool, from.... (H - Old skool was?) from the 80s, 1980s to 1999. (H - Right) Mid skool, from 2000-2010, New skool from 2010 to present. Now di impac' dat has on the current, is that, dancehall is, has to go back to the roots, in order for it, because sometime, dancehall is soul searching. This why Vybz Kartel himself have to du a song call (singing) 'Wheelie bounce, wheelie bounce' in, two thousand an sixteen [2016] because, the disc dancehall was created from 2005, but dancehall was soul searching, so he had to go back to, a ole skool dancehall, a mid skool step, that will bring back the community togedda, an bring back the dancas togedda. Bring back unity. So, dis kind of ting show yu dat, dancehall, it, it, it, it goes in the reverse for the dance moves, but howeva, di dance moves don' go in the reverse. Yu can't du a new skool step, yu can't du a 'Gas' [Ding Dong and Ravers Clavers] to a 'Worl a Dance' song from Beenie Man, or to a Buju, 'Bogle' song, you can't du non of these popular dance move today, but you can do a 'Bogle' dance move to a popular riddim today, becau dancehall goes forward, di dance moves progress. So dis what many people don' undastan, so dis why when I go an I go in a party an I see, a ol, I hear a ole skool song play, an I see the dancas du a new skool step to it I say, you don't undastan di musicality, yu don't undastan what you're doing. That is from the dancas phase. 0:42:17.1 GB - Now, how it has change. Before, it was about aut'entic music being played in the party. Now its about, flossing an, entertaining, an modelling. So dere destroying the culcha, jus, wid, wid, wid less dancin now, an more modelling, more profiling. So its now dere trying to get back into the dancing phase, but, it will neva be like di same, like before, because its no more about community dance moves, its about individual dance moves. (H - Right) So, many street parties today look like, its a, itsa , its a fight, is a fighting ring, because you see the dancas all, doing their own style. Its not about love, its not about peace, its not about I do your move an we endorse togedda. (H - Right) But at di end a di day, its, its dancehall where its competitive environment an, wit' the competition, comes wit' improvement, an, its good fa di culcha because yu keep others, a danca have to keep creating until he can fin' a, a, a propa [proper] dance move. Yu keep him, yu keep himon di groun'. Artist, they have to keep, creating songs, they hav to keep writing songs, seeking inspiration, because from this, thats where they can, like, improve, an they can fight against their competitors lyrically. So, yeah man! Is a good setting like dat ...

H - Do you participate in any of the Jamaican forms such as any of the traditional forms?

0:44:04.7 GB - N, I am, I am very interested in it, but I, I, I don't know the, the channel to go through, to seek such information, because sometime, it, it, knowledge for me is endless, so now that I master my craft in my element, now I want to go, before me and find out what was existing before me, to get in-depth knowledge about it. So, yeah, I'm really interested about it. So is just me to find the right channel and the right forum to go through to find this. (H - Hmmhmm, ok) But I have only heard stories, heard things, but I've never studied it first hand myself ...

H - What changes in society has most affected dancehall?

0:45:14.2 GB - The changes is the, when we have government changes. The tax, the raise of tax increase inflation. All these factors, change dancehall and change the communities, because, dancehall is representing the street crossroad. When you speak about dancehall the first thing that comes to mind is inna city, the garrison. So the garrison are what are affected by the decision, the policy makers, the things that are placed in the, every strategy that is implemented, it affects the dancehall community because, if the price increases for, for example, energy drink, dancehall in the, in the street, the bar is going to raise. So the dancehall people they have to find more money, to purchase alcohol. If its, if its about the noise abatement act [act], the dancehall communities is stifled from this, because, to stop a dancehall party at 2am, 2am is when the culture of Jamaicans are ready to go party in the street. So, things like this, den, they starting to re, reassess to see what they can do to bring it in with the culture.

0:46:17.2 GB - Also when we start to, there's a fight now going on because, dancehall communities defending themselves saying dat, "why is Jamaican society against dancehall so much, when, we're embracing carnival, dat is from Trinidad? A carnival is where people are dressing half naked in the streets, gyrating in front of kids. So its pretty much the same, but is a double standard, view of this agains', as opposed to dancehall. If the music is calypso, you are saying that its the norm, and its, an its, an its, accepted in society, to see this half naked women, half naked men gyrating on each other [other]. But if its dancehall music, then its not accepted because the music,

is what we speaking about this or that. 0:47:01.1 GB - So there's a lot of, a lot of factors happening now, that is really affecting, the crime rate also because, if there's crime in the, in the inna city, there is no way they, they, that community can get a, a permit to keep no event, so this is why no more street dances are being kept in many places, that was once before hip places for bes' street dance. Because crime an violence, the police won't allow no permit. So di yutes have nuttin to look forward tu or tu protec' their community. So the ones now who can keep a party, they're trying their best to have peace an order, because they now if any killing or any shooting, no more they can have this party in their community. An dese kinna parties bring for everybody, money. For even the likkle man who can park a car, 'im can park a one vehicle for a \$100 dollars an it add up, at the en' a di night 'im get \$10,000 dollar easy. (H - Hmmhmm) So, a lot a factors, influencing dancehall right now, in Jamaica ...

H - Laas [last] question now. what is dancehall role in popularising Jamaica?

0:48:15.4 GB - Dancehall's role in popularising Jamaica is that, once you hear, dancehall music worl' wide, people don't even have to can speak English to be singing dancehall music. It has become popular dan, even the acts wid great performances such as Usain Bolt, performing on the world stage in act, in trac' an fiel' [track and field] an den he started to do dancehall moves, it brought a new attention to dancehall, a new light. So people were seeing the worl' at'lete [athlete], doing Jamaican dancehall moves, it was a plus for dancehall, because everybody started to find out what are these moves, what kind of dance is this? Now you see this style of dance in almos every grammy, every award show, you are seeing dancehall as a part of it. The major ac's [acts], Beyonce, the Rihanna, Chris Brown, Justin Bieber, these guys, Drake, they're using dancehall in their performances. So the popularity for dancehall now, has grown tremendously, an the acts are using dis, tu tu improve their own perofrmances on stage. So its, and its both ways, its a plus for Jamaica, its a plus for the artists. 0:49:21.7 GB - Also for the tourist industry its a plus, because now more people are visiting Jamaica to learn the culcha, an fin' out where dis music is coming from. (H - Hmmhmm) Also take dem back to their roots because more people are more, gettingmore information also about reggae, an all di odda genres before.

H - Hmmhmm, for others, ok. Thank yu very much. (GB - Yeah man! a blessings mi dads man) Although I said that was the laas question there is one more (GB - One more, yeah man) ... is there anthing you want to say?

0:50:06.3 GB - Well for me is jus, wha me'da jus like fi jus see is dat, more persons wi jus try to seek information di right way, about dancehall. What I realise that for example even in Jamaica, the national forums, sometimes like the forums that conduc' big interviews, on the, on the prime spot, on TV, they are interviewing people dat are speaking about negative tings an mix up tings an pasa passa, so, if these forums keep interviewing such people only, then the natural diaspora they will only see dancehall as someting inate negative because every time dem turn on di TV, is something negative wid dancehall. So, it, each person have to play their role, an what I dream is one day dat dese people will wake up, an stopseeking jus negative news. For example myself I even open di worl cup in Brazil, as the only Jamaican, I was amongst Beyonce's choreographer, Michael Jackson's choreographer, Madonnachoreographer, an only one media call me for interview, an it was Orville from 'Fame FM'. Only Orville con, contac' me for interview while I was in Brazil. So even when I did a interview in Brazil, I was on Brazil national TV for t'ree nights, in their, during their news time. When I went to Brazil, no body knew me. When I left, I couldn' leave the airport in peace, everybody wanted a picture wid me. Everybody call me Kingston, Kingston, Kingston because, they were so surprised that even my own country, didn't highlight that I was in Brazil for the big Worl' Cup. Openning it, using dancehall. So, tings like dis is my wish dat, we will focus on the positive side one day, an not jus, highlight on the negatives. Even if its not about Global Bob, but about, anodda danca who'se doing it, I can be proud an say yes, positive news one day, can excel. (H - Right, so you can say, yu want one day) 0:52:01.9 I turn on my TV an I see, someone wid positive influence, being interviewed about dancehall. An dat it don't have to be, a drug related case, or, or anyting dat bad happen to di artist, or someting like dat, becau we tend to use negative tings as only dat is current.

H - Hmmhmm. Tank yu [thank you] (round up and thank you, finishing up).

0:53:03.6 GB - Blessing mi dads, (H - Alright) Respec' every time! ... Give thanks!

H - Thanks - Respect!



## **Appendix 9.**

### **001 Interview with John Hype Member of the Black Roses Crew 07.03.2017**

H - Intro and clearane

0:01:27.8 JH - My right name is Jonathan Prendergast, but the worl know me as John Hype. I am the legend, I am the heritage and rthe prestige of the dancing. That is me. ... A me a keep up the prestige up to this day.

H - Background.

0:01:54.5 JH - Well, I have come from the great. The school. I have come from the school. Yu kno! Bogle is the teacha, an I have come from the school. Same way like how me an yu sidungright here so, is so me an him sidung every day. Talk everyday. An we grow up live next door to me. So many people doan kno dese tings. Dem tink like mi jus come an know him. I see him everyday, grow up togedda, so dat was a pleasur an a joy, an fi si, stan up side a him an became a legen' affa his legacy, to create my own legacy, dat a summ'n dat I will always cherrish.

H - Where are you from originally

0:02:52.6 JH - Well, I was born in Linderhurst Park, yeah! Kgn 5. My mom, dad, granmadda an granfadda. I grow up fairly good inna everyting was ok yu kno! I was alright yu kno! ...

H - Definition of Dh

0:03:35.3 JH - Dancehall? Dancehall is part of life, cause many people survive t'ru dancehall. So dancehall is part of life, but many people don' see it dat way. Dem jus see it as a opportunity. So dat is what causing di problem now a days.

H - Many people survive in dh, what yu mean by dat?

0:04:00.4 JH - Alright in terms of, even me, survive t'ru dancin. (H - Right) Maybe if it wasn't for the dancin, me'd a haffi go be a lawya or a judge or be a police or a soldier, but the Fadda God seh is not my side dat. Dis is my side so mi stay to my side. (H - Hmmhmm) What is for me I stick to it , I don' run down evertin daty I si.

H - Who are the other people dat survive from dancehall then?

0:04:45.2 JH - Many artist, producers, many musicians, alla dem survive t'ru dancin, up to this day, the great legen dem tour same way. Toots dem tour same way. Shabba Ranking, jus dun [done/finish] do di boat. So, jus show yu seh, legacy will always live on an prestige.

H - Yu seh Toots, still perform, but some people wi seh but Toots is not, dancehall.

0:05:22.4 JH - Dem not, so him is wha? Reggae?

H - Some people make a distinction between reggae an dancehall, dats why I'm asking you....

0:05:31.2 JH - Dem a confuse man, reggae a dancehall an dancehall a reggae. ...

H - How you, get to dat den?

0:05:41.1 JH - Tell dem, me, reggae a dancehall an dancehall a reggae. Becau reggae a play inna di dancehall, is not jus dancehall music a play in di dancehall. So it can' be dancehall alone it mus be dancehall an reggae. Same like how yu have reggae dancehall playing it tu, so is not dancehall alone is reggae an dancehall, but dem trying tu define it, it naah work.

H - So what your saying dats a false seperation right dere!

0:06:08.7 JH - Yeah, I, dat is, dat is what me seh, I am not forcing a nex man to seh dat yu kno! I am jus telling what me seh, so a jus suh me see it.

H - How does theorising around Dh affect the dancing, the academics etc? How has the theorising informed the dance and music?

0:06:53.5 JH - Di, di yutes, di yutes, di yutes, di yutes don't know, di culcha a di dancing. Him jus see it dat him can jus come out a im yaard [house] an go a Uptown Mondays an jus dance. An im name call. An im jus do it right t'ru. But im don' know weh di dancing coming from. What happening, what mek it happen to be dis. (H - Right) I am the man who tek the dancin to a nex' level. I am the first danca to sign in Jamaica, to one a di biggest company dem, 'Shocking Vibes'. I am the first danca to tour with a grammy star in Jamaica, Beenie Man. I am the first danca an the only danca, who eva mek BET t'ree times. ... I am the first danca who eva tour di worl' two times, so yu see why I say I have a legacy an a prestige to protec? I cyaan du what dem du, I cyaan seh what dem seh, I cy aan act like how dem ac'.

H - What does dancehall mean to you then?

0:08:35.2 JH - Everting! Dancehall mean everyting tu me ... 0:08:49.4 JH - Like mi whole life, widout dancehall, how mi a go survive? So dancehallmean everting, a mi work. When mi go a dance, mi nuh go fi party an drink an smoke a work mi go fi work. A mi work place mi come. So it mean everyting to me. If mi nuh work mi naah get pay, how wi a go survive.

H - As an artist myself mi can seh, we kinna lucky, we can enjoy our work tu.

0:09:31.5 Yes, it come in like di man who own di business place, but im don' haffi sit inna di business plaus now ce, but di business a run, an im have everyting going, because him a push it that far that him don' haffi go dere no more. Im have managa, im have supervisa, who report to him. So is jus like us now in di dancin, wi du so much now so we can jus enjoy an do it when wi ready or when di right time come. An when di right money come. Cau nuh money nuh deh pan di dancin again. Di value gaan dung. (H - Why is that then?) Because, the danca dem don' know who dem is. Dem jus si demself waan go a foriegn. But when dem go a foreign an come back, two day from dat yu nuh have nuh money. (H - Right) Yu naah tink seh yu waan buy a 'ouse. Yu nuh tink seh yu waan buy a car? Suh di yute dem naah look furdda dan dem

toe. All dem want is dem name fi call, an video light. But dat cyaan work. What is nex?

H - Right, so you think that they're not building a legacy?

0:10:53.4 JH - They not building a legacy. That's why dem fade out so fas. Cau dem don' buil' no legacy. ...

H - What is the sociial culture of Dh?

0:11:22.1 JH - The social culture, the social culture, is, from, way back, from Africa. So is a blood line it come right down. Cau dem seh we come from Africa, an come a Jamaica. So it come right down di blood line. Dancin inna wi blood. Wedda yu waan believe it or not. An dere's no one across di worl can dance like us. No one! Can dance like us.

So you're saying is a bloddline from Africa (JH - Is a bloodline!) Hmmhmm, because some people will, will argue that reggae used to look towards Africa, but dancehall don', don't look towards Africa.

0:12:12.6 JH - Mi nuh inna di music confusion wid dem yu kno! I don' inna di music confusion. Weh me inna a love wid it in di music, an di music fi teach. So I don' inna di confusion widin de lo, di music, cau is dat mi si everyone intend to do, want to confuse di music. Di good music dem nah sing, an play. Yu quickka fi here a war song an a killing song dan a good song.

H - So when yu seh yu quickka fi here a war song an a killing song?

0:12:48.1 JH - Yeah, dan a good song. Dan a good one drop song, cau dat too slow, dat naah go nuh weh. But di war song now a go kick up a heat. (H - Right, so) So a di confusion me a tell yu widdin di music, weh a cause di problem. Nuh love nuh inna di music. (H - Hmmhmm) No love, is in di music, all is in di music, "a me a run di place, a me a di baddis or a mi a di hottest artist" (H - Hmmhmm) No love nuh inna di music. Den check it nuh man.

H - Right, right, ok! ... (0:13:33.7 - disclaimer and permission)

H - How yu feel widdin your own body, widdin yuself, when yu a dance?

0:14:13.6 JH - Great, (H - Hmmhmm) Feel like seh it is a joy yu kno, yu haffi love it fi do it yu kno! Yu cyaan jus a do it. Yu haffi love it, fi do it. So if yu nuh love it, yu naah go si di realniss a it. ...

H - Yu can tell mi a little bit more? Like what the kin' a emotions yu go t'ru or anything?

0:14:47.8 JH - Crazy emotions man! Mi trimble [tremble] sometimes. I have seen the greatest dem sometimes. I've rub shouldda wid di greatest dem. Perform on some a di biggest stadium aroun here. So, my emotions, I I haffi hol it plenty of times, an sometimes it get to me yu kno! Cold bump full me up, yu haffi get in back inna yuself an seh, "now is di time". Yu neva have dem experience deh yet? Dem neva have dem experience deh.

H - Hmmhmm, right. When yu seh cold bump, come up on yu, is it because of, th, the people who yu w, working with or is it the dance itself?

0:15:35.4 JH - Both the crowd an di dance, so many people, yu cyaan believe a wait fi si yu. Is a great feeling (H - Right, right) Is like yu a seh, is dis really me? So yu haffi get back inna yuself afta all dat adrenalin rise up inna yu, yu kno wha a mean? Yeah, so di emotion, yu haffi control it. But afta a period a time, it come like, chu, mi use to dis now, yu kno wha a mean? (H - Hmmhmm) But yu neva get use to it. No matta yu si di artist big, yu wi neva get use to it. Dat's why di artist haffi always seh summ'n backstage, an warm up himself, an get himself in gear, fi dat big appro. ...

H - What are the main social activities?

0:16:40.7 JH - Dancing! (H - Hmmhmm) Cau widdout di dancin it cyaan, a di dancin. If everbody come an stan up inna dancehall it cyaan nice, widdout di dancin di dancehall cyaan nice. So di main source a di dancehall is di dancing ...

H - Yu can explain dat a little further? Becau is not jus di dancing alone, wha, wha....

0:17:10.5 JH - No! depends pan, depends pan di selecta, di way di music a play. Di type a song dem weh a play. (H - right) Cause is not every selecta get yu in di same vibes. So it depends pon di song weh a play, an di type a selecta, who a selec'.

H - Right! So di selecta is another....

0:17:36.4 JH - Is a big issue

H - Ok, ahmm, who again or what again?

0:17:42.6 JH - (Laugh) Who again, or what again? In terms of?

H - Well you, you said its the hmmm, the dancing, its how the music flow, er, what else er, what elseare the main social activities? What are the main issues that dancehall artists, whether is the artist as in the singer or the artist as in a dancer like yuself, what are the, main tinngs dat you face?

0:18:13.3 JH - It work, the main ting that you have to face, when it into dance, is to be dere, is to maintain dat, dat, dat, dat, dat, dat, dat presence at all time, because out a sight out a mine [mind]. (H - Right) So the main ting is to be present dere at all times ...

H - What does Dh hold dancewise?

0:19:28.6 JH - Dancehall, dancehall have everyting yu kno! Because, dancehall have some great people. (H - Hmmhmm) Dancehall, Reggae, a we have Jimmy Cliff yu kno! An a we have Bob Marley yu kno! So yu si how far di legacy is coming from? Dat we have to protec' an cherrish? (H - Hmmmhmm) How many people across the

worl' look up to, dose man? An di lis' go on an on. We have di biggest dancehall artist, Shabba Ranks, who win a back to back grammy. People don' seem to talk about dese tings. (H - Right, hmmhmm) An dese tings are legacy. (H - Right, but what about the dance itself now?) 0:20:27.2 JH - The dancin? (H - Yes, hmmhmm) Now dancin is me. Me response fi di dancing, me own di dancin. I am di ambassador for di dancin. I am di prestige, I have to always present, an mek sure at all times, it be weh it suppose to be. All when naah look like a desso it deh, once I am dere, (H - Hmmhmm) dat prestige an dat legacy have to always remain, cause I have set dat ova di years. (H - Right) I have come wid tings dat, people have neva si yet, an I have created di biggest dance in di worl until tedday! [today] 'Pon Di Riva, Pon Di Bank!' So dese are tings, these are 'istory [history]. I don' deal wid record yu kno, cau record can be broken, but yu cyaan bruk 'istory, yu haffi join 'istory. So I'm di history man. (H - Right) So dat is what mi haffi protec' an cherrish, like mi life. (Right). 0:21:44.6 JH - Same like how when dem si di grammy star dem seh, "Si di grammy man deh", when dem si mi dem haffi seh "Si di BET star deh". (H - Right) All danca watch mi on tv. Dancin before all a dem. When me a dance, non a dem naah dance. An mi still a dance todeh [today] an some a dem stop dance. Nuh las night yu si mi a dance? (H - Hmmhmm) Well alright!

H - Yes but, yeah, I think that in itself was interesting las night becau, mis si yu a dance

0:22:17.1 JH - Yeah man! Dat surprise yu?

H - No, no is not dat it suprise mi, but it was interesting becau, mi si yu a dance but mi si, naah really dance, becau yu come out, an is like ahmm, yu come out an yu du a one move an stop an gaan back, but di one move is enough to show di crowd dat, yu still deh deh, an you still have it. (0:22:39.5 JH - Alright!) Whereas the man who jus a come him haffi (JH - Kill out) Kill out himself di whole night (JH - Aaaaalright! Alright) So, a dat mi si ... Do you belong to any church or religious body, or anything like dat?

0:23:11.5 JH - No, I jus live upful an right inna di Almighty site yu kno! An give praises an pray to him yu kno. Yes so, I no really have no church or mmhmm! Cau di

church a anyweh, weh mi a go a di same God yu kno? So, 'im nuh haffi tell mi, me know 'im fi myself, so I can sit an talk to 'im, same like how yu can sit an talk wid me. An I feel betta when me an 'im alone a talk, dan when di farty [forty] people a talk tu. So I preffa to stay in my kingdom an praise di Creator in my kingdom.

H - So yu "stay in my kingdom an" (JH - praise di Creator in my kingdom) I'm going to use dat as a qoute in itself (JH - Laugh a chuckling laugh) ... I think thats an important, point that you're making there. Ahhnhheh. So, yu just stay in your kingdom an praise di Almighty in your own kingdom, that is correct? (JH - Yes). Alright, so, so yu don' actually have a religion or faith that yu, you seh, this is what you follow, yu kinna, follow it from your own, instinct. (JH - Rastafari [yes]) Right. So, what is the relationship between dancehall an your faith? Or, your faith in relation to dancehall? Is there a relationship?

0:25:12.7 JH - Now, my faith is wittin [within] me yu kno! I am me, I am real, I live in di real worl yu kno! Cause dere are lot a fake worl an created worl dat a si is going on infront a everything, so I inten' to keep focus, cause I know what is going on, I si it every day. So I am well focus. So I inten to keep, di Creator clossa to me, becuase I si people inten to keep di devil clossa to dem. (H - Right! Hmmhmm) My confident is bigga dan di worl. My 'art [heart] is bigga dan di worl'. My blessing is bigga dan di worl. I don' use luck, I use blessing. Cau luck a go run out, but blessing cyaan done.

H - Right! Dats a good emmm, a good point, a good philosophy. Alright. So you're saying that your faith is within you an yu live according to that. And hmm, yu don't want to operate in the false worlds, your confidence, art and hmm blessings are (JH - Are bigga dan di worl') than the world. Alright, an so how dat relate to di dance then?

0:26:41.2 JH - How that relate to the dancin? (H - Hmmhmm) Dat fi show yu how much, mi focus an have di dancin, weh mi now seh, it suppose to be. I don't get carried away by what I seen is happen, an I know seh dat is not di way its suppose to be. Same like how I tell yu dat, no value is on di dancin again. Money drop. Dese danca, yu don' have nuh prestige, yu don' have no value, to set certain price, yu cyaan tell, yu cyaan dictate nutt'n. Anyting weh yu seh yu a get yu haffi tek. (H - Hmmhm) Now my ting don' work suh wittin di dancin. (H - Hmmhmm) So dat is di difference



wid me, widdin di dance. I have been t'ru it already, I know what is going on. So certain tings don' phase me like how it phase dem, wittin [within] di dance. (H - Right, hmmhmm, ok) Yu undastan? (H - Hmmhmm) OK! ...

H - Are there ritual aspects to dancehall?

0:27:53.6 JH - Are there ritual aspects to dancehall?

H - Yes because some people talk bout dancehall, dat dere are ritual aspects, like even Sonjah Stanley Niaah. She, she writes about dancehall as a ritual space. Are there ritual aspects?

0:28:11.0 JH - Yea, Yeah! Of course. Why not, Alright! Tek for instance den, how you see it? How you look at it?

H - I wi tell you when wi finish di interview, becau I don' want to influence wha you a go seh.

0:28:36.7 JH - No man, no one influence, I ask you how you look at it. I jus as yu a view, how you look at it?

H - Yes but di ting is, because I'm researching I can't say dat until afta yu finish, den, I will, I will tell you, what I feel, so that, so that its not going to make you (JH - Alright) go one way or di other.

0:28:54.5 JH - Alright. Some people si it as nutti'n, (H - Right) Some people see it as "Oh is jus a likkle ting", but dem don' kno di real backgroun of it. (H - Right) Dancin, dancin has make, so many, tings has happen for so many people, including myself. From a small space, to a big space. So some people look pan it an jus seh "It naah du nutt'n man, dem jus a dance". But if dem eva, know, how far di dancin has take people an change dem life. (H - Hmmhmm) Including me. So is not jus a small ting or a likkle ting. Is a big ting. Look on Mavado. Did no one kno dat Mavado could blow up like dat? So 'im coming from a small, into a big. (H - Hmmhmm) So, yu haffi kno, about, di ting fi talk about di ting. Is not by jus looking at di ting, den yu jus seh "No

man, dat is jus a small, chuh, dat naah look like it a big yaah, dat naah look like", but is not suh, there are many aspects too it. ...

H - So what are the things that help the dancers to explode an blow up then? What help to...

0:30:44.3 JH - Some man use song, someone use danc, some artist wi sing a song, an because of who sing di song, cause di dance fi blow up, cause di song fi bus offa who sing di song. Is not so much about di dance or about di song. Sometimea jus a who sing di song. Cau yu wi sing a bad song yu kno! An it nuh work, but me wi sing a song weh nuh bad, an it fly pass your song, far a me name John Hype. (H - Hmmhmm). So dat is a nex ting towards it. ...

H - So are you saying then, in terms of the movement, is there, is it equal between the music an di movement, or,

0:31:39.1 JH - Its equal between the artist an di danca, its equal. (H - Hmmhmm) Becau you create di move, himsing di song. Den him haffi watch di moveto put it in disong, so di song connect wid di move. So if yu a move yu right han' 'im seh "yu move yu right han'", if yu move yu lef' foot him seh "Yu move yu lef foot". (H - Right) So is a connection, it haffi, it haffi, it haffi, organise right, an put togedda.

H - So the, the, the singer create the song, the dancer create di dance to it, an then the singer have to watch back di song an....

0:32:21.4 JH - Watch di dance, (H - Hmmhmm watch what) fi put it inna di song, so it coordinate. (H - Hmmhmm) ...

H - What does it mean? Ehmm, because I hear a lot a dancas wi seh, "sometimes yu get laas inna di music". What does dat mean?

0:33:10.9 JH - Sometime demget laas (H - Inna di music, yeah) inna di music? Datzs why, dem nuh focus, (H - Hmmhmm) Dem get laas becau dem name naah call. Yu naah create nutt'n fi keep up yu name fi a call.

H - No, what they're saying is that them start dance and then is almos' like dem not conscious of what is happening aroun dem again, dem get laas in di music.

0:33:36.8 JH - Dem laas? Dem laas long time man! (laughter - JH kiss him teet') Dem laas long time. How you fi deh inna di party an music a play an yu nuh conscioius a weh a gwaan? Yu laas? Yu laas long time. Yu suppose fi focus when yu come a work, yu nuh come a work. (H - Ok) So yu laas before yu come inside. Cau when yu inside yu suppose to a focus an seh a dis mi a go du tonight yu kno. Dis mi a deal wid.(H - Hmmhmm, ok) Yu need fi start deal wid it or yu laas.

H - Ok, right, so when your going to dance yu, yu already, plan, what an what yu going to du before yu, before yu go (JH - A dis m...) or yu mek di vibes...

0:34:26.0 JH - The John Hype yu si here now is nott di John Hype yu si in di party. (H - Yes, hmmhmm) Is a total different man yu si in di party from what yu seeing here today. (H - Hmmhmm) So is a nex different ting wid me. (H - Right) Dat's why a tell yu seh mi focus. (H - Right) Yu couldda neva hear me tell yu seh mi laas. ...

H - What is di difference between di two John Hype dem yu jus talk about?

0:34:55.9 JH - What is di different between di two John Hype dem? Da [this] John Hype here, laugh an everyting an nice, but the John Hype weh go a road, a work mi go, when mi go a road, mi nuh go fi joke. I have a body a people aroun, dat I know of confident in me, all of us are broddas. (H - Hmmhmm) Same like how studio yu sit in here wid mic now, one a mi good frien studio, Backra. (H - Hmmhmm) One weh a handle di camera, a wi engineer. Don' tek di rasta simple like how yu si him. Nuff artist come right t'ru dis same likkle place here. Nuff, big artist, voice right in dis same 4, 4 studio here, an dis man, is di man weh tek all voice. (H - Hmmhmm, ok) So, me is, my ting is different from dem, my ting is surroun by big man, a big man ting. W, we a nuh organisation, we, we is a business, wee is a entity. (H - Hmmhmm) Differently from, run up an down an, "Yow wi a go roun desso an", no, a organisation.

H - ...dats a important ting. So is a organisation.

0:36:34.3 JH - So everyone a, everyone have dem, dem respectable position, man nuh haffi tell a man deh seh "yu kno a you fi du dat?" or dah man yah haffi tell dah man deh seh a 'im fi du dat. ...

H - Can you define spirit or spirituality for mi?

0:37:08.9 JH - Spirit or spirituality (H - Hmmhmm) In terms a wha now?

H - What does spirituality mean or what hmmhmm...

0:37:20.6 JH - Aaaiy, my spirit! My spirt! My spirit, mi jus work off di Almighty yu kno! An di Almighty God talk t'ru me yu kno! So any ting 'im seh, a dat mi du. Cau di way, mi si di ting a run right now yu kno, is only God alone can save us. So, me is a fearful man of di Almighty yu kno! I man jus keep di ting, right. An kno seh, yu a hear mi? Fadda God spirit mi a deal wid yu kno. (H - Right) So dat is jus me.

H - Right, ok. Well yu jus said, yu, yu said, Fadda God spirit yu a deal wid. So, how does dat relate in terms of dance den?

0:38:31.3 JH - Mean if God nuh inna a ting, nutt'n cyaa 'appen man. God is di masta of everyting yu kno! How wi foot dem a go move? Tink a me a move dem? Dis people, like, if di people, di people lose dem head, no one remember God nuh more. Di people dem a run down di devil's work because them feel dat everting is so good, as gold is, is di devil. So no one nuh memba, the Almighty no more, only when dem sick an problem come roun dem seh "Lawd God help mi!" (H - Hmmhmm) Every day, di almighty God is wid us, a fi him spirit. So if mi inna di dancehall it de de. Not because a nuh di dancehall, im deh deh! A im carry mi dere an carry mi home back. So im spirit have to be dere.

H - Right, hmmhmm. So yu saying his spirit is in you, within the dancehall tu.

0:39:29.2 JH - At all times, an every time ...

H - So can you tell mi about di dances den? When yu creatijng di dances an ting, how dat happen den?

0:39:54.3 JH - Di spirit a di Almighty, dat's how it happen. All di dances I've created is create in di dancehall. (H - Hmmhmm) Neva come home an practice a dance or rehearse a dance yet, or try a dance. Every dance, dat mi create, create in di dancehall. By eidda, by hearing a new riddim or a new song, dats how all di dance dem create.

H - Right, so is either by hearing the, by, by hearing a new riddim, or new song.

0:40:29.4 JH - Dat's how di dance create. (H -Hmmhmm) T'ru di powa a di Almighty.

H - Yu can give an example? (JH - Eh?) Yu can give mi an example?

0:40:44.3 JH - Of wha?

H - Of one of di dances, how, how it came to yu an?

0:40:50.8 JH - One? Can gi yu more dan one! Is jus a natrual ting. (H - Hmmhmm) Cos, it has happen so much time, by time yu hear de, a riddim, or yu hear a song, yu inten to jus do someting. Yu nuh plan fi it yu kno! So di more yu dance, a di more, style, yu put towards di dance. Because every time yu move, is a new move, but is you haffi know seh, is a new move dis yu kno! Yu kno seh mi du dis laas night? An mi du dis? Mi a put dis pon dis tonight an si how it a go match up. (H - Hmmhmm) So dat is how id whole ting all go.

H - Right, hmmhmm. So you hear de, yu hear di music an yu fine yu jus du somting?

0:41:42.4 JH - Yu jus du summ'n. Is not like if yu have it, plan or yu have dis, yu jus fine yuself a du it. Yu all a seh, "Jah know star, wah dis now, fine it" (H - Hmmhmm) Yu a seh dat tu yuself or somebody else a she "Weh yu get da style deh? Den yu kno seh, yu on yu way.

H - Right, hmmhmm. Yu jus fine it. Ok. Ahmmm. I know is difficult to describe, but, when yu seh yu jus fine it, fine it how? Is it, yu, because nutt'n nutt'n.....

0:42:27.2 JH - Yu jus fine it. Is like di sele, is like di riddim a play an di artist inna dis tune here, 'im neva, im nuh kno wha fi seh, im nevah 'ear di riddim yet. (H - Hmmhmm) But aaf, him jus start umm, until im jus seh summ'n or di engineer same one a tell seh, "Seh dat again weh yu jus seh a while ago". Until him seh it, an gradually, it tek two t'ree day, fi di song complete. (H - Hmmhmm) So is like, mi stannin up, an mi hear a song a play, an mi jus start move mi foot, an mi jus start move mi han', or mi jus start du summ'n, or mi jus start, mi nuh plan fi du dat, mi jus start dweet, far mi neva plan fi dweet, an gradually it jus work in, till somebody a go seh to yu seh, "mi like dat yu kno", yu a go seh, oh it a work. Or yu team mate may bi roun yu, yu engineer, or yu breddren a seh, "kno seh da style deh bad? Put summ'n else to it", so dat is in yu min' [mind] now, to put someting else, towards what yu have du areddy.

H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm, hmmhmm. Right! Ok! Good! So ahmmm, how has dancehall affected your social development? Yu kinna ansa [answer] dat already (laugh) But if yu waan give a short, one-lina [liner]!

0:43:47.1 JH - No! Dancehall,, it doan affec my development yu kno. Actually I'dda seh [I would say] it dev, dev, it devel mi, develop me up. (H - Hmmhmm) To a giant!

H - Right, so it has developed you into a giant. (JH - Yeah!) ... What do you feel about di female dancers? Tell mi about di female dancers.

0:44:21.2 JH - Di female danca dem, dem arigh! Mi glad, mi love the female danca dem, mi love fi si de female dem. Becau nutt'n cyaan happen widdout di woman dem yu kno! Di ting cyaan look nice, an pretty widdout di woman dem. But a nuh all adem can dance. But mi like dem still. but di female danca dem play a great part yu nuh! Yu have some good female dancas tu, like how yu have some good male dancas tu. An yu have some big female dancas tu.

H - Right, hmmhmm, so, can you name some of the females then?

0:44:57.2 JH - Yeah, yu have ssSher Rumbaar [International Dancehall Queen] (Sher Rum Baar?) Yeah! (H - Is, is...) Si dem aarr, yu have a new girl dem a boots now name Dolly Boo (H - Dolly Boo?) Yeah, (H - Hmmhmm) Dem have couple more girl yu kno wha a mean? Dem have a girl name Head Top tu [as well] (H - Head Top?) Yeah! Bwoy a su much a dem mi haffi jus laugh sometime yu kno but, a couple night, yu couple, good female dance crew, girl. Yu have Dance Xpressionz dem tu. Some girl, yu si weh mi a seh? (H - Hmmhmm). Yu have some girl seh dem name Spice Girls dem tu so, a whole heap a girl, if yu gwaan call girl di book a go dun an di pen run out (laugh).

H - The Spice girls, which is the Spice Team, (JH - Yeah!) dat was where (JH - O.K!) dem start. So how, what's di female, yu can tell mi about the female movements dem an how dey?

0:46:11.9 JH - Well female, dance girl dem nuh really have nuh dance move yu kno! Dem jus du dance, dem jus dance. Dem nuh really have nuh dance move fi seh, dem create. Dem more 'ave a routine. Yu kno wha a mean? Like four five den, like how yu si di Team Spice dem, have a routine, so dem nuh really have, nuh dance weh dem a seh, dem a create nuh dance. A jus routine dem 'ave when a girl segment. Yu kno wha a mean?

H - Hmmhmm, so, so, they doan have nuh moves they create, they jus have routines (JH - Yeah) Hmmhmm. That's interesting. And then hmmhmm, what about the individual, when they dancing individual, can yu describe what that is?

0:46:58.9 JH - Well, everybody du dem own ting. (H - Hmmhmm) Everybody du dem own ting! Like if dem, two t'ree a dem get book fi a show is not like, cause everybody come from different, yu kno wha a mean? So everybody a do dem own ting, is not like dem ave a dance weh dem seh, "A dah style de we a go du!" No, a every style every, di ooman danca dem du. ...

H - Right, an dem du every style.

0:47:28.4 JH - Every style! All di man dance dem du tu. ...

H - Can yu describe any a di main signature movement them that yu think, the females them du?

0:47:47.7 JH - All a di dance dem. Dem can dance betta dan some a di man dem! (H - Hmmhmm) Some a di dance weh Shelly Belly dem du, Ding Dong dem, Ching dem, all a dem dance deh, yu have some girl weh can dance betta dan some a di male danca dem yu kno? Dat di male danca dem create yu kno? Yu have some girls who can dance betta dan dem.

H - Hmmhmm, alright. Ahmm, yeah, alright. I was gonna ask if yu can describe some a di movement dem dat di, di woman dem do, becau, yu kno like yu mention 'Head Top' den, if yu can describe what dat is (JH - Head Top!) So tha tfor those who doan know....

0:48:42.5 JH - Alright, Head Top [Dancehall Queen Headtop Aneika], why she get di name Head Top, becau she always go pan arr headtop an a dance. A wine an a bruk out, an split an all a dese tings. She always deh pan arr head top so a suh she get dah name deh Head Top. (H - Hmmhmm) Six Thirty! Renee (H - Six Thirty) Yeah man! Yu have all a girl name Renee SixThirty. She get the name, sixthirty, t'ru she come wid a dance name 'SixThirty'. (indistinguishable) (H - Hmmhmm) (Technician - Buil' a dance name 'Puppy Tail') Yu see it, an big, an den she buil' di dance name 'Puppy Tail, an den Demarco sing bout it. Yeah!

H - (Repeat and get classification of dancer's names and the dances). But can you explin bout the SixThirty and what the Puppy Tail dance is?

0:49:57.4 JH - Is a dance weh, dem a, she a shake arr, arr, arr but yu kno! Cau yu kno she t'ick [thick] yu kno! So when she a shake it like, yu eva si dawwg a shake dem tail? A same weh daawg a, a same like how yu si dawg a shake dem tail? A so she a shake arr bu, arr, arr, arr butt. Jus like a puppy tail, wedda puppy tail, dawg tail, bull tail, any tail a tail. Yeah! (Someone else - t'umpa [thumpa] tail).



H - (clarify by repeating) ...

0:50:27.6 JH - An SixThirty a like six thirty pan di clock. Yeah! Is jus right ova  
(Other person indistinguishable) Yeah!

H - An den di six 'irty is what? Wah shi du?

0:50:54.8 JH - Ben' ova like di clock, a seh six t'irty. (H - Right) Right ova!

H - She ben ova like di clock

0:51:03.4 JH Yeah, six t'irty. Head to tail. Wid arr head come go t'ru arr.

0:51:11.4 Technician - T'ru arr head come between arr, between arr leg. Dat is di six  
t'irty yu kno!

H - Right ... So di head go between the legs?

0:51:29.0 JH - Yeah! Acrobatic ting deh yu kno? ...

H - Wah bout di man dem den? Wah yu a go seh bout di, di man dances now? What's  
di man, dance dem if yu haffi describe some a dem tu mi now?

0:51:50.7 JH - Di dance move or di man dem yu a, tell dem?

H - The man dem an di movement, what kinna movement they do an...

0:52:00.1 JH - Well, danca dem du some good move yu kno! Like Shelly Belly have a  
dance name 'Tek Ova'. (Interruption) (H - So, Shelly Belly, hmmhmm) Him have a  
nice dnce move, 'Tek Ova' yu kno!

H - Tek Ova, hmmhmm, so how dat one go?

0:52:28.4 JH - Tek Ova? So dem move yu kno (demonstrates the movement, singing the lyrics - Tek, tek tek ova, tek wi a tek ova, tek ova, tek tek tek ova)

H - So the arms are working.....

