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THE CONSUMPTION OF CALYPSO MUSIC IN TRINIDAD.
ABSTRACT.

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This thesis will explore, through the use of ethnographic and historical data, the nature of calypso and the functions it has served in its host society. Ultimately it will show how the music fits into, and has evolved within its social context, and the effect it can have on social processes. It will show, through example, what may be termed, the "power" of music. It will not concern itself with the process of creating music, or how it is performed, but rather will look at how it is consumed and transformed through consumption.

There are ten chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter discusses the theories and literature relating to Caribbean and Trinidadian society, music consumption and carnival, that have had a significant influence on the research and its presentation. The second chapter comprises a brief political and social history of Trinidad and an ethnography composed of the area and members of the family with whom the researcher resided. The third chapter presents a history of calypso and carnival in context, while the fourth chapter discusses the nature of calypso stressing its underlying dualism and highlighting evidence of present day attitudes.

The rest of the thesis shows the impact that calypso has on different facets of Trinidadian society such as gender and ethnicity. It will also show how it structures itself through competition and has been structured as a commodity. This will lead to the crux of the thesis which, in the final chapter, will concentrate solely on its consumption. This shows how consumption can lead to the music itself taking on secondary meanings through its use in advertising and politics, for example, and highlights instances where calypso music has had a direct influence on social and political processes.
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CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.

The thesis is essentially a study of the social consequences of music and its consumption. Its approach, therefore, will depart from the tradition of looking at music as music; that is, it will not essentially concern itself with the creative processes of making music, or how it is performed, but rather will show how the music fits into, and has evolved with, Trinidadian society. It will concentrate on providing the social context for the consumption of the music, before then evaluating the influence it has on social processes. To do this it will look at how calypso structures itself through competition (chapter 9), how it has been structured as a commodity and will highlight the impact that calypso can have on different facets of Trinidadian society, and how these can lead to the music taking on secondary meanings. It takes the view that; "Music is interrelated with the rest of culture' and that it therefore 'can and does shape, strengthen, and channel social, political, economic, linguistic, religious, and other kinds of behavior" (Merriam 1964:15); or, as Finnegan 1989:6) points out, that "... music can equally well be seen as playing a central part not just in urban networks but also more generally in the social structure and processes of our life today."  

This thesis will examine, through the use of historical and ethnographic data, the nature of calypso and the functions it has served in its host society. There is less emphasis on the fundamental nature of music per se, or with its performance in the manner of, for example, John Blacking (1976) or Ruth Stone (1982). Again it is not a detailed localised study of the musicians or performers as carried out, most notably, by Ruth Finnegan (1989), although considerable detail of performers is expounded in certain chapters. The thesis is "ethnomusicological" in the sense that it is a study of music in culture" (see Merriam 1964:6). Merriam points out that implicit in this definition "is the assumption that ethnomusicology is made up of both the musicological and the ethnological, and that music sound is the result of
human behavioral processes that are shaped by the values, attitudes and beliefs of
the people who comprise a particular culture" (ibid). The thesis then places an
emphasis on the determination of these "values, attitudes and beliefs."

The concern of this project is with how music functions in society and the extent to
which it permeates the daily life of the people. For example, one important point
that has received very little analysis is the affect that calypso has on the everyday
language of the people. Usually a number of "sayings" will emerge out of certain
calypsos that will take on meanings beyond their original calypso context to
become part of the general language and consciousness of the people. Some of
these phrases will outlast the season. Liverpool, himself a prominent calypsonian,
points out that: "The calypsonian too has invented and contributed many words to
the Creole language used in Trinidad and Tobago and throughout the Caribbean....
words like 'bobol', 'soft-head', 'wang yu', to describe the cold, 'pannist', 'wine',
'jam', 'jammin', have been legally added to the language and accepted by the
populace, after the calypsonian in his songs added dignity and value to them"
(1986:30). Calypso words and phrases may be quoted by politicians to further a
point, or printed onto clothing, tickets and other merchandise, so that they become
"fashionable", also taking on a nature as temporary as fashion. The reasons why
certain phrases are elevated to this status, the extent to which this goes on and how
these words and phrases are employed outside of their original calypso contexts, is
part of the way in which calypso is consumed and will help in determining its
appeal and power.

This does not mean that the aesthetical properties of calypso will be ignored, but it
does involve examining how calypso functions both as a commodity and as a
component of media culture whose aesthetics are subject to the constraints and
conventions of that culture. The significance of this is highlighted by Manuel in his
analysis of cassette culture in India: "In many cases, media content - including
popular music - may be seen to recapitulate or encode specific features of its
context, including the nature of its disseminating medium" (1993:16). These issues
have yet to be directly addressed in an analysis of calypso which, given its
inclination towards social commentary and as music for carnival, as well as the
general emphasis that is placed on musical expression in Trinidad, make it an ideal
case study for an examination of the influence music can have on social behaviour
and processes.

The greatest body of work directly concerned with calypso music has come from
Gordon Rohlehr. His major work, amongst many articles, is "Calypso and Society
in Pre-Independence Trinidad" (1990) which is a comprehensive account of
calypso from its origins up until 1962. It provides a superb historical background
to the contemporary calypso that has been utilised in part in the history section of
this work. More recently, John Cowley's excellent work "Carnival, Canboulay and
Calypso; Traditions in the Making" (1996) has covered the period from slavery up
until 1920. Significantly there are several works on calypso by two calypsonians,
Raymond Quevedo (Atilla) who wrote "Atilla's Kaiso; A Short History of Trinidad
Calypso", and Hollis Liverpool (Chalkdust) whose "Kaiso and Society" provides
an insight into how the contemporary calypsonian sees himself in society.
However, as Atilla's history does not go much beyond 1950 and Rohlehr's work
does not go beyond Trinidad's independence, 1962, there is a lack of work
covering the last thirty years of calypso. Rohlehr does indicate that he will
undertake this task but his concern is with only the analysis of the leading calypsos
from each year rather than with their consumption.