0:52:46.2 JH - Yeah, because a di same ting, if yu a go tek ova, a wah yu a go tek ova? Yu haffi show seh yu a tek ova. (H - Hmmhmm) Yu kno wah a mean? Yeah so, we, we a tek ova, so if yu a tek ova, yu a tek ova an ra, yu kno, yu get what I'm saying? (H - Yeah!) So di dance haffi have meaning, the name haffi have meaning. Dats why it doan soun' good on the dance move yu kno, because, yu jus a seh, a so it name, an when yu a du di dance it naah add up. (H - Hmmhmm) Same like how Ching seh 'Rock Di Worl' an yu rock di worl', so yu haffi rock far di worl a rock, yu kno wah a mean? So if yu a rock di worl', it have fi have meaning. (H - Hmmhmm, Rock di Worl).

0:53:25.4 Technician - Rock di Worl an di worl a stan still. (JH - An di worl a stan still) (laughter)

H - Hmm, Rock Di Worl is Ching (JH - Yeah!) Wehn yu seh Ching yu mean Chi (JH - Chi Ching Ching) Ching Ching. Hmmhmm, right ... How yu seh di movement is, if yu have to describe di movement?

0:53:55.3 JH - Rock Di Worl' see it ya! (demonstrates rocking motion and sing lyrics - Seh! Rock di worl oh! Rock di worl oh! Rock di worl oh! (H - but if somebody couldn't see it?). If somebody couldn't see it?

H - How yu would describe it tu dem?

0:54:04.4 JH - How mi da describe it? (Technician - Jus tink about rocking yuself) Jus tink about rocking di worl', jus tink about how yu'dda rock, jus rock tu di two side. Rock to yu lef, rock to yu riight. Yu kno wha a mean? An move yu han', becau how yu a go rock? Anybody a rock, yu rock, yu haffi rock tu di two side.

H - Hmmhmm, an when yu move di han, how yu moving the han? How would you describe the moving a di han? (Technician - How yu use yu han?)....

0:54:27.1 JH - Like open di han dem, same like how yu a rock di worl, if yu a rock to di lef, yu use yu right han, if yu a rock to di right, yu use yu lef han. So it wi more look like, yu kno wah a mean? Its going di opposite way. (H - Hmmhmm, but then you were using both hands jus now) Yeah, but I say if yu going to the lef, yu use yu right han, an if yu going to the right, yu use yu lef han. It cyaan go suh (demonstrates) It a go look ackward.

H - No but jus a while ago yu use the two han one time.

0:54:58.9 JH - Yeah, because, is a, is a, mi jus a mek it easy because yu a write. If mi a show now, me'da use mi two han cau dem couldda si, but mi jus a seh me'da use the lef han to the right shoulda, an di right han to the lef shoulda ... (H - repeat for clarity) ...

0:55:21.8 Technician - Yu kno, yu kno why him put, why 'im haffi use 'im two han? Cau a fi him dance dem tek weh n pass it ova. Dats why (JH - nervously laughs) A fi him dance dem remix, dat's why im haffi use di two han. T'ru im know it dah way deh, (JH - nervously laughs) im du it dah way deh.

H - Right, so, so you had di dance first with two han, an Chi Ching Ching do it ova wid one han. A dat yu a seh?

0:55:44.5 Technician - A nuh Ching du di dance, im sing di song. [Rock Di World - movement looks very close to the Revival movement, particularly when you dip side to side with candel in the hand. It is like a stylised version] (H - Hmmhmm)

0:55:51.6 JH - A nuh him du di dance, a him sing di song (H - Hmmhmm) A nex man du di dance! (H - Right, right)

0:56:00.1 Technician - Mek mi tell yu summ'n, ninty-five percent a dem dance deh a fi im [John Hype] dance dem yu kno! (H - Hmmhmm) An you yusef, if watch back

all dem ole time tape deh, right ya now, you yuself wi si seh, wi see it. (H - Hmmhmm) Yes sir. (H - Right, right) So a remix dem a remix dance.

H - Yes, in di same way dat hmm, in di same way dat di music remix, dance remix tu. Ok. ... So hmm, wid de, wid de Tek Ova, di arms move like yu taking ova (JH - Yeah man) But I would seh, I would seh also in di Tek Ova, di arm, di fact dat dem move the arm this way as well is almos' like, dem a, rachette up a gun (No!) or sumting.

0:57:15.4 JH - Alright watch, (H - I' look almos') alright watch 'ow it go, it go suh (demonstrate) This is how it come yu kno, dis, dis, dis is di take ova, dis (H - oh di tek ova is di sweeping!) Yes, dis jus di, dis is jus di action. (H - Hmmhmm) Dis is jus a nex part, add to it. (H - Right) Yu get what I'm saying. (H - So what does that action signify then?) Tek ova, weh it a, a di signal, to di side, and dis, a fi di people, di whole worl'. When wi go so, dat mean di whole worl get tek ova. So dis a di signal.

H - Right, so in Tek Ova, hands signal and den it slide across, across, to show is di whole worl. Ok, good ... (discuss the writing and spelling) Can yu explain the difference between the DJ an Selecta then, within dancehall?

0:58:47.8 JH - Di difference between di DJ an Selecta? ... (H - Hmmhmm, or di role of the DJ an Selecta?)

0:58:53.5 JH - A two different, a two different category. Cau di Selectaplay music, an di DJ, dj, but dem need both, dem need each, need each odda. Cau di DJ need di Selecta, fi play di song, but di Selecta need di song, from di DJ, fi play tu. (H - Hmmhmm) Becau is a , is a plus fi im , fi im, buss a new song yu kno! An dat is what, dat is one a di ting now weh mi si, di Selecta dem a run down. Fi seh, a 'im buss da song deh, "A me buss dah song deh, a me first play it, before it buss", an dem ting deh. So, it work both ways. DJ need di Selecta and di Selecta need di DJ.

H - Hmmhmm, an suh now your saying there's a competition between the Selectas, as to who buss which song first. (JH - Yeah man, big competition). Right, and, some people talk about the MC an di Selecta, an seperate, is there, is there a difference between MC....

1:00:09.6 JH - Yeah man, MC a MC an Selecta a Selecta man. MC nuh come Selec a dance, MC selec pon stage show (Technician - MC du talking, introduce people) (H - Right!) Dat is MC work, a stage show im work pon.Im a introduce artist, Selecta a introduce song.

H - Right, so what your saying is that the MC, the MC,works on stage shows, (JH - Yeah) not within the dancehall space.

1:00:40.4 JH - Naa man! Selecta work wid dancehall.

H - ... That is a issue, wit, there were some poeple were saying, when, when yu talk about selecta, "No is not di Selecta, he's the MC.

1:01:00.9 JH - Naah man! (Technician - A difference!) Different.

H - Yes, eehe, now, can yu explain the different phases of dancehall for me, and the impact of the current style of performance now?

1:01:18.4 JH - Aaah, the impac?

H - Yeah, first of all the different phases of dancehall, that dancehall has gone through. (JH - whole heap a phases) How it start, then it move to what...

1:01:31.6 JH - It start, dancehall, dancing, start from Bogle. Then it reach to me! (H - Hmmhm) But a desso it de now. It deh a me. It nuh pass mi yet. Iam the man. I am di man, I sit on the throne. I doan han ova di crown to no one yet, so I am di man.

H - Right, but I guess hmm. Part of dat is how you view dancehall then. Is dancehall the dance? Is it the music? Is it the space? Is it the people, what is it?

1:02:29.8 JH - Is everything. (Technician - Also is a reggae fambily) (Interruption by phonecall) ... Yeah! How mi si dancehall.

H - Yeah, so the different phases becau, people talking about old skool, new skool etc.

1:02:58.5 JH - The ole, the old skool is the best skool.

H - Yes, but yu neva tell mi dat, (JH - Yu neva ask mi dat) Yu start wid Bogle an reach yu. (JH - Yeah! But the old skool a di bes' skool) So, what are the, the phases then? Becau, what do yu represent, old skool, new skool? So yu have to explain.....

1:03:16.3 JH - I'm from di old skool, but me own di new skool. Because I am the one dat teach di new skool, but I am from the old skool, because I learn from the old skool. (H - Hmmhmm) An bring it to the new skool. (H - Hmmhmm) So gradually, different phases, different yute, do different tings, look, have different views, do it, look pon di dancing different. View di dancin different from how me view it. So gradually dis changes a go mek, certain dance move, naah go be aggain, it naah go bi so nice. (H - Hmmhmm) Di dancin' get wile [wild]. Man a jumpoff a roof an all a dese tings, so is a whole different phase. Different strokes fi different folks!

H - Hmmhmm, so yu seh dem get wile, an jumping off tings.

1:04:21.0 JH - Mi nuh kno dat inna di dancin. (H - Right, so dats anodda phase again den?) That's another phase.

H - Hmmhmm, so, well you didn't know dat, when you where dancing! (JH - No!) (interruption by phone) ... So, what changes, in society, have most affected dancehall?

1:05:14.0 JH - What changes, in society, have most affected dancehall? (H - confirm and repeat question) 1:05:28.7 JH - Love! (H - Hmmhmm) Di dancas dem, don' unite, togedda. So dat is a big, dat is a big damage. No unification, no respec'. Danca dem don' respec' dem one a nedda. Danca dem don' learn to respec dem elda! Everybody tink dem big an dema star an dem a don. An a dem a run di place, an dem a di biggest dons. So di respec' weh di danca dem nuh show each odda, cause a big damage within the dancin. (H - Hmmhmm) Dat is the main factor. Respec'! for each other.

H - So the damage is, lack of respect for each other? (JH - Yes man) Ok. An den hmm, an so hmm ... I miss one question, do you participate in any other Jamaican, hmm forms, or practices? Such as the traditional forms an ting. Did you ever participate in any of them?

1:07:14.8 JH - No! No, I don't, no! I really pres, no I jus. Me is a low key man yu kno! (H - Right, so yu neva participated?) No.

H - In things like seh, Kumina or Dinkie Mini

1:07:35.0 JH - No, non a dem. No!

H - No, ok. ... What is dancehall's role, in popularising Jamaica? Or the brand Jamaica, what is dancehall's role in dat?

1:07:59.5 - JH A big role. In Jamaica! Dancehall! Music pon a whole an sport, is what hol' up di country today. So dancehall play a great part. (H - Hmmhmm) Dancehall is the number one. Every night wi people go out. Is only music alone, can solve di pain, sometime, from di problem an di stress. Now mi stress out mi a seh, yu know wha roun a big mi roun deh suh. Age a keep I roun yah! Mi go roun deh go drink a beer an ease off di pressure, yeah man. An dat alone, jus come a di party an 'ear di music, yu whole vibes jus change. If yu inten' fi go du summ'n wrong yu min' change, jus because a di music.

H - Hmmhmm, right. Wah bout di dance?

1:08:58.5 JH - Di dance? (H - Hmmhmm dat!) Di dance is di life man! Di dance! widout di dance, it cyaan nice. Dancin is di life. A di danca dem mek di party nice. Yu have people come out fi come si di dance. Yu have people fly in, fi come si di danca yu kno! Yu have girl weh fly from foriegn [abroad] fi come deh wid danca yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm) So di dancin is very important, di dancin is big, is legacy. Mi haffi cherrish it. Dem nuh know dat, dem jus see it as a opportunity, fi get a girl or fly out. (H - Hmmhmm) So wa'happen ten years down di line? (H - Hmmhmm) Like

now, ten years down di line now, yu a interview me now. Nuh di legacy? From den till now. So mi still haffi cherrish it up to today an protec' it. (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah.

H - So is there anything else you'd like to say about the dancing and dancehall itself?

1:10:07.9 JH - Yeah man! Dancin, we a bring it back where it rightfully belong, yu know wha a mean? Cau a me a di rula uh jus talk mi a talk yu kno! Mi nuh even tell im dat seh, "A mi a di rula!" An mi new dance name Rula [ruler]. So mi a go show yu seh a nuh st, talk mi a talk seh mi a go rule. Mi a go rule an show yu, far mi rule areddy, so mi can rule again. A nuh now mi a rule yu kno! A long time mi a rule, so it nuh tek mi nutt'n fi rule. (H - Hmmhmm) A me a di rula man, everyting good man. A rule we seh yu kno (Technician - Rule!) Rula! A nuh T square or geography set yu kno! A rula! (Technician - Rula!) I'm from di ole skool ya!

H - (Thank you to all and finish off).



## **Appendix 10.**

### **001 Interview with Orville and Shelly Xpressionz Boot Camp 07.02.2017**

0:00:31.8 H - Setting up questions, introducing fact Xpressions will be case study.

0:01:03.4 H - Shelly and the tattoo

0:01:17.9 S - Oh that was in the time of the daggering. ...

0:01:29.8 O - In the time of daggering, when daggering started to get, we were kinna being sort of rebellious about it yu know, because the government and the media was talking a lot of negative things about what was happening with daggering. And then, dem impose a ban on the word and the, the action, and that is when in the dancehall it just really got to a different level. It was, how it felt to me because I was really in the space at that time, is just we rebelling and saying that, you are taking away, the, the joy of what we are doing, the release, because we went to dancehall to release the kinna tension of the day, so yu kno we were, truly having fun and women were. Everything has its extreme moments, but especially for, Dance Xpressions we rehearsed every daggering dance that we did, so everything was done from an artistic point of view. It was rehearsed, there were other guys who came into the space and them and a female start dancing, it was never rehearsed and then they would just do some, weird things and some people would get hurt and, and yu kno! There were moments like that, but when we as dancers went out there we tried to rehearse it before.

0:02:55.7 O - But like when Shelly got that cut on arr foot that was one of the nights where is, is almost like a different spirit took over the dancers and they went to a different place. We started to realise, one of the reasons why, when I started linking, what was happening in dancehall to that of Kumina becaus of the, kindda a spiritual nature, an some dance practitioners was, being very upset and annoyed about the fact that I made the link, between both, there was, there was a big disagreement. I think 'H' did know about it as well, yu know, where myself and L'Antoinnette went at it because L'Antoinnette was saying, I was talking about, ahmm, the movement quality of, daggering, ahmm, linking it with the same thing of Kumina, and she was saying to

me, ahmmm, "how dare I make that kindda distinction between both because the intent of pur, and purpose of the dance of, of Kumina, is different from dancehall". So I, yu know, was explaining to arr that, "I am not stupid! I'm not talking about, I know about the difference between intent and purpose, as apposed to what resembles what. Yu know, if something looks like something that's, totally different from what the intent and purpose is. So, there is just something that happens in dancehall, that when, my females go back and look at it on a video tape, they were not aware of where they went with the dance. Yu know, that is when the music, tek dem to another place, but, because people are so, high strung on making dancehall seem like something that is just, too lewd for public viewing and should never be something that represent Jamaica as a part of the culture, yu know, a whole lot of negative things were being said and I was always in defense of that, because I am saying 0:04:52.8 O - You would have to be in the space to understan' what is happening in the space. You would have to be in the space to understan' when a girl comes to a party and gets \$10,000 dolla on any given night to dance, she already love the dancing, they might ask her to do some extreme things, but she is willing to, make that sacrifice to earn that money, yu know, you would have to be there to understand. To know what her situation was, and to feel the joy that we feel when that girl win, \$10,000 dollars that night. \$10,000 dollars is major money, for a little inner ciity girl that don't have a proper nine to five, or would sacrifice arr nine to five by going in to work late the morning, or go to work with bloodshot eyes, but earning maybe t'ree times what she would earn, fi di week. Yu know! So a lot of people didn't understan dat. Dem dem watch it on tape, on ahm different dvds or other mediums, when dem did hav dancehall channel, an' not realising, so they would, they would link the whole dancehall session as being a daggering session when, it was maybe 15minnutes out of the whole party, that this, this moment happen, but the dvd guys going to edit the video to show mostly that because that is what sells the dvd, yu know! 0:06:13.2 O - So people started saying, so we're saying, you're seeing 15 minutes of what happen, over a 4 hour period, yu know! That is what is, is on the tape, so don't use that to speak to the whole dancehall session.

Rough translation

0:06:26.4 O - An we got far more intense with it when they tried to impose the ban on it, or when they impose the ban on it. That is when it got really raunchy. Ahmm, how I see things and as I explain to them, a part of my experience shows that, some things work themselves out. Daggering was, was, was one such thing, it worked itself out, and they were still dwelling on the word daggering, when we pass the word daggering, because they were, daggering, came bout (about) as an effort to get man and woman to dance again, because we lost that. I remember in the 70s and 80s when you had 'rub-a-dub', yu know, 'cool and deadly' and male and female dancing together, dancehall was losing that. Because when Bogle came out and Bogle showed men that they could, dance, men literally came out in the middle, full force, women were pushed to the side, so there was not the couple up dances any more. Every man was now trying to find a way to develop himself as a dancer personally, to earn his own money. So, there was this void. Women felt left out of the space and when women started coming back into the space it was when, 'duttu wine' came in. So, ahmm, like Fire Links, Garey Trucks, some of these Selectors were some of the Selectors, yuk kno! Richie Feelings and some of these Selectors were, trying to get man and woman to dance together again.

0:08:01.1 S - It, it, it, it, even, the name even changed. I mean, since they had a problem with the whole daggering it changed. (O - Yeah man). So they said, ok, if not daggering then, we call it 'couple up'

0:08:13.1 O - Yeah, so they they, they, so they were labouring the name daggering, even when we change it to couple up. Even when we change, there, there, there were so many different things that was happening, because there were daggering, style dances that came out, in that yu have, ahmm, 'bunny hop', yu have 'Macka juk', and all of these were comedic type dancing where the man would do all the, the woman would jus ben ova and the man would do all kind a, ahmm, funny things behind the woman and people would laugh. So when, there, there was one action where guys did, that wore hats, so when, when, when them go behind the woman and hol (hold) arr waistline, they did this fast nod with the head. So they would just go, this fast nod and the hat would be doing that. They are not actually hitting the woman. So the action was in the head and people would, yu know, that crazy laughing because of the head action. Ahmm, them call it '100 stab', because the Selector would seh, give arrr a 100

stab in, 60 seconds, so his waistline cyan (can't) go up to doing that, so him use him head and people look at it and a dead with laugh and dem a seh, "100 stab, 100 stab. 100 stab, 100 stab". We pass the daggering stage and we were now having fun with it. But, they were serious about trying to ban the word, ban the dance and we were having so much fun with it, and that is why it seem as if we were rebelling, with this dance. Yu kno so.

0:09:42.5 O - During this era, there was a back and forth and it was the same thing with 'dutty wine' because they were trying to explain to people why dem shoudn't do dutty wine, why females shouldn't dutty wine. About 2 or 3 girls lost their lives doing the dance and didn't do it properly, and immediately it became, (Shelly – the talk of the town), the talk a the town, dat is they say, is the dance of the devil an, yuk no all kind of things was associated with it. An' we were immediately alienated. And when they started doing that to dancehall and trying to alienate people den, we lock wi self inna wi own worl' and just go overboard wid it. Yu kno!

What was build up into Shelly going into tree?

0:10:45.6 S - Which song, I doan (don't) even remember which song was playing, but there were a few songs in, in, I mean then (O - Me a go try fin' one mek yu hear now)

0:10:53.8 S - There are a few songs in dancehall, that I mean, when it starts, an the Selectors know, and they play them back to back, just like that in succession. Ahmm, once you start dancing, you are lost, and if you have a partner that you are, connected to in the space, once he, touches you, its, its automatic like, you know what to do or where to go. But that night in particular, ahmm, I don't know when I reach in the tree, because it wasn't a tree that was very easy to, climb.

0:11:31.6 O - Twice I saw that. Yu remember at Passa Passa? Unnu do it at Passa Passa one night and unnu do it over desso.

0:11:37.2 S - Its not, its not a easy tree. It's not a, there wasn't anything where yu step up seh, no! But I was up there, the guy was up there, an' I mean, all I heard was noise, that's all I heard, noise! And then when I came down, I mean I was, I was still

dancing, I was, is, is like I didn't know where I was, but I was still dancing and carrying on, and a girl touch me an say "de, de back a yu foot blood up yu kno!" an mi seh "yeah?" An' dat was it, mi gaan again. And then the last thing I remember is saying to Orville, the back of mi foot burning. And that was, when I show him, I mean, the blood was running down. (H -Hmhmhm) And after that we just left. Sooo!

0:12:23.2 S - But that, I mean, in, in how it actually happened, no, I can't tell yu. I know that the song just started to play and, we were dancing before, but, as I said there are certain songs that play in dancehall that, when they play, yu, is like a different kinna spirit tek yu over all togedda (together). I'm a spirit that love to climb! I love to climb! I'm the climbing spirit. I will see things that I, easily, when them seh, "Which girl that up there so!" Is me. I love to climb. Like floor ting, I will do the floor ting but no, climbing is me. I'm the spirit that climbs.

0:13:00.0 O - Stacey, yes, Stacey a di floor person. (H - Right, hmhmhm).

(H, S & O discuss start of Kartel song)

0:13:11.6 O - Once yu hear dis! Da Vibz Kartel here, the man dem jus haffi jus, open the middle a di floor. (Music play) ... 0:13:44.6 O - An den yu feel, there are different sections of the song where it jus keep going up ...

0:13:57.5 O - So this was one of them, an then now, the, the energy of the dancers, climb to a different level depending on the circumstance that you're in. Fi, fi Dance Xpressionz mi can tell people dat, when, when dem jus finish EXCed College an we start going into the streets an Bembe was the first party that they went to. Bembe Thursdays! An because we didn't know any other parties, I saw dancers come to Bembe to challenge Dance Xpressionz because that's the only place that they would go. An I remember seeing dancers coming to Bembe, where when mi si dem girls deh dance, mi tell Dance Xpressionz seh there is no way unnu can beat dem girl deh, cau dem girl deh, I've seen them with head-tops and certain stunts, an they were never, beaten at Bembe. Because there was something in them that told them that this is the only place that we have, a face and a name, so they refused to be beaten at Bembe. I si them beat dancers who I classify to be better than Dance Xpressionz, but Dance

Xpressionz would rub dem out at Bembe. Cau dis is my home, dis is like, dis is my home so, there is no way, I doan care how good you are, you are not beating me in my house. Yu kno, an that is what develop them as good dancers because, they rose to every challenge, an every time them beat a dance group that is potentially better than them, they grew as dancers in terms of understanding because, one of the things that ahmmm, (Distraction by Mr Hanes) 0:15:39.9 O - Yeah man, Ahmm, they were dancers who were just come out of college, that learn certain, ahmm polished things about dance, so they were applying that to the street when the street was just very raw. So we had to re-train them again, because, they were never good unless is the t'ree a dem a dance together. Yu kno, Sherine, Stacey and Shelly, yu kno, once dem jump out there with a routine, but the street neva (H - Allowed that) Yeah, like dem a seh, "Why dem do routine all di time, we need fi si dem individually". So dat is when now, everybody started to take on, we started to, individualise now to see what people have, dem strengths. Dat is when we realise she, Shelly love to climb things, so, if Shelly is there, Shelly cyaan stan up pon arr head, cyaan balance pon arr head. She could split, but so many other girls were splitting, so when the girls were on the stage doing some madness, yu hear somebody seh, "is who dat up deh so?" So Shelly tek di spotlight from everybody dat is down deh so, cause she's climbing on something and she's hanging upside down, and she wheeling on it and it, it just look dangerous. So immediately, she tek the spotlight from everybody, you know! Arhmm, Stacey is the head-top person and sh, and Stacey would, ahmm, Stacey would climb on things but she doan stay dere. So she climb on it to jump off and she jump from some place to the groun' inna a full split and then, yu kno, these are things that they, they would use to just shut down the competition. And then they started finding dem individual self.

0:17:08.0 S -Most of all, we didn't like competition, for once a group, once the group is there, we don' like competition. Doan like it in the sense that we hate to, we know the fact that Ok, they're here, compete, cyaan lose. So once it's competition is like wi go inna a different worl'.

(H - discussion about the a/c)

Did you see before Shelly enter the tree who was she dancing with?

0:18:21.7 S - No man it was the group, us, Dance Xpressionz (O - No man him a talk inna di tree, no) Oh no, dat was my partner, dat, I mean dis per, dis guy is my, (O - Like a dance partner) he was my daggering partner, at every party.

0:18:34.7 O - But him jus, him jus follow Shelly yu kno, is not like dem plan it yu kno! Shelly was just looking someting to climb, becau when the party get heated now and yu si she start looking aroun', mi jus kno, seh she looking someting to climb on, and den mi si she run go ova di place, and den once she start climbing, the guy jus run an follow arr and jus decide seh him a go climb wid arr tu, yu kno because...

0:18:56.4 S - And, an' to how, to how, it was, a mean a lot a. I know maybe a lot of people like hold, because believe it or not, the tree was shaking like crazy and breaking, yu know, cos a di body weight dat was there, because I don't know where I found ahmm, a part of the tree tu, I was actually lying on (laugh), but a mean it was, the tree, trust mi, yu would have to see it to understan' the whole, elements of it.

(H clarification into question) Are you consciously looking for something to climb?

0:19:47.1 S - Ahmm, maybe not all the time aware, ahmm because sometimes I climb on some places and I don' even know how I reach up there.

0:19:54.3 O - She's looking back at the video, she wonder, (S - Right!) wha she did a du up dereso (up there), or how she get up dereso!

0:20:00.5 S - Right! In particular one night we were in Spanish Town an, we reach on a roof top and I don't know how I reach up there, and to come back down it was, it was hell!

0:20:13.8 O - This happened with a dancer name Shelly Belly. Shelly was at a, a, a, a, a dance name, Cadillac Saturdays, an Shelly Belly, jus, mi no know how Shelly Belly almost go up on the side of the building, and got on top of the place dancing. And when him finish, mi si Shelly Belly stop and si'down pon the edge a di building a wonda, how him a go come down. (S - Come down) Like him a try figure out, how him reach up here so? (S - How him reach up here so? Yeah!) And we were there and

we doan know, when Shelly Belly reach on the building. Now when you waan si, for me, weh yu call 'Spirit dancehall', Shelly Belly, a group call Rifical Team. (S - Hmmhmm) Ahmm when these guys go at it, dem really go to a different place, dem really really go to a different place.

H - Clarification on Shelly Belly and Rifical Team.

0:21:25.9 O - Dem call demself Rifical 'Spiritual Team' and that's exactly how dem dance. (S - Hmmhmm) Dem just, dem lose demself, dem lose, yu si dem guys deh dem du some things it jus....

0:21:35.0 S - And then now they have, dem have this thing, it looks like a fight (O - Like a dance fight) but its not (O - Yeah) its dance, its dance. Yu have to be in the space to undastan, yeah!

0:21:42.0 O - If yu did deh a Uptown Mondays lass night an si some a di tings dem!

(H - Explain about Pat and timing.)

H - Where did you start from before going to the tree?

0:22:33.0 O - On the road, (S - On the road) we were on the road. (S - It was like a street party) Cos is a yard yu kno! Is a yard she go ova yu kno! Is like she jus run ova dis yard, so we were on the street side, cau di party is on the road. (H - clarification).

0:22:49.1 S - This is in Nannyville. (O - Hmmhmm) Yeah, so the likkle place now, cau yu know when I went there Friday Orville, remember I was telling you seh well, while walking in the pla, walking in there was very nostalgic. (O - Yeah) An I, when I, I saw Ding Dong, Sunday night and I said to him, "Bwoy, the almond tree that was there," him seh "the almond tree still deh deh man, is jus that, them buil' [build] out further", cos remember, a fence was there, but it was like a likkle broken down fence, but them buil' it out and fix it now like a nice likkle park, and that's where the Selectors are now, when they have the event, the Selectors are placed in there.



H - So you went into an almond tree? (O - interrupts to show the dance fight)

0:23:52.5 O - And yu hear wha di Selecta du wid di music? A dat mek dem mad.

(H clarifies that it is the repetition of particular aspects of the song that charges the atmosphere)

0:24:02.9 O - Yes man! The repetition heighten it. The repetition heighten it. Mi waan show you one a di night dem. (O - searches for another clip)

0:24:38.0 H - So the selector himself have a have a, do you remember that night, what was the Selector doing when Shelly ran to the tree?

0:24:49.9 O - Yeah man, that, that motivate the Selecta as well. Selectas get super motivated when dem si dancers reacting to a set dat dey're (they are) playing, because every Selecta now want to be able to seh, ahmm because most parties now have 4/5 selectors passing through. You want to leave that indelible mark that, the night was yours. That the, that the dancers went to a different level when you were playing your set. So every Selecta is trying to pull out the dancers at the highest level. Yu know? So, when a Selecta si a movement like that happening now, him try to, him try play on it as much as possible. Yu know, so him wi call out the dancer's name becau dancers love when they are singled out. Becau there are so many dancers in the space now, when a selector is calling your name, you try to do everything to keep your name being repeated in the space. So when him seh "Who dat, Shelly Xpresssionz! Di party mash up ya now, watch dis, watch dis" and then, everybody, "Bling Cadillac" or him sen a danca fi arr. So, she go up dere an him seh "Bling Caddilac, go fi arr, go fi arr" an him run go up dere and is an' di madness start. Yu kno, so the more dancers yu can pull out in your set, yu have bragging rights, fi dat particular party.

H - But yu say she was on the road, when yu say on the road, where, where was the set dou?

0:26:25.0 O - We usually go stan, (S - Stan up wid di soun' system) cos, yu walk in, even if yu gwain stan somewhere else in di party, yu usually pass where di Selecta is

so the Selecta knows that you're there. Usually for Dance Xpressionz we try to stan up, alright lets say, lets say weh de ting deh, where di car is weh di, di Selecta set up. Your either standing directly in-front a dem, or your standing across the road, but in, in, (S - His eyesight) in, eyesight. In his direct line of sight, when 'im, when 'im look up, him must be able to see yu. (S - Hmmhmm) 0:27:04.9 O - When yu get to, when yu get to a stage now, where you are a know danca, you can jus indicate to him that you're here and go an hol' your spot anywhere, but he will always call your name cos he knows that you're in the party. Yu know! So one of the newest things now, is to set up monitors where, the, the lead camera person whose always getting, catching the vibe, the Selecta doan haffi break him neck fi si weh di danca's are, cos he's looking at the monitor, so 'im can always look at the monitor so him can seh "Shelly do wha yu a du", but she's no where near the Selecta, but the Selecta is able to si arr cos he's looking at a monitor.

H - So the Selecta direct everybody to where the danca is? (discuss and agree)

0:27:55.4 O - And the, an the, an the camera man is very instrumental tu, cos while he is videotaping, you, he's always looking aroun' to see if something more active is happening somewhere else, an' him jus move the camera quickly an run over to derso. So, the camera man dem is always active, always active and, run from one place to the next.

H - When you came out of that tree the time then, how did you get out of the tree then? (S - laughs) Do you remember?

0:28:30.4 S - No Sah! ... No sah!

0:28:36.3 O - Let mi tell, I, I was at the party kindda with my heart in my mout [mouth], cos, see this branch right here, Shelly's two, this section ah arr foot, was locked aroun' it and she was hanging down like this. (H - Yes) An the guy was hanging down with her like this. So his chest was on her chest, so all his weight, that's what rip her foot yu kno! Because all his weight is hanging on her. (H - On Shelly, right) An him a dagger arr an dagger arr. So she's holding up his weight an she rap di tree. (H - Yes, yes) Yu understan wha mi a seh? So that is the pressure of the ting that,

that, cos it literally like it buss arr foot, like the pressure, buss arr foot. An, I only si when, 'im 'im ease up, so yu know dats more weight to ease up aff arr fi go up back into di tree. An den I don' kno, mi si she kindda ease up and den likkle afta mi si she come down. But, when she came back, when she came back aroun' she didn't look like she was under any pressure, she didn't look like she was hurt, yu kno, she jus, run come back roun' an stan up an start rock again, until somebody alert, (S - Yeah, to mi) Yeah, yeah. 0:29:49.0 O - Yeah, is, that come in like one night, when Stacey, climb on a box at 'Bembe', where visually, it was impossible to climb on because the box, it was a tall box, but they put the box on two narrow things, so it is not to be touched, becau even attempting to climb on it would tople everyting. An when Stacey got on top of the box and jump off into a split, and the box was still standing, no body could believe. (H - Hmmhmm) No body could believe. And that was one of the most spectacular, one of, there are a couple of them, but that was one of the most spectacular things I've ever seen Dance Xpressionz du. 0:30:36.4 O - That night, and it was, it was a competition with a nex' group and Dance Xpressionz lost that night. They lost that night. But, but, but that was, that was fighting for dear life, that, that that night. Because wha happen is, it was, di group was four members, (S - Five!) It was five members, (S - Hmmhmm) but what, who wasn't there? It was you Sheri, no the group was four at that time. (S - Oh us! Yeah four) The group was four and Sherine, we were supposed to get to the venue cos somebody said to us, the group that was coming there tonight is coming there to compete with unnu and the Selectas know about it already, so unnu prepare unnu self cos we were not supposed to know about it. So, Shelly, Stacey and Ginel got to the venue in time, but the group that is challenging them is five members, so even at five members, they're already at a disadvantage because is five girls against four and co-ordinated stunts is a part of what yu do an' the more members yu have is the more stunts yu can du. An' Sherine got to the venue late, and didn' go on the stage wid dem. 0:31:52.2 O - So it was t'ree a dem taking on five girls. So that was, is almost like a moment of necessity, cau dem si seh dem a lose an' dem dicide, Sheri, Stacey decide she a go du sum'n. She jus a du sum'n fi, yu kno, get the crowd riled up, yu kno! Cau now it is based on wha di crowd du, when yu mek yu, yu, yu move. Is either the crowd go in a frenzy or the crowd stan' up on yu. Yu kno, an' di group kept, carrying the, the, the crowd up inna a frenzy an', Dance Xpressionz was doing the same ting until there was one, where the crowd was lauder for the other team than they were for us, so Stacey decide seh she a go out.

But just based on numbers, because the group was already a group that, if you are going to challenge them, yu haffi challenge them at yu full strength. So when yu're at a disadvantage, yu haffi go twice as hard, but, it turned out to be one of the most talked about female clash, because of the place. Some people seh no is unfair cause a t'ree, but a loss is a loss, cause we were there and we felt it, yu. Like we'dda seh, we haffi jus accept this defeat. Yu kno, it, it was a tiny margin but, they really did more because is five a them

(H - discuss the defeat)

0:33:31.3 S - Some stunts we couldn't du.

0:33:29.8 O - Them war fi days, dem war Sherine fi days. Stacey was livid fi daysss, becau let mi tell yu someting, Stacey nuh believe in losing.

(H - Discuss Stacey vexation at the Uptown Mondays challenge she couldn't deal with as she was in white).

Why did L'Antoinette hit out gainst Orville's comparison of Dh and Kumina?

0:35:12.1 O - Is not what I think, is what came out in the paper. (S - Yeah) (H - share what I hear in UK).

0:35:26.1 S - Maybe because she, she has done the study and she think it should not be a comparison because dancehall is a different space than Kumina. (H - Hmmhmm) But, I mean there are similarities, I mean bar none. There are similarities between the dancehall space and Kumina. Like the whole spirit ting, I mean with the climbing and the whole lot a different things weh yu talk about the earth spirit, the sky spirits. Yu have the same elements in dancehall. There are the same elements in dancehall. (O - Hmmhmm).

H - People relate to it in that way though?

0:36:13.0 O - No! (S - No!) We alone du dat, an' dem doan like wi because wi du dat. This is one a di spirit night them (Orville shows video clip) This is at Uptown

Mondays and this is Upstairs. ... Now look at Stacey. Stacey is on arr head, on a table, an' she upstairs. This likkle blue table, if she drop, this is the distance dat she a go go down. (H - Straight ova) An' she is on arr head on a table. An start vibrate on di table. ...If she drop from there she is out. Out, out, out! ... 0:37:31.1 O - This was Negril ... 0:37:41.2 O - this was with Spice. ... [Another time] 0:38:13.6 O - She [Stacey] went up deh las' night (S - Oh, pon di grill!) 0:39:45.6 O - But when mi a tell yu bout absolute madniss! 0:40:12.0 O - She hav a time when shi leggo one han' and den shi si'down desso know.

H - Who was the first person to climb up on that?

0:40:21.6 S - Stacey.

0:40:22.6 O - Stacey ... first person to climb up dere, si arr here again, an now she tilting arr body over the other way. See it de, she leggo.

H - So is jus the shoulder alone holding arr (O - Yeah)

## **Appendix 11.**

### **1 033 Interview with Raddy Rich Independent Dancer - Wyndham:Hilton Hotel Kingston 10.08.2010**

0:00:04.5 H - So we're here, at the Hylton of Wyndham Ho, Hotel in Kingston Jamaica. Today is the 10th, the 10th of August and I am here talking to Raddy Rich. So first of all I want to just check with you, is it ok that any info you give me during tyhis interview, that I can use it for research purposes?

0:00:34.4 R - Yeh I think so, nothing is wrong with that, hmmm, yeah.

H - Its not for any commercial purposes is just for research purposes Ok. So, that is ok with you?

0:00:45.2 R - Yeah, that's good.

H - Alright, so can we start by you giving me your full name and like, your, what you're known as. Your title and ting and then hmm, just tell me a little bit about yourself as well, as a dancer, as a artist.

0:01:06.7 R - Well, my real name is hmm, Rowan Al Etto [Lytte], yeah? People know me as Raddy Rich, as as you can see or as yu hear, but hmm me know, a little bit abvout me. I'm just this person who have a passion for dancing. I jus, if I talk about dancing the way I think about dancing, maybe yu think I'm crazy, coz, that's all I think about. I eat dancing, sleep dancing dream, yu kno, its, for me, I'm all about dance from yu say Raddy Rich, yu talking about dancing.

H - Alright

R - Yeah

H - So can you tell me hmm, what type a dance yu do yuself?

0:01:57.4 R - Me? Actually I do Popping and locking, I do African dancing. Also I do modern, yeah a little bit of modern. I'm a I'm a mixture. Yeah I do, but the only dance

I really do or interested in much is like ballet, because it brings out a different side, so that is pretty much

H - Hmm. Ok, but, but hmm, I notice you didn't mention dancehall. You do dancehall tu?

0:02:32.9 R - Aahh, I can't believe, no, I can't believe I didn't mention dancehall. Is because I think, pop and locking, that was the first thing I started to do, because I used to watch the Michael Jackson videos and things, when I was younger. Then after, it was actually dancehall, cause Raddy Rich, as everybody knows, I create dancehall, movements. Actually I have a popular one that everybody knows right now, call the 'badda wave', everybody likes that dance. Yeah, so, yeah, dancehall, definitely one of my main, my main thing.

H - Oh, Ok.

R - That I do yeah.

H - Alright, can you tell me, can you tell me about the dancehall scene here in Jamaica now, particularly from the kind of, er, perspective, what, what is dancehall? What it mean to you? How you feel when you doing it? Etc.

0:03:34.3 R - Dancehall, is dancehall is a thing that, I think dancehall is more like, about the hype. It's all about being seen. People wear different, do different things to themselves, just to be seen. Understand, like, say for instance my hair style, I have a dollar sign in my head. You know, people do different things to stand out. Yeah, people just.

H - Well maybe if you can repeat that then, so so that we hear when you say about you, dollar sign and so

0:04:24.1 R - Yeah, I'm saying, example, I get my dollar sign. I had to do something like this to stand out in the people's eyes in Jamaica, because, people don't really, in the dancehall people don't really see you if you're not different. So you have to be

different. Say, another example, say Bogle, the standard for dancehall, for dancehall dancing, he is the, he is the person who, make all a dancehall thing really happening. The whole dancing, accept of the whole dancehall thing, yeah! If you see his dresscode, things about him, he's just, he's just different. Big high shoes, a lot of stuns, studs round his neck, his hands, everywhere. He just stands out real different you know> So, it's all about, who stands out the most, understand? It's like also a competition. Who can, you know, stand out the best, everytime they go out in the street. You know, dancehall is (sigh) yeah that's, that's what I see mostly in dancehall. That's one of the main things.

H - Ok, so can you, can you tell me then, how you approach the dancehall. How you, do you for example, do you rehearse or do you just go out? Is it a vibe? Or, can you tell me how you approach dancehall yourself?

0:06:03.6 R - Dancehall, dancehall dancing ahmm, doesn't take much rehearsing, but for a dancer like me who is versatile, who do different stuff and want to take it to a different level. Cause that's what I'm in it for, to make, to put it to a different level, start making money off the whole thing. Dancehall, dancing ahmm, comes on to rehearsing, is more like, we more do choreography, it don't need to rehearse dancehall. Dancehall dancing is pretty much easy. (laugh) Comparing to me, I don't, I don't know how other people see that, but that's how I see it. Easy!