The background to this study is the anthropology of West Indian societies. I
propose therefore to summarise some more recent theories that have been
influential to how this research has been approached. In particular, the theory of
dualism and its developments which will be seen to manifest themselves throughout
this study of calypso and, following this, an examination of carnival theory, which again is especially relevant as calypso is the music of West Indian carnival.

WIDER THEORETICAL CONCERNS.

The aim of this section is to present a theoretical context for the examination of the consumption of calypso music, and is twofold in its approach. Firstly it highlights the key theoretical elements relating to the Caribbean which will appear under the heading "Dualism". From this the thesis will show, particularly in chapters 3, 4 and 9, how calypso fits with the various aspects of this theory. It will provide the academic context within which the literature on calypso, will be located. Secondly it will highlight key theoretical elements relevant to Trinidad Carnival. It will provide the theoretical context for the consumption of calypso music. This section will outline those theories that have been most influential to the approach that has been taken to this thesis.

DUALISM:-

Dualism has been a key theoretical motif in understanding Caribbean cultures and is also manifest in calypso. The theory has been applied to a number of Caribbean societies and has been presented in various different ways. Wilson (1973) presented a form of dualism using the terms "reputation" and "respectability", based around gender roles, and arrived at from an analysis of the tiny Colombian island of Provedincia. Daniel Miller (1994) uses Trinidadian society to express dualism in a broader sense using the terms "transience" and "transcendence" so that the former embodies reputation and all those values attributed to carnival such as spontaneity, loudness, spending money, disorder, and anything that is temporary. Transcendence then represents respectability and those values associated with Christmas like domesticity, commitment, and the family (see Miller 1994:125-133 for a fuller account of these terms and how they relate to Trinidad Christmas and carnival). Its ideology is simple: the ability of a society to hold equally two distinct
sets of value systems simultaneously. These values usually can be seen either as being in some way at odds with each other or even directly opposing each other as binary opposites; what is significant is that the society has the ability to hold both value systems without being at odds with itself. Although one person may veer towards one set of values these values can themselves find their definition in the opposing value system existing alongside them.

Wilson established the centrality of dualism to Caribbean culture with his book "Crab Antics" in 1973, and although his ethnographic data may have come from only one Caribbean island it is set within a wider analysis of comparative and historical data that provide a basis for the wider conclusions derived from his ethnography. Wilson appears to have developed his theory in answer to two previous theories which ironically were also diametrically opposed to each other. R T Smith (1956) maintained a dominant ideology for the Caribbean based on colonialism and the class structure brought about by this. It was then within this that all other ideologies were situated. Hyman Rodman employs this theory to research conducted in Coconut Village, Trinidad, and presents it in his book "Lower Class Families" (1971). The conclusion to his ethnography is what he calls the "lower-class value stretch" (1971:194). He maintains that Caribbean society still operates on a single value system but stretches itself to accommodate a wider range of values. This, he states, "is a response of members of the lower class to a situation in which circumstances make it difficult or impossible for them to behave in accordance with the dominant values of an open class society" (ibid). The second theory is exemplified in M.G. Smith's work on Grenada (1965) in which he concludes that Caribbean societies essentially adhere to a plural value system. Pluralism asserts a multiple value system operating within a single society. But, unlike Wilson's dualism, pluralism advocates that the differing value systems contained within each society are distinct from each other.
Dualism, as Wilson sees it, takes from both these ideas. Rodman appears incorrect in his observation that only one value system exists, whether it is stretched or not. Rodman maintains that: "They [the lower class] share the general values of the society with members of other classes, but in addition they have stretched these values, or developed alternative values, which help them to adjust to their deprived circumstances" (Rodman, 1971:195). This may be so but it still does not account for the movement of these value systems through time and the way they react to historical events. It does not consider any connection between value systems, and this criticism must also be levelled more widely at Smith's pluralism. They both ignore, what Wilson describes as "...the dialectic nature of Caribbean society - that is a society of historically changing relationships" (1973:221). Wilson presents a dialectic in terms of respectability and reputation. An example of how this dialectic may work is as follows:-

If the white, respectable upper class marries and has legitimate child then the black lower class lives in common law union with illegitimate children. If a lower class couple marries it is taken as a sign that they wish to better themselves. Such betterment, of course, reinforces the upper class point of view. But this cannot be allowed to go too far, as it will eventually negate class differentiation. Hence the upper class, which values respectability, is forever shifting the grounds of its recognition in order to preserve its dominance. (ibid).

Likewise, the lower class will shift its value system to counter any changes so that it might provide itself relief from oppression, and perhaps undermine and eventually overthrow the oppressors. Thus a dual set of values, in this case ones that may be associated with class, are operating in conjunction with each other, constantly shifting through the course of history.

The distinction Wilson makes between respectability and reputation is the foundation of his argument. Respectability represents order through proper or good
behaviour. Its emphasis is on the virtues that when employed signify social status.