H - Alright, when you see easy, how? So, so if you explain to me, how do you go about hmmm, creating or preparing for the performances and thing?

0:07:11.7 R - As I say, it's more about the choreography, putting the movements together, you know? But to be able to do the moves, for, I wouldn't, for somebody like me would be like, like easy. You understand me? Because I'm a dance teacher I can say it like this. And I teach dancing, for instance I teach dancing at the health and, yeah, so forth. I'm at the Edna Manley [School of Performing Arts] most of the times, that's where I learn the African dance, you know the African dancing. Ahmmm, (sigh) that's.

H - But where do you get the movements from then? When you say it's easy, it's just about choreographing, where you get the movements from? Where the inspiration from?



0:08:06.1 R - Maybe that's the thing now. The reason, because, I actually do my moves mostly. That's, that's why it comes off this way, easy for me because I build my own movements, dancehall movements, so I'm all me. Understand? I do other dancer's moves and it still comes off easy (laugh). How would I say now? (laugh).

H - So, in terms of the movements them, is there a body of movement or, or hmm is it that you just create and just do you own? Or do you know like movements that's coming from way back in the day from like Della Move coming forward? Can you tell me a bit of the history, that, that part of it then?

0:09:08.3 R - The history?

H - What you might know

0:09:12.6 R - Hmmmm, well actually, to create a dancehall move, it's easier to like watch some African dances, and take steps from there, you know? Can you know African dancing is coming from way back, so you, you go back in time in history and take old steps, and create it in your own way, your own, and make it new. That's simple it, you know! You just simple add to old moves.

H - And when you say African steps, what do you mean? Do you know the name of any of these steps or dances?

0:10:07.9 R - Hmmmm, when I say African steps, is not, is not only African, but you know, is like Jonkunni, you know Jonkunnu, you know? Pokkumina, you know? All those things, its, its coming back from all those kindda, those history of dancing. Those old school, yeah, its all coming back from, way back then.

H - Ok, because that's interesting for me now, because when you were talking about African steps, you're talking about the traditional Jamaican steps, but you refer to them as African steps, because they originated in Africa and were brought here. So that's interesting for me because some people make a distinction between those which they see as African and those which they see as Jamaican, but as traditional, as

opposed to African. So its interesting that you make that distinction that they're African steps and you mean, by African, yu mean the Jamaican traditions as well.

0:11:11.7 R - Right! right! Cos I see (laugh) Oh, why, its more like that.

H - So, did you grow up with any of these traditions?

0:11:26.4 R - I grow up, I grow up with my, mom in the country, I'm, I'm actually a country gu, country boy, undastan? That's, back in Portland, where in, in those times when I been watching all those tapes an things, it was more like, the cassette tape kindda days. So I was watching, I always watch, these old school cassettes. Is like my, my grandad, like my grandfather used to like watching dancing, he like dancing, so, he al, he had a lot of tapes at home, yu undastan? So I, I used top jus sit down when I'm bored and jus watch all those tapes. And it got interesting at a time and I started jus, preeing all those tapes, Michael Jackson, those African ting, those old school dancehall, Passa Passa kindda thing yu know? Yeah. An, it (laugh).

H - Ok, no, yu doing, yu doing fine man. Do, don't hmm, becau remember there's no right or wrong or anyting. I, jus want yu to tell me how you feel about it and how you do it. Somebody else wi do it differently, it doesn't mean that you're right or that person right, its jus different. Yu, yu see whaat I mean.

R - Ok.

H - So tell mi, tell mi then, when your dancing how yu feel? An where yu getting tthe inspiration from?

0:13:18.3 R - Well, how I feel when I'm dancing? (laugh) Well, like, when I get the inspiration from like, yu mean as?

H - Is it the beat in the music? Or is it, that yu start with the steps and then yu find a music to go with it? Or do you jus play the music and then yu start move and then it, yu jus find yuself moving, how do yu?

0:13:50.7 R - Yeah, that's the weird thing about me now, me Raddy Rich, I, I feel every music, maybe in a different way, I feel every rhythm, yu undastan? Maybe in a different way but, I dont see, no rhythm out there that I don't feel like, every genre of music, I like, because I get something out of it, I get a kick out of it, undastan? I just love music period. That's my thing, yes. Jazz and blues, yu know, polka, I, I dont know what I dont do. I dont know what kind of dance I dont like or I dont do. Yu undastan? I do house dancing yu know! I dont know (laugh), I just try and do everything. Thats, basically me.

H - And do you get the inspiration in the same way from all a de music or some will, some will give you inspiration in a different way? Because I want to see, like in terms of the dancehall now, com, in comparison to the regge, in comparison to other styles now, I want to know about the Jamaican popular dance forms. How, yu, r, how you, get the inspiration, whats the feeling you get from, from it or for it and hmm how that compares to when you're working in another genre.

0:15:30.5 R - Well! doing my own dancehall thing will feel, will be more easier and more comfortable because, its own genre. Yu undastan? An as I said its kindda more easier, because is my genre an, arr my genre and I wouldn't have to learn it, like how you would have to learn, break dancing, because it's coming from somewhere else, not from our country. Undastan?

H - Hmmhmm.

0:16:08.1 R - So its not a outsider kind of thing, hmmm

H - So what do you listen, listen to in the music, when yu listening to the music, what do you listen for, in order to be able to start move an ting?

0:16:25.7 R - Its all about the rhythm, its all about the rhythm. Sometimes its a little bit about the music also, sometimes its about the music also, but its mainly about the rhythm. The rhythm give you, it, it give you, it give you different feeling, yu know! Every rhythm give you a different feeling. Every beat!

H - So, can yu tell me for example, I know you did Gyallis, what, what was, what was the vibes for that then?

0:16:58.8 R - The vibes, for, 'Gallis Swing'?

H - Yes, when you were creating your movement and doing Gallis Swing, wha, what was it that you were working with then?

0:17:10.3 R - I was actually, doing a mixture, that, tha, that mixture of, I think I am the only person in Jamaica who does that. I do hmm, I mix, popping and dancehall. If yu really watch keenley, I mix my movement. Is like popping, dancehall, African. So, I kindda look a little bit different from other dancers. As you can see, even when I am doing dancehall, it doesn't look exactly raw dancehall. Yu know, it have a difference. But people love it. People like, it a lot. I respect that, from people, who like it.

H - Right. And err, so, was the re a particular, were you listening to the main beat or was it the vocals, what drive you in 'Galiis Swing'?

0:18:11.5 R - Well, errr. The beat of course yeah, but the vocal was, was really interesting, was really nice. Yu know! Man a gallis, it give yu a, it put a smile on your face fi know dat, yeah, yu actually, representing for, yu know? That kind of people out there, yeah. Give you a different vibe. Give yu a stronger vibe, to do it, to dance. The vocal yeah, the vocal have a lot to do with it.

H - An when yu say the vocal, yu talking about the lyrics or the quality of the voice? Do you hear the voice, do you hear the words or do you just hear the voice as a riddim? How do you?

0:19:02.8 R - It's really, (not clear - think) Not, as you were saying that. I think the voice have a little to do with it. Yeah, but not hundred percent the voice, its the lyrics, the lyrics have a lot to do with it. The lyrics have evereything to do with it, yeah. The lyrics push the riddim into a different, yu know! Into a different world, like, makes it different. Cau if you were saying something stupid on the rhythm, I wouldn't dance to it. Right! I rather jus, si, dance to the rhythm by itself. If is something stupid, but if

the song is saying something sensible or something that you like, yeah it makes a big difference.

H - So what happen to those people then, because, I've been in Africa where hmm, them don't even know what is being said, but them dance to the rhythm still.

0:20:14.2 R - (laugh), What do I think about them?

H - Yeah!

0:20:17.1 R - Well, I think their rhythm is, lot different than ours, so, their rhythm is more spiritual. Is like, yu have to feel it, yu have to move to their rhythm. Is not all about the listening, of the song, its more about the rhythm for their culture, that's how I see it, because, I feel the rhythm more, cause, some, most of those lyrics I don't know what they're saying, but the lyrics just hit me and I, I move to it.

H - Ok, when yu say yu dont understand what they are ssaying now, are you talking about African rhythms that come straight from Africa or yu talkin about the Jamaican African rhythms?

0:21:20.2 R - hmm

H - Like you mention Jonkunnu etc, do you understand ll of those lyrics and all of the?

0:21:28.4 R - No not all of those lyrics, that's what I'm saying, not all, I dont understan all of those lyrics. But the rhythms are always interesting. They're always, yu always, feel the rhythms. Yu have a difference,. Is (laugh), is like Kumina type of thing, yu always feel the rhythm, links, if you understan, I dont know. (laugh).

H - OK, an, an, one last question. Do you ever, like say those rhythms, do you ever hear them in the, do you find them within the dancehall, within the reggae, within the popular forms? Do you find the

0:22:20.1 R - Yeah, actually, actually these dancehall artists actually, put their songs on the rhythm. Yu know, they actually, they actually do songs on the, African rhythms and things and it sound real well and even make it better because, yu actually know what, understand the lyrics, and yu still hearing the beat. Makes a lot of difference, a like, a like the, its very interesting.

H - Alright, thanks very much. Ok.

## **Interview part 2**

Raddy Rich\_Wyndham:Hilton Hotel\_Kingston\_10.08.2010\_2\_034

0:00:00.0 H - Yeah, you were saying about when your dancing the, the spiriit and ting.

0:00:07.1 R - Oh! (laugh), I was jus saying, when I dancing like, when the Kumiina and the ryhthm, the beat and the drum, is like, so different. Is like a spirit take over, yu whole body. Yu jus, yu jus haffi feel it, b, the Kumina ting, African whole drum thing, I jus love it, understan? It jus give yu a different feeling (laugh).

H - And do you get that , f, feeling any other time then?

0:00:37.3 R - I dont get that feeling from any other music. Yu know? Any other rhythm than, yu know! African rhythm. Drum, jus the drums. That kindda thing, yeah.

H - So is the drum that (R - Yeah) give you that vibe?

0:00:52.5 R - Is the drum that give yu that vibe. Totally different vibe, (laugh). It mek yu express yourself in a totally different way. Is like, is like it's almost not you, that dancing. Is like is the spirit inside yu. Yu know! Is jus a whole different personality. A whole different person, dancing. But it's quite fun though, cause it mek yu express yuself very differently, that's wicked (laugh).

H - And how does that compare to the dancehall then?

0:01:28.3 R - How does it compare to the dancehall? Err, dancehall, it doesn't, give you that spiritual feeling, but, dancehall, it make yu feel happy. It, it, take away stress.

If you feel stressed in any way, just go to a dancehall scene and jus, dance it, dance it off. Yu know! All gone, (laugh). Yeah its killing stress. So yu know, people who is, so yu have people who is poor and don't really have much money an, and thing, who jus, yu know? Have bad time at home, at home but, they just, feel really like, stressed out with what happen at home. Yu know? No money, cyaan buy this, cyaan buy a food, but once yu jus step in de dancehall scene, an jus dance it off, all da feeling deh gaan. Yu kno! Jus, like yu back to new, an yu jus go again, yu kno?

H - An tell me then, (R - that's it!) What about the man woman ting then?

0:02:45.9 R - The man and woman ting?

H - Yes, how that would work?

0:02:48.3 R - In the dancehall? (H - Yes) The man an woman thing, yeah, is a fun ting. Yu actually talking about the man danceing with the woman right?

H - Hmm

0:02:59.1 R - Yeah, the man an woman ting dancing in the dancehall, thats, its fun and crazy, the bo, the both side enjoy it. The woman enjoy it, the man enjoy it. Its all about, having fun, yu know yu can jus mix with a next guy ooman, but not having intimate, yu kno, sex with her, but jus having fun, we jus pla, we jus playing, yu undastan? An, an it doesn't matter. Is jus fun. We jus, see it as fun, yu kno, is all about releasing yu stress, jus having fun, yu kno? Mingling with different people, meeting different people. Dancing with different, yu like, dancing in the dancehall with woman, is like, yu dance with any girl yu want to dance with. That's how it is, no special person.

H - Right, but I notice, I notice hmm, a lot of the time I notice the man dem come (R - In groups) in groups and the woman dem come in groups an, so how man an woman meet?

0:04:09.7 R - How man an woman meet? Yu know, in the dancehall, when music hit yu is not about meeting, is jus the vibe that yu get from the music, yu jus, yu jus dancing. A guy go a de back a a girl an jus star dance. Is not nothing special, is not a like ting, is jus having fun. Yu don't have to, is not looking the person, or trying to deal with that person. Yu undastan? If you want to do that, that's different, but is not

much about that. It's about jus having fun, caus sometimes you're there with, your group. Maybe, sometimes yu come in groups. Yu have yu ownna dance group, girl in de group, guys in de group, an we go inna de party an we jus, dem jus kill it, dem jus party. Its not like they're couples or anything, jus a group, jus, they like showing off their skills an having fun, at the same time, for in the dancehall they play both side of music. They play for the guys, they play for the ladies, when, for the guys they do the whole dancehall thing, the reggae, yu kno! Mr Whacky kind a thing there, Yu kno! Or, when it go into the girl section, everybody start, having fun enjoying themself. Them call it 'dagging' its all about the 'dagging', the, yu kno! jus, all man, fun. Its all about fun. yu kno?

H - So, so canyou tell me what would be the build up of the night, in terms of the music and the dance? From you enter into a space, what kind of music them play and what them go to etc. Is there a way you can categorise it?

0:06:10.0 R - Well, when yu enter yu kno, a dancehall, first kindda music they start to play, they start to go back, in the past like some old, reggae music, yu know? Is, is more like they play reggae first, they remiind yu that yeah, this is our culture yeah? Thiis is where, its coming from and we jus, drinking some liquor yu kno, yu know, sipping some whatever, Hennesey yu kno? Some people nuh really, have enough money to buy that, but some street vibes, yu kno? Something, yu jus, yu kno, listening to those music, cau those music are more about words so yu listen. Not dancing up, jumping, yu kno! Is not a jumping up music, yu jus listen. Yeah, some Beres Hammond an, yu kno, coming up. 0:07:03.5 Then, later on in the night, kindda, they kindda kick it in the hip hop genre yu kno! Basically play the latest hip hop music yu kno? That like, everybody jus enjoying theyself, sometimes people in the dance actually do hip hop so they, start dancing already. People popping, locking, spinning aroun, yeah. Then, actually going, the man section whe everybody jus, gather their group together an in one particular place that they say yes, this is my spot. When the video light pass here yu kno, we jus gain kill it. So everbody have their groups, everybody, m, majority, all dancs have their signature moves, like all dancs make dance moves, so all dancs have their own, steps. They do other dancs' steps as well but they have their own signature move. So everybody jus having fun, doing their own choreography in the dancehall yu kno! Jus, jus, is all about fun! Playing around yu kno, is all about, looking good, the hype yu kno! Come back to all that yu



kno! Flossing yu kno? Jus taking away all stress. Jus come back down to that. Yu nu have to be stress! Can jus be there for fun an the hype. an the flossing, cause yu have people in the dancehall that's not really danca, so they're there for looking good for the hype, yu kno! They move, but yu kno, the dancers now have a different scene in the dancehall, is like, the dancers is a mus in the dancehall. They bring a different vibe. If you go into a, a dancehall party or anything like that, and there's no danca, it would be a di, the same vibe wouldn't be there, unddastan?

H - Hmmm

0:09:22.4 R - So dancers push off that vibe. So danca, is a great thing actually.

H - Well yu reach as far as the man section when, (R - Yeah), when yu seh, then after the man section (R - Yeah), then,

0:09:38.3 R - Then afta the man section now, this is where, this is what everybody is waiting for, so nobody leaves, this is when the dance ram up (laugh). Everybody deh deh, everbody having fun. The ooman dem come out in dem short up bakini, whatever, inna dem tights, yu kno inna dem hair, dem hair well do, everting look good an jus ready fi party. An the man dem deh deh, liqua inna dem head, liqua bus dem head, dem jus ready fi, yu kno, enjoy demself an everybody jus start party. The dancers them, lif girls up, trow dem aroun' an jus, is jus all about fun. Is nuttin , nuttin to , like, nuttin to damage, the ladies. The y will never do nothing to damage the ladies. Undastan? The ladies see it as fun also as the guys, so its jus all fun . We trow dem aroun, we trow dem to a partna, yu kno! We, we switch girls, yu kno! is jus all about fun, jus its all bout fun an de hype. In the video light, cause actually when we dancing, its all about, for the video personal to see us, undastan? To see us what we're doing. The different, cause we always try come with something different. 0:11:11.9 R - Even dancing with a girl, we try to do it different, movement, different style, yu kno! Everytime we go in the dancehall we tryto create something new for the people to see. Is like, also a entertainment yu kno? In the dancehall. So, people always come out to see what the dancer's have.

H - Hmmhmm

0:11:35.4 R - Next, what's new, yu undastan me? What they gonna do, whats the new step, yu kno! Whats the new move, whats the new thing, yu kno! What's the new

daggering movement with the girls yu kno! Whats the new thing out there, yu kno!  
People always out, going to enjoythemselves yu kno! Its all about enjoyment, all  
about having fun. Thats really it yu know! (laugh)

H - Alright, thank yu.

### **Interview part 3**

Raddy Rich\_Wyndham:Hilton Hotel\_Kingston\_10.08.2010\_3\_035

0:00:00.0 H - Ok, right, so in terms of the dancehall session then, yu seh every night  
have a session.

0:00:06.1 R - Yeah, so in terms of the dancehall session, every night have a session.  
They have Monday night, yu have 'Uptown Monday', 'Hot Monday' yu kno! Yu have  
couple Monday sec, section. Yu have Tuesday, yu have 'Boasy Tuesday', yu kno! Yu  
have clubbing otherwise, yu kno! People go a Assylum on Tuesday. Yu have  
Wednesday, yu have 'Weddy Wednesday', yu have 'Passa Passa', thats on Wednesday  
a Wednesday night. I din't seh Tues, yeah yeah Thursday. I did seh Tuesday?

H - Yes.

0:00:38.5 R - Yeah 'Boasy Tuesday' yeah, yeah. On Thursday now, yu have, yu have  
like, 'Xpressionz Thursday', yu kno! Thats. thats the mainly thing that we go on  
Thursday, 'Xpressionz Thursday', that the hot spot, for Thursday. Friday now, Friday  
is more like, Friday night! Friday night! Yu go clubbing.

H - Dirty Friday

0:01:02.1 R - 'Dutty Friday' Yeah, yu kno! Is more, more like, 'Dutty Fiday', fi Friday  
night.

H - Thats the only one then?

0:01:09.6 R - Thats the one, that's the one period, that everybody is at yu kno?

H - Hmmhmm

0:01:15.2 R - On Saturdays, clubbing. Sunday a 'Wet Sunday', yu kno! 'Bounty Sunday'. Yu have 'Wet Sunday', 'Bounty Sunday' thats on Sunday. Thats the main place,

H - Jus 'Wet Sunday' an 'Bounty Sunday'?

0:01:28.7 R - Boun, Bounty Sunday, thats the main place to be

H - Saturday then, then yu no have non

0:01:31.5 R - Saturday night, clubbing, Asylum, yu kno! Quad, Fiction yu kno! Dats my Saturday night.

H - Right and those are dancehall sessions?

0:01:44.6 R - Well, they do dancehall session in the club.

H - In the club!

0:01:48.1 R - Yeah on Saturday night.

H - So what do you class as a dancehall session?

0:01:51.7 What do I class?

H - What is a dancehall session?

0:01:53.9 R - Dancehall session is (laugh), actually, like hmm a street dance. So I more class it as a dancehall session, so, actually the club scene on Saturday night, not a, not a 100% a dancehall session. Is a uptown session on Saturday night.

H - So what about Xppressionz Thursday'?

0:02:16.3 R - Yeah, thats a dancehall

H - But that is in a club

0:02:19.1 R - But its not jus in a club, its jus becuse hmmm, the, the crimes, the whole Dudus crimes and things, so actually, things, most things have to be up in a club. Even hmmm, the Friday night ting, hmm (H -Dutty Fridayz?) 'Dutty Fridayz', its in a club now, but it used to be on the street, so street dance in the club so, not because its in a club, its still a street dance. Its something that was in the street and we

put it in the club, yu undastan? Jus because of the crime rate, so, actually all, they're all a dance, dance, yu kno! Dancehall scene.

H - So, so those are the dancehall sessions within, (R - the week), within town.

0:03:06.2 R - Within town, right! Within Kingston.

H - Within Kingston and what are the boundaries then that defines where you stop.

0:03:15.0 R - Where you stop? (H - Hmm), I n Kingston?

H - Yeah

0:03:18.0 R - The boundaries, the boundaries lie like, is from Constant Spring Rd, go back, go back to downtown, but even though, they kindda, limit, stop the downtown thing now, so is more from Constant Spring road, to Half-Way-Tree. Right in Half-Way-Tree, yu know, so is Constant Spring Rd to Limelight. (H - Alright), to New Kingston, that's the boundary, hear! Boundary line is in New Kingston. From Constant Spring to New Kingston, yeah! I would say that's the boundary line.

H - Alright, Ok. Thank yu.

## **Appendix 12.**

### **002 Interview with Taz\_Timeless Crew\_Angel Town-Spanish Town 01.03.2017**

0:00:31.6 H - Clearance for use of material/data

0:00:58.9 T - Well, well for the note now my name is Taz Timeless, founding member of the Timeless Crew. Yu kno! We been in Dh for more than 10years now doing this thing. Yeah, we create a whole lot a dance moves an all dat. So, so far ova the years my crew ha, my crew have evolved. Yu kno! I, i, it change yu know? The members have changed , but a few still remain, including myself, which is the foundig member and reason why, cos I love this thing so much. This is my God, gif [gift] talent, yu kno! so I'm not gonna jus put it down. Yu kno! Yeah, dancehall, a mi everything. An mi mean evryting, mi mean everything. Yeah man. Hmmhmm.

H - what is your position within the culture itself?

0:01:56.3 T - Alright, I won't tell no lie. Yu hear di Bob Marley? Alright, my position within dancehall itself, I look, I see dancehall as, a ouse [house], right? I see it as a house an', buil'ing [building] a house it tek more than one persons, right? With more than one set a skills. So, I look, yu have musician in dancehall, yu have the selectas who play music an then yu have the dancas. We do the entertainment part of it, the antics and all that. I see myself as part of, or one of those persons who buil' that house. Yu kno, blood swet an tears, I help buil' the house. So my position is, I see my self a, a, a, a, as one of the founding members den [then]. Yu kno! In this era right now, where dancehall is concerned. I see myself do a lot where dancing is concerned in dancehall, because, when Bogle dead, right, there was like a, a, a, a craving for dancing so much, cos Bogle was that man, Bogle was e, e, e, yu know? He was all that, Bogle was the icon an when Bogle died, there was a craving, dance pick up so much, dancerss become so global, right afta Bogle dead. 0:03:10.6 T - Yeah, so yu kno, I look on myself, yu kno, people might not say it, but I see my self as an, as an icon, in dancehall, in dancing, per se. In my own rights, yu kno, in my own right I see that. I see myself as an, dancehall icon, as a danca, in dancehall.

H - Define Dh

0:03:46.3 T - Ok. How I see it or as it is? Cos if yu ask me how I see it. Mek mi tell yu how I define dancehall. I si dancehall as a movie, dats how big I see dancehall, dats how I define dancehall. I si dancehall as an, unwritten movie. There's no script, but listen, there is the actors, there is the directors, there is the writers. Who are the, who are the directors of this movie? Is the selectas, becau the selectas ar the ones, they are the ones that tlking on the microphone. An there're saying "look at yow, yow, yow, lok ya, whatch ya, a Taz Timeless dat ova desso? [over there?] Bran new dance 'Mad Move' alright, mi si, wait, mi si Nikesha, mi si dancehall queen Sher, right? Mi si rae, rae ,rae and such an such," so, dem a di directors. Yu know, dem wi seh, "Well look pan da giral ya, my girl go up pon da box top, go pon di building deh. Alright Taz, go pon di wall now". Dem a di directors. I see them as director of thsi movie. So I se, I si dancehall as a movie, dats how big I si dancehall. An' den yu have the actors which is we. 0:04:51.7 T - The dancers, are the actors of this movie, because we come out an we dance. Now if there was no dancers, tek away di dancers from this movie, who would be acting? It cant be the selectas cause they are only soun' they're talking, they're the directors. It cyaan be a, a, ahmm the artist at all times, because in dancehall itself in parties, artists does not perform, artists perform on stage shows, ahmm book event, but in a nightly dancehall party, we are the actors. The artists are the actors tu yu kno, but when yu tek it on a nightly basis, the dancers are the actors. So we ac' right? We go out there, we do all dese [these] antics, for memba yu kno, is not jus dancing alone that make dancehall so nice. Is the dancing also, is the, is the antics, right! Is the likkle charades, because a guy, for instance theres a guy right now in dancehall doing ski. He has on a ski mask, wid two sticks an' he dressed up like if he's in the tropics. Ahmm, like he's in the ice box, right, or in Polan' an he's skiing. That's antics, that's creativeness, that's acting right dere.

H - Wha im name?

0:06:01.8 T - Ski, yeah right. Me, back in di days I used to, I buil' a dance call 'To Di World', right! Which recently, Usain Bolt, when he was, ahmm, running a, a, a, an' him win di medal, he always du dis move an pose an seh, "To di worl'", an I buil' dat dance move like, some four or five years now. An Usain Bolt still come back an seh to the world. I used to dress up, right, put on tall socks an all dese tings an, I used to

buil' costume wid maps on it all ova, all ova di world. And, I walk with a globe, a big globe an I go into dancehall an I spin that globe, right! An I call my dance 'To the World', that's part of the acting, that's part of the antics, right! That's creativity. An always memba dis, when yu buil a dance, it is important. Bogle teach mi dis. Make your dance into a slang, an den, di dance, yu use it as words. So a slang is slur, so for instance now, I'm saying 'Mad Move', everybody is saying "Mad Move", because is a slang and den when people say it now widdin di everyday language, then I'll come out an I do this dance. Right! So, always make your dance into a slang an thenyu mek it into a dance, right? (H - Right) 0:07:20.4 So, back at it again, how I si dancehall or how I conceptualise dancehall? Is yu movie. Its an unwritten an unscript movie. Its a r-e-a-l, its a reality, yu kno, is more like a reality clip. Yu kno? Its real, dats how I si dancehall, dats how big dancehall is tu me. ... It is a reality but I si it as a movie, dats how big it is. A movie, an unwritten, unscript movie. As weh mi seh, yu have di actors, yu have di directors an all dat.

H - Can yu go through the main players then? Like, yu said hmm, directors are the....

0:08:06.2 T - Are the selectors, right! Those are the one who tell yu what to do an when yu doing it, yu kno? Because, if the music is jus playing an there's nobody talking, its, its boring. (H - Yes) So I see the selectors as the directors of the movie. Right? Now the dancas an' di artists are the actors, yu kno? So we come out an we ac', cos if there were no dancers in the dancehall an di selectors was there jus talking, it would be boring, if everybody was to standing aroun'. Den dere are now I, I would call dem ahmm, a, a, a, ahmm, they are back up or they are jus di, di add libs, or the people who are jus standing there watching the performance, like for instance in a movie yu have people who jus mek up numbers, yu kno, den yu have the main stars. So, the regular patrons, like somebody who doesn't dance, like for you now Mr Pattison, yu doesn't dance, so you come out an you look an you spectate, yu kno! So you are e, e, e, yu kno, you are di spectata in di movie, yu kno? Yes.

H - I wi seh someting about that later because that's not quite true, because I do dance.

0:09:11.6 T - Oh, you do dance, well for, for now in dis aspec' (laugh) in dis apsec' right , right now, in dancehall right now , yeah. So, yeah, in, in, yu kno der's a group a people yu kno, so, dat mek it up to be dat movie, right, yeah.

H - How does theory inform Dh music and movement?

0:09:54.8 T - Ok, alright, for me , dere is whole, dere is a whole lot a different people who help to make dancehall possible. An does name dat yu jus call [Carolyn Cooper, Donna Hope, Dennis Howard] does are likea, a, ahmm, they, those people take it to more of ahmm like di educational side of dancehall, like institutionalise, dancehall. They do it from, like, the Edna Manley School of art, Edna Manley School of performance, they do it from there. They do it from UWI an UTECH, yu know, if yu wanna go there. Yu kno, they have dancehall in those era. So they would be more of a professor den of dancehall, yu kno? An dey, dey wi mostly teach yu, teach you, the old folks, from back in the day. The nook an cranny of it. They will teach you that, like for instance, Miss Lou, mis Lou was, a very big icon in Jamaica here. Yu kno who is Miss Lou right? (H - Yeah man) Yes man, Mis Lou...

H - Let mi tell yu something, my first, dance tour was with Miss Lou.

0:11:02.4 T - Ok! Si! Now, Miss Lou now and those people now, they will, they will institutionalise dancehall, they will tek it to the institute an eh, eh, yu kno, an dose types. But we, we are more streets, we are more of the streets type, we learn from the streets. Yu kno? For instance, yu wi have a guy who go to college an he is very book smart. Yu kno? He, e, dats the college guy. Den yu have a guy from the streets, he kno di streets. Now some, in some cases, if yu put the guy from the college in the streets yu kno, yu knohe cant survive that easy? Yeah because he kno, he does not kno di streets. If yu put the guy from the streets inside the college, probably he wont survive that easy because he is not that knowledgeable or book smart as the college guy. Yu kno? Yeah, so I would put us an, yu kno, an dem in, we are in one circle, but, yu kno, is two different half. If yu get what I'm saying right! ... 0:12:10.5 T - Cos what I said before, what, how I dance an how I tech dances probly dem, probably dem teach it in a different way, dan me. Yu kno? As yu seh we, I will have five or ten people here. For instance, las' week, I have bout fifteen Europeans on my block,



teaching them dance move that I created ova di years, right. Yeah an if you, what's her name Donna Hope? (H - Yeah) Yeah, an probably if yu tek it to dem, dey will go like more into di institute. They will be in a studio, dancing infront of a mirror, yu undastan? Yes, an ahmm board floor an all dat. Me I'm taking it right down to, eart' [earth] right here, di, yow, di groun', dutty tuff [the tough ground], yu kno? Di sun an di breeze an all dat weh outside, yeah! Yu kno? Di streets. (H - Right, ok) ...

H - What does Dh mean to you?

0:13:19.1 T - Dancehall mean everyting to mi. Dancehall mean everyting to mi, because I used to have dis saying, "when I'm cooking I'm dancing, when I'm taking a bath I'm dancing, even when I'm making love to my girl I'm dancing", yu kno? Even when I'm walking I'm dancing, cau even sometime, if mi a walk an mi hear a song, trus' mi, my han' start move an mi foot wi move, ar ar, are mi head, or rock to di beat. If I'm standing an I'm hear a song, trus mi, I will be dancing. Like dis one time, my grandmother said to mi, "Look at Kevin", cos dat's my birt' name. She say "Look at Kevin, I'm cyaan stan up still, him jus haffi jus a move, all if nu song naah play, him body haffi jus a move". (H - Yeah) So, to me, to me, dancehall dancing is m, is, is everyting, it cova every aspec' for me. It speaks so many different languages, yu kno? Dat, dat is the most beautiful ting about this, artform, it speaks so many different languages. Dancing on a whole, it doesn't matter if is dancehall, if it's African, right! If it's Hip Hop, right! It doesn't matter, it speaks a whole different language, cause dancing speaks to everybody. 0:14:30.4 T - Jus like music, 'when music hit yu, yu feel no pain', dancing speaks in a universal language, yu kkno? It speaks so many different languages, one, one, once yu dance, because, di odda day when I have my class wid dese people from France, as I tell yu was like fifteen to ten a dem, an when I a have my classes wid dem, some a dem can hardly even speak English. Somebody have to be translating what I said to dem. To show yu how much, an when I do a dance move, dey ketch on to it so easy. ...

H - Social and cultural side off Dh? This is going more towards wha yu refer to as the nooks an crannies I guess them I guess.

0:15:47.7 T - Well, as wha I say before, yu kno, some people probably look on dancehall, yu kno. Let mi be specific, probably the foriegners, probably th, a, a, a, ahmm, the Europeans who love dancehall so much, they look on dancehall as just, some of them who love dancing they see it as just dancing only. Some of them who love the music, becau yu have some of them who jus go for the music, yu kno? For the reggae vibe, they jus see it as dat, but is not jus dat its, its way bigger dan dat. Its dis right here which I'm smoking, this weed right here, in my han', yu kno! It, it, it is the Jamaican soil right here, (M - Smoke herb bredrin) Alright, hear big man correct mi deh! Seh mi a smoke some herb. But, w, w, weh we gi it now, wi gi a more Jamai, we yow, we jus call it weed an (M - Americans call it, start wid dis weed ting a herbs) Alright, (Hartical Rastaman call it herbs) Alright the natural herbs, hmmhmm. So, back to, wha mi did a seh now? We du so bam an we look pon it as, dis a wi everting an it a come from we folkfathers an wi folkparents an its an, its an African, in born concept in us. Yu kno! To dance. 0:17:11.0 T - De odda day di Prime Minista said, he's blaming domestic violence, on daggering. Now I was looking like, wha di Prime Minista jus seh? Probably somebody piss off the Prime Minista, or somebody (M - in audible) Or, or, or, or, or somebody du summn and piss him off, mek hi m seh dat. But still yet, the Prime Minista kinna a bit wrong, because, daggering, if yu look at daggering, if yu check Kumina, right, Dinkie Mini an all those tings, the man an di ooman come togetha an gyrate, they work, the pelvis area, they gyrate, they dance togetha. That is a form of daggering right there! That is a form of daggering yu kno! When me was small an my granmotha used to tek mi to Mento yard an, the man siddung pon di drum, the likkle kete drum an him a beat it right desso, an all dat, an di graitta [grater] an di pot cover a beat, me si man an ooman a dance an gyrate togedda, an wining up pon one a nedda. Right! Yeah! Mi si all dem ting deh. Right!

0:18:10.2 T My grandfadda a come from di era weh, him use tu hav a ting weh him call Duke Box, inna di house. Him put a vynal record pon, it, an one side hav in di big speaker, one side hav in a, a, a, ahmm wha yu put di record pon an it play. An it big, is a big box inside di house, call it di Duke Box. I see my grandfadda playing dat, an dat's how I become to love dancing so much cau my granmadda was a Revivalist. My granmadda was a, was a Revivalist, she was, she was a poco lady. Right, an she was a spiritual one. I tink she was wah? Sixty-one or sumting like dat. She have a big blue piece a claat [cloth] with a white, ahmm, cross on it. An she very spiritual. She ward aaf [off] any bad spirit. An when I use to go to church wid arr, an she dance an speak

in tongues [Pentecostal term], trus mi when dem get in spirit dey dance. Right, dey dance an mi use fi si my granmadda dance an gyrating an then when I come home, my granfadda put on two Dennis Brown cd, or, or, or two Lieutenant Stitchie, or, or, or, or, or, yu, yu kno? (H - Right) One a dose, yu kno, ol' folk's singers an, him dance same way in di house. So dats how dancing come into me. Right. But its coming from we African, yu kno? Backgroun'. 0:19:19.8 T - The slave dem a Africa use fi dance, an a, a di same way, if yu look pon mos' a di African moves dem right now an African beat or Afrobeat, it kinna soun like reggae an dancehall same way. (H - Hmmhmm) It have dat similar beat dat similar dancing. The girls when I see dem, dancing, the African girls, dey dance similar to di Jamaican girls same way. Even when they, in, in the village an dey dancing , yu kno, is the same move an dey dance, bare foot, on the groun', dirt kicking up an all dat. Dat's, where it coming from. Dats when, dats how I said now when I'm dancing, I bring my dancers right tu, in, i, yu kno, dutty tuff. I bring dem to di streets, because it remin' mi of di Africanniss, weh wi a come from, I neva bin to Africa before, I was suppose to go dere, couple years ago, to du a show but, it neva worked out. But, mi can feel dat, presence in mi, mi can feel de African, yu kno? Presence in mi. Kunta Kinte in mi, yu kno? Di Nanny, di Paul Bogle, all dat, mi can feel dat inna mi. Yeah! 0:20:21.0 T - If yu look pon i', look pon we as black man, yu si 'ow our nose broad an wi have dat broad nose pon our nose, shape different from di white man? (H - Hmmhmm) Cos we were born in di heat in di tropics. Yu know our nose is more broader, the white man he have a straighta nose becau he was born in di coul [cold], so, yu kno, he don' inhale all dat coulness, an all dat open his nostril, yu kno? yeah! So, yu kno! Di dutty tuff, di nook an cranny. Dats what dancehall is, dats what i. its all about, di cultcha, everyting. Back to di groun', yu kno.

H - Right, I just gwain quote yu 'Di dutty tuff....'

0:20:59.9 T - Yeah man! "Rain a fall but di dut ie tuff!" Hear Bob Marley tell yu! Yes man (laugh). Di nook an cranny a it man. Yes man, yu kno!. So dem, so mi nuh waan dem feel like is jus because a di dancing alone, dats howdey, dat's how dem look at dancehall an seh yes, dey, dey are dancehall. If dey doan kno, if dey doan kno all these things, they are not dancehall. If yu cyaan do a likkle Kumiina, a likkle Dinkie Mini, a likkle Merengue a likkle all a dat, dem nuh dancehall man. ...

H - So if yu can't do a likkle a di traditional practices, then yu not doing dancehall?

0:21:40.6 T - Hmmhmm, An if yu kno kno bout it, becau yu don' necessarily haffi dance it yu kno, but yu have to kno bout it. Even a likkle, yu kno, stretch yu knowledge because, bear dis, in mine. Yu haffi exercise di mind, jus like how yu exercise di body, cos if yu nu exercise the mine or the brain, it a go become lazy an unfit, jus like di body, so yu haffi exercise dat a likkle. Cos if me not dancing an exercising my body, cos dat is my exercise yu kno, dancing is my exercise. Yu get weh mi a seh Mr Patten? Yeah, an den now when mi naah dance, mi try fi read up on stuff. Yu kno, mi try fi read a likkle, an kno seh alright, expanded knowledge an dat now, tings, an mi try fi read tings weh mi nuh undastan as yet, or mi nuh get fi kno as yet. So yu kno wha it exer, dat now a go exercise, yu mine yu kno! It a go exercise, den yu a go seh, Oh mi neva kno dis, what dis mean? How dis come about? Weh dis come from? Yu get wha mi a seh? Mi neva kno bout all dis. An den now it encourage you fi keep on reading more. Yeah. So exercise, di mine jus as how yu exercise di body, keep it fit jus di same.

H - Yu nuh haffi call mi Mr Patten, jus di 'H' is fine.

0:23:04.0 T - OK! Yu kno, yu si is because is a ting weh, yu si when yu grow up pon summn, yu always a go keep dat concep' a it, becau me grow up inna a home weh, my parents or my granmadda an granfadda teach mi dis, "Membra respec yu elders, is Mr an Mrs" an all dat, so dem teach mi dat, yu get mi, so mi always hav dat ting bout mi, it kinna hard (laugh) fi tek dat outta mi system (laugh) Yes man.

(H respond ...)

H - How do yu feel within yourself when yu perform...

0:24:12.5 T - Ahhh, i,i,i,i, its, I feel free. I feel free I feel vibrant, I feel powered. Yu kno? I,i,i, I feel like a,a,a, a bird souring, in the skies, yu kno! I feel like I'm flying, when I'm performing. Yu kno? Yeah, it motivate mi, yu kno? It, it jus du so much good tings. I,i, it jus feel like, a miracle happen to me when I'm dancing. Yu kno? Escpecially when I'm on a big stage performing for, thousands of people an all dat.