It is the community's overt set of values that may be called upon as the example that shows what is correct and virtuous, and, as such, these values are imposed through inheritance on each generation, although they are also subject to alteration. Reputation, on the other hand, has to be earned and then maintained. Wilson portrays reputation as being linked essentially to the male world outside of the home. It is men who earn reputations and men who decide who is reputable. Reputations may be won in any given situation. Primarily it is the younger men, or "crew" (gang) members who compete for reputation. The emphasis is mainly on expression, either verbal (big talk, cursing rhyming etc) or visual (fashion items, cars etc) and on how someone may deal with a particular situation that arises.

Roger Abrahams (1983:142), who acknowledges his debt to both Mintz and Wilson in a collection of his essays entitled "The Man-Of-Words in the West Indies", exhibits many other dualistic distinctions found in Caribbean societies. His primary distinction is a linguistic one between the "broad talker" and the "sweet talker". Sweet talking places an emphasis on the eloquent and correct use of formal Standard English, whereas broad talking places an emphasis on the stylised use of the vernacular creole. This may have further implications, for example, broad talking may emphasize joking and license, while sweet talking may emphasise decorum and formality. To fit this into Wilson's wider categorization, talking broad would be a part of being reputable and talking sweet would be an aspect of respectability.

Abrahams prefers to use the term "diglossia" (1983:91) to describe the two language systems, assigning Ferguson's H and L (high and low) as categories that correspond to the relative value placed by the people on the two speech forms: H = sweet, L = broad. There are though several points that need to be made in addition. The first is that the H category, "sweet", represents the collective social
ideal of how to talk, but it is rarely used in general conversation between members of the community. The effect this may have is that the people may construct a negative image of themselves, in this case, because they are constantly talking broad or bad which represents the Low end of the diglossia (ibid). The second point provides a response to this because, although the man who can talk sweet on the proper occasions will be admired for his skill with words, so too will the broad talker. Broad talking can be elevated to a performing art, a point most clearly illustrated by the scandal songs of the 1920's and 1930's in Trinidad and at the annual Calypso Monarch Final, but also in everyday verbal battles. If a song is judged to be particularly successful in its use of wit, rhyme, and clarity of expression through its use of the vernacular Creole tongue, it too may be called sweet. Abrahams then ultimately defines H as the people's conscious ideal, and L as having its own ideal dimension that is unconscious but still recognisable and valid (1983:92).

Language that it is commonly put into practice in the day to day conversation of the people will often be distinguishable from that which society holds to be the correct or proper way of using it. In the Caribbean where a language like English may be the official language of an island and therefore formal English its conscious ideal or H type, the distinction is bound to be more pronounced due to the fact that language has, at some stage, been imposed on the people, and so the development of a language that is in some way alternative, when it is put into use, may be interpreted as a form of cultural resistance. However, as many islanders are only familiar with their alternative and would struggle to use the official H form if they had to, that language may be seen less as a form of resistance and more as a national characteristic that ultimately helps to promote a national identity. It can be argued that the language form used by the masses must be closer to the real thinking and feeling of the people (Abrahams 1983:109) and so it is more worthy of analysis and more effective as a form for mass communication. The respected
calypsonian in Trinidad is recognised as a master of the native dialect and is capable of elevating what may be perceived as the L type of language use, to the H type. He may even become the initiator of certain words and phrases that subsequently become part of the common language of the people. The way the calypsonian makes use of the language and how it is recognised and taken up by the people in Trinidad is something that will be realised in the following chapters.

Another important distinction that arises out of Abrahams work is between the two major Caribbean festivities of Christmas and carnival. According to Abrahams;

"Christmas provides for an orderly invasion of the yard, where the seasonal performances of singing and speechmaking are carried out. Carnival must be kept on the road, however, because it is an overt and constant threat to the social order, and therefore to yard values. It is the time of the year when the rude ones are permitted the greatest amount of latitude." (1983:100).

Christmas then provides occasion for talking sweet and would be more linked to respectability and the family, whereas carnival is public and is the time when stylised Creole dialect comes to the fore. There is a working dialectic operating between the two festivals. Abrahams concludes that although they represent conflicting attitudes to life, the community is able to capitalise on the "focus of energies inherent in recurrent social tensions and conflicts of life style... by embodying these otherwise embarrassing non household nonsense behaviours in their licentious festival performances" (1983:108).

Abrahams ultimately pursues the reputation-respectability dualism in the various social domains that he examines. A clear symbolic differentiation emerges from the presentation of his subject matter between the house or yard, and the cross-roads (1983:151ff). This again hinges on gender. Men compete for reputation on the common outside ground of the cross-roads, women try to be as respectable as possible within the yard, but through the outside projection that they give off of the
way they run their household. Women are deemed to be respectable by other women, and men earn their reputation from other men. However, the interaction between the sexes can often be crucial in the formulation of a man’s reputation or a woman’s respectability (see for examples, Abrahams, 1983:143). If a man allows himself to be too dominated by a woman he can lose his masculinity in the eyes of other men. Similarly, a woman’s respectability may be threatened if she allows a man to beat her or shout at her too often, as this behaviour directly threatens the control she has over the household (Abrahams, 1983:143/4). Male-female conflicts in calypso are analysed in chapter 7. This is particularly significant due to the recent emergence of female calypsonians, and this chapter determines their impact through the attitudes, both male and female, towards them.