My, w, w, one of my biggest show was in Japan. Yeah, was in Japan, couple years, now. Was Sir Alf Cooper, yu kno! from Fame FM, is a, is a very well known disc jock right now. Him still deh pon the station right now, Fame FM. Yeah, yeah, cau him used to par wid Third World tu, him fadda was a part a di Third World ban', yu kno? An, yu kno? Really an truly, I was on a video set, right? I was dancing an dis man jus, as mi finish perform him look pon mi an seh "Mi need fi talk wid you yu kno yute! Yu have a talent, yu have summn bout yu weh mi like", an right dere di connection jus mek. Yu kno? An me an him start link an ting an him a seh yow, we a plan dis tour, we a go Japan. Mi need one danca wid mi. One danca, an probably, t'ree artist. One danca, an him a seh, you are the only person wha mi si so far wha mi'da really, bring on a tour wid mi. Yeah! An wi go to Japan, yu kno? First time going to Japan, yu kno. Fly from here to Texas an from Texas to Japan. Fly from night going into day, an when we reach to Japan, is night. An mi seh wooh, a di first mi a si dem ting here! Yu kno? Mi de pon di plane an mi look an mi a si mi inna day an den night deh behin' mi. Yu kno? I was astonish an I seh, Jah know! When mi reach a Japan, an dem introduce mi an mi deh pon di stage, di amount a Japanese people weh mi si a, a,a, a raael fi mi an put up dem han! Mi haf, mi haffi really stop an seh to mi self seh yow, "a me dis? Di likkle yute weh a come from one likkle communnity a Jamaica now, a likkle ghetto, inna one likkle board house, a me dis? Deh right yasso? Yu kno! Yes so, was so, mi no even kno, fi seh. Mi no even can fin' di word fi seh right now. It was so, gimme a word, gimme a word! Gimme a word Missa Patten (H - Ecstatic!) E, e, ecstatic! Yu kno? So unbelievable den, yu kno! Fi so so much Japanese people a seh, yu kno, yeah, cause Timeless to di worl' here in Japan. 0:26:51.3 T - Yu kno? Cos, even di night when, I go for my show Shaggy was dere, Shaggy was doing some, self promo. Right? An, I was in, the audience, an when Shaggy was, a,a, announce on stage, Shaggy, get him, announce an everybody was, "Yeah dats Shaggy" Cau probably people kno Shaggy already but, fi see me for the first time den, becau trus mi, di Japanese nation or Japanese set a people dey love dis ting call dancehall so much as well. Yu kno? At one time it was, it was Jamaica, Jamaica was full wid Japanese. More than the Europeans now. Now the Europeans tek ova. Yu hardly si Japanese here. Couple years ago, bout, four, five years ago dere was all Japanese, four, five years ago. Japanese was everywhere, everywhere in Jamaica yu can fin' dem. Dey, dey want dub plates, an deh waan dancing. Dey want dub plates n dey want dancing, an dat, dat a one a di ting weh wi haffi be carefull about tu, cau now di

Japanese, dere were, dey're not here no more, because why? Dey suck up, so much of, wi culture an so much dat wi give to dem, jus give to dem an dem suck up so much of it, dat dey don't, dey don't need us no more. 0:28:04.1 T - Dey dont need us no more! An if we don't be careful, if wi don' be careful, it wi happen again. It wi happen again because one a di ting weh upset mi, I see a lot a dance teachers, a lot of dance teachers teaching dance classes, choreographers, right! For memba I tell yu yu have two different type a dances in Jamaica, yu have choreographers an yu have dance creators. (H - Right) An I see a lot of choreographers, ova di worl' right now, they are dance teachers an, they are bigga dan most of di dancas in Jamaica, an dey are teaching, dancehall, in their class. An their, their name are bigga, more than nuff of these Jamaican dancas an dance creators. Even, e, e, even me, cau even when I si some a dem on Instagram, some a dem have like, like, almos a million an so followers.

H - Right

0:28:58.9 Right , an dey say they are, dance teachers teaching dance-hall. Yu kno, so mi kinna question miself bout dat, how dis come about? (H - Right) How dis come about? (H - Important question) Yu know! How dis come about? Somebody was saying to me dat, ahmm, there was, I, I tink it was Orville. Orville was saying to me that, ahmmm he, I tink he was asking the Jamaica Tourist Board to come on board to du something with dancing an they wouldn't. An he say he, he say he went to somewhere in Europe an there was this girl, she was European, she was having a dance seminar, an when he look on arr table, there's a big Jamaica Tourist Board banner on her table an him was saying to himself, "How me, how I couldn't get Jamaica tourist board an I live in Jamaica an du so much", an him couldn't get Jamaica Tourist Board fi come on board wid him, but Jamaica Tourist Board i supporting her. Now how dat? Question miself bout all dem tings dere. So if we don't be careful, dem a go be like a sponge an obsorb all of our likkle knowledge we have an what we have an tek it an den no need wi no more. Because Japanese now, right now in Japan they don'reallv need no dancehall artist or reggae artist to come there cos they are doing it themselves. (H - Right) I tek my own two eyes an si dis. Dem a sing dancehall fi demself, dem a sing reggae, fi demself. For instance Ska. Ska is not very big in Jamaica yu kno! Ok, but some, white guys or mixed guys they doing Ska, somewhere in part a di worl' when I si. An trus mi, they are one of the biggest Ska

ban' in the worl' an they're not even Jamaican, they don' have Jamaican roots or heritage. Dem a one a di biggest Ska ban' but wha? Because we, we nuh really go did deep inna our culcha an si weh wi have, an si seh weh wi have a gol' [gold]. Richie Stevens a di only man wha mi si right now doing back Ska, an because an dat a part a di ting weh Richie Stevens si. Dats why Richie Stevens tek it upon himself an doing Ska music again. Yu kno? Yeah. An Ska come wid dancing tu, cau when yu hear Ska music yu haffi skank. (Sings) "Ska, ska, ska", an yu haffiskank an yu haffi du all dem ting deh. So it haffi du wid dancing same way. So Ska, have a whole lot fi du wid dancing, a whole lot, cau once a Ska music play yu haffi dance. (H - Hmmhmm) Trus mi! Yes man. So i, if we don' be careful, we a go lose it, so we haffi bi careful what we're doing. Becau is very good for the worl' to know wi culture yu kno! It good for the world to know our culture, an want to be a part of our culture. Is very good there's nuttin wrong wid dat, but, 'is not everyting good fi eat good fi talk!' (Jamaican proverb). (H - Right, right) (laughter) An I res' [rest] that there. Yes man. ... An I bet seh if yu axe [ask] one a dem again an seh, when I seh dat dem ask yu "Weh dat mean?" 'A nuh everyting good fi eat, good fi talk!' It part a wi cultcha is part a dancehall scene, dat a part a di nook an cranny weh deh don' undastan, all dem stuff deh. ...

(H and T private exchange on fresh col' [cold])

H - What are main social activities around dancehall?

0:32:35.1 T - Its the music an di dancing. Dancehall, its the music an di dancing, there's a lot a likkle tings, dat mek it up, but is the music and di dancing, dats it. If the music, if yu tek away di music ahmm, what the artist singing, our everyday, the artist a sing about the everyday life dat him si. An when we dance, wi dance to our surroundings, we dance to wha wi si an wha wi feel also. So if you take away that now, there's nuttin to it. Yu haffi jus play the music, there's nuttin to it. Yu kno! If the fashion, its all about the fashion, also. Fashion have a whole lot to do wid it. Its di talk. Bogle use fi seh "Fashion ova style!" Now people use fi seh, "wha dat mean?" 'Fashion ova style', "eh heh, all dem deh, weh dem de did deh?" Yu kno! An all does words. "Get jiggy" yu kno! Its all, its all dat. So is di fashion, also. Di dancin, yu kno?

Di music. Yu kno di song weh di artist produce, yu kno! Di riddim, (H - Hmmhmm)  
Yu feel all a dat, yu kno!

H - Hmmhmm, right, (T - Yeah) anything else? What else, what else you would class.  
What are those small things that yu mention ...

0:34:00.9 T - Part a wi food. Wi food have a lot fi du wid it. Yu si di jerk chicken man im a sell im jerk chicken, im a sell a soup. Yu kno yu have a soup man, him a sell a soup. Yu undastan? Yu have a man weh a sell cane. Yu kno! Yu have a man weh pass tru, di husslas dem inna di dancehall, an we call dese people di husslas because dem a sell peanuts, dem a sell a likkle herbs in a box, dem a cell cigarettes, although cigarettes is not good fi yu, dem a sell all, but dem a hussle. Deh have a deh have rizzla, dem have all does tings. Dem walk tru di dance an dey sell dat. An dey so creative, y uwi si a man wid a likkle, a, a, likkle box, a likkle cardboard box an him have does stuff, an im decorate it, an im put a light bulb into it, a walk wid a light bulb, yu kno im twis' up a light bulb inna it dat yu can si, all a dat when yu a buy from im. Him sell icee mint, im sell, yu kno! Wrigglees, im sell all those stuff. Right? If yu go into any odda else country, I don' tink yu wi really fin' dat i, i, in a party. Yu, yu won' find dat. Yu won' find dat! Yu kno! Yeah, is all dose likkle tings dat help mek it up. Yu kno it help mek it up. An di girls dem, oh my gosh, when di ladies come out man, an yu si dem dance, yu kno? An yu si dem dance is like, "Oh my God!" I, I could watch dis all nnight all day, because di ladies, dey are so, dey are so flexible an so skilled. Yu kno! I don' kno, woman is a part a wi ting so yes, yu kno! Dats a part a it. Th, the ladies dat come out a dancehal, so don't forget dem. Yu kno? Sometime, mi's a danca myself an when di ladies song come on I, I jus stan up an like, "oh my God I lovee dis ting right here", Yeah! Sometime mi get loss into it myself. (laugh) (H - Right) Yeah! yeah!

H - So yu seh sometimes yu get loss into it?

0:35:46.7 T - Yeah! even, myself a a danca I get loss into it sometime. Yu kno, when, mostly when I si di girls dancing, cos when we, when, when, when man song come on, we have to be working at dat time, but when is a girls song now, yu can stan' up an watch di girls dem dance, or yu can grab a girl an wine wid arr, an dance wid arr.



Out a respec' same way. Not to abuse arr, yu kno? Arr, arr, or mistreat arr, ()H - Hmmhmm) yu undastan? Dance wid arr in a moderate and propa way way, mek she, she like it an yu like it, an di audience like it tu. Yeah! (H - Right) So does are di likkle tings, yu kno! Wha mek it up.

H - So what yu mean when yu seh yu get loss in it now?

0:36:25.9 T - Because its, i, i, i, i, alright, put it dis way, as mi di seh before, dere's a section, where, dere is, dere is jus, easy going music playing, right? Di Selecta play some easy going rocking music, some, some nice cool reggae, an yu can, stan up an, yu can drink yu likka [liquor] right? An yu can smoke yu herbs an, yu enjoy dat moment. Den, it start to pick up, den probably di selecta wi play a likkle rap. Who like rap music can gyrate to dat. Den he wi play probably a two, one or two, bad bwoy tune, yes, he wi play one or two bad bwoy tune, right? An den now, yu can reac' to dat same way or yu can bus a one blank, bouy, bouy, bouy! An yu can, yu kno? Yeah. He will play song dat relate to real life an talking bout issues an all dat, yu get weh mi a seh? Den now, he wi play dancing song, fa di male. Like for instance me. When I buil' a dance him play dat, den him go to di girl section now, him play, its all about di ladies now. Yu wi hear di selecta seh, "Alright, yow, mi naah play no more man tune now yu kno! A di gyal dem time now!" When im seh dat, di ladies dem, dats when I get laas. Cos sometime I stan up an I watch dese ladies, an I si dem dancin, yu kno! An as a man sometime yeah, I get arouse an I look on it an seh, "I like dis", yes, cos dey are di woman, yu kno? An dey look good, dey are sexy, dey're boffulous. (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) Yes, so dats, dats when I get laas, into it, when di ladies dem start to work, an dem wear dem likkle, batty rida an all dem likkle shorts an, yu kno? An yeah, an yu can si, all, yu kno, not everyting cau dem naah expose, but, yu kno? Yu seeing what yu suppose to be seeing yaah there. Yu undastan? So thats when I get laas, when it come to di ladies dem, apart from dat! Work moi a work a nuh chicken mi a jerk. ... Jerk chicken man deh outta door [outside the door/session].

H - ... What does dancehall hol' in di worl'? ...

0:39:04.4 T - Dat a one a wi dance class di odda day. Di dance call Docta bird, an wi buil eeii [it] offa wi national bird. (H - Right, right) ... 0:39:27.7 T - All a dem people ya come from France, an dem come fi dis. Yu kno? ...

H - Do you belong to any religious church or body?

0:40:34.0 T - Yeah well! Alright, yu si dat now, wid di I? Mi grow as how mi seh, a while ago mi call yu Missa Patten an yu a seh no, an mi a seh di way how mi grow up, mi grow up pon certain ting an so i kinna inna yu. Me grow up in a househol' as weh mi tell yu, my grandmadda, she's a very spiritual ooman. Right! She is a Seven day Adventis. She believe inna dat strongly, she don' eat the pork, she no really mess aroun beef, but pork mos' of all, she no eat pork becau Seven day Adventist, dem don' ieat pork, dem seh is agains it. Yu kno, someweh inna e,e, inna e, inna di bible, I tink dem seh, ahmm (M - It unclean!) Yes him call, Jesus did cast some bad spirit inna di pork, inna di pig an dem go drown,. So, dem strongly believe inna dat. So, me grow up inna house weh every Sat'day marning, I have to wake up an go to church. Sometime mi neva use to like it, because yu kno, I was small, mi neva waan go church, my granmadda use fi come an wet up di bed. (H - Hmmhmm) Tek wata an wet yu up outta di bed. "Get up an go a church". 0:41:35.1 T - Ehheh, an, when mi a go church mi bex. Nuh go a nuh church, cau me waan stay home an play game an go play football an run up an down, an when mi go a church mi a sleep. Sometime she box mi inna mi headside, "wake up bwoy, can hear di word aa God an yu a sleep?" Mi use to bex, mi use to cry sometime, so mi grow up inna a Christian home. My granmadda was a strong believer inna Christ, so I grow up in a Christian home. My granfadda was, more of a, a, a, a, of a gangsta type yu kno! Yeah, dey use to call im hussla! Yu kno! Was a street man. My gran madda strongly believe, an, im neva have a problem wid dat doh, but she strongly believe in dat. Yu kno? So mi grow up in a Christian home, right. When I was younga, I was forced to Baptise, yes, cos dat was not on my own choice, yu kno? Was forced into it cos, yu kno dem a seh, "Yes now cau we a Christian an, me an mi likkle cousin dem. But, when someting was, is forced on you, yu don' whaan fi, haffi keep it up, so I was forced, it wasn't my choice. Yeah! So me is a strong believe, yu kno? Inna, di Almighty, mi believe inna dat, cause mi read my bible, a, a, a, a, every now an den, an mi naah go tell yu seh mi read it pon a

daily basis, but mi read it. Right now mi bible open pon mi dressa, Psalm 91. An sometimes, Psalms 25. ...

(H - interrupt interview).

0:43:23.7 T - Yeah, mi grow up inna a strong Christian home an me is a firm believe dat, yu kno! Di Almighty is dere, but I don't go to church no more. I don' go to church no more cau mi strongly believe, religion is division still an mi nuh haffi go church, fi really an truly, yu kno! Call pon di Almighty. Or, or talk to him. I don' haffi go to di church, I don' have to, because, if yu talk to di Seven day Adventist dey wi tell yu seh, "Oh, ahmm, Sunday is not di right day", if yu talk to di, to, to di Pentecostal, dem gwain tell yu, "Oh, Saturday is not di right day", an if yu talk to probably a,a,a, a Jew, an if yu talk to a, a, a, a, a Catholic an if, cau mi use to go to a Catholic school also, an at di end of evry praya, dem teach yu, in di name of di Fadda, di Son, an di Holy Spirit, an all dat. So if yu talk to each one a dem people deh, dem a go tell yu summn different bout, di Almighty, or tell yu dis is wrong or dat is wrong on dat one. So to me religion is division, an dat's how I look at it so I don', I, I don' have to go to a church. I don', I don' go to church. I get up an I call on di Almighty an I pray. I can do dat widdin my own self, widout hav to be, yu kno, going to a church. Not saying dat everybody in the church is bad or everbody in di church is wrong or, yu kno? But dat, dat's my belief! Yeah an I, I strongly believe dat.

H - Your Bible open

0:44:48.4 T - Psalms 91 ... gentleman give him Psalms as he was going to a meeting, but everything seemed to be preventing him ... di man get into spirit same time an im start speak in tongues, an seh, "yu is a strong believe inna di Almighty, go forth an du wha yu haffi du. Yu have talent, use it!" An im seh read dis Psalms. Him seh "Yow, jus keep dis Psalms evr, an, an read dis Psalms", yeah! (H - Right) An I don' know dis man! I don' know dis man yu kno. I jus, I was going to Halway Tree, go in his taxi an ahmm me an him start talk. Yu kno! An, right there an den, it jus come about an I don' know him. Yeah. So to me, I believe, yeah, dere is a Almighty, but I neva si him before, an some people say, yow yes he is dis. I, I've neva see him before or nuttiin like dat but, to way how I grow, yu have to believe in someting or yu believe in nuttin

den. (H - Hmmhmm) Always du goo dough! Yeah, so from yu believe in a good, dere's nuh problem. Yu kno! Is eidda yu believe in someting or yu believe in nuttin, but at di end a di day probably yu a go be las inna dis worl', yu si mi? Yu, yu, yu cyaan tel di o, o, original Rastaman about God or Jesus, him believe seh Selassie, san yu cyaan tek weh fi him belief. If yu talk to probably di Indian, I tink dey wi tell yu ahmm, wha? About, wha, Sheba or what so eva. An some a dem worship di cow, yeah or whats so eva. Dats, yu kno, everybody have their own belef, so yu cyaan tek a, e, e, e, tek weh dat from a man.

H - Right, right, so dat man who go inna spirit an give yu di Psalms dat yu mus read, alright! So, hmmm, I wanted to check with yu then, what is the relationship between you, your faith and dancehall then?

0:46:59.2 T - There is no relationship between, my faith an dancehall. Cos, mi nuh try fi mix, the two. As weh mi seh, I don' really go church. Or, or my beliefs den, in a higha spirit, right! I don' try fi mix di two, but how I look at it, is dat if I'm going on di road, I ask di Almighty to keep an guide mi going out an coming in. In anything I'm doing, help mi to elevate. But I don' really mix it, den, in someway or someway farm [form], yu still have to, use yu faith an call on the Almighty to help you in yu endeavours. Becau, still yet, is the Almighty give yu dis, dis gif den, dis gif dat I hav as dancing, is the Almighty give it to mi. I couldn' jus get up an reah! So it mus be a higher being dat giv it to me, so dat, when I am going out, I ask dis higha being den, or di, or Di Creator, help mi to go out dere an excel, an b, an to become a betta man so I can help my family, help myself, yu kno! An to have a betta life. I ask for dat help, an trus me, sometime it don' fall on deaf ears. Sometime when tings happen I'm like Jeese! Dis really happ'n? An mi seh tank yu. Mi seh tank yu to di man up above. Yeah! But I don't really mix dem per se, Yu kno? Like some people wi seh, Ok! Dem go dance tonight an den inna di marnning dem go church, dats mixing it. A nuh suh yu do dat. Yu go dance tonight an inna di amrning yu seh, oh yu haffi go a church, so, mi nuh undastan! I don't do dat. So, to me dat, dat would be mixing it. But pon a, a, a, a real scale, I don' mix it. I don' mix it cos, I'm not a regular church gowwa, I don' go to church, dats not me! (H - Right, right) ...

H - Do you think there are ritual aspects to dancehall ... what you think?

0:49:02.8 T - Well, to me, there is only one, an that's Rastafari an Rastafarian is not a religion it's a movement. Rastafarian is the only ritual I si associated with dancehall a, a, as, I could pu, put it right now. But to me, Rastafarian is not a religion it's a movement. Thats what Rastaf, and they are the only people right now, really say, yu kno! In dancehall. If yu go to a man who, wh, who go to the church or, or, a Christian, 'im nah go tell yu seh him wid dancehall, 'im a go bun dancehall. Hi a go bi agains' dancehall. Yu get weh mi a seh? Anybody weh have fi do wid nutt'n wid church, dem a go go agains' dancehall. So di only, movement I could seh now, or which eva, some people call it religioan, religion, which is not a religion, is Rastafari. Yeah, in Jamaica I could put to seh yes, wid dancehall, is Rastafari. Yes man. ...

H - When yu said yu get las' [lost] in hmm (T - In the moment an di happenings!) yes, (T - Hmmhmm) when di woman dem dancing, well a lot of people talk about getting las' when dem a dance, so what does ge, what would dat mean to you den?

0:50:25.9 T - Dem, if dem get las when dem a dance, like in their own movement? Tu me, I neva get laas' in when mi a dance. I don' kno about a next person. I get excited, I get enjoyment out a it, I feel lifted. I feel spirited and motivated when I'm dancing, so I don', I wouldn't say I get laas. Yu kno, cau if yu get laas is dat, yu don' have dat consciousness of probably what you're doing, yu jus doing it an yu don' even remember wha yu doan sometime, but I am always [conscious] of what I'm doin. Probably some people wi get laas, seh when dem into demself. Probably, its right, for dem to seh dat, yu kno? Cau some people when dem dancing, dere was like, some yutes back in the day when dere was dis big dance down town call 'Passa Passa', Tivoli Garden (H - Yeah) dere was some yutes, right! An dem use to come out an dance, an dat a part a di antics tu an acting but, I feel like, dats when dem get laas. Dem use to have di drum covas [covers]. Cova weh yu use tu use pon di drum, like barrel! Alright, dem use tu tek dat, an when dem come, dem beat dem one a nedda inna dem head wid it. Use it an beat inna dem, boom, boom,boom until it ben. I was like, "a wha di, a wha really a gwaan? 0:51:38.9 T - Yu kno! use di drum cova, yu kno di drum cova wha I'm talking about? Di barrel cova! (H - Yeah) Does likkle metal, yu kno! But di metal is saaf [soft], dem use fi come an tek dat man. Becau yu kno dey are, dem, dem drum covas are relevantly saaf. An dem use fi use dat man, an

when dem seh "Get mad now!" far dem use fi name 'Teachers Squad' from Portmore, some yutes, dem use fi come an dance. Yeah man, an when one hol' him head like dis an 'im tek di cova - Boom, boom, boom - an him beat it, mi use fi seh, "A laas dem yute ya laas, a mus laas dem laas inna whaadem a du", so, dat's di only way (laughingly) I could see where somebody seh dem get laas, (laughing) inna di whole ting, but I don' get laas. I get lifted, I get motivated, I yu kno (H - Right) I get inspired by what I do ... So probably dat a weh dem mean when dem seh dem get laas. But mi nuh get laas, neva get laas. (bursting into song) "Neva laas, my way", yeah man. (H - Right) Neva laas way.

H - Can you define spirituality for me?

0:52:44.6 T - In terms a, dancehall, in terms a yu own feelings, (H - In terms) in terms a religion, in terms a wha?

H - Any one a dem, you, what it means to you, (T - Alrigh!) on a whole.

0:52:55.3 T - What it mean to me on a whole? From my point a view, from my concept! (H - Yes, from your perspective) Me's a spiritual yute. Yes I am a spiritual person, because, sometime I wi get up an I, I wi seh to myself, alright, for instance night, I'm going to 'Uptown Mondays' or I'm going to 'Hot Mondays', an di spirit jus wi come to mi an jus seh yow, don' go. Don't move, stay home. Chill! Stay right here. (H - Hmmhmm) Probably if I leave di party an I'm going down di road to a nex' party, sometime di spirit wi seh to mi seh, don't go, stay right here, don't move. Yu kno? Out of dancehall jus di same. If I'm doan someting an di spirit seh to mi, yu kno what, don' go dere today, don' leave yu house today, don't really, yu, yu kno, go dat way or don' do dis. If di spirit talk to mi, yes, I will work wid di spirit. Yu kno, I'm a spiritual yute, yu kno, I'll go by my spirit. If, for instance, if somebody come aroun mi, an my spirit don' tek yu, my spirit doesn't, it don' feel at peace wid yu, I'm not gonna talk to yu. I'm very observant, so, for instant, if a new person come aroun' me, an I've been looking at you, an, an di spirit, an my spirit don' like how you act, I'm not gonna talk to yu, I'm not gonna speak tu yu. Yu kno! Because, yu attrac what yu is yu kno! If yu attract di bad, if yu is a bad person, yu a go get bad. Yu kno? An yu company tell yu who yu are. Yu get mi? So, di spirit have a lot to do wid dat. Yes, so me is a spiritual

person. As mi seh, I pray, I read my bible. I talk to di Almighty. I don' go to church tu, but I talk to di Almighty, I grew up dat way. Yu kno! 0:54:29.4 T - Yes, yu kno dem seh. There was a sayi, wha dem seh, as a, I tink its was a verse from the bible, I'm not sure but it say, 'As a chile [child], yu do wha chile du, but when yu grow as a man yu do what man du an be a man' eh, yu know, an now, I a, I am my own man, so I do what I feel like, so thats why I seh I don' really go to church, but I speak to the Almighty. Yu kno? Yeah, I pray. So, dat's my spirituality right there.

H - How has dancehall affected your own social development?

0:55:08.2 T - In a good way, it affect it in a good way for me becau it help me, so far dancehall, an my talent, it help mi, to achieve. Cos when I was going to high school it was my madda alone. Dere was no fadda. I rememba when I was just starting High school, my madda seh to my fadda, she need help fi sen mi to high school, an my fadda come an 'im seh, "Ok, him soon come back", an I don' si back dat man, in my eyesight! Was my madda alone. An den, when I leave, high school, when I graduated from high school, right? (H - Hmmhmm) My madda, don' didn' have no money to sen mi go college or nutt'n like dat, or sen mi to anotha institution to learn, cause, she waas a single madda. Yu kno? Yeah, inna, a ghetto community, poor. As yu look pon it, she neva really have it. So when I lef school, right? I have to fin' a way to live now, for myself. I have to go get a job, right? I used to do job as a waita first. I neva know nutt'n about waitering, but I said I can't si down, an no have no money I have to live. I become a man now, so I apply for, a waita job, mi get di job, yu kno? No, actually before di waita job I used to do barbering, but I neva kno anyting about barbering, I jus used to cut hair. Yu kno like di likkle kids dem when dem come in I jus used to shave dem head ball [bald], an sweep out di barba shop. 0:56:43.0 T - Mi nevafeel comfortable wid dat, mi leave, den mi go du di waita work. Apply fi a waita job, I neva kno nutt'n about waitering. I jus go, apply for di job, go an du di interview an all dat. Get di job, right? An it was dere when I startt dancing because, at dat complexdere was a gaming lounge, dere was a restaurant an dere was a club. Right, an I start dacning from dere. To one partticular song, right? To one partticular song. (Burst into song) "Jus gimme di light an start di drooo". Dat was a Sean Paul song. (H - Eeehee) Dat's when I really start, doing, yu kno, what I was doing. An den dere was dis director by the name of Jay Will, yu kno? Big director! Him si mi an 'im a seh

"yow, mi need yu fi a projec". An from dere, dancehall have help mi life so much, dancing have hlepded my life so much. It has helped mi to earn a car. It has helped mi to buil' a house. It has helped pay my bills, sen' my, my son t'ru [through] school. Well I have two kids, one in America, one here. 0:57:46.1 T - It help sen my son here t'ru school an it still helping right now, still putting food on my table, right? So I would seh, I have to give tanks for it, it help me a lot. Yu kno! I neva turn my back on it, eva. Becau di ting weh me learn in life, yu si once you turn your back on whatsoeva bring yu to di forefront or bring you to di top, or yu disrespect it, yu a go have consequences, yu a go lose out. 0:58:11.7 T - So I neva turn my back, nuh matta, if tomorra or if for di nex two years I become this big rich man ar, or, or I consider doing music on a serious level an become a big artist, I won't forget about dancing, I have t orespec' dat. Yu kno? So mi always respec it, an mi feel like when yu respec tings whateva yu du. Di likkle tings inna life, it 'elp [help] yu to prepel [propel] to a bigga level, to a higher level. So, I would seh dancehall an dancing help mi, in so many ways, it motivate mi in so many ways. Yeah! It o, it o, it open a whole lot a doors fi mi. Places I, I, I neva dream of going dere, people who I've met I neva dream of meeting dem, places I have rock, I neva, hmm, yu kno? Kno dat I would rock it dat way. (H - Yeah) So, it inspire mi life a whole lot man ...

H - You've answered a little bit about the female but, what do you feel about the femalle dancers themselves now.

0:59:14.2 T - They're beautiful, yu kno! They're beautiful, they're nice yeah! The female dancers they, they play a very important role, in dancehall, because if there's no female dancas wha wi a go du? Stan up an watch man dance all night? No (laugh) No, it cyaan be, yu kno! Too much male, tu much man, tu much bull inna one pen, no! Di female now helpbring dat sophisticated saaf [soft] side, yukno? Dat touch weh, which it need. Dat classiness, dat saafness. When di female are dancing, it bring dat saafness, as I said before, when di female are dancing I get laas because of dem, because of the female. Yu kno di female agenda. Yu kno? Yeah, the womanly parts that e, e, you kno, yu si, as I'm saying, the, their not exposing their body, yu kno! But you can look an si a, an seh wow, yu kno? (H - Hmmhmm) Yu can si arr sexiness, yu kno! Y, yu can si arr, arr beautiful black skin or arr beautiful brown skin, right? An di way how she dance, an di way how she gyrate an she move arr body. As a man, it



stimulate yu body an min' yu kno! It jus gi yu dat joyfulness fi look an si woman dancing, so dey play a very important part , in dancehall, when woman is dancing. Dere, a, a, I would seh, female danca is a mus, at all given time. Is a mus, man, tu woman, always a good combination.

H - Right. Same ting about the male dancers dem, what yu tink about the male dancers? ...

1:01:16.9 T - How I see it! Well, its more of a male dominance, a, a, ahmm business I wi look at it seh, per ce in dancing. Ahmm, woman dance, but yu won' fin' a whole heap a woman will be dancing, yu si more male dancing more dan woman. Right? And, it help to balance it, we male help to balance it. As we seh wid di female de're [they are] there, they bring the more saafa [soft] tenda touching. We male, we, w, we bring dat more, toughness, dat barkiness [tough, harch sharpe look/attitude] to it, yu kno? A, a,a,a,ahmm, woman, nuff time woman seh to me, yow, deh jus like to stan up an watch man dance, jus like how, man like fi stan up an si woman dance. The woman like fi si us male dancas dancing jus di same. I ave, I hav numerous a girl come to mi an seh, "Oh I love how yu dance, yu dance so neat, so sexy, oh my God! I jus, I jus love yu dancin. (H - Hmmhmm) So, its a balance to me, its a balance, it balances out. (H - Right) An its a good combination as I said before ... 1:02:22.0 T - An den di nex ting is dat we male dancas, we, mos of di dances dat were created in Jamaica, yu kno! An dat are teaching right now across, di world in dance classes, is, is from a male concep, is, is what male create. Yu kno? So as mi seh i,i,i,i, its all good, its all good, I cannot say (indistinguishable) about dat, yu kno! Its all good.

H - Right ... male dances are the ones that are hmm, creative an...

1:02:56.1 T - Yeah, douse [those] are what di artist sing more, sings bout more. E, like for El, a Elephant Man, a Beenie Man, even Buju Banton back in di day. Admiral Bailey. Yu kno! Yeah, all douse big name dat I jjus call a while ago, dey sing about dance song, created by male, yu kno! Yeah! Bounty Killer likewise. Bounty Killer is not a artist dat sing a lot a dance song but, he sing one an two also. Right! Yu kno?

H - Right, can you explain di role , the different role of the DJ an di Selecta, an di danca?

1:03:39.8 T - Well, di DJ, di Selec, d, d, de artist, cau we nuh say, no, we say artist (H - Yes is di artist, becau yu have DJ, di Songjay, all a dem) Yes, so ...

H - Di artist di selecta, di danca, what's di different roles?

1:03:56.8 T - Di different role, as a seh, de Selecta, him is di directa. Him direc di traffic, him direc dis movie, every night dat wi go out dere an du. Yu kno? Him direc dat cau when yu walk into a dance, di Selecta is di one dat big yu up, im wi seh "Yow a who dat? A Taz Timeless dta wi, yow Taz, here di new song wid you an Beenie Man, mi like it. A matta a fac, yow Taz! Show di people dem di mad move. See it deh people, dem man ya a dance from back in di days , from Bogle days come right now. A legend dis dem yute ya a do it long time". Im a direc, so everybody a look, everbody ttention is right dere. Yu kno? So im direc, wha appen inna di movie den now, I am di acta. We di dancas we ac' we go out dere, an, dats how we ac', dats how we intarac' an di people watch, an see us as di acta where, we are not really di star of di movie, but we, wi co-star along wid di Selectas, right? An along with the artist. Right? Yeah! Cos a artist doesn't, e jus come out for showcase yu kno, per night, cause he doesn't come to dance, in dancehall, in the, in the party at night to DJ. He have to get book to do dat. So, when dey get book on shows, that's the artist platform, but when we in the dancehall every night in the parties, thats a danca's platform right there. Only if a artist have a new song to premiere, he will probably come an, yu kno, he will sing that new song, or if its a special event, he will come an do dat, yu kno. But as long as the artist does, is not booked for it, he wont do it. (H - Right) 1:05:42.0 T - Yeah, so, membayu kno, get it right yu kno Mr Patten is, da, is all a, it all a, unda one umbrella, dancehall is unda one umbrella, but, going out t night time, at the nightly parties, from Monday to Sunday, from Monday to Sunday, as I said, the artists an di dancas are the stars of the movie. The art, ar,ar,ar no, the selecta sorry. X out th, th, the artist, the selectas an di dancas, ar, are the main focus, the main star. But when it come to, shows, events, the artist now, he is that star. For instance a Sting, a Sumfes, yu kno! Major stage shows, doues are the artist time to be now a star of the movie also, cau di artist dem are stars of the movies tu, like us, yu kno? Yeah! ...

H - So the artists are when is a stage show?en

1:06:49.1 T - Yeah, because, we perform on two different platform. As mi seh di artist work on a stage, when dem get book, an we, we work right there in the dancehall.

H - So what's your relationship in terms of the stage show then? ...

1:07:07.4 T - How, how we come in? (H - Yeah) Oh! Is jus like, is jus the same how the artis get book yu kno! For instance, if you keeping a, a, a, event, if you keeping a stage show an you seh, ok it relate to jus ahmm, yu jus want artist only, yu book artist only. If yu want di mixed artists along wid dancas, yu kno! (interruption) ...

H - Yu can explain di phases of dancehall?

1:08:27.8 T - Well, di music has changed. Di music has changed because from, like from a Dennis, like from Dennis Brown days, right! Ahmmm, Alton Ellis, yu kno! Arrh a Leutenant Stitchie or a Papa San, yu kno! A Garnet Silk, yu kno! To now, right, the music has evolve. There are different topics singing about, yu kno! Actually is the same topic yu kno, but it kinna change, yu kno! These artists now arr, are more grimey, yu kno? They're more grimey, they're not so smooth an as cool as the artist back in the days. They are more grimey, yu kno! They're more aggressive, yu kno! Sometime, they're more on a war paart [path] more dan piece, if yu notice it sometimes. Artist going again' artist yu kno? Yu, yu, yu kno? An all dat. Bare in min' it is also good for the business because, when yu have rivals an all dat, people, kinna listen to di songs more. It needed tu, fi spice, to spice up dancehall. Yu kno! It need a likkle, a likkle verbal war sometime. Nutt'n physical, but the verbal war, it good, it, it helps, yu kno it elp, because dancehall is a harsh business yu kno, an if yu cyaan tek harsh criticism, an people, a,a,a, ahm sometime being aggressive agains' yu, yu don' need to be in dis business. Dis is a tough business, right! So, to me, I tink di music, has changed to more of a,a,a, of a, of a hard core, being than back then. Its more hardcore now. It was hardcore all di time yu kno, but, yu kno! Its more tougha now yu kno! Its like growing from five to reaching to ten, yu are more, yu kno develop, yu kno! An so, an I feel like, di music more, now, people more listen to it, becau we are

speaking about, more social topic now, tings what going on now. Ei, i, i, i yu kno, di now a days an all dat, yu kno? Yeah! ... 1:11:28.5 T - When dancehall was like back in di days, we wouldn' a, we neva have to much social media an all dat an, an ting. Now, now a artist can spread his music so far an wide even by himself, yu kno! Dere is di Facebook dere is di Instagram, dere is, y u kno Twitter an all dat, so to me, it more on a wide spread, e, e, surface now, dan, dat, dan it was back in di days, yu kno? Its more hardcore, yu kno? It, it has been hardcore, but to me know, yu kno! It get harda, it morre hardcore now, it more tougha dan back den. Yu kno? It did more smood [smooth]. It was like a smood hardcoreness to it back den, yu kno? Back in the 80s an 90s, yu kno? Yeah a Buju Banton, an when Buju Banton, b, b, when Buju Banton come an him sing him seh, "Mi love mi car mi love mi bike mi love mi money an ting!" an all all dat now i,i, i, yu kno? It evolve so much, de, di whole recording of music, di voicing a music, di tren' [trend], yu kno! Di slang, yu kno! Di fashion! Yeah! Is a different fashion now yu kno! Dan back den. ... 1:12:39.1 T - All a dat as evolve, all a dat, an it has a lot to du wid social media, yeah! have a lot to du wid social media.

H - I guess dat how mos' a yu wi interact an even get work an dem ting deh.

1:13:00.3 T - Yeah, because, for instance for me, I, a, ahmm, I used to work wid management. I don' have to work wid management right now, I can jus go a my IG account an my Facebook account, yu kno! Or whatseva, an people si dat (interruption) ... 1:13:16.9 T - Yu kno? an people si dat. An dat, an dat is marketting myself right dere. Yu kno? Dat's how mos dancas market demself right now in Jamaica. An yu haffi really look into dat an seh wow! No management an, wi doing such great work for ourself. If yu check mos of the dancas dem right now, deh don' have a manager. Dey [they're] jus a group a yute come togedda an deh jus say now, "We need betta, an we a go use wi talent an wi love dancing", an dem start do dem own ting an dem get dem own shows. (H - Right, right) Because one, one important fac' weh mi a go show yu again, how dancehall change, an mi a go sho, Ii' change true [through] dancing. Back in di days, when I use to get book, I get book as how an artist woul;d get book. Right! (H - Hmmhmm) I get book, to go an du a show, in a club, which is, sometimes, it is a sol' out event. Yu kno! Is a sol' out event the amount of people dats dere. Dats how I use to get book. I neva use to get book to du dance classes, right! I

used to get book as an performa, as a entertaina. Right! Dat's how I used to get book, to go an du shows. All ova di US, in Japan. Right! Dere is only two place which I, I, I was suppose to go an neva go, is Englan' and Africa. Right, but mos a di US, I've done shows in almos, all a di states dem in di US. In di Caribbean same way. Yu kno! Turks and Caicos, Trinidad, all does places. Du shows all does places weh people call an book yu fah. As a danca, an when dem bill dese flya [flyer], yu is on it jus like how, a man wi book Bounty Killa, a man wi book Beeneie Man, dats how! An couple shows in, in Jamaica here as well. We get book for couple shows in Jamaica here as well, to go an perform. Sometime is wid di artist. Mos a my performance was wid ahmmm, Voicemail, yeah! Mos a Timeless performance was wid Voicemail. Yu kno for Sumfes...

1:15:17.1 Mark - Gully man! A wha di ting Gully ahmmm ...

1:15:19.8 T - Gully Creepa? (M - Yeah) Aaa, dat was Ice. Elephant Man sing dat one. Yeah, but mos a mi show dem, was wid di group, Voicemail ... 1:15:39.7 Dat was my first time even meeting Fantasia, yu know! Afta doing Sumfes, meet Fantasia fi di firs time an trus mi, she was a nice girl (laugh). Yeah man, nice blk girl man, yu kno? Yeah so dat's why I'm telling yu seh dancing tek mi so far an mek mi meet people i'd neva dream of meeting. Mi meet Russel Simmons an all dat. Dancing du dat for mi. Busta Rhymes, dancing du dat for me. Yu kno! Yeah! I was suppose to meet J Zee at one time but it neva even work out, dancing du dat for me. If it wasn't for dancing I wouldn't meet so much a dose people. ...

H - Do you participate in any othe r Jamaican form, such as the traditional practices now?

1:16:32.1 T - No, dancehall is all I participate in. Dat is my everyting. Yeah! Dat is my every ting right now. Dat's where it is, jus dancehall, yu kno? Get up, eat, sleep dri, as mi tell yu before, I eat sleep drink dancehall. Dat's it. Yu kno? Dats what put, dats ho, dat a what put food pon di table so yu kno mi jus haffi keep a buzz on dat. Any other else ting no. ...

H - What changes in society has most affected dancheall?

1:17:19.4 T - Fi me, what affect dancehall di mos inna soci, inna Jamaican society right now? (H - Hmmhmm) Di government, fighting against dancehall. Bigga heads in Jamaica fighting agains' dancehall. Di police dem ahmm now, di government seh 2 o'clock noise amenment [amendment] act, dat was one a di biggest affec' for dancehall. Yeah, yu kno! Wha, wha, da, dat was one a di bigges major downfall for dancehall when de locking off di parties an all dat. No parties can keep. Dat is one a di major, major effec', a dancehall. Apartt from dat, I don' si nutt'n, I don' si anything else that affec' dancehall. Trus mi cause, dey cyaan seh is crime, because trus mi, music an dancehall knna 'elp keep don' da crime rate deh, cuase when time people hear music it mek yu, a happy moment. (H - Right) Yu undastan? Is a, is a happy moment. It, is a moment weh mek yu waan go out an enjoy yuself. So I don' tink dancehall contribute to violence, or crime in Jamaica. I wi mostly seh, di government affec' dancehall so badly. Look at it, for so much great man, Bob Marley, Dennis Brown, Bob Marley Dennis Brown, Peter Tosh, yu, yu kno! All dem people deh (interruption by community elder) ... 1:19:31.5 T - An den mi'd a seh now, look pon it, so much greats wi have bout here. As weh mi seh di Bob Marley an all dese people an all di Beres Hammon' an, yu kno! An all dese, all dem people ya! How come Jamaica don' have a hall of fame fi reggae or dancehall? Mi ask mi self dat all di while. ... (talks of the halls of fame in America and fight against herbs, whilst other countries developing it). ...

1:21:34.1 T - Even if yu inna America, dere is a a rock hall a fame an all dem ting, so we nu have no were weh yu can go an seh yow, alright, dese people dem use fi use dis, dem use fi use dat, here it is, an all dat. An look ooomuch tourist come to city Kingston on a yearly basis. Not in Mo'bay, not in Negril, not in Ochi, because, there is really no, white sand beach or no, exotic sites on this sites on this side a Kingston, like there is Mo'bay an dat. An yu kno how much people travel, tourist come here in city Kingston? An wha dem come here fa? Dancehall! Well on dis side a a di islan' dancehall dem come fa. Trus mi, mi'da like di government fi look an si, or do a servay [survey] an si ooomuch, ooomuch tourist come inna city Kingston, per year, right! An si, as tourist. An a because a wha? Dancehall! So yu a tell mi seh dancehall nu mean nutt'n? As I seh dancehall is a movie, I see it as big as a movie. Dats how I see it. I see it as a movie, a real life movie, unscript, unwritten movie. ...

H - What is dancehall's role, in popularising Jamaica?

1:23:02.8 T - As mi seh before, the role in dancehall, it buil up of so many compartment. As mi seh the dancign, the music, the culture. An, the dancing as mi seh, it breaks the language barrier, it speaks so many different languages. Right? Our music is so rich and diverse, right? Dat some people cyaan even speak English an evensing a dancehall song, but once deh hear dat riddim, dat beat, dem go towards it. Dem seh "Yes, dis dancehall we like it", cau dey hear tdi beat. Yu kno? Itsso much of a, of a uplifting music, so I tink dirole weh dancehall play inna society, it help Jamaican society a lot! Because as mi seh dancehall weh it a come from, it a come from wi African heritage. It a come from wi roots, wi culcha [culture], yu kno! It a come from, inna wi back, a wi nooke an cranny, a wi everyting. If yu tek away dancehall from Jamaica right now, an seh Jamaica! peopel would seh aaw, ok. But put dancehall wid it yes! Wi known fi wi dancehall an wi food. Wi jerk chicken, rice an peas, an all dese ting, wi good food, wi strong Jamaican culcha weh wi have. So dancehall play all role inna dat. (H - Hmmhmm) So dancehall have a lot to do wid society. If it wasn' fi dancehall yu kno! As mi tell yu seh my madda neva have it fi sen mi go schoo, ahmm college afta mi lef high school, inna di harshsurrounding wha me grow in, probably mi'dda pick up a gun or probalby mi'dda have two yute a buss gun bout ya. Undastan weh mi aa seh elda? If it wasn't fi dancehall. If it wasn't fi dis weh mi kno. Yu get mi? Because a dis me know an a dis help me live, so if it wasn't fi dis probably mi'dda du summ'n else. I swear, probably mi wouldn' even deh right yasso now. Probably mi'dda bi so vile and repable, di police dem wouldda cut mi down areddy. Probably mi'dda be so wise, mi ave yutes roun an roun a du tings fi mi same way. Cau memba yu kno, as one dead one rise yu kno. Yu kno oomuch bad man, go down an still eva rise same way, but wha, as weh mi seh, dancehall 'elp curb dat. Dats nuff a di yutes dem do not turn to violence or turn to gun. A dancehall help dat.

H - Well dats a good point to end on (T - Yes man) ... words of inspiration to the yutes

1:26:00.1 T - My inspiration to the yutes, or words to the yutes dem is that, du weh yu believe, go offa weh yu believe, go offa weh yu love. Du weh yu love. From yu love

summ'n, yu kno, not necessarily dancehall, but whateva yu love, wha eva yu believe inna. Wha eva yu, toink yu have a God gift talent inna, or weh God, put yu on dis eart' to du, for all a wi have a purpose. God ahead an do it an do it todi bes of your abilities. Yu undastan, don' let nobody tell yu seh yu can't, eva. When people tell yu seh yu can't, yu suppose to be more motivated an more, e, e, e, yu kno, an more forward fi du it. Trus mi, me, when mi jus start du dis, lots a people tell mi seh mi can't. People tell mi seh who, mi a go tur out to nuttin, mi a rubbish, mi a trash. Even mi own madda use to seh to mi dat mi naah turn out to be nuttin, but I can understand dat from mi own madda when time she alone sen mi go High school and she waan si, yu kno summ'n good for mi, yu kno so she aa go tell yu dat. So I am not mad at mommy for dat, mi love arr more for dat. Yu undastan, because a she alone. Mi couldda neva seh me mad at my madda for telling mi seh yu kno, no! Mi love mummy more for dat becau she waan fi si betta. An mi prove, an mi du betta, yu kno? ... 1:27:26.1 T - As long as is good, go forth an do, Timeless, God bless. I'm out!

## **Interview part 2**

Taz\_Timeless Dance Crew\_VORC002\_07.03.2017 2

.....(Fill in).....

0:01:07.2 Taz - Bogle talk about grooving, moving the body from the waist up. Grooving come from back in the days from Mento and Ska. Right! From being in the yard and being a Maroon. Nuf a dem doint even kno dat. So how can some of those European say dem a dancehall when dem doan even kno di nook an cranny! (laugh).

0:01:43.5 Taz - An the African ting dat you do in African dancehal I like dat. Dis is Taz talking from the Timeless Crew.

....(fill in).....

0:04:15.4 Taz - Di nook an cranny is a old folks saying from back in the day, my granny used to say it to mi. ....(fill in)..... She always give parable and dis is one more parable within a parable - she say yu wi fin' out one day, she say, hog always ask him mumma "why yu mout' so long", an she answa seh, "yu a grow, one day yu wi si." So nook an cranny it means from the roots, from the culture, from the groun'



up. From back den until now, from foundation as Tiny Tot jus say a while go. So the nooks an cranny it mean that the roots and the culture and yu have to understan the whole ora of Jamaica, if yu doan understan dat, if you ar not of Jamaican blood yu cyaan understan dat....(fill).... is jus one more Jamaican parable, folklore.

0:05:17.1 Taz - Nook an cranny of dancehall is not just dancing, they need to know dis, nooks an cranny of dancehall is everyting surrounding dancehall, when yu go in an see it. Because they think is jus di dancing, but is not jus di dancing. Nook an cranny is everyting that blends into dancehall, from the taxi driver to the sellers etc. (fill in)

## **Appendix 13.**

### **003 Interview with Stacia Fya\_Dancehall Origin 18.03.2017**

0:00:12.2 H - Introductions to project and Stacia Fya and explanations -

0:00:45.1 SF - Ok, basically, alright. So, my name is Stacia Francine Edwards, I, I'm basically a dancer for over a hundred and six years. I have, competed several times, in Canada, also in Jamaica and placed second as a dancehall queen. Ahh, I had a group of females who were like the first females in Jamaica to truthfully, be a part of corporate, touring with, like RJR [Real Jamaican Radio], ahmmm, Courts Jamaica Limited [Jamaican furniture chain], like, the top corporate companies used to have us ahmm, as part of their road shows, promotional, but then in regard to promotional girls we had to basically be dancing. So, most of my, most of the members of my group, which was Vybesayartas, had taken part in dancehall queen and we were the first, (H - Sorry) Vybe Iyatas, (H - Oh Vibe, ayatas) which is Ihatas (H - Iha, t) tas [Vibe Ihartas]. Its actually an acronym, (interruption re: cigarette smoke) ... Ihatas is a acronym for 'Intelligent Hard-Working Ambitious Talented Attractive Sisters (H - Clarification of name) ... Yes, and, we basically came first in Dancin' Dynamite, the first year of Dancin' Dynamite. (H - I didn't know that) Really, ok! 0:03:03.1 SF - So, my, my background in regards to, dancehall, and its, I don't really limit myself to just dancehall, because of the fact that I love all genres of music so I indulge in all, African, what they call Afrobeat, Salsa. I, even went ahead to create summ'n [something] call Salgae, which is a mixture of Salsa and Reggae, Hip Hop, Disco, Popping and Locking, once is dancing, I, I'm so involved, yeah. So, I'm now with a company called Dance Jamaica Academy, which is based in Kingston, and I mostly teach international ahmm, dancers, from, you name it Europe, Japan, aah, the Caribbean, just anybody at all, I mean most, most of them who are interested from overseas, come, basically come to our academy, to, learn dancehall, so yeah. And is a wide variety because they get both male and female teachers who, have been in the industry, not as long as my hundred years but, still hone in to their craft and basically, ahmm,

are, kinna all ova di worl' right now, teaching everybody. So its like a cultural exchange, they come to us, we go to them. (H - Hmmhmm) Yep ...

H - Repeat and set up questions - definition?

0:05:41.0 SF - Aahh, the flow of the field, di riddim, di, di, di location, ahmm, the vibe, the energy, the hours (laugh) (H - Hmmhmm) is jus, is like a whole, a whole, is like a holistic vibe an, where is mine [mind] body an soul. If yu not, in it wid [with] all three, is like, yu don' really get it. (H - Right) Yes! ...

H - How does theory inform dancehall?

0:06:42.2 SF - How does the thinking and the theory

H - Theorising aroun it, because yu kno yu have the Carolyn Coopers and the Donna Hopes, the Stanley Niaahs and Dennis Howard, all of these people who are theorising about dancehall, how does that impact? Does it have an impact?

0:07:01.1 SF - Ahmmm, in, in some sort of a way, in regards to the fact that, ahmm, mos, most of the dancehall music, you interpret exactly what it is that the artist is saying. So, its, more dramatised on the level of, if, I mean say for instance, S90 Skank, which is Big Youth, he is basically telling you to "ride on!" So, the whole, feel of the music is that you are on the bike, and you are just, basically easily riding, down. An this, were're taking it from, old skool, real old skool, an is, a, a, mi'dda waan [I would want to] call it, is a mixture of both dancehall an reggae, because it was playing in the dancehall, but at the same time its a slowa [slower], a slowa beat. So, more than likely it would be, recognised as reggae but, this is where all of it started from. It was slower before it got fast. Yeah, so, ahmmm, it, it impacts in regards to the, the fact that, an then most of the artists are telling stories about, one

thing or the other, and its just a matter of how you interpret it, especially in regards to choreography. So, you feel what it is that the artist is going through, and kinda portray that through, your movements.

H - Ok. ...feel what the artist is going through, and portray in your movement. (Yes) ... So what does dancehall mean to you?

0:09:05.5 SF - Ahmmm, life, on a, on a whole, on the level that where it is that, because I'm a dancer and, basically my love of dancehall is what kinda pushed me to even start creating my own movements because of the, I mean, there is a time I would not have, named a dance, based on the fact that I have so much respect for, my ancestral values, and I am pushing it as far back as to, Africa, to where it is that, sometimes you realise that a step, you come up with a step and, who to tell, it probably was created already and it was called, Shunkapunka! [guessing a name] You understand. So, I was, I was mostly scared of the fact that, calling it a name and it already, existed. Yeah, but then, I see where in regards to the marketing, the marketing, value of where it is, as a solo art, a solo, actor, or a solo artist, or a solo dancer is concerned, you have to have that, that marketing, strategy of, of creating the names, to basically interpret what it is you're doing. So, hence that's my series.

H - So what you're saying is that, there's, the movements have a name before, and, and, so what you're saying is that there's nothing new in terms of movement....

0:10:53.8 SF - I think, yeah! It's like a full circle, it keeps coming back to the level of where it is that, because of where it started, you find that we Africans are so creative, that, whatever was created long ago, is like it's actually coming right back, forefront, coming right back and it is, I think we'll go full circle again, (H - Hmmhmm) with just alternate, alternating ahmm, hand movements, or head movements or waistline movements, whatever the case may be, but then, yeah! (H - Right) It's kinda unda that vibe.

H - Good ... Social and cultural side of dancehall?

0:11:47.6 SF - The cultural (H - ....and social side of dancehall) Right now it is so upside down. Ahmm, everybody wants to be a star, on the level of where it is that, they want to be, the one, and I keep trying to explain to them that it can be so united on the level of where it is that, there is, there is room for everybody, to be able to earn, off it an, an, push it to another level of where it is productions, but I think, w,with growth, and I see the growth, because there was a time that (interruption by passers by in fancy dress) ... So, I see where there is growth (laugh), for the weather its good (referring to fancy dress), I see where there is growth, so, socially it is, becoming, stronga, but, I think, they, it needs to be taken more seriously in regards to the principle of business and placed on the level, of where it is, that our art form, our culture is ahmm, it, it becomes more, productive, there's more productions where you can be able to go and see, a dancehall show, and not, be worried if, ahmm, it is going to be like, everything else that you've seen. So its a production, its on the level of a pantomime, that is jus, that is just ahmm, more than jus an hour, is a, a show. So you're, you're seeing, artistic forms, of dancehall from every angle, and it is, not only noticed but respected, on the level of where it is united and, that element of business , the principle of business is involved, so, everybody can earn. I hope that answered the question. I don't even remember where the question was.

H - Its fine, its how you respond to it is important. So how do you feel within your body, when you're dancing, within yuself? How yu feel?

0:14:16.4 SF - I lose myself! I am so lost, I mean, I can tek yu, I have, well, being on tour yu fin' dat yu deh a situations where, you truthfully, you truthfully, don' even get a break, so, in regards, mentally, yu should be tired, so, in yu mine [mind] your telling yourself, "I didn't get any sleep so, how mi a go du dis?" Is like, yu question yuself, but den, a, as soon as the music start to play, you forget about all a dat, and you jus step right into it easily.

H - Hmmhmm (Interruption by other artists re: dinner) ... (Interview cont) Waht are the main social activities?

0:17:32.8 SF - So the main social activities in regards to where dancehall is concerned isssz. Excursions, I mean in rega, let me, let me put it on the point of view of where Dance JA is concern and what it is dat we offer to di internationals, so yes yu come to the studio, or, no it was a studio before, but its now the academy, so we actually consider it a school, and, you do your classes, but, we, kinna added more value to it of where it is that we, do excursions to rivers, to any waterhole there is. So we carry the internationals there, whether to jus, have a bath, in the water or, to have a class, before them have a bath. (H - Right) Yes, so, its, its excursions, its am, we do lectures, ahmm, teaching them patwa, so patwa classes are involved. Ahmmm, we do private sessions, like on a personallevel, one on one level, as well as, we do groups, so, you'll find that say, ahmm, a group from, from Portugal, comes an we basically doing it jus, all Portugal, yeah! (H - Hmmhmm) So, yes.

H - What does dancehall hold dancewise?

0:19:23.1 SF - What does dancehall hold dancewise? I guess its the vibe, on the level of where it is, if you hear a dancehll music you immediately, (H - Hmmhmm) kick into, that vibe of wanting to either wine up yuself or, so the vocabulary basically speaks, with the riddim. Yeah, so, yeah! (H - Hmmhmm. So the vocab, speaks to the riddim) SF - Yeah, and vice versa! The riddim sometimes kinna tell yu exactly what to do. Not necessarily the words of the artist because, there are times where I truthfully don't even listen, to the words, of the arts. I ,I truthfully dwell in, the beat of the drums, which, comes right back to my whole ancestral values of, of, the whole drumming aspect of, of African, an di Kumina, an di Dinkie Mini, which, yu know dat is from, whole heap a centuries ago. (H - Right, the African values of di Dinkie, Kumina...) Mento yeah, etc.

H - Ok, good, so moving on from that then, do you belong to any church or religious group or body?

0:21:26.1 SF - My religion is, love. And love is my religion, so I, spread that through, my dances, its, especially in regards to where, the female is concerned, I, tend to want, to always see, that confidence level of knowing that, yu don't have to be, yu don't have to be afraid, to expressing yuself, through dance and with that, I created confidence dancehall, especially for females. (H - Hmmhmm) So, its all based on the love that I have, and the passion that I have, for my craft, and I, teach it that way.

H - So you created confidence dancehall (SF - Yep) An when yu seh confidence dancehall, is that specifically for women, or? ...

0:22:43.1 SF - Yeah, its, its, its specifically for women but, I never, I never, descriminate on the level of where, if a male danca wants to take my class, based on the fact that he can show his, flow of movements, show his flow of movements as how to accept the female without daggering her into the groun', an I don't see where that shows any love at all, so!

H - Hmmhmm, so is open to the male dancas who want tu, who want tu show their love, (SF - of females, of course) ok, ... What is your, the relationship between your faith, and dancehall? Between you, your faith an dancehall?

0:23:55.0 SF - I thinking they're all connected on the level of, where it is, as I said before, I tend to bring forth, ahmm, what I believe in, in my classroom. So, yes its, its confidence dancehall so therefore the names of my moves, kinna portray, what is my faith and what is my, what was the other question? The faith and the what? (H - The faith, yourself an dancehall) Yeah, well basically portrays my faith, and what I stand

for, which is, also, yeah I mean, the portrayal of my movements and even the naming of my movements, potrays dat. (H - Hmmhmm) Loving life an loving self. And I, I, I see where dere's a lot of females dat really don't, hone in to dat facta [factor] of knowing , your a fabulous creature, that's why you're feminine, so, express yuself accordingly. An not necessarily having tu, throw yuself all around, but can be able to stand yu groun', by yuself an, an, create that, atmosphere dat, everybody can si [see].

H - Hmmhmm, that's a good way of putting it. (interruption, directing Crazy Hype to restaurant). ... So, are there ritual aspects to dancehall yu thinnk?

0:26:07.1 SF - Of course, this is coming from, Kumina level, so, the ritual is still on, that level of where it is, we meet an we dance. Back inna di days it was the same, level of where, an wi teking it from, the, the, the slavery days of where they usually meet an dance, an then dem go home. So, I thinnk, yeah, it can be considered on that level of where it is a ritual. (H - Right) An I think is more of the love, the ritual of, the, the, the love of ahmm, the drums, the, the, the bass line. Just knowing that, yu going to hear that, an automatically just start dance. (Emily interruption re: food) ...

H - So you said it was the love of the drums, (SF - Yeah) an, sorry I, I'am)

0:27:18.5 SF - It is the love of the drums and the bassline, that makes it more of a ritual, knowing that, you gadda, [gather] in the dancehall, jus to hear that, an, flow with the music, flow with the riddim.

H - Gather in the dancehall, jus to hear that, (SF - Yeah) an, flow with the rhythm. (Yeah). You, you do hmm, spoken word? Well, let me not digress because, I'll come back to that because you just have a nice way of putting things, yu kno you jus, flow the word them together. What does it mean to get lost in, in the music? Yu kinna touch on that already (SF - Yeah) So hmm.



0:28:16.9 SF - What does it mean to get lost in the mu (H - To get lost in the music, yeah) I mean it, it, it, truthfully, sometime yu don' even know that yu lost until, when yu, realise 5, 6 hours pass an yu still, dancing. A mean it is a continuous, level of where it is that, Jamaicans are lost almost every night, in, the music. Cos every night there is a party, every night there is a session, an, the session wi start at, 12 o'clock, or even 11 o'clock at night, and, it doesn't end until, morning light [daybreak]. An when you realise it, you, you've been dancing for, 5 to 6 hours, so yeah.

H - Ok, so hmmm, can you define spirit or spirituality for me?

0:29:27.2 SF - Well my spirituality kinna, an I am so deep it is not funny. I, believe in self, I believe in, in love, I believe in, the moon and the star and, the sun by far, these are my gods, so I, as soon as the morning light, I speak to the sun. Once I'm in a space where I can see them, I pay them homage for life, and for opportunity and for blessings, and the abundance of joy, and staying on that level of where it is that it brings forth, just fabulousness and greatness, on a daily level.

H - Right, ok, good. Hmm, so, how has dancehall affected your social development then?

0:30:33.2 SF - Well, it has placed it on a global level, so I can only give thanks for that, based on the fact, that, through social media, I am able to, market myself and, and be able to show who I am and what I stand for.

H - Right, market self and what you stand for. (SF - Yeah) Right, and so can you tell me then, hmm, can you tell me, w, what do you think about, the, females, within the dancehall space?

0:31:24.2 SF - Right now I, pray for them, to get, more, confidence, knowing that, it doesn't have to be, a man behind me that, basically gives me that vibe to want to express myself. (H - Hmmhmm) Yeah, it, it, it should be off my own, my own energy, my own vibe, my own outlook on life and, portraying myself, as a, a strong black ooman.

H - Portraying yourself as a, strong black woman. (SF - Yeah). That is good.

0:32:19.2 SF - So yes I love to dance with men, but at the same time, I can, basically stand my own and, attract, the same, amount of, of, energy, just showing myself confident, confidently, doing me. So yes I can do the headtops, yes I can do the splits, yes I can do the cartwheels, yes I can do all these tricks but, there's a time and place, for that. So, it doesn't necessarily have to be on a daily level, of where it is that, yu, yu, you have to be, raunchy, which, sometimes dancehall is raunchy, and you have to, a mean, give that vibe, but then, being versatile and being able to know that you can, you can stand yu ground without having to go on the ground (H - Right, right) Yeah!  
...

H - And the same about the man dem then (SF - Exactly) What you think about the men?

0:33:46.9 SF - The men need to appreciate, a mean, yu have some that truthfully do appreciate, do appreciate the female anotomy, that they won't try to harm it, but then, there're some that truthfully, because truthfully there's nothing wrong with daggering cos its a, one of the art forms of dancehall, but then, it can be on a tastefull level of where it is that it still holds the female as, who she is. Full of strength an, an vigour an vim. Without having to know that, yu daggering arr an, yu let arr go an, she drop an mash up the whole a arr face. (H - Right, hmmhmm, so is to let her, keep her dignity) Right, basically.

H - (Interuprtion) ... Can you explain the DJ an Selecta role? it was jus a question like that.

0:35:01.6 SF - Dem, sometime dem chat tu much. Sometime I fine dem very impo, un-important, because is like, to me is a disturbance of, of me actually listening, tu the, song that is playing. Sometimes they do build a vibe, that will create, dat extra energy in you, or in self to, to even, go harda, but then, some are jus annoying as raatid.

H - (Repeat what she has said for clarification) ... Explain the phases of dancehall and its impact on the current style. Yu can du that?

0:36:09.3 SF - Explain the, (H - the phases, the different phases of dancehall and their impact on what's happening now) Well its, its, its basically like how I teach. Yu, yu have to understand, where it is all coming from, to where it is going. And as I said its basically on the level of where it is, full circle. Yu teking it from the roots, yu teking it from, as I said, the Dinkie Mini, the, the, the Bruckins, the Kumina, the whole wining of the waistline, and, alternately utilising yu hands, or attitude, its, its, basically on that same level. So the creation is, is, like its, its, like this world, its going around, its going roun', it come right back again, it go roun, it come right back again, so, like my mother sometimes seh, "But I used to du it like dat, an a dat did name so an so", Yeah! (H - Yeah) So yu find that, its jus full circle. (H - full circle) Yeah, its, its creative on that level of where it is that, many moons ago, somebody created some dance or the other, an then, many moons layta [later], some other person come up with that same, style, but call it a different way. Arr, arr, flow it a different way, but when yu check di level, di technique is, the same. (H - Right) An then it truthfully depends on if the, the, the song, in the dancehall is eitha, slow, or fast, so it can be broken down.

H - Right, ok. (Interruption for the food) ... I was gonna ask yu if yu participate in any of the traditional practices....

0:38:49.4 SF - Oh, definately. (Interruption for food) ...

(Crazy Hype - Birthday dinner talk)

0:40:23.2 Crazy Hype - I create, I created, I created this dance different yu kno! But, is like, is like, is like afta I created the dance, mi, is like, is like mi du like suh, an mi a seh to miself seh! Mi a seh hol' on deh, mi seh daag yu kno seh yu si, di dance fi jus name 'Praise Di Laawd' [Praise the Lord], an mi a seh yow like, like, nuboddy naah tink of naming, of of a dance to name 'Praise Di Laawd'. Nuboddy wouldn't even tink [think] of dat tu be a slang. But, is a slang. Yu get mi? An is someting that is universal because, the people dem inna di church can du di dance. An if you can create a trail a dance move weh di people dem in di church a go du, (SF - Uhmhmm) yu win! (SF - Yow yu win) Yu si mi?

H - But yu si, it also come back to something Stacia was saying earlier on, an hmm, all of yu have said it through out the day, in different ways, shape an form, becau yu know like home, we have the, the saying 'Ole time story come back again" (CH - Yeah), an, an that is what wi si, because this movement, we have it in, in hmm the Senegalese dance, we have the movement like this, but yu si when yu bring it up here, them du it up an down [up, up, down, down - hand waving action] and the focus when they're doing it, is upwards, like if they're praising the Laawd as well.

0:41:55.1 CH - Yeah, cau the beaty of the dance as well is when you look up, like yu really, yeah man! (Global Bob - The hist of the dance group) Yeah man, no, the ting is yu kno, memba yu kno, the African dance dem connec back to Jamaican dance them yu kno. (H - That's right) If you go, alright, watch some music video, an some dance video from the Congo, an si if a nuh Jamaica yu a look pon. All when

(indistinguishable) mi haffi 'blood claat no, a Jamaica dis'. The gyal dem is jus the same, di man dem is jus di same, (H - Hmmhmm) an dem look di same.

0:42:28.6 White dread - Ten years ago, I don't think its gonna run out, but ten years ago they were saying that, Jamaican people reject, their connection to Africa land.

0:42:37.3 (CH - Hmmhmm!) SF - Who seh dat? (GB - Madness that) SF - Whoever seh dat want a slap.

0:42:42.4 White dread - Like he , like he would say like, we are Jamaicans (indistinguishable ... we have our own history, our own culture, our own heritage.

0:42:48.4 SF - An weh wi come from?

0:42:49.5 CH - Well, yu know who du dat? Di American dem. Di, di, di, di, African American dem, mos a dem don' like to be called African. Call dem American only. (SF - Hmmhmm)

0:43:00.7 H - Step Africa - American first and African second ...

0:43:32.5 SF - Historically, dem tell yu seh, where America is now, mostly Blacks were there. At the start. Yeah, so, truthfully, a probably our lan' [land] tu.

H - Discuss fact that world geographically has changed.

0:44:05.9 CH - American youths don't have no culture ...

0:44:18.7 SF - Where is Hip Hop coming from? CH - Hip Hop from dancehall SF - Hip Hop from reggae. Now gone to 'Trap'.

0:45:55.7 CH - Like first time hip hop, yu did have a dance move, summ'n like 'running man', (SF - Hmmhmm) Like everybody's doing it. (SF - Of course) It, it have a kinna togeddaness an a vibe, now a days, in hip hop people don' even smile. (SF - Is a confusion) Hmmhmm, yu kno, everybody is like finding their own world and their face is so serious..... (SF - Is like them laas [lost] is a laas like, where am I, look at this, what am I doing, yes, oh my, yes, oh yes, yes, ahmm, hmmm, yes, smell my arm, yes (laugh). (All continue to joke and laugh)

H - Do you participate in any of the Jamaican forms, such as the traditional practices?

0:46:52.0 SF - CH - Yu ask mi dat one deh tedday yu kno. (H - Hmmm?) Yu ask mi that one today.

H - Yes, that's why, I told him that, that's why I ask the question so that all of you get the same, same question, an hear what the differences are, the similarities are. So...

0:47:08.8 SF - So if I induge in any? (H - Any of the other practices in Jamaica, the traditional practices) There's actually one that not many people know about and its called Myal, and its done truthfully, more on the country side. St Thomas. (CH - Oh Jesus) An this is where these people dance to the beat a di drums, until the beata di drums, start beating on the level of where their heart is, an dem fly. An when mi seh fly, mi mean dem literally lif' up offa di groun. (CH - Like yu si it wid yu, wid yu eye?) Like serious flight! (CH - Yu si it wid yu eye? Yu si it?) Like serious flight. (CH - Yu si it wid yu eye?) 0:47:51.5 SF - Weh mi eye deh? Nuh right yassu a look pon yu? (CH - Inna yu head, mi nuh believe yu!) Really? (CH - Go a nine night an si,

dem en up all inna stream, spirit!) Backway! Once yu heart beat, start beating on the same beat as the drum dem, yu tek weh. (CH - Mi naah go desso yu kno, mi naah go) Yu naah, a nuff seh dem naah go. (CH - Midda fraid fi go desso, yu frighten?) But mi tell yu dis, yu si di roots? (CH - Yu fly?) Den mi nuh mus fly! (CH - Dah gyal deh have wings, yu drink red bull?) No, not at all, but this is it, our culchais is so deep that there's a lot of, of, of tings that we du, we truthfully don't know, or don't want tu know or kinna fraid fi know bout, (CH - Hmmhmmm) But it deh deh. All remains to du a jus go look fi it, cos it is so there. An our Jamaican, culcha is jus, f, f, far an wide. Yu know dis deep an wide? It deep an it wide.

0:48:51.9 CH - Far an wide fi real, but yu hear mi? Mi wi si yu a dancehall dough [though].

0:48:56.1 SF - Yu si the Maroon village? Maroon village pan every blow, wow year, it is Christmas! An when yu go desso, a t'ree day straight dem party fah. An when mi seh dem dance, dem dance fi t'ree day. Yu si dah t'ird [third] day deh? All wings tek flight. (CH - People fly again?) Again! (CH - So wha yu a du wid visa?) This is it. So it gets on that deeply spiritual level of where it is that, yu get so lost inna di drums, yu probably not even know yu self. L'Antoinette Stines, do you know her? (CH - Yeah) This is my aunt. (CH - L'Antoinette a yu family?) Yes I, so if yu want to know di deep value of where it is our, our ting come from? Check arr.

0:49:44.8 CH - Hmmhmm! L'Antoinette love me yu kno? Yeah man! Yeahman L'Antoinette love mi man. Mi memba when wi went to di 'Reggae Dance Championships', she told mi come rehearse up at arr place, far she did want to si how wi a go set wi formation dem an ting. Yu kno? An, mi love dahooman deh still, is a really nice woman (SF - Tell yu di truth) She have a nice soul (SF - She tell yu the truth) She have a nice soul. yu kno? (SF - She tell yu di truth, it nuh mek no sense yu lie) Yeah man! No, L'Antoinette love mi man, she always, anyweh she si mi man. Yu si mi? Mi neva know a yu family still.

H - So, hmm, what changes in society, has most affected dancehall?

0:50:28.3 SF - What changes? (H - Hmmhmm) There are changes? Every day life is dancehall yu kno? Every situation. Everyting that the artist feel, every, every, cau every, most of the songs are stories of, what it is that is happening inna dem, dem, dem livity, or happened, inna somebody weh dem know. So, on a daily, every two seconds, it, it, it, mi nuh even know, yeah, a t'ink a ansa [answer], mi ansa, mi nuh know.

H - Yes, yes, I would seh so. An then the laas question. What is dancehall's role in popularising Jamaica?

0:51:22.3 SF - What is dancehall's role in popularising Jamaica? Uhhmmhmm, reggae did done tek di standards already, it did done set from mento. So, is jus ano, an other added, genre, of our culcha, dat, dat, attracts so many people, all ova di world. (H - Right) Mi brain tired, mi ask, but mi nuh even kno if mi ansa di question tu shit! But yeah! Dem love wi becaus a wi reggae, dem love wi becaus a wi mento, an dis is jus an added feature, dem love wi becaus of wi dancehall. An how wi flow, an how wi love.

H - Right, hmmhmm. An lastly, if you have anything you want to seh?

0:52:19.3 SF - Love life an live it! Stay fabulous, always. (CH - Praise di Laard! Praise di Lord!) (All laugh)

H - Thank you to all - CH explaining why Praise Di Laard!





## **Appendix 14.**

### **06 Interview with Selector Fire Reeves - Xpressions Thurs 12.08.2010**

0:00:07.3 Camar - Well, mi name Camar Melbourne, selector for fire stone. Understnd? Sound name Fire Ribs and it a take it to the world right now. Yu undersstand? Big up the whole street team. Caa team mus say, so a Fire Ribs represent the Fire sound and street team mus say, Africa Tv.

H - alright, well this is a little research that I am doing into dancehaqll music and some of the connections back to Africa and ting. So, you cna tell me a little bit aqbout dacnehall. How yu get involve in it and what it mean, mean to you?

0:00:49.7 C - Well, as a juvenile me born come see mi faada wid a sound yu know. So mi inna dis from mi eye de a mi knee. An mi a do it. I been tru, I been thru a whole heap a sound before I reach where I am right now. De laas sound I played before I play Fire Stone was Metro Media Sound System. And dancehall on whole a di people dem choice, beca, widout de music yu dont have peace yu know. Yu understand? An inna de dancehall is a fulljoyment fi di people dem. So mi haffi say dancehall inna Jamaica good right now. it a do lot, it do a lot fi de country. It establish we all over de place, reggae music, overall, understand?

H - So can you tell me the difference between reggae music and dancehall? When yu come to select, how yu, how yu get the vibe an,

0:01:41.0 C - Err, yu done know y u know, Yu deh a de party from early, have fi hold as vibes from early,. We work with a vibes, if nobody nu really deh deh, we hold we own vibe till people come so de people dem walk in pon a vibe, yu understand. When we seh reggae music, reggae music a like de vocals dem an de one drop dem an all dose tings an de Jah cure and Gyptian dem an all dose one drop songs. When yu seh dancehall now a weh de dancer dem tek it to, understand, dancehall like de Mavado and de Bounty Killa dem and the Kartel dem and de |Rhino dem and de Popcaan dem. Dats, when dem song deh a play, hold a dancehall vibes. Understand? Well yu done know a music overall and a music weh seh so. A just one ting, one ting, one love.

H - Alright an so how do you select and decide what music fi play when, if yu can just talk me thru the night what music yu play when. If yu can jus talk me thru the night how yu build it.

0:02:34.0 C - Well! As a selector with experience, when yu walk into a party now, yu haffi just know the crowd weh yu see. Some party yu go in, yu see big people now, yu know seh yu play big people song, yu play, yu play some song whe mek de bar rock, yu mek de bar shell. Mek big people enjoy demself. Yu come into a party weh yu see young people, yu know seh a jus straight party vibes. Understand? But inna Jamaica yu have a ting name de early part of it, people come out early, dem buy dem likka from early, caus dem waan here some good song, some good studio 1, some. some good Coxson Dodd and, an all dose music , yu understand? Some Alton Ellis an John Holt and all dem veteran artist deh. Den yu tek yu time go up inna de ting now, weh de regular vocals dem an all dese ting. Is a step, is a step by step ting, yu understand? Yu nuh jus run inna de ting so, is a step by step ting, suh yu haffi jus know wha yu a do, fi dancehall.

H - Alright! An emm, in terms of the dance now, yu can tell me how, how dat really work in terms of the movement. When you watch it how dat work now?

0:03:46.1 C - Well! De dancer dem react affa certain songs, understand? De dancer dem, certain song , certain riddim, caus yu know certain riddim gi yu a vibe. De dancer dem build a certaiin dance fi certain song, certain riddim, said way. So yu know how di ting go! When yu a prepare a dancing song, yu notice the dance floor start get busy. Every dancer start do dem ting, everybody start get involve an yu can hold a vibe affa dat, understand? Yu can use dat an build yu vibe. Yu understand? An we are de ongle sound play one hour wut a new song. Even alf a hour, some unusual song, nobody nuh know, mek everybody feel like somebody. Far yu have some likkle young artist out dere, we haffi gi dem some strength. Cyaan jus a play de people dem weh mek it arready. Yu haffi tink bout de yute dem of de future. Seh yu have some little young artist with some likkle young dancing song an some likkle bad vibes, understand? When dem song deh drop, de place shell down said way. Si mi a seh? Big up Shan Dizzy, Russian Yute, Russian production, yu understand? Everting alright man, a music we seh, far music is life, yu understand?

H - One last ting doh, I notice hmm, towards the end of the session now, dat's when everything start to get to like a mad frenzy. Yu can tell me how yu view dat, an what is, what is really going on then?

0:05:09.8 C - Well, is just like when Usain Bolt dominate Beijing yu know. He was in the peak of his performance. So is like de party a go reach a peak level now.

Everybody know dat is coming to dat time so everybody haffi hear de top ten song dem right now, or de song dem weh hot! All a de song dem weh a do de place a way, yu understand? Da mad frenzy deh now, a de energy weh we have, a dat Fire stone put out, mad energy. Yu understand? We start from early wid de energy and carry it right back to de party, and de party jus mad. Big up Fire Links, a my general dat, yu understand, bobo a de team captain, yu understand? A him seh to de world an we juss deal wid de world wicked. Yu understand? De whole world a say team right now. A desso de team deh, team up, team, team, big up Truthful, Yu understand? Everyting alright, Mr House, big up yuself, Boom Fros, de whole team. A dem yute deh weh a save, a we a save music right now. Can tell de worl in Af, tell everybod inna Africa, seh a we a save t, save de world right now a music.

H – So how does that relate to Jamaican music and dance right now?

0:06:23.5 C - Yu done know seh a yasso a de roots a everything. Cause yu see de Japanese? Dem come in like dem come ya and research de music and even love it more dan we. But a yasso everyting start from. Right yasso. Understand? A right yasso everyting start, a root a de foundation. Yu understand? Jamaica done deh pon de map already, Bob Marley put it to di world already, yu understand? Peter Tosh an dem man deh, yu understand? Suh we as de yute jus de ya fi endorse it. Understand?

0:06:57.2 C - See dancing? Bogle send it to de world, See de dancer dem weh jus a carry on de work. Yu ave a icon inna everyting. Yu understand? So a jus suh me feel. A jus my opinion.

H - An how does, how does, how idi it, Weh it start from den? Weh it start from becau, before reggae music, what was? What was it? Weh everyting a come from in terms of...

0:07:23.5 C - Everyting a come from down a Mer, Merengae an Ska, an all dem likkle ting deh. Della Move, one foot skank an dem likkle ting deh, A jus de yute dem now jus flip de scrip an add fi dem likkle input to di ting an mek it appen now, an we can say alright now, step over, pullover, all a dem ting now weh drive out. All a dem dance deh Rubbabounce, Nuh Linga, understand? A music we saying an a dancing a feed de worl' [world] right now, dem cyaan go roun it. Yu understand.

H - Alright, just to finish off, is it, is it ok for me to use hmm, any of the infprmation you have given today for research purposes and ting?

0:08:06.3 C - Free to yu know, cau mi nuh see nuttin out a de way. You are free to use it and do whatever you want.

H - Respect.

07 Selector Fire Reeves Xpressions Thurs 12.08.2010

0:00:01.9 H - What is your role as a selector?

0:00:05.7 C - Well my role as a selector is to entertain people, mek people dance and feel happy. Yu understand? So if yu have a bad vibes inna yu house, jus come out and party. Is not my role alone mi have mi fellow co-workers dem like Stainy and Gieves Fire, Firelinks yu know? A our job dat fi mek people enjoy demselves. Fa we a entertainas and we work in the streets seven days a week. We party seven days a week. Understan? Save we a save music.

H - Alright, so yu see yuself as de saviours of music!

0:00:42.8 C - Yeah we a save cau yu nuh see weh music deh right now? It a get a fight. Yu understan? An we a fight fi it in de streets, dats why we say Street team! So we in de street seven days a week. Yu understan, so big up all de people dem whe come out to party seven days a week. All a dem people deh, a we a save music. If a neva we in de street, de artist dem an everybody wha inna de entertainment

fraternitty, music mash up already,. Understnd? So, big up to all the people dem wha save music.

H - An hy yu tink it have to dsave in society in Jamaica society?