Daniel Miller (1994:264) views gender as "only one of a series of social distinctions which could otherwise have been argued to be equally good candidates for the origins of dualism." He nominates both class and ethnicity as other possible candidates for expressing dualism in Trinidad, and further shows how these can be pinned on the ethnic marginalisation, or more precisely, the colonial historical forces that have led to it. He shows that cultural dualism in the Caribbean cannot be caused by gender relations, class relations or ethnic relations, but is objectified by them. Each Caribbean island therefore, may have a different vehicle through which the discourse of dualism operates. In the case of Trinidad "the marginalisation of the Black community in colonialism led to its opposition to hierarchising institutions, while the marginalisation of the Indians by the Africans led to its inward looking cultural endogamy" (Miller, 1994:258). This argument fits Trinidad where a system of polarised character stereotypes have been imposed as representative of one or other of the two main ethnic groups. The truth of these representations is not at issue here, the point is that "... gender, class and ethnic groups are constantly used as the means of objectifying a sense of order" (Miller, 1994:259). In Trinidad attitudes may be extreme and at odds with each other and
divide themselves, most notably, according to ethnicity (see Yelvington 1993; and B Williams 1991 who shows this for Guyana).

Dualism then, does not originate in ethnicity or gender or any other category, but rather its origins can often be traced historically, and it can use the divisions inherent in these categories to clarify and show itself. A more recent historical factor was the oil boom of the 1970's and the subsequent recession of the 1980's. Trinidad is exceptional in that it is the only Caribbean nation to have oil resources. From Steven Vertovec’s (1992) account of the Hindu community in Trinidad during this period it seems that this heightened Hindu ethnic sentiments and has perhaps been a contributory factor to ethnic dualism. He states that the increased wealth served to "bolster racial hegemony through selective [government] spending programmes" (1992:xi), the government then being the Afro-Trinidadian dominated PNM, and concludes that: "The profound economic changes which were experienced in Trinidad during the 1970's and early 1980's, coupled with the ways in which they were channelled by the entrenched government of the day, led to a heightening of self-consciousness among Indians and an implosion of ethnic activity among Hindus" (1992:231). Rather than dissipating ethnic dualism it seems that this new found wealth meant that it both explored and expressed itself more vigorously.

What then are the implications of dualism and how has it been effected in the post independence period? As has been argued, dualism, by its nature, deals polar opposites, and is therefore uncompromising and contradictory. Its impact is to isolate groups (in terms of class, sex, ethnicity etc) so that each group may view itself, and be viewed, as a polarity within a structure. Of course the way a group is perceived and perceives itself may be two different things, as Miller has recently shown with the evidence for the homogenisation of the living room in Trinidad (1994:206ff). Miller (1994) also shows that mass consumption in Trinidad has
clarified and elaborated dualism, providing more choice and therefore more meaning, and is therefore responsible for the specificity of Trinidadian culture and its preservation.

Calypso may be associated with carnival and therefore representative of the L, transient or reputation side of the polemic, but it is also clearly dualistic itself. This can be seen particularly in the analysis of the Calypso Monarch and Road March competitions in chapters 3 and 9, and the with the various types and themes of calypso examined in chapter 4. In terms of ethnicity, the calypsonians presently, with some notable exceptions, are predominantly black. It is then, difficult to talk of a dualism operating within calypso based on ethnicity, but the examination of the way the various ethnic groups in Trinidad are represented in calypso songs helps to define its presence in Trinidadian society (see chapter 8). The advent of Indian calypsonians, and how they are received, will also provide important information concerning ethnic division. Calypso has though, come a long way towards incorporating women into its singing ranks and a concern of chapter 7 will be to determine whether this works only towards a more clearly defined dualism based on gender, or whether calypso is in some way transcending the gender division.

It is necessary now to consider various approaches to carnival as it is the main context within which calypso music is produced and consumed.

CARNIVAL THEORY:-
Carnival is play as opposed to work. Bakhtin (1984), in his analysis of Rabelaisian carnival, talks of the strong element of play involved in carnival, and places it on the borderline of art and life, highlighting the lack of distinction between actor/performer and spectator. Its function has traditionally been posited as cathartic. Gluckman refers to carnivals as "rituals of rebellion" (1954),
mechanisms that serve ultimately in maintaining the established order, functioning, effectively, in the same way as the middle liminal period in the passage ritual as defined by Van Gennep and developed by Turner (see Turner 1967:93-111). That is, that by presenting chaos and disorder for the course of its duration it therefore dramatises the importance of the subsequent return to order. It may be that carnival elevates behaviour that would normally be frowned upon outside of carnival so that those who advocate that kind of behaviour become acceptable, even fashionable, for the carnival period. For those who subscribe to society's behavioural norms carnival allows them the opportunity to explore their curiosity.

Carnival arguably is cathartic in that it allows the individual freedom from the responsibilities of being individual. It lifts the restrictions imposed by social status, the limitations imposed on behaviour by other people's expectations of how a certain individual is meant to behave. Abner Cohen states that:

Through interaction in primary relationships and change of role in masquerading, individuals recreate their self-identity and thus enable themselves to resume their demanding roles in ordinary daily life. (1982:34).

Masquerading may help people to "forget themselves", but ultimately it is the pre-established social acceptance that carnival is a period where any behaviour is acceptable that gives its participants the license to behave as they will. Carnival is a period of organised chaos enclosed either side by order. It has more ominously been described in functionalist terms as a tool for maintaining order through disorder, a kind of "steamvalve" or vent that harmlessly drains social tensions that might otherwise become dangerous to the existing order (see for example, V Turner 1969, M Gluckman 1970 and R Sales 1983). If carnival is disorder it is only "allowed" disorder, a disorder within the rules that perhaps even reinforces rules by showing ritually the folly of not having them. However, for many, this has proved inadequate as it ignores the true power inherent in carnival. Victor
Turner finds that in such events new models, symbols, paradigms, etc, can arise that are then incorporated back into the main economic, political and cultural domain after the event, supplying goals, structural models and reasons. He describes them as "the seedbeds of cultural activity" (1982:28). Manning provides a similar explanation of how this may work in his essay "Cup Match and Carnival":

The revitalizing synthesis that is produced on these occasions illustrates the cultural inventiveness that is so often fostered by the LIMEN [for these purposes; a period of allowed disorder]. Temporarily released from the conservative influences of structure, individuals and societies can formulate new understandings of the realities they face (1977:280).