0:01:20.4 C - Because, yu no see, party start done during de week by 12am an de weekend by 2am. Street dance nuh get fi keep till certain time again. If yu string up yu sound seh yu a keep a street dance or party, by de quint of an eye, a policemen a go come lock off yu party. Understan? A de rules, a de rules wah dem set still so haffi just abide by it, dats why we draw fi di club dem. Yu understan? A ungle inna de club dem yu can get really, daylight party yu kno. Street dance fi go daylight, a nuh everywhere it a go happen again. Dats why most a we seh country, country de ting deh, ca a bare bush, nubody nuh hav nuh cow, na go fly and call nu police. Yu see it?

H - Aah, so, so you yuself now, if it wasn't for the situation now, yu wouldn't deh inna eny club den? Yu'd a jus...

0:02:16.0 C - No! we play, is not a situation yu know, seh we run come a club caus de streets mash up no. But fi di time being tru de unress whe did a gwaan inna de country an all dese tings, we did haffi draw fi di club dem cau de streets did lock down . Yu understan? so we party pon a new tribe groun. Street dance inna de club. Yu understan? We boo, we haffi bookfi ti cau, we nowalk an look fi it.

H - Alright, repect.

## **Interview part 2**

07 Selector Fire Reeves Xpressions Thurs 12.08.2010

0:00:01.9 H - What is your role as a selector?

0:00:05.7 C - Well my role as a selector is to entertain people, mek people dance and feel happy. Yu understand? So if yu have a bad vibes inna yu house, jus come out and party. Is not my role alone mi have mi fellow co-workers dem like Stainy and Gieves Fire, Firelinks yu know? A our job dat fi mek people enjoy demselves. Fah we a

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H - An why yu tink it have to save in society in Jamaica society?

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H - Aah, so, so you yuself now, if it wasn't for the situation now, yu wouldn't deh inna eny club den? Yu'd a jus...

0:02:16.0 C - No! we play, ius not a situation yu know, seh we run come a club caus de streets mash up no. But fi di time being tru de unress whe did a gwaan inna de country an all dese tings, we did haffi draw fi di club dem cau de streets did lock down . Yu understan? so we party pon a new tribe groun. Street dance inna de club. Yu understan? We boo, we haffi bookfi ti cau, we no walk an look fi it.

H - Alright, respect.





## **Appendix 15.**

### **053 Interview with Orville Hall and Dansa Bling - Korotech Dancefest**

#### **Workshop Debrief\_17.04.2012**

0:00:47.9 Shocking to see that you guys dance as the camera light moves on you, but stop when light not on you

0:01:16.1 O - My group and Dansa Bling very popular in the space and other groups think that we hog the space but the spotlight comes to us. ... We give other people time to shine

0:02:40.1 Kaisha - How do you see the westernised version of crump compared to raw version

0:03:08.1 O - Is a lot like dancehall, if you come to JA and you go and see NDTC version of dancehall, you see a stylised version, but when you're in the space last night yu see a girl jus climb (dancers - yeah, yeah) O - incidentally that is a girl that has this ongoing rivalry with Dance Xpressionz. The minute we're in the space she does that because she is always trying to create attention and challenge the girls in Dance Xpressionz. She has been defeated about four or five times, so my girls just stand there and allow her to do those things.

0:04:20.9 O - Stacey really wants to demolish that girl (Bling - again) last night, but because of what she is wearing, yu cyaan mess up that suit, at the first party. Yu save for the last party cause after the laas party (Bling- Yu going home) Yu going home, so she was waiting until we got into the club now, because, you'd be surprised the place that people climb in that club (Bling - that club). Like, yu si people climb on the counter where the likka is being served, on the boxes behind yu, even (Bling - even over yu head) Yu kno, that's the section weh dem call, dat's di 'get mad section' (Bling - Yeah, get crazy) A di dance yu kno! So yu were going to see, the perfect development of where it start, so that girl there, her name is Rumar, she was doing the warm up. Now yu have a ting name, draw mi out, that's trying to pull me out of my shell so that I can challenge yu on the spot. The next girl she was trying to draw out is

the girl with the coloured hair standing by us, her name is Kartoon, she can du some amazing things with arr....

0:05:38.7 Dansa Bling - That what yu see that girl go up and du, that's nothing.

Rule about timings - Noise abatement.....

0:08:24.1 O - Dance Xpressionz came with a dance that Elephant Man decide to du a song for, and that's the dance yu saw them doing laas night call 'Tenda Touch'.....

0:08:56.6 O - Swizzle Body Girls, Kartoon and Dance Xpressionz, incidentally all three have songs made about them. ... She really have to be doing that fi them notice her.....

0:09:46.5 O - It is a part of what happpens in dancehall. This is how you are knnown by 1. Creating a dance ... This started as 'Star Time' and Fire Links saw it and seh no, jus call it 'Tek Off' an when yu in the dancehall space an yu du dis, an everybody start try do it, yu know the dance is on its way. ... To promote your dance, first a selecta ask yu di name, den now, yu start going to every party doing the same dance hoping that more selectas will say it, more people will catch on to it and then it will move from one place to the nex.... In JA there are at least 3 parties every single night.

0:11:25.9 O - Mojito Mondays, in New Kingston is Money Mondays, yu have Uptown Mondays an yu have Hot Mondays. Tuesday - Swagg Tuesday, Boasy Tuesday, Rebel Tuesday (Interuption asking to start again) Mojito Mondays, Money Mondays, Uptown Mondays, Hot Mondays ... Tuesday now yu have Swagg Tuesday, an then the areas that you go to yu moving from hardcore inner city areas to corporate looking areas. ... On a Tuesday now yu going into the heart of the city, heart a di ghetto, then yu leave an go into the same club for Boasy Tuesday, then yu go a club into New Kingsto, yu go to a ting call Rebel Tuesday. 0:13:09.7 O - On a Wednesday - yu have Team Wednesday, in the garrison again, yu have Weddy Weddy Wednesday, which is borderline between what iis downtown and uptown because of where it is position, then yu have Give Away Wednesday, so you have Team Wednesday, Weddy Weddy Wednesday, and Weddy Wednesday is like one of the father or mother of street dances, it is maybe the longest running. (Bling - Hot

Mondays) Hot Mondays is the longest running then Weddy Wednesday. ... Passa Passa is in the region of Hot Mondays in terms of length of time. ... 0:14:11.3 Passa Passa, literally drew the biggest audience from all over the world. This is probably the most volatile area in Jamaica, Tivoli Gardens ...

Explain about how people police the area themselves in Tivoli and other garrisons - 0:18:47.2 Weh Container Saturday keep, Denham Town ... parties bring income into area - informal economy

0:19:25.6 O - in the dancehall we call it a relay, so when we a rave, 12 oclock we deh roun a Mojito Mondays, we leave Mojito Mondays, an Uptown Mondays, we leave Uptown Mondays go du a quick run up a Money Mondays and leave an du di laas leg, an everybody now dis the laas leg in that club. ... That club is known as a laas leg club [Limelight].

0:20:52.2 O - Weh wi did deh? Wednesday. Thursday there is, weh yu have on a Thursday? Yu have Bembe Thursday (0:21:00.4 Bling - Yu have Bemebe, yu ave Allianz) Allianz Thursday. Yu have bout three sessions on Thursday. Friday now is usually clubbing, people usually go Quad, Club Riddim, yu dont find much street dances on the weekend. But yu might have major dances

0:21:24.6 Bling - Back den, yu have Dutty Fridayz (O - Dutty Fridayz ... ) Similar to Passa Passa!

## **Appendix 16.**

### **23 Interview with Cherril Ryman Jamaican Scholar 24.08.2010**

0:00:01.0 So we're here today at the Pegasus Hotel and today is the 15th I think its...

0:00:10.7 C - Nnooo, today is the 24ttth, 24ttth ....

H - Yes, so how could I forget, my daughter just got her exam results today

0:00:18.7 C - Really, really, and how she du?

H - She did very well, fantastic. She did 11 subjects (C - !!!!!) She got one A and 10 A\*s. (C - Wow) Sowe couldn't ask for no better.... 0:00:30.2 (C - No no no no no no no no no), so I'm taking her out (absolutely) Devon house for (C - Oh gosh) ice cream and treats and I told her she can choose what she wants....

0:00:39.8 C - To buy, yes, oh that' sounds good, that sounds good.

H - So today is the 24th (C - Tank yu) of August and I'm here at the Pegasus (C - Hmmhmm) with hmmm Cheryl Ryman, (C - That's it), who uhmm, I will refer to at times as Dr Ryman because, (C - it in mi head) although you don't have the the actual (C - Piece a paper...) Title on the piece a paypa (paper), in my head I just know that the amount you have done, yu already a doctor, (C - There yu go!) twice ova (you, you, you go, you go 'H', you got it). And then also, its not just what you have researched, but what you have contirbuted and allowed to, tu happen. So, I'd loke you just to introduce your-self so that, hmm, they don't necessarilly have to hear my voice. (C - Oh my goodness) Introduce yourself in the way you wh...

0:01:30.0 C - Sigh, ok, arrhmm, Cheryl Ryman may best be introduced as somebody who has a passion for culture, arhmm, Jamaica's cultural heritage in particular, I see it as a viable tool for, for ahmm, nation building, especially in terms of ahmm, cultural identification which I think is critical, in the kind of global village and globl spacein which we operate. I thnk its ebven morre important that people have a clear understanding of self, literally where they're coming from, the kinds of, just what your

talked about, the kinds of contributions that Jamaican people have made, and ahmm, even contemporary history, which I, I find amazingly, lacking ahmm, where people just don't know hmm, recent, recent characters, the its, its some sort of negative mythology or positive as the case may be, that's built around people like ahmm, a Michael Manley or even the Manleys. 0:02:33.7 You know, who are foundation people to, to the development of the Jamaica. Ahmm, so that is, that is kinda my passion, when I came back to Jamaica, I was very clear that I wanted to lead my revolution, ala Professor Nettleford. Not on a political platform, not through a social group, but by dedicating and committing my self to, working to unearth, and to promulgate through writing, through teaching, through talking ahmm through any type of expose, as we have done through 'Outmen's Experience' Ahmm, to, to introduce and to excite the younger generations, to to what their heritage is about. And what makes us special and why we're special because we have had a very special history and we have dealt with it in a very special way to evolve in the way we have, negatives an all. An all of it can be fixed, drawing on the same resources of our heritage (H - Right), so I think that's my introduction, I don't need to talk about where I teach and what my qualifications are right?

H - No, no no no (laugh)

0:03:37.8 C - Thank you very much you'll fill in those blanks, yes! But that's the essence of why I do what I do and which is why I have never given up my passion and love for it, and which is why I'm here today 'H'! in the middle of my very busy day cause I think it's important. I love the discourse anyway (H - Right, right) So, there we go.

H - Right. So, the, the first thing that I wanted to say because I think hmm. I'd like you to talk about a little bit, that, that hmm first major piece of work that you did, (C - Hmmhmm) where you were the one that really outlined hmm (C - Oh I know what you're talking about) Jamaica (C - The map!) and outlined, yes, in terms of mapping the traditions, you outline and map the traditions across Jamaica (C - Right) Could you talk a little, a bit about that and then, the various traditions and how you actually came to produce that then?

0:04:26.4 C - Ok, well the short, the short answer is that when I, when I ca, decided to come back to Jamaica and I knew I wanted to do research in this area, my mandte from the Institute of Jamaica through Neville Doors and Professor Nettleford was, that my, one of my primary, I had three sort of primary assignments. One was to develop a bibliog, bibliogrephy of traditional folk forms, and probably more importantly, which is where I think I started, was to tr nd I, locate, identify and locate all the traditional dances that were still alive in Jamaica and to hmm, to present that. So the format of presentation turned out to be this map, which identified, yu know, all the parishes wheredifferent dances could be found. So th, the format of it and the, the kind a presentation kind of eveolved. Ahmm, as you know the piece ahmm, starts off with a lid, lidde [little] introductory thing and then it, it identifies some thirty-nine dances, 0:05:28.2 C - An really its about forty, which is a nice round figure because subsequent to doing that study, one of my own students at ahmm, the Edna Manley, ahmm, College for the Performing Arts, came up with Zella, which is akin to Dinkie Mini, its very closely related to Dinkie mini in St Mary. I don't think is, as far as I know, it is not to be found anywhere else in the same way that Dinkie Mini is not to be found anywhere else except in, in St Mary. There're other forms of nine night.

0:05:57.6 C - So, what emerged, as the map, if I'm remembering it, is a little while since I (laugh)looked at it, but as I'm remembering it, is that I tried to identify core, forms, an what, what sort of inspired that was to realise that Jonkunnu was the earliest recorded, traditional form in Jamaica. An to realise that out of Jonkunnu, so many ahmm, other, other ahmm dances , identifiable dances broke out of it. Including Bruckins, coming from the Set Girls, including ahmm, Queen Party an so on. Ahmm, so I saw, yu know yu say hhhmmm so, there is this sort of group, this, this more ahmm, secular type, bearing in mind that Jonkunnu didn't start out as a secular type. An its good to know that somebody like Kenneth Bilby, (H - Hmmhmm) is actively for the past, I would say five years, actively pursuing, all the, the vestages, the remnants of, Jonkunnu in its original religious form, throughout the Caribbean. Ahmm, Jonkunnu, Jonkunnu in Jamaica has been identified as one of those, ahmm Bahamas and so on, all kinds of places, but that would be a good sort of backup in terms of, that Jonkunnu and Masquerade for example, which is in one of the articles I wrote subsequent to the, to the 'Jamaica, hmmm Dance Heritage', is that, all the,. I almost lost my thought yu kno (laugh).

H - You were talking about Jonkunnu

0:07:37.8 C - Yes and a subsequent article that I wrote, (H - Hmmhmm) Yes and that Jomkunnu and Masquerade are separate traditions. Closely aligned but separate a, traditions, in the same way that Burru, is closely aligned, but a separate tradition. So what I started to find on the map is that I would have to group, ahmm, certain set of dances together, in a kind of line coming down and to make, cause my mind tends to think that way. In this logical (laugh) ahmm, in that more logical kind of way. Yes, hmmhmm. Set up my little back rest. No man this is good. This is good, it's perfect.

0:08:18.1 C - Right, so that is how it kind of emerged, where there were groupings and of course something like Nne Night, that is a whole complex in itself. With the Dinkie Mini, the Gerreh, the Set Up, ahmm the ahmm even Kumiina, so you find that, although Kumina is a core. And I would talk about what the cores represented. Which was in the introductory part. (H - Yes) And then in the, body of the article now, there were notes on each of the dances, in terms of what appears on the map. And the map attempted to do, two main things, because Maroon was seen as a core, type, being one of the earliest organised types, besides a Masquerade and besides the Revival that, you know, sprang out, ahmm, was to show how, the, remnants of Maroon filtered down and the inter, connection between Maroon and Kumina and then finally ahmm, with, with ahmm, and Rastafari, Nyabingi, how those traditions merged and how those traditions pulled from each other. Ahmm, and in fact an article I did on Kumina talked about that it is both Creole and ethnic, at the same time. Very distinct identifiable ethnic traits, Congo, and at the same time very creole in terms of common features across the board with Revival, ahmm, and, and the Maroons. You know?

H - Sorry, just say that last part again! Hmm how...

0:09:56.1 C - That Kumina for example is both ahmm, ethnic, specifically ethnic, in its, in its, in its structure and make up, and at the same time Creole! Creole meaning that it was a) born here, but also shared, pulled common features, from ahmm, from some of its predecessors, like Revival and the Maroons. Juba is, I drew a lot of, of things, of course from Revival because Revival, was always coming out of a very African tradition (H - Hmmhmm) And there are some common features that were shared, and, some of them I remember pointing to was the use of herbs (H - Yeah)

possession, dance, music, ahmm, as, as a means to communicate with the spiritual world and those were the elements that were all there. (H - Right) Right, so....

H - Hmmm, that was specifically to, as a means of communication...

0:10:56.1 C - Yeah, it is a similar set of devices, common devices were used. In terms of the use of herbs, in terms of dance, in terms of music, usually drumming but it could include other things (H - Right), Ahmm, cos if you remember the continent of Africa is the repository of every human instrument that has ever been created. (H - Yes, yes) Yu know and infact ahmm, probably, even if is parallel development, it certainly can boast of having the earliest, instruments in, in every sphere. Percussive, air wind instruments, string, yu kno, yu name it. they've had it all.

H - So can you tell me a little bit now, because I know that was the earlier, early stages when you did that large mapping (C - Large mapping that was...) in a way that is, that is something that I want to come back to in a little bit when I tal, talk a littl bit more about what I'm doing now. Could you then jump forward a little bit because, I know that you did ahmm, I know you did the Kumina ahmm, the Kumina research and that that was written up...

0:12:09.0 C - Published in the (H - ACIJ ...) Yes, Research Review, (H - Research Review) Can't tell you what, what (laugh)

H - Yes that was err 83, somewhere...

0:12:17.4 C - Could have been around there yes, I did Jonkunnu before the Kumina, yes (H - Right), 83, 84 somewhere around there...

H - Aahhaan, so i'd like to go back to both of them, but in order to link to both of them, I want you to jump a little further forward to the article that you wrote for 'Discourses on Dance' (C - Oh), where you spoke about hmm, dancehall, 'Bouyaka!'

0:12:42.9 C - Oh yes! That one! Ok! That short article? (H - Yes, yes) Ok, ok, well I always, I mean in my, in my reaeach, full time research days, there was always a



parallel, set of work that I was doing on popular, dance. (H - Right) And I was particularly interested in it because, I was looking at the continuities. I felt I needed, if I was talking about that there were certain commonalities, which was another thing that I, I sort of developed as a way of, of analysis, and also of establishing that there are African retentions, cos I, I should have said, remember, with African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica, the overriding mandate was to, to unearth, to unearth and to document, those areas of African retentions in Jamaican society and its, related ahmm, Caribbean communities.

H - Hmmhmm

0:13:44.2 C - So, in looking at it, I mean I had been in Ghana for ten months, roughly a year. Academic year plus. And I did have a sense of, of seeing what some of these commonalities were, in some cases steps, and, having read ahmm, Rich, is Richard Farris Thompson? (H - Right) Book on African Arts in Motion? He gave me the initial framework, or if you want to call it eye, to begin to look in a particular way at African retentions, because he spoke about African retentions, African art in motion, he really is an art historian. But he looked at it by drawing parallels across the art forms. So he'd look at it in music and in dance and so on. For example he talks about suspension, that you see suspension in African art and you, its in the music and its in the dance and you know suspension literally comes in that moment just before a break and at the end of a break. There is an And beat that is just, still. Still in the music and still in the dance, its so imperceptable sometimes, its that kind a break, break and you go into 1234, if you turn, whatever it is. (H - Hmmhmm) 0:14:55.0 C - So, I started to, because I had been dancing it, I, I experience and understood, I jus, there was a word, to name it. And that was another thing in the dance article, it was called 'Towards a Jamaican Dance Typology', and it was towards trying to name, the dances, and name, and to put names to describe, the movement that I was seeing. So for example, in trenc, in an attempt to describe, ahmmm, Dinkie Mini's action, its not a re, you can't say is a rotation because its not forward back and thing, it is a, its an up an' down and around, movement (H - Yes, yes), an all I could think of was cork screw (H - Yes, yeah) an I call it a cork screw movement. (H - Right). Because, yu kno, if I'm trying to teach it and break it down, I can't say to them, "lift your th, thing

here and then move it back", because its not quite that, its its the going aroun' and lifting up and down at the same time, which is what, a corkscrew action kind of is.

H - Right

0:15:57.5 C - So that was part of the, the thing that emerged, the language that you need to find, (H - Right) in order to describe what your saying (laughing), which is not like anything you had seen before. So, ahmm, so yes in popular dance now, this is where I began, not so much as people have been doing more recently, to look at specific steps, but to look more at the underlying commonalities of the principles of dance. The approach to dance, what was the aesthetic, even that I had started to develop. I have not written about it, but I have all kinds of notes and stuff on it and I started doing a reclassification of dance, visa vee, world classification of dance. Cos that was what first started me off knowing I wanted to do my own research and to do my own descriptions. Is when I sat in my history of dance class as an undergraduate, and was told, that based on the existing world classification of dance, the dance that we did in Jamaica, the Caribbean and many of the diaspora, Africa and the diaspora, was ahmm, primitive and uncivilised dance. An true me know me was dancing in NDTC at the time and I know there was nuttin primitive or , or unsophisticated or whatever you want to call it. An it did classify as spectacular dance, cos spectacular dance by definition is dance that has a seperation of audience and performer. (H - Right). 0:17:19.7 C - An therefore, I know that nuttin neva go suh. So I stick up my han' and say but sir, that can't be right, bbecause, where I come from some of the people who perform the traditional do so simultaneously in a spectacular dance environment nd or do modern dance in a spectacular, so how do you classify those people and that society? (H - Hmmhmm) And he says, "well there's nothing written on it, so I, yu kno, we jus have to go by what is written". An I say oh yes to myself (H - Oh! So jus as dismissive as that?) Yes! So I said "Oh yes!", in my mind, "Well I'm going to write something tthat you have to read" (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm). (Laughter). That was the germ of what started me on thinking that I, I dont want necessarily to jus be a performer, I want to do the research. And thats what kindda drove me to Africa to begin to look at it, to look at thier dance and to begin to see the similarities and to begin to feel , wha, what it is yuo had alsways sensed and so on. An I always had a kind of affinity, I was always drawn to traditional. 0:18:19.5 C - From

I started dancing with NDTC then we started going into the field, to me, this is what you say just excite the blood. (H - Yes) Yu know, oh man, I just, to me this is what Jamaica was, this is what Jamaica is, this is what make us Jamaican. (H - Right!) Yu know! Yu jus feel it in yu bone an yu blood an, whatever. And as for the Kumina now! Oh God! That's my dance! (H - Right) Oooh, yes! If ever I want to sooth my soul and lift my spirit, jus let me hear some Kumina music (laugh) Yu know! An to watch them dancing an ting, yes. So, popular dance therefore came out of that, that need. But I realised ahmm, an subsequent, subsequent and I think Rex was amongst the first to point to it, that there was, a pr, there was a particular, an I've written, I have written papaers on this, which I anticipated was going to be a chapter, at least a chapter in, my final thesis (H - Hmmhmm), 0:19:20.6 C - Ahmm, or what we call dissertation, yes in my final dissertation, because, it was very clear that it, again its not the, just the steps! The steps is almost incidental yu kno, to the continuities. Or to the retentions, the steps are really, because when you break it down some of the steps are so similar, yu almos, yu almos, is like a progression. Yu kno yu may start with - step together, step together, two steps together - that's a progression of the same basic thing. Or yu can go forward, yu can go back, yu can go in a circle and do the same, thing, an it looks like a different step, but its using the same principle. An there is one, you kn, you will appreciate this, we were doing this the other day, remember? When you were talking about Kpanlogo? (H - Oh yeah) An I was showing yu how, this is a kind of continuity when, an its something that ahmm, with a danca, the use of the body. The particular use of the body, an we were talking about the Kpanlogo going with this. Teng, teng, teng, ten, ten (singing Kpanlogo rhythm) (H - Thats right), Teki Teng, teng, teng, ten, (H - Yes) ten, Teki Teng, teng, teng, ten, ten, (H - That's right) Teki Teng, teng, teng, ten, ten, Teng teng, thats the Kpanlogo I know,so I went from this Teng, teng, teng, ten, ten, Teki, Teng. Teng. Teng the rocksteady, the same (H - Right) The hip is doing ths, is like when yu du, I forget what this dance is, is a dance weh yu, aaaah is one of the particular ethnic groups do it. There was a festrival they had in Abl, at Legon (H - Right, right) An you got to see a lot of, the different dance from the different regions and there was a dance where they do this kind of thing...

H - Bamaya

0:20:50.2 C - Could be (H - Yeah) An they do a shake shake shake an a lot of this shake, but that is in Kpanlogo tu yu kno! (H - Yes) The shake shake shake thing (H - Yes) But we do that, we do it in dancehall, we do it in, if you, Tambu does that (H - Yes yes) Tambu does that, yu hear the drum going, du du du du, du du du du, du du du du, du du du du, du du du du, du an dem do the break! (H - Thats right, yeah) I mean when yu see those things appear again and agin, but from this now I remember going from the Rocksteady and it was Log on, da, Log on, and now it is Sway, sway, sway, its the same use of the body. (H - Right, right) Its all a variation.

H - Yes, yes

0:21:26.4 C - So yu kno, I got very excited, about those things, an there was another thing, even this, there was something, this kind a brush thing, ahmm, (H - Yes) Penguin? Wasn't there a Penguin? Yu memba Penguin? (H - Penguin?) An the an the, something chicken? (H - Oh yes...) Something chicken? Weh yu du the same brush thing? (H - Yes, ahhaa) Same brush thing and Penguin, Penguin was, very similar to Kpanlogo (H - Right, right) So those things I found exciting, not so much for step by step (H - Hmmhmm) but because there was this use of body. The shimmy, the shake, all when the women do that and I look at it I say, but, this could come out of any tradition. The Bogle thing, that kind of use, which is in Bruckins, (H - Yes) when they go down to the groun' an they bruk this way an they bruk that way an they bruk (H - Yes) Ahhhh, yu kno! A mean they jus, there's just a lot of examples. When I used to do like lecture demonstrations, I would use those specific examples, because it was easier for people to see, retentions.

H - Right

0:22:26.3 C - There is a, a lecture demonstration, that I did at the institute, its written up and the slides are at ACIJ (H - Right) I had done a earlier, let me tell you, what I did, I was just so, I didn't even want to write I was just so, en, engaged in the notion of, presenting the material to ,ordinary students and ordinary people in a way they could understand, so I would do, I had a number of slidepackages for demonstration purposes. An then there was a script behind it. They used to do a script, on a tape, that time it was cassette, (H - Right) And there would be like a ping, so the person, if I

wasnt there, the person who was opperating would know when to change the slide (H - Right) An the tape would jus run. Is almost like what we do in, an its inperceptible, its almost like what we do in ahmm (laughing), in 'Outameni' know. (H - Right) The performers in the village, have their script, they have a cue! that's inperceptible to people listening, but they know when they hear that cue, they know they have X seconds, before the film is going to come off. So sometimes they get it so on thing that its like they are conducting it and says, please turn your attention an then it jus comes up. (H - Right) Right? But it is, is summn thats rehearsed and there are liddle, liddle techniques, so thats how that used to be. So there was something on, African retentions, there was something on, to expose what Jonkunnu was like, I think something on Kumina. Ahmm, the one like that was re-done, was African retentions, in Jamaican dance and we brought it right up to the, to the popular stage.

H - Right

0:24:02.9 C - An I rememba ahmm, saying to them, I'm going to, which is what I love, I love the interaction with my audience. After we gone through and talk about the principles and said, do any dance an thing, notice their is this 'soft knees', bent and sometimes just soft knees, we do not have riggid, we have something call, ahmm, relaxed control. (H - Right) When you think of Adowa, Adowa is a good example of relaxed control (H - Yes), Yu kno all these different parts of the body doing taan, taan, taan, and the hands going this way, its a different rhythm, an whateva. Yu know what I used to love, when yu si di man tek di cloth an do di turn an Adowa and come back an du di ting (H - Yes) Oh God! I used to love that. (H - Yes) Maaan! That was sweet. Yes, yes that's it. Exactly, Oh God and di foot work! (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) Aah, anyway those were good days.

H - Yes

0:24:50.6 C - Sso, so that for me was the popular dance thing. Looking at, looking at ahmm, looking at that first, and then became very engaaged in the whole de-velopment of popular music and dance, and how the dances changed and how the dances, where focused. I think ahmm Sonya Stanley Niaah in doing her most recent thing, I asked a student, that same student of mine, to assist her with the names of the

more contemporary things, and we wanted to classify it in terms of, because I think in my own thing I dealt with a certain classification, dances that come from, that are derived from the environment, dances that are, (sigh) that are based on, yu know like the aeroplane and the, even the Log on, those are, social environmental things. And some of the dances that come from more, specifically traditional, ahmm, things, ahmm an me cyaan remember, the name but it was, it was, classified accordingly, and those are one of the papers at a conference or something, that one can, begin to dig up. Ahmm, so popular dance had that, those two dimensions, and really being, because it was happening so fast, always happening very fast (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) An we were talking the other day, was it in your presence we were talking about S-90 Skank and the Skank?

H - No, no

0:26:10.6 C - Oh God, an I was even saying to people there was a thing call Cockroach, there was a thing, there's a thing, Cockroach, even the thing weh yu du dis (Demo) Cockroach, dis, yu, yu, yu step pon it an yu stamp it, an I was saying, which was similar to Log on. (H - Yes, yes) All, all, I remember, all of it jus come back, cos I went thru maybe about six different versions (H - Right, right) Coming out of popular, even African American, coming to us and sing. (H - Becau that cockroach) Yes that cockroach is (demonstration) (H - Yes) like that...

H - Yes, (C - And) sorry, if yu didn't, if yu softened it a little bit, er, yu could tek it back into the Dinkie Mini (C - Cou, can be dat of course, whateva) Yeah!

0:26:50.2 C - But Dinkie Mini, Dinkie Mini's is, is the, is the dis, is the corkscrew (H - Yes, yes) Which is, is both rotation an up an down at the same time (H - Yes, yes, aanhaan) Yu kon! An this is another thing that gets yu, is the distinction wha (sigh), as I said ther, there's only so many possibilities of movement for the body. Even those who have, exaggerated fascility, weh dey can tek leg n put ova whereva, whereva! But that, that would not fin' its place in the traditional, cos not, unless you have that particular fascility, most people cannot dance that way. (H - Right) So what you'd find is the more, common range, of possibilities of the body. An is not that anybody, does it any different, that anybody uses any particular body parts, or create a

step that has no correlation, cos there's always simultaneous development, in cultures and how the body's used and on which, certain occasions and so on. So what you'd fin' is, and I pointed this out, I said the, that Russian, Cussack step, this, that is something that was a, typical African step that I found.

H - Yes, becau its in Kpanlogo but they jus use the hands coming up an down...

0:28:03.5 C - This is it an is same thing, yes, exactly, exactly, An, so I said to them, I said this is hm, big know! These things happen because all these are signs of strength an the high leaps, is nt only, they do it in Ballet for heavens sakes. They may not point the toes, but is the same 'ballon' [suspended leap] they have to have. When they do these jumps, the, the Maasi, they do they jus jump and go way and further an further up in the air, what the hell yu think that is (H - Hmmhmm) They may not be pointing the feet an, twirling in the air (laugh) or some of those things, (H - Right, right) but it is all , its all within a range, so what, what, my (sigh) theory then, or my, my, basis for classification, of what are the hallmarks of a particular culture widely, of a particular space or environment of use of the body, is more, dependent on the frequency with which you see a particular, type of movement being done, or a particular bodypart being used, or a particular way that it is used, the fequency with it. Everybody du bounce, bu I would seh one of the most distinctive, types of movement for Jamaican dance, is the bounce. (H - Right) The bounce quality. This bonce quality (H - Right, yes) Is not that other people don't do bo-unce (laughingly), but we jus seem to involve it in almos' everything wi du. Because if yu realise with this, is the same, is a bounce tu yu kno! (H - Yeah) All a dis is a bounce (H - Yes) An up an down, the only thing that don', even that is a dip, is a dip which is thing, but so much a what we do is a bounce. 0:29:37.3 C - When wi du this, this step, which is so common to us, mi si Africa, everywhere (H - Yeas, yes) So yu don't want to claim that, but if yu look at the range of popular and traditional, that you will find is a consistant feature.

H - But because that tu, yu could a, argue hmm, well, I see it more as a balance step, the basic balance step.

0:29:58.1 C -No no, I not talking about that step, I jus talking about the bounce, the basis of reggae is the bounce (laugh) (H - Yes) You look almost at any singer thatgets

on stage, you look at the performance of singers on stage, somebody who was doing a music thing, call, wrote to me and I corresponded with him for nearly two years, he was working on his, PhD thesis, cos we talk about the importance, this was vey important in Africa and its very important in Jamaica. When we look t white people we seh dem cyaan dance, why? (H - Them don' have the bounce) Not even the bounce, they jus don' get, the rhythm, them jus not on the rythm or on the off beat where they should be, they jus, they jus dancing tu, they not hearing the music (H - Yes....) In the way that you hear it. An if they clapping, they, they soun like they clapping off beat off rhythm, it not right. Becuse they don't know how to hear the music, we hear it. (H - Hmmhmm) They don' kow how to dance it in the xame way. So is not so much actualform, cos I saw some horrible form in Africa and dem tellhe is one of the best dancers an I said O-K then, and why is he the best (laugh) (H - Right) Man du some juk, juk for Agbadza, some juk, juk thing, so I said, Oh my God, I know is more this I jus folla, but him was doing a (demonstration) And I thiought it was the ugliest thing cos he was tall and kindda had a clumsy look, an they said he was the hottest dancer since sliced bread and I said why? And they said"Look how he's on the rhythm man, look at it. Look how he catch the drum beat, look how he catch it!" To them the emphasis was on cathing, an I think back on when, who it is and why it is we call people, seh people cyaan dance. When they come off the rhythm. (H - Right) 0:31:29.8 C - So those, those are some of the, if yu want to call it the aesthetics, that I identified that was consistent. Certainly with those peole who came here. West Africans primarily, although we got some from Congo and even way down in South Africa, some came eventually (H - Yes, yes) 0:31:46.3 C - Ahmmm, but as I said it is the frequency with which a particular movement type or action, is perpetuated and underlines, most of our movement. In the same way, I mean you think, when you think about it, Indian dance, what makes Indian dance so distinctive, because ahmm, Phillipians du a similar hand thing, ahmmmm Spanish thing have a similarish kind of movement, but it is, to me a lot of it is isolation.

H - Yes, yes,

0:32:19.0 C - It is isolation, 16 beats to a bar means that you dance to every beat! Even if its not immediately perceptible, but you do have that sense of absolute rprecision iin Indian dance. (H - Yes, yes) Whereas like Japanese and Chinese ther's a



kind of fluidity, the Tai chi feeling, yu have a feeling of fluidity that flows through. So it is the, it is the use of the body, its the kind of style and use of the body and music that to me distinguishes the dances. (H - Hmmmhmmm) Yu hear, yu ever hear about strong beat in African dances? Strong beat is the, is the thing. That first beat, (H - Yeah) if is eight beats to the bar yu betta come back good on that first beat. What is inbetween di, dere is good tu, but yu betta come on it, an if it is a leap, an I seh to the person, do you realise, they say "but they do lots of leaps", cause when I said that African dance is about that strong beat in connection with the earth! That it always come, they seh, but they do lots of leaps", I say but you check it, what do they come down on? (H - Hmmhmm) When they leap, instinctively they leap and they come down on the strong beat, on the first beat. They, they leap on a and beat and they come down on the strong beat. (H - Yes, yes) And he said "Oh yes, yes, yes, an we ting an wi talk back and forth and so on and so forth. We had long discourses, I don't even know where those emails are, (laugh) sorry caus, you know things come out of yu that yu don't think of before because certain questions have never been asked.

H - Right, right

0:33:40.0 C - Ahmm, I've actually lost, track of him. It was interesting how he found me yu know, through email, tracking the name an, musi going on hotmail and searching for, (H - Right) One a dem things and he, wrote and says, are you the same Cheryl Ryman? Oh God its like I'm so embarrassed, somebody keep asking if I am Cheryl Ryman related tu, a insurance manager and, something something, but I know, I know he'a on the right track and he wrote me twice and I ignored him because I just have'nt had the time to respond.

H - Right, right, yes, that's why I tend to .... (0:34:11.0 C - But I will respond) speak to people as well cause I know, for somebody to write it means they have to put away time for that....

0:34:19.0 C - No, even to call, I could have written him back and say yes I am the one. But I know he's probably going to write me back and I ting, an I just keep put, anyway, whatever (H - Right) Yes.

H - But can you tell me a little bit now, becau in Buyaka you start to look, look at hmmm, (C - Boy I did stray from that eeh) the riddim and, sorry? (C - I stray so from that!) Yeah, but what I wanted to find out is about the popular forms now and the, what you identify within those popular forms as the thing that holds people. What is it that mkes people connect with (C - The popular forms) the popular forms so much, world wide and even here and world wide.

0:35:00:0 C - Ok, hmmm, I dont think I actually addressed it in, in ahmmm in Bouyaka, Bouyaka what I think I , I focused on was the assendancy of the female, (H - Hmmm) in dancehall, cause the female never started off having that kind of, of, of primary position. It was always the male. The legs man, the man who cotch by the speaker, the man who tek di girl and do im rub a dub gainst her an dem kind a thing. It was couple dancing, or if is, it is, women never came out and danced. In a crew or by themselves, that was just onheard of. Carlene now, started what has been sustained in dancehall where, females go into the videolight, and dance and people look forward and there are dances dedi, songs, much to a lot of peoples shagrin sometimes mind that women would respond, but fi the women, yu know in there minds is, dem getting a big up. Wine yu girl, waist gyal, wine yu waist gyal, all dem ting, the Beenie Man, the everybody, all Vybz Kartel have summn bout how yu wine (H - Hmmm) Yu know know, so there is a kind of focus now on the female, body and figure and dancer, in dancehall. 0:36:14:0 C - Since Carlene days and now coming into, when Bogle started to get more into the mix, men started to, to claim back a space, but its a shared space, cause they have male crews and female crews (H - Hmmhmm) as yu know. Ahmm, what I think really holds people, is this alternate world. Its your alter ego, its where dancehall queen the dance, the, the movie, I think very clearly, ahmm, illustrate, its a very good anecdotal explanation for what holds people in dancehall. That kind of total transformation. Sonjah Stanley Niaah speaks to it, I have written, papers that speak to that. The, the, the moments of luminocity, (H - Hmmhmm) where you shine like a star, where you are a star, where you become a star, where you can strive to become one, if not in the everyday life, then there, its then, its a similar reason to why traditional forms persist, when you think of the titles that are given to the, to the leaders of, of traditional groups, escpecially the more religious ones, ahmmm, you wil understand. 0:37:27:0 C - Your Captain, your, your Shepherd, your Mother, yu know, which is a lesser designation usually, your Kumina Queen, they

don't usually call them a Kumina King, but they call them a 'Sciyanse [Science] man', which is a, the one that is really high up there. That knows the Kongo law and knows the, the business of Obeah, which is part of, they know the Maroon tradition, they understand the, they understand the 'sciyanse' business, different aspects. Ahmm, many refer to him as the leader, but these designations, the Bishop and all these terms that give them, give them ahmm sort of a high place, in their own world, vis-a-vis the society. So they could be a little gardener or somebody who dress as a caretaker, but when they're ready to put on their fabulous, this is why these gowns are all so fabulous and their attire is always so, so, distinctive. It's costumed, it's costumed to create, an alta world and an alta ego, to make that become. 0:38:22:7 C - Ahmm, I think that is the main thing. The music transforms, the space transforms, the dress the masquerade, which is what I, I eluded I think that Rex was probably the first person to have alluded to it as specifically of that in terms of Jonkunnu. I have taken it and intend to take it even further because of the concrete elements that have been duplicated, in the dancehall.

H - Hmmhmm

0:38:50:1 C - The u, the material, the use of sequins and satins and things that shine and, u, make you become luminous, so you cyan, you cyan not si mi (laugh). an, everything is larger than life, why it is that they have to wear these shoes, these kind of shoes that they can hardly walk in an hour but for dancing? Why they have to have these hair doos? What the make up have to say? Why the jewellery, it is all about creating an alta image.

H - Right

0:39:15:7 C - In the movie dancehall queen, where she, ahmm the woman who was, it was Audrey Reid who was dancehall queen and she just dress, she just dress in it and she fabulous, and somebody see her on street and she "dats her? Den she look so ordinary. Which is, that is, it is a statement, it is a profound statement that her life is ordinary, not going anywhere, not doing anything, but every time she dress to go to dancehall she is somebody. Somebody! You understand? And she is, admired, she is envied she is, everything. And if you cyan mek it the other world, then you mek it in

this world, yu createe yu own world. Wich is what Kumina does, which is what, ahmm Revival does, and Jonkunnu does and the Maroon traditions, to those who hold to it. Dinkie Mini, all of those, you create your own world where you have control over it and where, you can almost predict the results of your efforts.

H - Hmmhmm

0:40:12:5 C - Yu know, yu bring yu ancestors, yu get the answers to yu questions, yu get yu ??? Yu earn a living, for heaven sakes (laugh), (H - Right) from it. An yu have prestige an yu have status, and that is what I think ahmm, dancehall continues that tradition. I think that's probably the most important thing. But the music, yu know, is the combination of music dance and mask, which is how I describe it. That is the consistant combination. The mask transforms on one level. The music, ahmm initiates, music is always present and I talk about, in that present article that music and dance are just inceperable, an even if you just.....

H - Which article?

0:40:56.1 C - The one in that ahmm, Susanna Sloaths, 'Caribbean Dance', 'Making Caribbean Dance' or something like that. Promise was to bring it, the book for you and I forget.

H - Yeah, yes (laugh)

0:41:10.0 C - Any way, (H - We can sort that out after) Yeah, so that, that, in in the, I, I talk about that music is always present, even, in African and Jamaican tradition, even if it is, that you have to make the music with the human body, either by the voice or the guttural sound, yu kno, or slapping a table to get the riddim. Somebody start to Dj, an yu gi dem a likkle, a likkle thing on your, on your eg (H - Hmmhmm) or, or where were there are some African dances, I think its South African, where there do that thing with just slapping and slapping, (H - Gumboot, yes, hmmhmm) Right! Exactly, ahmm, you can make the music almost entirely from that. You can make the music from clapping, from ahmm, from singing. Singing sounds or just, just likkle chants and likkle sounds, daam, te, te, daam, whatever it is (laugh). There is so much

from making sounds and more importantly and I'll quote you it, as where you can, you can, where literally, an something that was discussed while I was there in Ghana, but "you can see, the music and hear the dance". (H - Yes) You can hear the, hear the dance, ah yeah, "you see the music by what you see on the body, because you are picking up all the rythms. So if you are deaf, you can see the music an hear it by looking at that, that is how the deaf kids, perform. (H - Right)

0:42:30.2 C - They, they, somebody demonstrate that and they get the feeling of the rhythm and the quality of the movement from them, and, they just start. Then the teacher stands in front, its just amazing, the teacher stands infront of them and gives them the first four beats. Ahmm, so they now how to go and they just go through, you'd never know these kids cannot hear. (H - Right, right) Because they not only have the style, they have the quality, them on the beat, them bringing the dash and they're picking up the sounds from the floor. They always have to (H - Yeah), they always have to dance on a wooden floor so they can pick up the vibrations. (H - Yes) An them put the speaker in a particular way so them can pick it up.

H - Yes, I've worked with deaf and that, that how I would do, (C - Right, right) always on a wooden floor....

0:43:08.4 C - Right, right! But in festival its always amaze, for yearss they've been doing it and they've been doing so well. Its not no likkle, oh feel sorry for them likkle, "Oh they're doing quite good for people with", No, they're doing real choreography and real good dances. But if you didn't know, they are just fabulous. And this is what I admire so much, that they don't set limits to them, that you're supposed to say, "Oh very good, can't hear and yet you're dancing", is not no peyaw, peyaw dance, is soem, whatever. At any standard, at any level. Ahmm!

H - Can we talk alittle bit more about this transformative nature of the popular form? (C - Ok) And hmm and how that (un-clear) how far does it go?

0:43:50.7 C - Well, for some, if yu read Sonya Stanley Niaah, she, she calls it, she use limbo as her metaphor, I know certainly in that, in that aspect of her, her book where she says you move from one space to the other but you go under this bar and you

move from one reality to another reality. She use that as a metaphor. (H - Hmmhmm)  
But certainly, the level of participation and the level of transformation depends on the level, just that, on the level of participation, because, I, I talked about how you can be a v, I use the term voyeur and somebody had criticised and said maybe its not, because the connotation is so much of, of ahmm, impolite or, or, or illegal peeping, when your, when you talk about a voyeur. But I meant a voyeur in the, in the broader sense, where ahmm, you gain, a secondary or a vicarious, but similar experience to the person who is performing, if you engage with the performer. If your, your level of empathy and, if you want to call it kinetic connection with that performer, where it fires your imagination, it fires, it fires a lot of the emotions that they are feeling, plus those that you superimpo, is like yu reading a book.

H - Hmmhmm

0:45:08.3 C - Yu know? Ahmmm, what your imagination, they are just words but, the , Olive Senior always talks about it, its, its what she, what she finds exciting in the books that she writes, is how the reader engages with her work. And she also likes to have discussions with people who have read her work. I guess is the same as somebody who paints, they are anxious to find out how people interested can see their work. (H - Hmmhmm) Because that is where, a, another kind of meaning, another kind of experience can be extracted. So I, I feel that many of the people to the extent that they are watching and engage with particular personalities or with the entire space, that I call the 'new eye', to the extent that you are looking, and feel "he who has eyes to see, let him see". Its, its almost a tra, a more trained eye or a eye that is instinctively, picking up, the vibrations. All the various happening, for want of a better way of putting it, because there's a lot that happens in that kind of space, that you can, you can deduce meaning from and understanding, if, if you impose your own understanding of other kinds of principles. Like I would be looking at that thing and I will be looking at how much continuities in, in the principles of African movement there are. How they use their hands, how they use their bodies, how they come together as groups. Ahmm, whether the knees are bent, how the hands are held. Armm, you know, how they use the cotume, th, that they have on. Do they use it, do they not use it. All of those things my eyes would be seeing, all somebody would just see somebody dancing.

H - Yes

0:46:43.7 C - You understand? So it, the, the person, so it depends on the level, of participation both from the, onlooker. The active-ly participating onlooker or the passively participating onlooker. And I think its very important that active, passive. Ahmm and that's why I think I use voyeur because a voyeur is always an active participant, in what he's look, he or she is looking at. (H - Right) That is the whole idea, they want to experience second hand. They want to watch, two people are going to get, so they want to, you know? That's usually the conotation. But it is that they get a certain pleasure from it, an excitement and so on. Ahmm, on, on, as I said, w, once, I don't know about you, when you dance, but I know, I was talking to a young man that we, we ahmm, we were interviewing to come onboard at 'Out a Many', and he says "I just love to dance, when I dance I feel free! I just feel, I just feel good. Everything is alright with the world". And I said to him, you know, just recently I said to somebody that when I dance I feel like I've just released by soul. I feel all of me engaged. I feel like, I just like I, I'm flying, I just, you know there is, its just is a wonderful place and space to be inna.

H - Hmmhmm

0:48:04.4 C - Ahmm, that's what happen to the people, ahmmm, in the dancehall environment. Probably even more so than in the traditional, because there's so many elements that come together. You have a Dj who is part of it. Its part of what is egging on, an the Dj is looking, you know there's just so many elements. The Dj is looking on and seeing the good dance and seeing the good movement and sometimes, he will, highlight as the videolight does, and the videolight will probably move to that person, say "yes mi girl, go down, stay down, go down more, stan up pon him, stan up pon him, da da da da. And he is encouraging and egging on this performer. Now once you get into this kind of call and responce, which is another element that carries forward from the tradition, this call and response between the traditio, between the dancer or the performer, and the musician, being the man who playing the music. But she is, on top of that, urging them on verbally. Or putting on songs that he thinks is

going, this person can handle or really deal with, or really push out what they need to push out to, to, to, to just be transformed into this other, dancing spirit so to speak.

H - Right

0:49:15.0 C - You know, I think this is what people, have a sense, without being able to articulate it, and when I've watched it, the, and this is why for me it is harder to condemn, because what they're really releasing without inhibition is, is themselves, their spiritual, who they, who they feel they are, who they, they, who they are (smiling laugh). Mi nuh know how else to put it. An they feel, they don't feel the restriction in a space like this. So this is part of, I guess in the same way that people drink alcohol, and then become, whether it is boisterous or this or start to dance and they'd be shy to dance normally, or, they start to make speech, whatever it is, but is something, its an environment that cause you to lose those inhibitions that wouldn't allow you to see yourself.

H - Right

0:50:00.2 C - And, I think this is where the transformation begins and if, if, as with any performance and any performer, you do transform yourself when you, perform. You are not Cheryl Ryman when you get on the stage and you dancing mother, or yu dancing, ahmm, the, the, the ahmm, one of the three girls that is doing, forget the dance, is three of us dancing it, ahmm, whatever it is, whatever role you are playing, all Nyh, you become, you have to. If it is going to have meaning to your audience, you have to engage fully and become and feel, what it is. Ahmm, I remember being, I just felt the whole of that dance Nyh, there was no part of it that I didn't feel. I, I just felt powerful and strong and, and like I was a leader and I think all the people that danced that dance felt like they were powerful African women who were, who were fighting for a cause, you know? You, all when Shiela did that little dip thing that I know Rex uses now, ahmm I forget in what it, in what dance he uses it, but, but that thing, is jus, it was such a powerful movement to say you know that, we are going to, nuh care how you push us back I going to come back again and to do do di dawnett, yu jus, yu jus, create, meaning to the movement man, yu hearing the drums and I now



Margerie had, had ahmm, infact designed a whole, musical score for many parts of Nyh.

H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm.

0:51:27.4 C - Ahmm, so that, that is, that is one level of transformation, but your on, your on a very structured, difficult stage environment, an its very spectacular, there is no interaction, partici[ation, in the way that you would probably describe , if we did that in, in a, in a, to invoke the spirits or whatever, they would say that is, the more primitive, uncivilised type of dancing. In the popular realm, it is a similar kind of thing. There's the interacton, lets say you have that call and response, and yu have the kind, is all the traditional things, where people will circle roun yu, which them used to do in popular dance, 'Rock and Roll' days, circle roun yu and big you up, and say "B, go deh, go deh, go yah", is the Bouyaka kind of thing. That was the thing, wher you had people coming out as, solo performers, or as part of a crew and people would stand back and watch, and they would give them their applause. So all of that business of applause, and how it takes different forms, is the gun salute and the simulated gun salute, thats what in a sense bouyake was talking about.

H - Right

0:52:31.6 C - The ascendancy of the female in dancehall, and ahmm, and if, it was interesting, although Bogle was there, Bogle was never, ever reach the kind of, level, of King. He was never called King and never reach that level in the way that a, Carlene had. (H - Right) And some of her nee, immediate ahmm, some of her immediate successors, had a hard time calling themselves Queen because just about then, the dancehall Queen competition had started, down Montego Bay. (H - Hmmhmm) Which was what really started Carlene yu know! Carlene went on to do, a model, modelling to music, competition. Cause remember she went into design first, and was setting the trend in dressing? So she brought to dancehall this whole business of, supernova, this, this, this dress style that was part of, what it meant to be in dancehall and to be a full participant in dancehall. Yu cyann come de with no likkle pyaa pyaa clothes, yu buy clothes and have hair do and nails, just for the dance, for that particular session, whether its Passa Passa wherever it is.

H - Hmmhmm (C - Ahmm) Right, because, because hmm, somebody was saying, yes yu can go buy, the clothes them readymade, but then yu haffi fix it up...

0:54:00.5 C - Fix it up, yes, yeah, the accessories, the accessories, maybe what you put pon it, whether yu turn it up likkle more wether yu. Whether yu wear mesh... (H - Or cut off piece....) Yes, and whether yu wear, ahmmm, mesh stockings, or yu wear the spandex thing, which, which many of the fluffies [large women] wear now, cos it kind a keep everything firm and yu just sslug, yu know ??? Ahmm, and this term fluffy is another phenomenon, cos yu know, for the first time in the dancehall competition, which has been going on quite a while now, I don't know if is 10 years, 12 years, 15 years, a fluffy win yu kno! (H - Hmmmm?) What, but the woman can dance! Whoof! Saw a little piece of arr, fluffy win to raatid. (H - Ah) Yeah man, go look in the Gleaner or wherever. Yu can look for Dancehall Queen 2010. Yu know Sonya right? Stanley Niaah! She, she would probably have her pulse on, on that and can led yu to wheree you can find information.

H - Right.

0:55:00.5 C - But it was on Tv, showing the winner man. And all arr competitors. Is either on 'ER.' which is TvJ, or 'On Stage', which is CVM. (H - Right) That would have the footage. (H - Either On Stage...) Yes, and that's Winford Williams, or ER, which is, their not TvJ, then, both idependent p, producers. They're not ahmm, employees of, of, of ahmmm, of TvJ.

H - Ok, so Onstaage or the other one was?

0:55:35.1 C - ER. (H - ER. I see), Which is, ahmm, Anthony, wha 'im name again? He's the Rising Star Judge, Miller, Anthony Miller (H - Ok), hmmhmm. (H - He's the producer for that?) He's the producer and owner of the programme. (H - Ok) He's not just the producer, he owns the programme and he has his own company that produces that programme. The thing that Winfred Williams is no longer, Williams is no longer employed to CVM, he's an independent producer and owner of the programme.

H - Right, right, Ok. Good, alright, tell me in terms of the dance now, hmmm, what do you see in terms of the link and the connection between the dance and the transformative....

0:56:23.0 C - But the dance is, is the final stage of transformation. (H - Hmmhmm) The dress, the dress and the attitude, please don't forget the attitude, Yu got to have the attitude [said in American twang] which is the same thing in the traditional. Whether you're in costume or you come to the thing, if you don't have the attitude nuttin naa gwaan. (H - Hmmhmm) You must come with your style and you know, your thing. When you put on your clothes, that's the first thing that sets the tone. When the music starts, that is the, is the kinda vibration that, that, that starts the process so to speak. So you have the mask and you have the, the, the ahmm, the music. But the dance is the final, the final stage of a process, that starts with the mask the music and then the dance. The dance is the thing that we talked about that releases the spirit, releases soul, free you and it is the last dance process that you become transformed, I mean, that you can achieve the ultimate kind of transformation. The one of, of what I call luminosity, where you, you know you're shining like a star. I mean is a, you know! Yes you come in with a hot outfit and you get a few looks, but if, if you not doing nuttin (laugh) the person who in a lesser outfit and the right attitude and dancing, and I'm not talking about this daggering foolishness that I think by now has phased out, and I hope it has phased out. Is the most ridiculous thing. It is not dance, I was so infuriated, you know what I'm talking about? (H - Yes, yes) Stand up on top of a stage and jump down on somebody lying down, where the dance to hell the dance come in in dat? (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) And because he give you a rhythm and the DJ man go "juun joo" with the music and you go "juun joo", that's not dance! It is just a foolish, phenomenon that came in, because you see what happened even with ahmm, and I'm digressing a little. You know one of the reasons Fluffy won? Because they have now become, stuck in this mode that if you could do all this gymnastics in, in dancehall, the splits and the head ting, the whatever, that that was what mek you a good dancehall artist. And I am so happy for this. I wish I could write an article, that what this fluffy has done is say that at that at, that the Dancehall Queen must dance. Not be an athlete, or a gymnast, that not what, that's not dancing (laugh) (H - Hmmhmm) She danced. When the woman seh she wine you see! When you see the woman with the little b, bottom flick ting you see, when you see showman. She do arrh split and everything you know, but

that was incidental. In the same way that when a legman do 'im likkle ting and den go down an dem split, dat is, dat is jus a likkle climax move, but yu cyaan du show of those an say oh I'm dancing.

H - Hmmhmm

0:59:01.8 C - An that's what happen even in this year. Ahmmm, the festival's International Reggae Dance Championship, the group that won, there, there were several good dancers, and several good groups. I was surprised that non of the Japanese didn't win. There was one particular group that I thought, would not win, but at least have place second or third. I was rather disappointed, with maybe the third place winner. Even the second or third place winner, cause I really thought in terms of creativity, in terms of musicality and their ability to dance and costuming in terms of innovative little things, they were just, topnotch, I couldn't find anything wrong with them. (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) An they could really dance (laughingly) could really really dance.

H - But hmm, you know, there was something that I noticed about both of them though.... (C - Who yu, you were there?) Yeah, (C - For the third or, Ok I didn't see you, Ok) You were inside (C - Inside yeah, aah, so that's why I didn't see yu before or after. Yes) So I hmm, yu see the thing is, what I noticed then, with them though, there was something about the timing of theirs that was a little.... (C - See what I talking about, the riddim?) the riddim was the guys answer (C - Aah yes) that's why, they couldn't, reach there. But yu see the thing is....

1:00:23.6 C - The one that came out, the on I particularly liked, although the other set was very good, they danced well and so on. The one that i particularlly liked for that reason was the one that came out, the guy, the one guy with the kung fu and the girls.... (H - The girls) in their littl fluffy thing, (H - Right, right) An how they hold up the little green thing and fling the clothes and come out and dance, (H - Yes, yes) I thought that was a very novel, not to, not too much in other words, it was a fairly simple transition. (H - Hmmhmm, hmmhmm) But ahmm, yeah, but I don't know if they were so much, that, that, mi no know if the judges were so much on that, because, if you remember, out of the seventeen groups, there were at least ten groups

that were pretty much at the same standard in terms of their dance, competence and, you know, ability. They were, they were on target.

H - But the, but the winners, was clear from the outset.

1:01:08.2 C - Oh please, they were the third ones, people stood up and give them standing ovation in my section.

H - and then that means, from then, all the way down, like seh, amongst who I was with, it was, still number one, (C - All those) Still number one. (C - Always) That's because everything was now compared to that. (C - Truly!) And, and so, I think hmmm, I wasn't sure that I agreed with the second and third

1:01:34.3 C - That's what I am trying to tell you

H - But hmm, but hmmm, I think second and third were more open, maybe .....

C - Much more open

H - Yes, but number one was never in debate.

1:01:44.5 C - I didn't mind the second, the second were the defending champions and they were very good dancers, but nobody matched, and this is where I thought the Japan, that particular Japanese group had the edge, nobody matched the real innovation and creativity. You know what was good about them? I was, they had long hair, always in festival, in popular dance and know the criteria and know the coaching points in the workshops. (H - Hmmm) Try and do something innovative, try and, try, by all means use some little skit within there, so that, you know, it holds people's interest. (H - Hmmm) But, a, many people just had a little something there for no reason at all, a man put on a woman's outfit and jump on a bicycle and ride around, what is that?

H - Yes, because for me that wasn't hmm, (C - No that's what I'm saying) It never said anything.

1:02:28.8 C - It never said anything! When these people, when them start, listen to me, when them start off in the little box and them play the song that match the box, and the police stop them and pull them ova. All them ting, ting, ting ,ting and the,m drapes them up and whatever, whateva. Then dem move to the next skit where is two guys start to fight with each other. When I see the man, this arm knock one an yu see him lean back an him go all the way back, an them hol' them at the knees yu kno, (H - Yes) I just to know its in slow motion they do it, I said oh man, I said no, these guys good. Then by the time (laugh) them do the final piece with Bolt and the race, (H - Yeah) there, I was gone. Thats why people reel up becuse, evertime yu tink they can't do better, they just tek it up to another level.

H - But then you see, thing thing is I, let me ask you the question then. (C - Hmmhmm) Why you think they they come back, because I know with that competition, they can come back. And, (C - Come back how? Yu mean...) Like, like, the second place were first place last year. Defending champions. Why do they come back? (C - Oh, why they have to be placed? Our do...) Or why do they come back to the competition, because, is one out of two things, either yu gwain win again (C - Aaahuh) or yu not gwain win again, in which case you have damaged your... (C - Reputation as being the winner) Yes, thats right. (C - Oh, I see what you are saying) So why do they come back? For what purpose?

1:03:49.6 C - Maaybe to win again, they think they'll win again.

H - But then the thing is, the hmm, it stacked, the bar is stacked so high against them, because now....

1:04:01.6 C - Everybody, yeah and because people will be looking at what mayb, what where the components of lat years winner and how am I going t odo better than that if I hope to win.

H - But yu notice , they were the only group that did not do a little skit in theres, (C - That is true, that is true) Theirs was pure dance (C - That is true, that is true) from beginning to end. (C - That is true) Thats one thing I noticed. I say erherr, they're

winners and now they're coming back. Its almost as if they are saying, "we have won", and I dont know what they did (C - Yes), but I guess they must have, must hve had some kind of skit last time, but now we jus a come dance, to show you, [C - undistinguishable] what the dance is bout. Thats how I read it. (C - Yes) They were the only ones, and also, to a certain extent, that took a bit of courage, (C - Yes, yes, yes, yes) because they know that everybody else coming with aa little trick or something.

1:04:59.4 C - There was, there was a group there that, is, is, is some of the dancers, som of the performerss from, from ahmm, 'Out a Many' yu know e Trelawny group. Yu know the girl with the ahmm, hula hoop? (H - Yes) That was, that, herrr little performance. Here is the problem, the guys were reasonably good, but they just, they just never really in the league of at least I say, ten a dem. (H - Right) The dancin, the dancing core of at least ten of the groups was so strong, but they kind of seperated themselves so anybody who fall below that bar and those guys were'nt that strong. What was, what was good and very innovative, was the girl who was doing the hula hoop and she could do everything. She could spin she could grab on, she could do this whatever, whatever. That was a, that is a nice innovative, they attempted to do some little skits but is the same foolishness where yu don't know what the skit ws about and it just fall flat.

Basic idea of what in interview, NOT WORD FOR WORD (Listen over for direct quotes)

C - advice on what skit is within dance

1:06:38.1 C - Granny Nanny - comment on the gay issue within theatre and popular forms. Woman called Cherry, an older woman always get picture in papers for dancehall. Also Madusa, a white woman with long blond locks - Videolight pick her up - stage is a portable stage within dancehall - videographers sell dancehall session tapes to cable stations.

1:08:56.5 C - More basic in explanation - I don't think anybody goes into a trance, although it may be very close simulated to that. I know how I fell. I know the

transformation that takes place in me when I dance. - no need for it to be as radical as it is for dancers. - Sonya describes a scene where vendors set out and woman tear off T-shirt and skirt and was left in a hot dancehall costume, then take of head-tie and shake out her curls. That is literally an act of transformation as woman change and dress for each reality, as vendor and then dancehall person -

1:11:32.2 C - Stages of transformation - first which you must feel, at an emotional and physical level is when you change your personality, from being a street vendor, to what you hope to be and what you think of yourself now as a dancehall queen. You a different being, you have created a different being by your mask. - mask in Jokunnu is the whole body - put in earrings and bangles etc. who am I - Hotty hotty Cherry

1:12:53.4 C - there are particular masks/ attitudes with own individual way of presenting - Sonya talks about how the space is organised and how there is a predetermined prescribed mode of operating - Sonjah looks at physical, psychological and emotional space in dancehall

1:14:21.6 C - three major elements, is that mask, its the music, which is true of all the traditional dances - everybody get in there and dance, then there is intense phase and people gain luminosity at different times

1:15:23.3 C - Transformation at some level is sustained, once you prepare for and enter the space. Even if it is just the close and the attitude. - Some not dancing, some holding a bottle.

1:15:59.1 H - The women don't smoke much, is mostly the men, more of the dancing and the rolling of spliff happen in dancehall space, but the light up often don't happen until them go outside. - Ryman make same observatiojn.

1:16:30.1 C - As if they understand the different uses of the different spaces.

1:17:03.4 C - There are many devices in the dancehall space that helps them - that call and response that happens with the DJ thing is the same thing that is happening when the Kumina drum is drumming or the Revival drummers are drumming and of course



all the 9 nite thing the dancer and musician communicate with each other. Not a mystery to catch a Kumina break, is just to be attuned and listen for it.

1:18:50.5 C - The first and most important way of traditional and popular forms meeting is not in particular steps, or devices such as elements, that is just one of a number of continuities its the use of the body, how they use the space, the relationship between the dancer and musician, call and response being, how people sing along with the particular song that they like, how sometimes everybody joins in and sometimes they will withdraw. How people go into that spectacular mode. How people will circle around individual in the video light, even if the light is not physically on them, you might have the DJ who highlights the person to focus on

1:20:34.4 C - the release the transformation that happens as that person abandons their other self as they release their luminous self into the dance. Its another level, its an intense level and the more highly transformative level. Looking for those kind of continuities. You're going to see steps and say "oh my God its that", because it's the way we use our bodies, its what you call collective consciousness!

1:21:31.2 C - Dancing Wisdom talks about that 'memory of the body', that allows them to have that intuitive style, the collective consciousness gives credence to Revival and Kumina people's notion that you go to a spiritual school for 21 days or 7 days, its the multiples of 7, 7 days, 14, 21 days etc. As in the Kumina and Revival practices.

1:22:21.7 C - This is where the focus of collective consciousness pour through you ... In the case of Revivalism its particular spirits that seem to attach themselves to you and ask you to be their medium of expression, they will guide you and give you knowledge and wisdom if you deal with them right.

H - Talk Ryman through my research ideas.

1:25:10.0 C I have not systematically sat down and drawn parallels with all the steps, as so much is a reworking of what has gone before. It almost becomes tedious to look at steps. Use video or photographs, but video would be better to illustrate the movement similarities. Would have to focus on central area of similarities, which is

the way the pelvis is going, it is going in this kind of manner. (Ryman demonstrates)  
Its a swing its like, what you say that dance was? Bam what? Bamaya dance  
movement and the effect of the dance. Another continuity is the use of costume to  
create space and enhance and extend step. Costume exposes the correct use of the  
body and how it then effects the costume. That use of the costume and I think about it  
in the Adowa dance, the swing of the cloth etc. The cloth describes the space and  
movement, "creating a sense of mass" Ryman quoting Farris Thompson. How to  
begin to look at dance. Noticing in the dance how the people hold their hands. Closed  
fist, never completely open in "relaxed control" - 1:30:09.3 C - there is no over  
exertion of energy, the energy is intense but very contained. Sense of flow at all time -  
"That sense of cool in the face".

H - Facial expression eg. Kete face, which about taking on the persona of the dance.  
Same thing happening in Dh

1:31:34.4 C - there are many many different things that come together for the  
transformation. I talk about the devices for the transformation. (Devices mentioned in  
'Making Caribbean Dance: Continuity and Creativity in Island Cultures' Chapter 8  
p.97-132)

## **Appendix 17.**

### **31 Interview with MAJ Priest 10.08.2010**

0:00:20.4 MAJ - My name is MAJ and I am a Jamaican. I'm an Episcopal Priest working in New York.

0:01:03.0 MAJ - It may surprise many and I hope not too many, to hear that I have a profound appreciation of the Jamaican culture, period. Having an appreciation for Jamaican culture gives me a tremendous love for dancehall music and for reggae music, because I do believe that reggae music, dancehall especially, these forms of music has helped to shape the Jamaican consciousness for the better. Growing up in Jamaica during the early 70s for me, the dancehall music served the purpose of uniting the people, it was a healthy diversion, it was a reflection of the culture, it was a challenge to the political system and even to the religious system. 0:02:05.3 MAJ - It became a prophetic voice, in my view. And so because of the prophetic nature of dancehall music, some of things that artists were singing out, asking for rights for the poorer class of Jamaican people, challenging the politicians, even challenging the people themselves to love each other and to treat each other with respect, so in this sense for me, the dancehall music, especially of the mid 70s and early 80s provided a powerful influence and a powerfull impact, on the Jamaican society.

0:03:00.1 MAJ -

Jamaican dancehall have catchy beats, humourous lyrics and topical, making people think and ask questions. Michigan and Smiley 'Mind Jah Lick Yu Wid Diseases', helped people to think about their behaviour and moral decently and the role men played in the objectification of women. Frequently the church sets itself up over and against the culture, as religious often looks down on dancehall culture. God is just as much present in dancehall music as in the church.

## **Appendix 18.**

### **Interview with Damian Marley Damian Marley 2013 Tour Ghetto Youth**

**International 27.08.2013\_09**

Well my name is Damien Marley and I am a musician or an artist if you want to call it so. Mi jus use music as a way of expressing miself.

0:01:09.3 DM - Well dancehall is a place, it was originally a place and whatever music was played in the dancehall is what we call dancehall music. So, yu know, in the 70s, what yu call or what yu want mi call, weh yu call 'one drop' or you'd call reggae now, in the 70s that was the dancehall music of the day. Well the music has evolved yu kno! For the sake of people experimenting with different styles and different pieces of equipment and gear coming into the studio, drum machine etc. So now a days music a bit more fast pace that carry a younger more youthful energy that you'dda really kindda refer to as dancehall. Really to me its all, all of it belongs to reggae culture. So whether you want to say dancehall or whatever .....(fill in later)..... its seldom that you find an artist who doesn't do both. Its seldom that you find an artist who hasn't experimented with dancehall and reggae when it come on to Jamaican music.

0:02:32.0 DM - Well how I came up, mi born into a family of musicians, so yu didn't have to search to be exposed to the music itself or musicians. Dancehall music of the late 80s, early 90s was really the first music I started listening to fi myself, and buying cassettes and tings fi myself. Round about the late 80s we started a little group called the Shepherds which was a group of artists children. .... (fill in later)....

0:03:38.9 DM - How I feel on stage when mi a perform, yu kno! Different show a carry different feelings an just likewise different days. So every day feel different, but some mi really love doing because dat's how I really got started in the music. I started doing shows before I began recording. So its yu kno wha a mean? We love do it, di next, when yu travelling and yu doing all of dese tings it makes the rest of hours in the day right. When yu actually get to du di show, it makes the other 22 or 23 hours of the day travelling around and doing whatever else worth, the travel.

0:04:21.6 DM - Well I tink, is a cycle, both music and society affects each other. Yu kno wha a mean? Cos the music reflects what going on in society and the music itself also now influences, especially young people, yu kno wha a mean? People kindda move like, people kindda behave like di music dem wi see tu. Yu kno wha a mean? In a sense fi di most part, so, music is important in that part, is a way fi communicate, yu kno! at the end a di day, regardless of what, yu kno, yu have a so called message or not, or whatever it is. But is a way to communicate cause we've seen that music has broken down many, many barriers, the social barriers, racial barriers, even language barriers, yu kno wha a mean?

0:05:20.0 DM - Me myself I am a Rasta so, therefore, my way of life is reflected not just in my music but in everything I do. So therefore it obviously is reflected, yu kno! Strongly in my music also.

0:05:44.7 DM - The spirit need the flesh an the flesh need the spirit so all of dem go han' in han'. Is not everyday, sometime yu waan fi have fun, sometimes you waan musician play and maybe dance all like a slow rockers ting, well me have different music fi different moods and different reasons and times, yu kno, everyting has its own place. So I don't, yu kno! I don't condemn any of it, I think that everything has its own place.

0:06:14.6 DM - ..... (fill in)..... Yeah, I tink so, not just miself tu, I think ther's various others who do it, but yeah! I think yu have a whole heap a, yeah man, yu have a whole heap a dancehall music that is spiritual.

Thank you etc.

## Appendix 19

LB & NW Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March (1986)

LB: Alright, to begin with right? you have – this really was originated by slaves, it came from Africa with the slaves to Jamaica, and over the years as we got modernized it became modified. Now Revivalism is a kind of breaking away from the slave tradition of working, that is, you know it was a deep cult in a way – it was a deep cult in a way with the slaves, then, as it became modernized it take on a kind of Christian attitude to it, until it become partly Christian partly Revival. Now the Revival aspect there are only certain sections of what the slaves used to do that we do now, but majority is based on Christianity.

H: Ok, so your, so, the part that you use is all based or influenced by Christianity?

LB: Yes, it' influence by Christianity

H: So could you tell the part that you don't use then, what is that called?

LB: Well, I for one do not know, know the part really, but mainly, the part that are not really of God, or that we think are not of God, we neglect them.

H: Ok, well could you just describe what your main beliefs are and how you go about them?

LB: Well our main belief, we believe one in God, the father God the son God the holy spirit. Now our main belief really is on the holy spirit of God, in that when Christ was leaving earth he told us that he will be sending a comforter to us Christians, that comforter being the holy spirit and we'll be taught by that spirit. Now the holy spirit we believe comes in different forms ...

mainly the holy spirit because - he promised us that w'll be taught by the spirit and we do believe that the spirit comes in different forms. Now that way you see the manifestation here, in our way of worship, being we are taught by the spirit we are taught in different forms because we do believe that it comes in different forms.

H: mmhum

LB: That way our orders come in, the 60 and the 61 order.

H: Ok, now the 60 and the 61, can you explain the difference between those? What is it when you talk about the 60 and 61?

NW: Now I think I'll come in at this point. Now the 60 is that you hmm, yu deal with angel, that is angel from above. Hmm during that process yu pu'down yu, yu stamp yu feet and move yu han', dat time yu dealing with only the angel, from above.

H: So yu stamp yu feet an' move yu han? So what about the use of instruments, because I know drums and things like that?

NW: Yeh, well de drums do entertain angel – de music of de drum entertain angel, and during that time yu have hmm, spirit visiting, like yu'd a have Miriam, Gabriel, Raphael, Lukibel,

LB: Michael

NW: Michael, St Theresa, things like those.

H: and each one of these spirits have a different characteristic?

NW: Yeh!

LB: Yes they do

NW: Right, and they do wear different emblem

LB: Yeh, and you can identify them by the different emblems that the particular person uses and the different way the particular person moves.

... Like, well Miriam now, Miriam being a, a spi, a 66 messenger, the, her, the people that really work with her

H: Hmm

LB: Mainly deal with water

H: Oh I see yeh ...

LB: ... Yu see? So St Michael, he is a flower messenger, yu might find that a person that work with St Michael deal with, works mainly with flowers. They, they also get healing properties from St Michael because he is also a healing messenger.

H: I heard you mention Gabriel, is that the same Gabriel that we always hear about in the bible?

LB: Yeah, the angel Gabriel

NW: Yeah

H: So what is his characteristic?

LB: Well, say Gabriel mainly he, he's a general messenger so he can give you any type of, of, of gift that the bible mention, he doesn't mean, work with any particular thing like Miriam might be a water messenger and Michael might be a healing messenger.

NW: Yu faan' out Gabriel, Gabriel even when yu working with Gabriel, those people blows a bugle, they mainly blows a bugle, like they would blow and things like that

H: I see

NW: ...an' mostly they would dress in khaki uniform

H: Now what about the 61?

NW: Hmm, well the 61 is a different from 60, the 61 yu deal with prophet. Like yu deal with prophet from the earth

H: So 60 is angel and 61 is prophet!

NW: Right,

H: ... and 61 is prophet?

NW: Prophet!

H: When yu say from the earth then what do you mean?

NW: Divine spirit from the earth

LB: That is Saints, gone before us...

NW: ... on before!

LB: We do believe in reincarnation and also we believe that Saints that have gone on before, they can manifest themselves through the spiritual order

H: So really are you saying then that prophets are more like ancestral spirits then?

LB: Exactly!

NW: Exactly!

H: I see, so those are ground spirits?

NW: Right! Those yu bow, yu don't stamp

LB: That's why yu see them today, they have this bowing motion!

H: Hmm

LB: That time you are taught by the prophet. They, while yu are doing that they, they, you are actually hearing from them and they teach yu things

H: So you actually hear from them like a voice a, a?

LB: Yes, they speak to you

NW: They speak to you naturally,



H: Hmm, I see

NW: Right! but at dat time yu have to be in the power, yu have to be in the power, moving in the power, to really see these people and to hear from them at that time

H: Now, yu know that a person who has been involved in the 60, can that person be involved in the 61 as well?

NW: Yes, Yes

LB: Yes,

NW: They call it a two-pole messenger, they call it a two pole...

LB: That person might be dealing with a messenger as well as a prophet

NW: ...an also a prophet

LB: Yu see? So when yu switch orders, that person's prophet might come in and they start to work the 61 order, just like if you are working the 61 order and yu switch orders, then the messenger takes over. Sometimes both of them work at the same time, but you do not work the same orders at the same time.

H: Yes, Oh, so the two would never combine?

LB: No, yu cannot combine

NW: ...No

LB: ...both orders at the same time

NW: If yu, if yu faain', from jumping 61 and from jumping 60 at the same time, it always contrary.

LB: Exactly,

NW: Caa yu faain out one have to stamp, an' yu faain out one bow. And yu have two different music

LB: ...yeah

NW: ...tu, one for 60 an' a different music for 61

LB: ...an' a different one for 61

H: ...Hmm

LB: If yu notice t'day too, when we where working, yu notice that during the 61 is mainly hymns that we sang.

H: Hmmm

LB: We generally use mainly sacred songs for 61 orders, while in 60 yu use music notes - you might also use the scale, the musical scale. If yu notice tu some of the cymbal songs which are sung it is done in the scale...

H: Ok, so the actual process of inducing the spirit, that is called cymbaling then?

LB: Nooo

H: ...because

LB: While working

H: Yeh, what is that called then?

LB: While working, that is the cymbaling, the singing whilst the stamping an' ting, that is the cymbal. The singing that goes on during that time.

H: Ok, now also, there is also the heavy breathing that goes on at that time, what do you call that? The groaning?

LB: The groaning

NW: ...groaning

H: Hmmm... that is to actually get yourself? What is that for then?

LB: Mainly it's a means of concentration.

H: Hmmm

LB: When you're communicating with the spirit yu need total concentration. Some people do it by just simply meditating - others like us the Revivalists, we do it by groaning

H: Yes, I see. Now today you were telling me about the travelling, that you were travelling

LB: Oh,

H: ...it started with, it started from round the back

LB: ...it started from round there and then it ends at the river

H: Yes, can you explain that whole process there and what actually happen today, what I was seeing?

LB: ...who want to start

NW: Well, at the back we actually have a sacrifice. Hmm, during that process yu kill the goat - an' we pray. During that time yu pray to God and yu offer a sacrifice as a thanks giving to God for what yu have passed through for many, for many years. Right?

H: Hmm...

NW: During that time we work with the prophet. Hmmm...

H: Hmmm, now, I don't mean to cut yu, but how does that fit in then, with the Christian belief then that after Christ no need blood sacrifice was really necessary. How does that really fit in?

LB: Well the bible tells us, right? that Christ came and he made himself a sacrifice for us, but at the same time it did not tell us that we should depart from what our ancestors were coming from. If yu notice in the bible ancestral beings, they offer sacrifices to God as a means of remission for sin...

H: ...but

LB: ...we do not offer sacrifices as remission for sins, we off, offer sacrifices for thanks giving to God. That's where the difference comes in.

H: Yes, ok. Well could you continue explaining that...

NW: Right, at that time now we have, bow, that mean we using 61 at that time. After finishing there, we leave to the river. That time now yu using the river prophet.

H: Hmm, I heard in one of the songs the woman sang about river mumma

NW: Eehi

H: Now I know that river mumma is out of, is like a folk tale

LB: Is a folklore thing,

H: Is a folk tale, so how does that all fit in

LB: Well, she was just referring to a particular river prophet. Yu see if yu river prophet might have been a lady, yu might refer to her as your river mother, what she was actually saying was river mother, but she was using our slang,

H: Yes...

LB: ...so she says river mumma

H: So that doesn't have any link whatsoever with the folklore then?

LB: No

NW: No

H: I see – so, so I notice that, at that time it was mainly the men who, who were in the spirit then

LB: Not exactly yu know, yu might find that the majority there then, who are working the river are men mainly because their prophet might have been a river prophet, that's not to say that the, the women who were around aren't spiritual, they are but their prophet might not have been river prophets, so they wouldn't be working in the river.

H: Yes I, I understand that but what I was saying is that the river, those controlled by the river tended to be mainly men, is that...

LB: No yu know, probably at this particular church, but other churches yu have mainly women being, because me, most of the river portions right now are river maids and the river maids are mainly ladies

H: And hmm, well once yu actually got into the water then, I notice that you went more or less one at a time, and one person would then come back and

LB: ...and take people under water?

H: ...it seem as if its through, the hmm relationship between the one who's possessed and somebody outside that would induce possession in the next person. Could yu explain that process to me?

LB: It's just that they enter by sequence really. Here...

NW: Yu go by sequence right. Hmm, for instance, I am the head river...

LB: For this church...

NW: For this church, right, I am the head river – master for that river up there. If I unable to enter that river, I have a son who enter the river before anybody else...

H: So your son would have...

NW: Right, my spiritual son would have to enter the river...

LB: So that's what you saw today...

NW: ...that's what yu saw today

LB: And then he by turn take in the other rivers. Now he can also question them...

NW: ...before they enter

LB: ...before they enter the river. So he was merely inviting them when he goes back for them, but at the same time if he wanted he could question them to find out really if they were really working with the river prophet, yu have to tell what, who yu river

prophet is and by what means yu get that portion and so forth before you enter the river

H: So, this questioning is done what? on a spiritual plane...

NW: Yes, spiritual, spiritual...

H: ...or physically?

LB: Spiritual basis, they communicate by unknowing tongues, through the spirit to one another

H: Alright, I see, like they speak the unknowing tongues now, is there always somebody around who will understand that?

NW: Yeh,...

LB: Yeh, there always is, if the person who is talking cannot answer, their leader or leadress...

NW: ...have to answer

LB: ...they would come and speak for them. There's always someone around who do understand.

NW: Yu know, yu know hmm, sometimes yu will have a, yu have a child and yu know yu hav' to grow dat child, right. Because I am the river master, that person, I have questions that person cannot ansa, right? Right there yu look at him or she as a babe...