James Scott offers a most comprehensive argument against the steamvalve theory. Whilst recognising that it is not entirely wrong he argues that it is "seriously misleading" (1990:178): "A complex social event such as carnival cannot be said to be simply this or that as if it had a given, genetically programmed, function. It makes far greater sense to see carnival as the ritual site of various forms of social conflict and symbolic manipulation, none of which can be said, prima facie, to prevail. Carnival, then, may be expected to vary with culture and historic circumstances and is likely to be serving many functions for its participants" (ibid). The idea that a dominant elite could set such a thing up gives too much precedence to what they could achieve, although the intention may be there. If it were the case that elites felt that ritualised disorder should act as a deterrent from real disorder then we could expect carnival to be encouraged, especially at times when social tension is high, when in fact quite the opposite is usually the case. The social history of carnival shows that it has in fact been the basis for real revolt. The most notable example of this is Le Roy Ladurie's (1979) account of the bloody uprising that rode on the back of the carnival in the French town of Romans in 1580.
From the Caribbean perspective, Abrahams (1983:107/8) also finds the steamvalve theory inadequate. He points out that carnival takes on what is commonly seen as negative in the community, such as the tendency to play nonsense, and uses it creatively. It is not simply a control device but is an occasion for people who subscribe to these values to bring them to public attention. For a time these people are the model of behaviour, thus permitting society a second look at social restrictions and alternative behaviour. For the steamvalve theory to work this behaviour would have to be regarded as clownish and nonsensical by the general consensus of the population, and carnvalesque behaviour and performances would have to be eliminated outside of carnival, except by social outcasts, which is not the case (ibid).

The modern carnival, although its roots may be liminal, is a liminoid event. The word "liminal" comes from the Latin limen, "threshold", as used by Van Gennep to describe the transitional phase or margin in a rite of passage (see Turner, 1982:24). It is a period of ambiguity or social limbo. The liminal event, as defined by Turner 1982:52), does not belong to the realm of leisure but is purely functional. Liminoid, as Turner uses it (1982:30), is derived from the Greek "eidos", a form or shape, and means "like" or "resembling". "Liminal" resembles without being identical to "liminal". It is a protostructural domain, experimental science, for example, is "liminoid", taking place in "neutral spaces" like laboratories or studios, set aside from the mainstream of productive or political events. Universities, institutes, etcetera, are "liminoid" settings; experimental areas with the potential for immense cultural and political bearing. Optation is a liminoid trait whereas obligation belongs to the liminal (Turner, 1982:43). With the liminoid the emphasis is on choice, play and entertainment. At carnival, attendance, unlike ritual, is voluntary. Whilst it is in progress it may be entered or left at any time. It can be spectated or performed in, and is a genre of leisure that is separate from work (ibid).
Turner recognises that liminoid phenomena most often come in commodity form for sale on the "free market" and therefore, are most apparent in capitalist societies. He designates certain areas such as bars, pubs, clubs or even some cafes, as being permanently liminoid (ibid). The special nature of these areas is that they encourage social interaction through their neutrality. Certain groups may think of a pub or a club as being their meeting place but essentially they are open to anyone, and anyone may enter (although in some cases there may be certain conditions of entry in order to maintain some element of exclusivity), and therefore everyone present has an equal right to be there. This, as much as the various alcoholic social lubricants on sale, is their appeal. The nature of such places is such that they generate relationships even amongst strangers. The street though is probably the most public place of all, but in most cultures it is rarely viewed as being a meeting place or a place for social interaction, except if it happens spontaneously and by chance. The street is the no man's land between fixed points of destination that is frequently to be negotiated as quickly as possible. In Trinidad, as will be seen in chapter 2, there is much social interaction in the street. Carnival too is held on, and thrives in, the street. For its duration the street is the place to be. Carnival contests the boundaries between public and private space.

Cohen, in an analysis of the Notting Hill Carnival, refers to it as a "contested event" (1982:23), highlighting the tensions between politics and culture, police and civilian, and Jamaican and Trinidadian. The latter arises out of the fact that the carnival in the Caribbean is predominantly a "Trinidadian thing" but in London there are far more Jamaicans, and many of those associated with the Caribbean want to have a part in it. Cohen finds that: "In an 'ideal type' Carnival, hegemony and opposition are in a state of balance" (1982:37). If this balance swings too far one way the nature of the festival is transformed. It would then no longer be correct to call it carnival. In Cohen's example, if it goes one way it becomes a
massive political rally and the other way, through expressing pure opposition, it becomes a demonstration (ibid). Carnival then both validates and rejects; its creative strength is that it can entertain two polar ideologies simultaneously and make each aware of the values of the other. If a theory of dualism can be posited for Trinidad then it would seem that it is the ideal society to play host to carnival.