H: Hmmm

NW: Ok, somebody answer for her or him and then, yu let them enter and yu try to teach them, along

H: I see. Now I notice he, they were using perfume, some spraying some throwing it over and you were also spewing out wine - onto, the other people around, so what does that mean there?

LB: It was just entertaining the prophets really

NW: Yeh mostly those prophets use wine an perfume

H: I see, then can you continue to explain what happen after that? After that one...

LB: What happen after the river episode

NW: After yu finish the river yu pray on and when yu prayer yu leave the river. Now we are entering now a different station. From yu leave the river an come out, yu are entering now, 60...

H: I see, so as you were coming into the church...

NW: Right, right, that mean we change off...

LB: ...yu switch order...

NW: ...a different order and we change now to 60

H: Hmmm

NW: So, dat time now you cross the scale orders, yu know like you'll go up the scale do ray me far? And tings like those. So yu find out a more meak and lonely movement, during

LB: The feet and the arms and the leg...

NW: Different beat and the arms moving...

LB: ...and yu notice the tempo was different...

NW: ...different

LB: ...the tempo kind of picks up because during the 61 yu sing mainly hymns, mainly spiritual hymns. During the 60 yu do sing spiritual hymns but yu sing them at a different tempo.

H: Yeh, hmm

LB: Hmmm, mainly! This is mainly because the 60 messengers, they generally use like instruments, like the timbrel, Miriam uses her timbrel, there's Gabriel with his bugle and all of those lighter instruments so yu get a lighter ting a lighter tempo to, to the music. That's the main reason for the movement, hm...

H: Hmmm

LB: Yu have the movement being different...

H: Yeh and probably, 61 yu went to the 60 then. And then from the 60...

NW: We close off...

LB: We close there

H: Yes, but then, what about the Indian spirit, becau' I, I know

LB: Oh, that section now, a particular, yu might have a part of the 60 order being through the Indian, the Indian city also...

H: Oh, so it wasn't a separate thing?

LB: If yu notice in the first section, the first section when they went to the Indian city it was kind of different from the way they ended.

H: Hmm, yes...

LB: Why? Because the first section was the 60 Indian city. They use that same type of tempo that we use in the 60 order, but the part when the music gets more heavier, when yu have the drums beating more heavier, yu have the clapping, then yu have more instruments coming in, an' yu have the people moving, faster movements with spinning?

H: Hmmm

LB: That, they had reached back to the 60 order in the Indian city.

H: I see, now also the, the part where they were doing a, they were inching with their feet almost like a Kumina movement...

LB: That is a particular city in the Indian city. They where, what happen they pass through stations in the Indian city and nation. The part that is slightly link to the Kumina aspect, they were dealing with the Calcutta Indians then, yu know the type a wilder Indians...

NW: Those are mostly Africans,...

LB: Hmm...

NW: Tis a mostly African movement

H: Oh I see, and then when yu switch, there were some where their hands definitely...

LB: The maraj? Yu, yu might have them go to the maraj, the, the, they sing in maraj and move like maraj Indians

NW: Those are strictly 60...

H/LB: Hmm

NW: When yu touching maraj, yu moving off a strictly 60 order

H: Hmm, and then

NW: ...and then yu hav hmm...

H: then, when yu had the cloth over you, that time

NW: Hmm

H: ...that was the maraj?

NW: Right

LB: Hmhhh, then yu can move also to the Hindu city where they move and behave like Hindu.

H: Yeh... and then yu know the prayer that , that hmm, is it the queen?

LB: Yeh, she was praying in Hindustani. Now, whenever yu enter a Hindu city and whenever yu praying, yu hav to pray in an Indian language. Yu might pray in any particular Indian nation that you might to be working with. If your prophet happen to be a Calcutta Indian, then you might, that person might pray in the Calcutta language, yu prophet might happen to be a Hindu prophet, yu pray in the Hindustani

H: So, have you ever had any Indian who hav come along and been able to recognize the language?

LB: Yes, we do...

NW: ...Yes!

LB: Couple years ago we use to have, we were featured really in our heritage system and yu had people from different countries coming down, they actually recognized their languages, some of them even recognize their writing because some of our people do get the gift of writing also in different languages

H: And that is within, whilst controlled by the spirit?

NW: Yes, yes

LB: Yeh, during the actual outpour of the spirit. When they're in the spirit they do this, normally, they're not in the spirit they cannot...

NW: They cannot

H: Well, also within the church then, could you explain about the different roles for I know you all hav different...

LB: Yeh, ok, let me start with the...

H: First of all, could you just run through the order then of the leaders...

LB: Ok, our church is run really by, it is a set up where yu have different, different officers set up to do particular duties. Now the head is the Bishop, he has two pastors to assist him, then there are two deacons and a deaconess. Yu have an evangelis' a missionary, a leader...two leaders and a leadress, then you have elders. We have twelve elders at the moment, yu have water mothers and yu have a general secretary which I am, then going down yu might have have different departments such as Sunday school department. Now yu might know what a missionary and evangelis' does. Now the people yu yu might not be familiar with are the leaders and leadresses, water mothers. Now the leaders and leadresses are mainly the spiritual lead, the



spiritual heads of the church. When it comes to the spiritual asp, aspects of the church, they are the ones who are at the front...

H: I see,...

LB: They can communicate with whatever spirits that come into the church, they are able to recognize whatever spirit come in and whatever is going on in the church...

H: Hmm

LB: ...where a normal officer cannot do that, if they're not spiritual...

H: I see...

LB: ...the water mothers, they deal mainly with getting the particular stations in the church fix. Like there's a water mother's table there, yu have some corners here that the water mothers and elders do, and the elders also take part in baptism...

H: Hmm

LB: ...where they take the candidates to the water to be baptize, the bishops and pastors do the baptism and perform the other necessary clergy, clerical duties, like the christening of babies, ordaining of officers, signing up papers and so forth, they do that aspect.

H: Hmm

LB: ...Now all of us, our main job is to spread the gospel of Christ

H: Yes, so let me just ask yu something now, those who have the high positions do they have to have the spirit?

LB: ...the spirit? No

NW: No...

LB: They do not...

H: ...so is not everybody in the church have it

LB: No, everybody would not have it and at the same time everybody can have it, because nobody tells how God outpours his spirit. Now if the holy ghost comes in and wants to take charge of everybody, nobody has any control over that.

H: Hmm, I see, so what is your function?

NW: A leader

H: You're a leader?

NW: A spiritual leader

H: Hmm, cause I that is why you were more or less in charge in all the different stage?

NW: Hmm

H: Now you said that everybody can have a spirit ruling them, but can some people have more than one spirit ruling them?

LB: Not more than one spirit, some people can have more than one, portion

H: So what do you mean by a portion

LB: Ok, he works the river, he is also an Indian, he's also a healer. It depends really on the messenger that you have and also the prophet that you work with. His messenger, his main messenger is Mirian, therefore he deals directly with water and he's also a healer and a discerner. His prophet happens also to be an Indian and also his prophet works the river also, so he ends up working the river and he is also and Indian...

H: I see, so that means he would cover the main areas then!

NW: Yes, main areas

LB: Hmhhh...Now you might have some other people who their prophet might just be a river prophet so they only work river...

NW: ... only, work river

H: Caus I notice some of them once it pass the river stage they dropped out...

LB: Right...

H: ...and you know, other people came in at different stages. Now how do you get the portions then? Is it the length of time yu, yu serve in the church or...

LB: No...

NW: No

H: ...the strength of your belief or what?

LB: No...

H: ...what is it?

LB: ...once you're walking truly with God and he outpour his spirit on yu, then, yu receive messenger or yu might receive a prophet or whatever portion that prophet or messenger work...

NW: Is like some...

LB: all will be passed on to yu

NW: ...is like some go on de groun', some go on de groun', some wi get it in dem bed, some wi get it jus' by outpur in de church and some wi jus' get by jus' walking

H: Hmm, now yu know like, if yu are actually a member of the church an' yu invite a visitor along and the spirit is moving, would the visitors as well, is it possible that a visitor could get...

NW: Yes

H: get hit by the spirit?

LB: if that visitor happen to be a Christian

NW: Yes, yes...

LB: ...because the holy spirit..

H: ...even somebody who isn't a Christian? Yu know like how some, somebody can

NW: Well, it do happen...

LB: ...it do happen, but...

NW: ...it do happen...

LB: ... at the same time I believe is really conviction, more than the spirit outpouring with, on the person. Why? Because God spirit does not move on a dirty person or in a dirty person, not that I am saying that a person who is not a Christian is dirty, right? If you are sinful, if you are in sin, the spirit will not move on you unless it is convicting you

H: Right, yes...

LB: ...yu si, so if a person, if I invite somebody here now and the person, say he receive the spirit and is not a Christian, that person would automatically become a Christian after...

NW: After!

LB: ...why? Because the spirit is convicting the person at the same time...

H: Hmm

LB: ...while it is moving on the person. Now I can invite a Christian from another church here and they are filled with the spirit here...

H: Hmm

LB: ...it does happen... So the person does not have to be a member of this church to be filled with the spirit here. Neither do they have to be in the church for a, a...

NW: ...period of time...

LB: ...period of time before they can receive it

NW: I can be here for 23 years, 30 years

LB: ...and still do not receive the spirit

NW: ...and still don't receive the holy ghost. And, an' a next person can jus come today or tomarra or a t'ree weeks or a year an' they receive

H: Yeh, now, could yu explain the main difference then between a healer an' a Obeahman? Because some people think that they are one in the same thing

LB: ...one in the same thing

NW: No, well I believe a physician... the difference is a obeahman could kill, could try to kill, try to hurt people an' try to do de worst ting...

LB: an' usually...

NW: ...meanwhile a healer, a healer, if you are sick he try to pray to God, that God will hol' yu back and tings like dat. A healer is different off of a obeahman

LB: ...an' also a obeahman, he uses his work mainly for profit or profit leaning, that is he uses it mainly to exploit people for money...

H: Oh I see

LB: ...whilst the real spiritual healer does not do that...

H: Hmmm

LB: ...if yu want to give a donation fine...

NW: Fine...

LB: ...towards his work fine, but he does not really go out and say, well I cannot help you if yu cannot give...

NW: Meanwhile yu fin' a obeahman wi do yu dat ... a physician don't haffi do dat...

LB: 'im go exactly by God's power

NW: A obeahman only know oil and does tings, all a physician wi use is a bottle of olive oil an...

H: Hmm, well can you explain a little bit about the two areas known as, like myal and obeah? What's the difference between the two then? Because I've, well...

NW: Well the myal mostly fall in Kumina

H: Hmmm

NW: Right? Mostly fall, fin' in Kumina, an' I t'ink myal is even a little different off a ... even though yu might trance, yu might trance, but yu dealing with different personality. Myal is more different more near to Kumina

H: Myal has been described to me as a state of hmm, possession, when, but it, it was described as the good, the good while obeah is the bad, so what yu saying then, myal is'nt involved in Revival...

NW: No, no!

H: ...at all...

LB: Not at all...

NW: No

LB: ... we do not work that order...

NW: Different!

LB: ...it's, it's mainly linked with Kumina, an' at the same time myal, you're in a trance where, where as the obeahman uses spirits to do his job. When you're inna myal you're, you're just in a trance. You do not know what yu doing, the obeahman knows exactly what he's doing

H: I see, yeah, hmm, well can you also explain to me that within the church, the hmm different churches, the link, if there's a link with the Kumina and Revivalism?

LB: Hmm, some of what the Kumina people do yu might see, it in some Revival churches, you do have some Revival churches that work the Kumina order, not on a regular basis, just when they have tables like we have here now, they might have an extra night for their Kumina order, but generally a Revival church does not work Kumina. Kumina is a separate and apart thing to itself

H: Ok, what is the main difference between the Zion and Poco or Revival and Poco?

NW: Well, Revival is the same thing dem call poco

H: Hmmm

LB: Is jus a slang or a or a lip lead...

NW: ...it is jus a slang, dem jus say Poco

LB: ...the Revival dem jus call it Pocomania is really...

NW: ...but Revival, dat mean yu revive from Bedward onto righteousness

H: Hmm, so what...

NW: but is jus a slang an' dem call it Poco

H: So Poco isn't actually...

NW: No, dem jus call it...

H: a body itself?

LB: No, is jus a nickname or a slang

H: Ok, thank yu for the inter... Yu know like outside yu have the, yu have the pool an' yu have the different flags of different colours? Now yu can jus explain the significance of the pool and the significance of the flags and the different colours?

NW: Well the flags, the flags hmm, dat yu see out it represent the different messengers...

H: Hmm

NW: Right? Well the pool now, becau yu have lots of people who work river here, so we have de pool to entertain those messengers

LB: An' prophets

NW: And prophets

H: Yu wouldn't always find a pool in all Zion churches?

NW: No, well yu have some people do not work river, so from they don't river, work river they wouldn't have a pool...

LB: And then a Zion church would not have a pool mainly because a pool is mainly used in a 61 order and Zion church just work 60 order

H: So that the difference between Revival and Zion then?

LB: No, Revival is a combination of Zi, of the two orders 60 and 61

H: Oh I see, so when they use the term Revival is a combination, but when they say Zion...

LB: Is jus 60 order

H: I see

NW: Jus strictly 60 from...

LB: Jus strictly 60

NW: ...yu hear Zion

LB: If yu work a 61 order, yu go to a Zion church, try do not work it there because they do not work it there...

NW: ...yu gwain have hmm

LB: They will consider you as being contrary to what they are working

H: Just contrary?

NW: Yes

H: Is jus, so what decides what orders they work? How do they decide? Is that a decision that can be taken by, the leaders or...?

LB: It can be taken by the particular leaders of the particular body. Now le...

NW: Atleas, atleast during that time, that church, it leave to the foundation order...

LB: That the church is built upon

NW: ...that the church is built on. If that foundation put on a strictly 60 order...

LB: They only work 60

NW: They only work 60

LB: Now when we say orders we mean, hmm different numbers that are set in the church, if just set in a 60 number or if its, or if the different patrons are jus set to entertain only messengers, then yu only work 60...

NW: Jus 60

LB: ...in that church

H: So, it would ... it would

NW: An if...

H: ...be a case of either working jus 60 or working 60 and 61? Would yu ever find a case where somebody ju, jus work 61?

LB: No, majority of the people who work 61 also work 60

NW: After, after...

LB: After time they, they, they, they get to work the 60 order also

NW: Because really 60 is really the key for Zion

H: 60 is the key? I see, now yu know hmm

NW: Spiritually!

H: Sometimes when yu go to individuals who are involved within the, Zion and Revivalism yu always see they will set a table where they have the bowl of water an' de glasses an' like certain flowers and things...

LB: Yeh!

H: ...now what, what is that for then?

LB: Each...

NW: Each

LB: Each, each object represent a particular station. An each object represent a particular messenger or prophet

H: Each object re, represent a particular station?

LB: Mmm

H: What do yu mean a particular station?

LB: A particular station might mean a river station, a healing station or any other type or, of gift that are given by the spirit

NW: Now, for instance, looking over there, wheryu see those glass and those jars and yu have ... that represent a physician

H: A physician table

NW: Hmhhhmm, a physician, that mean is a healing order

LB: Dat now, yu have a tub with and glasses...

NW: Those are consecrated



LB: Those are consecrated and they are only used for spiritual use...

NW: On special people

LB: On, exactly, work on that table...

NW: Not any an' anybody

LB: ...that represent a physician order or a physician number

H: I see

NW: An' dat numba dat yu see ova dere is strictly 60

LB: Dats jus a 60 number

H: 60!

LB: Right

H: I see, now yu use, yu use the hmm, what is it? Incense, that burning?

LB: Yeh

H: Why yu use that then?

LB: As a means of consecration. We use incense, canango water and hmm olive oil for consecration. We consecrate everything that is used in the church. Every object that is used in the church for worship is consecrated. We use mainly canango water and incense to do the consecration

H: And the ni, the colours that are used in the church, now - would it be a different colour used on different nights? Because, how do you decide what colour yu using on a particular night?

NW: Well now, yu see tonight, is last night, hmm last Sunday night, hmm, it was a thanksgiving table, so we use blue and white, which represent yu know, peace and love...

H: That was Sunday night?

NW: Dat was Sunday, we use it also las' night. Tonight now, hmm, we use the red because it is sacrifice ... we use it to represent ...

H: I see, so hmm, when yu say yu use it to represent that messenger, is it a case then, that yu, you'll be calling mainly on that messenger?

NW: Yes tonight,...

LB: Yes mainly

H: So yu could use the colours as a means of calling to one particular messenger rather than another?

LB: No

H: Or yu never k now which one will come?

LB: No yu would, it depends on what yu really want and what yu really set your orders for...

NW: Still, yu have, yu have different messengers...

LB: At the same time the others are coming in

NW: ...right!

LB: ...cause they have other people that are ruled by different types of messengers and prophets...

NW: But yu use one mainly

LB: ...so their prophets and messengers will still be visiting them and will still be in the church and if they should come around they will have to entertain them

H: Hmhhh

LB: So, so is not that if, if the sacrifice messenger come we jus gonna entertain that messenger or prophet alone and forget the others. The others come in we have to entertain them all...

NW: Right, is jus like how yu see the flowers, it could be pure red...

LB: Exactly

NW: ...but we also have white an' pink

LB: An' pink, yeah

NW: ...representing different messenger then

H: Now yu know the movement in the church around the table, I notice there that people go either way, some go clockwise, some anti-clockwise...

NW: Hmmm

H: I know like, for example I've been to Kapo's church and everybody always goes anti-clockwise, is there a set thing to that or?

LB: No yu nu, I guess is mainly what the leader of the particular assembly want. He might say well I want this thing to be done in this particular manner, so yu do it in that particular manner

For his main personal reason, but is not really a general thing where yu have churches, hmm, going a particular direction when they are worshipping

H: I see

US Female: May I ask a question? Last time when I was here, you had symbols, circle symbols on the ground and you had the numbers 1 through 9, they was then each number you had, it was hmm they were marcus time were they not?

NW: Hmm it was not hor, it wasn't a horoscope, hmm yu have the circle and yu have a small wheel inside, right? That represent the, the wheel that yu see inside represent the wheel of, yu know a wheel?

US F: Uhu

NW: ...suppose to have on a axle? An' also the rubber, is a style jus like me and de number, the numbers represent, yu hmm, first time yu have churches...

LB: And the churches usual call themselves bands by using a number

NW: ...usual, usually use numbers, we call dem number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 up to 9, we use dose number. One, one number which is not working now in Revival is t'ree, dat die out, everybody from dat die out

LB: An' if you might remember I told yu from in the beginning that this is coming from ancestor days, now that's what the slaves usually do, they never generally give their church a name, they jus call their body a band and that particular band it give them a number...

H: Yeah

LB: Now the particular band number three, that band has completely phased out...yu have...

NW: So yu don't use that number

LB: Yu have other churches now that work off a particular band coming from that, from those days who are Revival churches now and they still give their church a name, so - is only us Revival will know that, well ok that church is coming from say bands number four, so with them we say alright that's number four bands, but another person might say well that's Fellowship Spiritual Church or whatsoever the church name might be, they might not know they're coming from bands number four...

H: So yu say that bands number three died out completely. Does that mean a whole part of, a whole part of your hmm, ritual has gone?

LB: No...

NW: No

H: ...or what?

LB: ...no, is just that in those days the leaders, they really didn't have a second or they never usually teach their children to take over from them. So if you were the leader, like in bands three now, you were the leader for bands three, you die out, you die...

NW: Everybody just drop

H: ...nobody don't tek over...

LB: ...the whole band cyaan go because there was nobody to keep it...

NW: ...right - nobody don't get on to keep it together, because of...

LB: ...yu had them going to different assembly and assemble themselves with another church

H: Now, I know, like hmm, like how Kapo is, is referred to as patriarch father within his section – hmm, do you have anybody like that who is in charge of the whole of Revivalism or Zionists?

LB: Hmm, Revival churches are divi, hmm, not really divided, but they cluster in small groups, in that, like our body we have about three or five churches in oir body with one bishop to father that. Yu might have another set of Revival churches coming together, 15 or 16 and they stay together with one Bishop, with different pastors to run the separate churches...

NW: Even, even if they have more than one, one Bishop, but...

LB: ...but yu have one tek over all a dem

H: Now how, how do these groupings come? Is that working from the bands number? Is that what decide becau yu...

LB: No

NW: No

H: ...yu say yu have 3 or 5, how did yu get that 3 or 5?

LB: Well yu might have people from other Revival churches visit our church, and they might like our way of worship or they might like the type of principle that we set, so they decide they like their church to join up with us to adapt or to work along those principles. So they become a member of our body. The same thing might happen to another Revival churches, but like the nominal churches where yu have the

Baptists coming together as one group with one archbishop, we do not have that in Revival – business

H: I see, yes. So like, when they're all coming together that would be, would that, is there a specific reason for that as well, like to make up numbers or what?

LB: No, they do not actually come together and worship in one church yu know, yu have, yu still have a different and apart church from us, they are referred as really branches of the church...

H: Oh I see

LB: the church being the headquarters...

NW: being the head quarters

H: Oh I see

LB: ...they don't actually leave their building and come here

H: So at no time they'd ever come her?

LB: Yes they do...

NW: Yeh, yu have certain time they always come in during hmm, conference, convention an'

LB: Yeah, we have conference and convention where they come in and we discuss church business, we worship together and so...

Side B

LB: The Indians celebrate for a parti, if they're having a feast they generally have it in a type of celebration - type first, where hmm, the Indians come out they might dance, they might speak with one another, they might do all sort of things that they do in their way of celebrating, after which they eat the feast

H: I see

LB: ...so that's exactly what yu might see tonight, but hmm, the circle that she was talking about, is not really a set order where yu have to set a circle if yu having a feast, yu don't have to, if yu want to set a circle and lay out yu numbers yu can, but yu can do it in this form because its really a feast, so yu set yu table with your plates...

H: Oh, so that's why the table is in, rather than the circle now?

NW: Hmm

LB: Exactly! Yu can do either, yu can build yu table or yu can set yu circle. That's why we set that particularly over there for the Indian. The circle generally tell yu well alright that's the Indian. This wouldn't tell yu anything so we have to set a side order

H: I see

Remainder of tape is Revival service song

Come go with me,  
Come go with me,  
Although we are going away to that place over there  
Blessed savior, come go with me

## **Appendix 20.**

### **001 Interview with Latonya Style and Global Bob\_Dancehall Origin 18.11.2017**

0:22:23.0: LS - Yu haffi inna JA to create a JA dance - a lot of the music talking about sex, we imbrace sex in Jamaica, we not going to shun it we not going to hide it. If the song say wine pan di gyal, yu not going to be doing doing a gun step, yu gonna be stabbing and jooking arr, so that's why the daggering evolved and that was just like dry sex, just showing how Jamaican like it.

0:23:17.4: LS - We not hiding it, we not throwing it under a carpet. So they express it in their body, yu kno they express it. They're not gonna fight eachother but they'll dance and show it in their body, so everything about dancehall is about what's happening in the society, what's happening with each other. When we create steps, we create it based on what's happening. (Explains about 'Vex Complex' dance based on friends anger with her man)

How you feel inside when dancing?

0:33:49.6: GB - For me, its a bret (breath) taking experience that, words are not there enough to explain it fully, but in depth, I can tell youo that, I go in a nex dimation. Its a soulfull experience, its a spiritual move. Its a movement that I dont understan it either. For example when I sit here now, as opposed to when I start teaching, is two different persons, because now I'm jus easy and calm. I go wid de, jus like what 'H' was telling you, wid de, when your body makes that transition, if I'm dance, if I'm doing an aggressive dance yu wi get a different attitude as oppose, if I'm doing whatwe call flava dance, mean de smooth dance, you'll get a different expression from me, but in terms of my body, I completely leave my body an enter into a spiritual realm. Dis why even before I start to teach, I say to my class, it takes more internalpower than external. Because to do old skool, yu have to understan it mentally first, before you can physically do it, because this is what is moving the organs, inside your body. (he explains when students finish dancing and panting for breath)

0:35:07.0: GB - because your spirit doesn't understan how to pace itself as yet. So dancehall its about the soul, its about the spirit, yu know yu have to understan dis because yu have to memba, as Latonya was telling you, it came from out of the

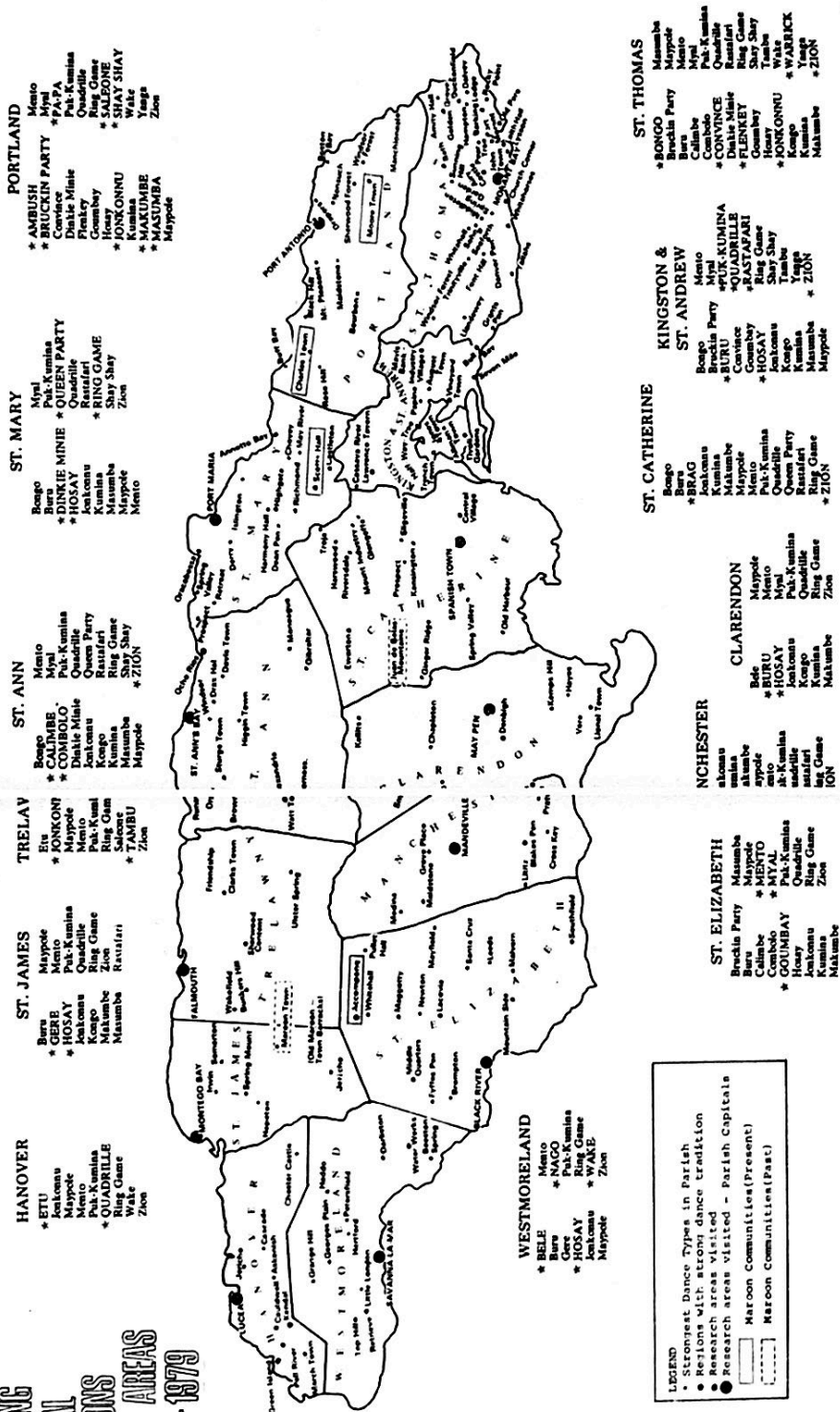
struggles, poverty, so we have spiritual, fight, battles going on, so when you enter this space yu have to understand it.



# Appendix 21

Ryman's map of Jamaican African/neo-African dances

## MAP SHOWING TRADITIONAL DANCE REGIONS AND RESEARCH AREAS VISITED 1975-1979



## Appendix 22.

Stanley-Niaah table of dancehall dances

TABLE 5.1  
Chronology of Major Dance Moves, 1986–2009

1986–89	cool an' deadly, rocking dolly, water pumpee, horseman scabby, heel an' toe, bubble, pedal an' wheel, body move, shoulder move, bounce, duck, jump an' spread out, stuck, wine an' go down, get flat, bubble, one foot skank, della move
1990–91	crab, head top, prang, poco man jam
1991–92	bike back, big it up, roun' di worl', santa barbara, bogle
1992–93	imitation bogle, butterfly, armstrong, bruk wine
1993–94	worl' dance, tatti, soca bogle, position, limbo, kung fu
1994–95	mock di dread, body basics, a capella
1995–96	erke, go go wine, ol' dog

## Appendix 22 Cont.

Stanley-Niaah table of dancehall dances cont.

### DANCEHALL

1996-97	sketel
1997-98	mister bean, pelpa, the flip
1998-99	jerry springer
2000-01	angel, screechy
2001-02	l.o.y. (lords of yard), zip it up, log on
2002-03	online, drive-by, curfew (taliban), tall up tall up, higher level, party dance, wave, karate or martial art, blazay, row like a boat, pon di river pon di bank, signal di plane, chaplin, parachute, fan dem off, propellar, hand cart, shake dem off, elbow dem, rock away, nah nuh head
2003-04	shelly belly, internet, gallop, crazy hype, jiggy, thunderclap, fall the rain, hop the ferry, scooby doo, shankle dip
2004-05	chaka chaka, chaka belly, sesame street, wacky dip, out an' bad, willy bounce, summer bounce, spongebob, back to basics
2005-06	bad man forward, gangsta rock, tick tock, swing i' weh, ova di wall, stookie
2006-07	mad a road, live red, craigy bounce, bounty/killla walk, killa swing, swing song, prezi bounce, spread out, march out, dutty wine, hoola hoop, beyoncé wine, hot f/wuk, raging bull
2007-08	tek weh yu self, drunkin' dance, drop dead, rollercoaster, helicopter, earthquake, statue of liberty, energy, rum ram, no linga, sweep, gully creeper, 90s rock
2008-09	daggering, nuh behaviour, summer bounce, skip to ma lou

## Appendix 23

Neila Banks and Christopher Walker table of dancehall dances

**Table 3.2 List of Dancehall Dances**

1980s	1. Cool an' deadly	8. Booty shake	14. Scabbie
	2. Rub a dub	9. Pedal an' wheel	15. Get flat
	3. Leggings	10. Skank	16. Charlie horse
	4. Wine and bubble	11. Stuck	17. General trees
	5. Ticktock	12. One foot skank	18. Della move
	6. Rent a tile	13. Water pumpie	19. Heel an' toe
	7. Roun' di worl'		
1990s	20. Butterfly	31. Peppa seed	42. Handi-cap
	21. Bogle	32. Mock di dread	43. Heel and toe
	22. Body basics	33. Prang (pram)	44. Nanny
	23. Turtle	34. Pelpa	45. Bashment
	24. Whip	35. Worl' dance	46. Chicago Bull
	25. LOY	36. Limbo	47. Trinity
	26. Boomshackalak	37. Position	48. Nutty Buddy
	27. Jerry Springer	38. Batty rider	49. Head top
	28. Angel	39. Skettel boom	50. Erkle
	29. Santa Barbara	40. Wild out	51. Go-go wine
	30. Hottie hottie	41. Armstrong	52. Bruk Up
2000s	53. Umbrella	68. Jiggy	82. Wash weh
	54. Handcart	69. Weh di weh di	83. Back to basics
	55. Mission Impossible	70. Iverson bounce	84. Formula
	56. Shizzle ma nizzle	71. Exit	85. VIP
	57. Chop out di grass	72. Defence	86. Online
	58. Fan dem off	73. Tun yu roll and clear yu heart	87. Matrix
	59. Drive by	74. Scooby Doo	88. Log on
	60. Gangsta step	75. Sponge Bob	89. Hop di ferry
	61. Reel rock	76. Sesame Street	90. Hotty hotty
	62. Black peppa	77. Big Bird	91. In har heart
	63. Tambourine	78. Air Force One	92. Matrix
	64. Flowahs a bloom	79. Rain a fall	93. Zip it up
	65. Sunshine	80. Dew rain	94. Pon di river
	66. Thundaclap	81. Hard rain	95. Kick dem out
	67. Thump di sky		
			(continued)

Table 3.2 (continued)

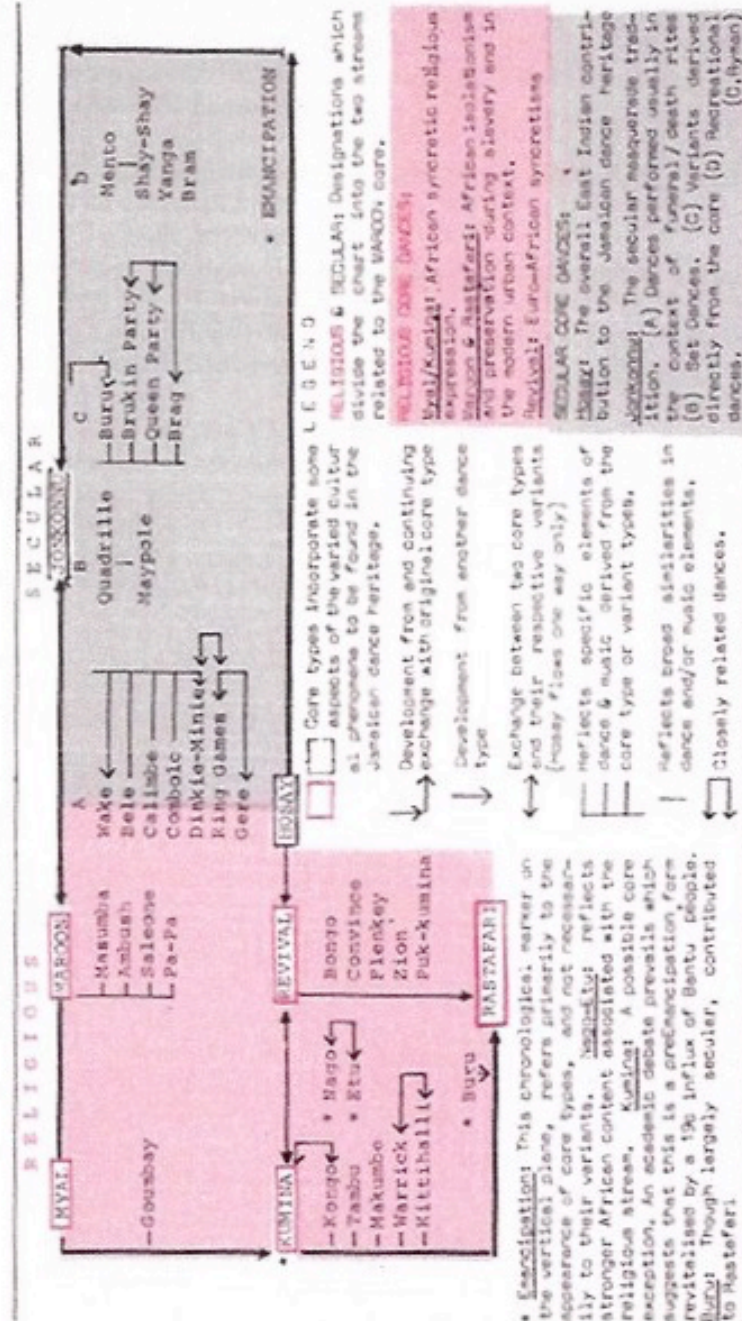
2000s	96. Di wave	116. Propella	135. In har heart
	97. Row the boat	117. Hot 97	136. Willie bounce
	98. Tattie	118. 3 pointer	137. Wacky dip
	99. Signal di plane	119. Chaplin	138. Tek buddy
	100. Anaconda	120. Head nuh good	139. Pray
	101. Screechie	121. Over di wall	140. Badda dance
	102. Pop di collar	122. Out a road	141. Out an' bad
	103. Diwali	123. Summer bounce/ Walk wid di bounce	142. Raging bull
	104. Tall up	124. Crazy hype	143. Rhum ram
	105. Higher level	125. Shankle dip	144. Stookie
	106. Gi dem a run	126. Ova' di wall	145. Hula hoop
	107. Parachute	127. Chakka chakka	146. Hot wuk
	108. Blahzay	128. Chakka Belly	147. Dutty wine
	109. Elbow dem	129. Swing sang	148. Tall up
	110. Shake dem off	130. Spread out	149. Bounty walk
	111. Roc-a-way	131. March out	150. Killa swing
	112. Egyptian	132. Part di crowd	151. Tek weh yuself
	113. Shelly belly	133. Mad run	152. Roller coaster
	114. Swim by	134. Look outta road	153. Helicopter
	115. Drive by/Bentley		

Compiled by Neila Ebanks and Chris Walker.



# Appendix 24

Ryman's core types



## Appendix 25

From: Former Dancer

Subject: Our encounter with the legendary dancehall dancer! Boggle!!!

Date: 8 November 2017 at 01:07

To: [kwame\\_h@hotmail.com](mailto:kwame_h@hotmail.com)

One Saturday afternoon after a vigorous rehearsal with the maestro of the art of African dance! H. Paton.

We decided to go to a nightclub in New Kingston area! Called The Asylum nightclub. Back then this was one of the baddest Club in Kingston.

We got there after midnight and the vibes was right. Music was pumping the dance floor was covered with dancehall lovers, moving to tracks of the latest dancehall hits.

Boggle and his entourage was there, not sure if John hype was with him but he had some tuff dancers with him. All I remember hearing Boggle say "a who dah brendda da? H was on the dance floor a done the place, I don't think he realized that everybody in the club was watching him.

Boggle say "blood clot" a who dat!!!? A wah kind a move dat!!!?

Dam moves yah badddd no blood clot!!!.

Boggle walk over and introduce himself to H and said mi woulda love fe lean dem moves da, a wha yu call it?.

Bro that's all I remember, if I remember anything else I'll link yu.

Blessings iyah, love and respect mi bredda.

Former Dancer

## **Appendix 26.**

### **The Jamaican National Anthem**

Eternal Father bless our land,  
Guard us with Thy Mighty Hand,  
Keep us free from evil powers,  
Be our light through countless hours.  
To our Leaders, Great Defender,  
Grant true wisdom from above.  
Justice, Truth be ours forever,  
Jamaica, Land we love.  
Jamaica, Jamaica, Jamaica land we love.

Teach us true respect for all,  
Stir response to duty's call, strengthen us the weak to cherish,  
Give us vision lest we perish.  
Knowledge send us Heavenly Father,  
Grant true wisdom from above.  
Justice, Truth be ours forever,  
Jamaica, land we love.  
Jamaica, Jamaica, Jamaica land we love.



<b>Appendix 27. African Dancehall Artists</b>			
Country	Male Artists	Female Artists	Groups
Botswana	Chantty Natural		
Côte d'Ivoire	DJ Arafat Kajeem		Ras Goody & Negromuffin
Ethiopia	Jonny Ragga		
Gambia	ENC Benjamin Stalwart		
Ghana	Obrafour Samini Sarkodie (Michael Owusu Addo) Shatta Wale (Bandana) Stonebwoy Iwan Willing Wanna	Kaakie Karamanti MzVee AK Songstress	
Kenya	Wyre Red San Fireson Bantu Levysill Bafu Chafu Jonny Bayata		Baldonz Necessary Noize (m&f)
Kenya/Uganda			East African Bashment Crew or East African Reggae Bashment Crew (m&f)
Malawi	Blasto Mafunyeta		C.o.B Connection
Mauritania			994 Crew

Namibia	King Faizel MC Gazza		
Nigeria	Daddy Showkey Daddy Fresh Squeeze Burna Boy Patoranking Whizkid		Mad Melon and Mountain Black R2Bees
Senegal	N'Mo King Lhota		
Sierra Leone	Ragga Spice King Hamin		
South Africa	Mandoza Teba		H2O
Tanzania	Deddy Klex Dully Sykes		Scorpion Grils X Plastaz
Uganda	Bebe Cool Bobi Wine Chameleon(e) (also known as Jose or Joe Chameleone) Ragga Ben Ragga Pimpy		
Zambia	Leo Muntu		
Zimbabwe	Winky D Guspy Warrior King Shaddy Cello Culture Jah Prayzah King Labash Freeman	Lady Bee Lady Squanda	

Artists sourced from:

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<http://allafrica.com/stories/201208230438.html>

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<http://www.flyglobalmusic.com/2005/va-african-rebel-music-roots-reggae-and-dancehall/>