CALYPSO, CARNIVAL AND DUALISM:–
Calypso is the music of the Trinidad Carnival. It is often criticised for not having a life outside of it, and calypsonians can also often be heard lamenting that their music is not played outside of this time. However, there is something very in keeping with calypso that perhaps explains why it only comes into full effect at this time. James Scott (1990:173) describes one of the most significant aspects of carnival as "the way it allows certain things to be said, certain forms of social power to be exercised that are muted or suppressed outside this ritual sphere... Among other things carnival is 'the people's informal courtroom' in which biting songs and scolding verse can be sung directly to the disrespected and malefactors... Disapproval that would be dangerous or socially costly to vent at other times is sanctioned during carnival." Bakhtin (1984) too treats it as the ritual location of uninhibited speech. Calypso is not just the music of carnival it is also its voice. The calypsonian is expected to speak out at this time as the voice of the people, even if it means courting controversy.

Scott states that "Every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant" (1990:xii) but the calypsonian, at this time, far from speaking "behind the back", is allowed to stand on a stage in front of large audiences. Of course he/she may still, from time to time, get into some trouble for going "too far" and will often employ certain devices such as the double entendre, allegory or metaphor, to hide behind, but the calypsonian remains very much a carnival figure.
It is the fact that he/she is permitted that is most significant. This again leads to the question that has also been asked about carnival generally, and that is whether or not it is merely a mechanism of social control authorized by elites.

Carnival has been shown to represent the transient or reputation or L side of the polemic, as described in the section on dualism, but as regards calypso, it is clearly dualistic itself. Within the genre the same underlying dualism does manifest itself in the contrast between highly scurrilous or ascerbic criticism, and other forms of calypso which are more like praise songs in favour of "good" values. Its most basic dualism is highlighted most clearly in the comparisons of the Calypso Monarch competition with the Road March competition in chapter 3, and the social commentary calypsos with those calypsos that are more of the party or "jam and wine" variety in chapter 4. However, while calypso may be generated from the larger place of carnival within society as a whole, it does not conform solely to cultural critique. Other potential forms of dualism, such as that expressed through ethnicity, are not so evident in calypso (see chapter 8). The advent of Indian calypsonians at present, and how they are received, will however, provide important information concerning ethnic division. In terms of gender, calypso has come a long way towards incorporating women into its singing ranks and a concern of chapter 7 will be to determine whether this works only towards a more clearly defined dualism expressed through gender, or whether calypso is in some way transcending the gender division.

SURVEY OF RECENT TRENDS; CALYPSO AS A MUSIC GENRE WITHIN THE STUDY OF POPULAR MUSIC.

Within the literature on calypso the major concern has been limited to the calypsonian as social commentator (eg Quevedo, 1983; Rohlehr 1990). This not only largely neglects a major aspect of calypso, that side of it related to carnival revelry and ribaldry which also provides calypso with its dual nature, but it
presupposes effects and consequences of calypso which we cannot assume. It is apparent, having selected calypso as the area of study, that it has not been developed to the extent of carnival theory. This raises various issues that need to be discussed and have, in relation to calypso, been left largely alone. These are mainly factors relating to its consumption rather than its production. However, there is initially a need to look at the influences on production. This will lead to an examination of syncretism and subculture, and then the influences of these on consumption.

**MUSICAL EXPRESSION: ITS PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT:**

This section will examine the initial consumption of music; the immediate experience of its performance. The experience and assessment of a musical event will not be the same for everyone but, as Ruth Stone concludes from her analysis of musical performance among the Kpelle in Ethiopia "Let the Inside be Sweet" (1982), the social relationship or harmonising glue, arises out of "the simultaneous experiencing of the performance in multiple dimensions of time" (1982:9). In this new time the participants, both musicians and audience, orient themselves to the actions of one another. Those involved in musical performance are, for its duration, subject to a different sense of time, the experience of which can bring them together. This power to create a new time within time is an essential quality of music that has led ethnomusicologists to make terminological distinctions between the two. John Blacking refers to Actual (real) time and Virtual (musical) time (1976:27), and Schultz and Stone talk of outer (real) time, and inner (musical) time (see Stone, 1982:9). This is what Stone is referring to with the title of her book "Let the Inside be Sweet". C Waterman, in his analysis of Ju Ju music, also refers to "a special flow of lived time" (1990:215) and goes further to state that it is not just necessary to look at music in the terms of its contextual background but also "as a context for human perception and action."
To clarify this concept, if we took two performances of identical duration as measured by outer or actual time, then time as experienced at these performances would be measured differently in terms of inner time. This means that the inner time, as experienced at both performances, would not only be different from a simultaneous experience of outer time, but it would also be differently experienced at both performances even though they are both being measured by inner time. This new experience of time does not contain homogenous units of measure but occurs within a stream of consciousness: the loss of normal time values often can result in life experienced temporarily at a greater intensity so that we may "appreciate the quality rather than the length of time spent doing something" (Blacking 1976:52). The power of the musical performance at this point lies in the shared experience of inner time within which ideas and emotions may then be symbolically altered or manipulated, and elements of culture can be highlighted and subjected to examination. This becomes all the more significant when it is realised that the responsibility of selection and manipulation lies largely in the hands of the musical performers and event organisers. This leads to the argument that music has the power to not just reflect, but also to restructure culture.

The lyrical content of certain songs and musical genres may also draw an audience into a feeling of shared experience. This is particularly noticeable in genres such as Blues or Soul music where the performer may express personal feelings and anxieties in his songs that can draw the listener into a common recognition that these problems exist. In his theory of "lyrical realism" Frith asserts the existence of "a direct relationship between a lyric and the social or emotional condition it describes or represents" (1988:112), but he also points out that when assessing the realism of a song we are in fact probably only making an assessment "of its use of assumed conventions of realism" (1988:113). The question is whether the meaning or "realism" that is conveyed lyrically is more than just an accurate (or inaccurate) description of contemporary events, or can it
actually get behind the surface symptoms to expose the real causes and thereby challenge cultural forms. For this to occur a song must address contemporary ideology rather than the "real world" of events.

The full meaning of any popular music cannot just be read off the lyrics as objective fact but ultimately rests with "the sense listeners made of the songs themselves" (Frith, 1988:119). An essential part of the function of the lyric is that it provides the listener with an access to the music. The listener can make sense of the words and can sing the lyrics to him/herself, or they can sing themselves inside his/her head, in the form of the melody. In this way the listener may reproduce the song when it is not being played; become familiar with its melody and lyrics and eventually come, in a way, to own the song. It becomes a small part of the way he/she thinks, she/he identifies with the song, and he/she may identify other events, places, and people, with that song. The meaning of the song then, is initially directed by its writer and the way it is performed, but the meaning it ends up with is ultimately determined by its listening public. This particularly is the subject of chapter 10. This process can happen to any work of art, but due to the easy accessibility of popular music, its short length and its ready mass appeal, it happens very quickly here. A successful popular song (i.e. a song that achieves popularity) will usually peak quickly before being replaced by other songs, so that it will automatically be, in many people's minds, linked with a certain period; usually that period when it was most popular.

In its direct analysis of calypsos the thesis will tend to focus on lyrics because these are tangible and therefore tend to be what the public and the media pick up on. The lyric has also come to be something that has particular significance in calypso. However, a too heavy reliance on the lyric as the conveyer of meaning can provide a distorted impression, not just because it misses the qualities of the musical accompaniment to the lyrics, but because it also misses the harmonizing effect of
lyric and music, as well as the musicality of the lyrics themselves. Blacking concludes that it is rhythm that distinguishes song from speech (1976:27), although music must also come from man, or at least be the result of his successive choices of different sounds. As song is music, words are elements of music, but music is the commanding form in any fusion of words with music even when the music is purely vocal. Langer defines this as the "principle of assimilation" (1953 chap 10, see Tambiah 1985:164) as she explains that "music swallows the words....even literary word structures. Poetic devices, rhyme, alliteration, are musical. They also blur grammatical boundaries and therefore have the potential to alter, destroy or renew the social code; the signifying practices upon which rationality is based."

Music gives words a linguistic vitality they would otherwise not have, but words or lyrics may also give a song a social relevance, and calypso, with its dual nature as the music for social commentary and the music of carnival, most perfectly embodies this. However, even in the study of music production the presence of interpretation and consumption has become much more conspicuous in recent years, as will become evident later when we look at the idea of creative consumption. Before this we must consider the more general relationship between how the music expresses or develops the sense of the society as a whole, which leads to the following discussion of syncretism; and then in relation to its subdivisions, which will lead to the discussion of subcultures. The theory of creative consumption will be relevant to both.

SYNCRETISM:-

The term "syncretism" is itself contentious and we need to arrive at some definition of it for this thesis. Shaw and Stewart (1994:1) point to a general tendency to take the term to imply "inaauthenticity" or "contamination" or "the infiltration of a supposedly 'pure' tradition by symbols and meanings seen as belonging to other, incompatible traditions." This, they feel, is too "negative" and perhaps unrealistic
Instead they criticise the idea of cultural purity, and suggest that syncretism be viewed as the "invention of tradition" pointing to the emergence "in post modern anthropology in which syncretic processes are considered basic not only to religion and ritual but to 'the predicament of culture' in general" (ibid).

It is from syncretism, and particularly work by such writers as Paul Gilroy (1988) and Dick Hebdige (1979, 1988), that one of the latest developments in the study of the context of music has come, although it has also been a mainstay of the original anthropology of this area (see Herskovits, 1941, 1947 and Bastide 1973). Both Gilroy and Hebdige provide positive arguments that extend this term into various forms of creolisation and show the immense creativity that is to be associated with it. Gilroy's analysis of the musics of Afro-Caribbeans and other displaced African groups in the West, posits tradition as a "changing same" (1988:16) rather than as something that is lost or overridden by the influence of more "powerful" cultures, and is discussed in chapter 4. The approach of recent anthropological works has now been to focus on the dynamics of music in context, (see particularly Waterman's examination of Juju music 1990), rather than to concentrate on the more historical and often thankless task of locating authenticity.

When examining musical syncretism in the Caribbean it is usually to assess the influence of Western techniques on native musical forms. Most Caribbean homes with a television set are able to pick up a variety of American channels, and those fitted with satellite dishes may pick up even more, including MTV, the leading American music channel. This has lead to the argument that the massive influx of American media coverage into the Caribbean islands has resulted in a new kind of cultural imperialism (Lashley, 1989). Arguably the situation can arise whereby the styles and trends of the advanced society, in this case America, are so predominant that the underdeveloped society can no longer generate any for themselves. Both Wilson (1973) and Miller (1994:205) highlight the islander’s desire for anything imported, which can sometimes even result in the situation where a product or
trend originating in the Caribbean may first have to be successfully marketed abroad before it receives recognition in its own back yard. The novelist V S Naipaul even developed a term, "mimic men" (1967), for his fellow Trinidadians, in relation to this. However, Miller argues more positively, using Trinidad and the imported popular American soap opera "The Young and the Restless" as his example he writes that "...we [can] no longer see the domestic sphere as merely the context for the reception of a foreign import" (1992:165), but that its appropriation is such that "... paradoxically... [it]... has become a key instrument for forging a highly specific sense of Trinidadian culture" (ibid).

Calypso music, especially in its aspect of soca, has undergone many changes which have been as much a result of improved studio techniques (discussed in chapter 5), as the awareness through the radio of other sounds, most notably Jamaican dub music and the more popular sounds from America (discussed in chapter 6). However, it will be argued in these cases, that it is the invocation of tradition that is important as a stand against the destabilising flux of the modern world. Hence a new hybrid musical type such as Hip Hop may be effectively used as a symbol of authenticity (Gilroy 1988:21). The essence remains the same but automatically it adapts its expression to its spatial and temporal environment so that it may be better understood. Waterman (1990) finds that the use of Western musical products like electric guitars and tuning equipment does not destroy the basic nature of music making so long as the traditional relationships are maintained (1990:5). He further argues that "syncretic modes of expression may in fact uphold hegemonic ideological patterns" (1990:9). With widening disparities in wealth and education, music plays a role in reproducing hegemonic values. It upholds the idea of identity, keeps values intact and succeeds in providing a rhetoric arguing for a particular vision of society; in the case of the Ju Ju, it presents the idea that anybody can be wealthy despite the fact that the wealthy form only a very small minority. However, any medium that may command a wide audience is always
susceptible to use and abuse and it is also apparent from Waterman's account that African popular music expresses the experiences of a group that may otherwise have been excluded from recorded history. A similar point was also cited above from the calypsonian "Chalkdust" as a function of the political calypso (Liverpool 1986:49) and is what Rohlehr refers to as "political recall" (1985:12).

CREATIVE CONSUMPTION AND THE IDEOLOGY OF SUBCULTURE:-

Culture, as defined by Stuart Hall (1976:10), is reached when "social groups develop distinct patterns of life, and give expressive form to their social and material... experience." Subculture then may be defined as an alternative working/interpretation of the raw materials of social existence. The raw materials of a subculture, it may be added, are both real and ideological. Hebdige (1979:84) finds it to be "a particular response to a particular set of circumstances." The nature of a subculture is essentially transient; it always applies itself to the present and usually can only be fully understood as a part of this present. A subculture is particularly subject to historical change as each moment of its existence it represents a "solution" to the current set of circumstances without which it would have no meaning, nor even come into being.

In the twentieth century the media has had a huge influence on cultural and ideological spheres, especially in urban cultures where, due to greater specialisation and sectionalisation in all areas, the media has become the only effective supplier of images and ideologies that can reach and permeate all sections of massively populated societies. Popular music wins popularity through the way it is presented in the mass media and is inseparable from its use by the mass media. Frith states that: "Rock and pop musicians of whatever type are acting according to conventions... no musical event, no way of singing, no rhythm comes naturally" (1988:4). A relevant analysis of a period or genre of music must first describe and account for the prevalent musical rules for
expression at that time, and this may only be done through an examination of the social situations in which they are applied and to which they refer. Blacking explains:—

Each apparently new idea in music, like a new idea in philosophy, does not really grow out of previously expressed ideas, though it may well be limited by them. It is a new emphasis which grows out of a composer's experience of his environment, a realisation of certain aspects of the experiences common to all human beings which seem to him to be particularly relevant in the light of contemporary events and personal experiences (1976:72/73).

The strength or potential of a subculture may often only be realised through market forces and sales figures signifying certain latent trends, but paradoxically the death of a subculture will also begin as soon as its ideologies and innovations have been converted into material commodities. When this happens the subculture has, as Hebdige (1979) describes it, effectively been "frozen". As soon as the subculture manifests itself in material culture it loses any ability to adapt. It becomes labelled and, whether these tags that have become synonymous with it are fair representations or not, it is unable to escape from them. As time moves on the circumstances that surround them will change until the products become totally removed from their original context and therefore meaningless. They are "frozen out". The result is that the life expectancy of any subculture is predictably short and is also open to misrepresentation by the material consumer items that are supposed to express it, although they may also serve to clarify it.

Popular music ultimately is also a commodity. This means ultimately that it is the consumers who must search for the "real" meaning in what they buy and this will be derived from their own understanding and experience of events passed or passing. This tendency has been referred to as "creative consumption" by the Rock sociologist Simon Frith (1988:6) but need not be confined to popular music as, for
example, Appadurai and Breckenridge show in their essay "Public Modernity in India"; there "...is a sense of consumption as a profound basis for group identity" (1995:6).

This may also be extended to the act of listening to music. Participants in music events include both listeners and performers. Even the unmusical can participate, perhaps by clapping or following the rhythm through dance. All interpretations are both contributory and valid. D Laing in his essay on the explosion of punk music in Britain in 1976/7 takes this further: "Through the experience of consuming music as a listener, many individuals are drawn into producing music of their own" (1990:186); and D Lelyveld draws attention to the many Indian musicians who "...came to learn styles and develop ideas not so much in a close and diffuse relation with a teacher... but by listening to records and tape recordings of a small group of internationally renowned masters" (1995:61). Creative critical listening, whether it be to recorded music or live performance, is a sign of musical competence no less than the ability to play musical instruments. This concept of creative listening and creative consumption is instrumental in the escalation of a subculture, especially as the voice of the subculture is primarily musical.

Adorno's (1967) analysis of mass culture effectively challenges anyone wishing to attach any value to the products of the music industry. Essentially he argues that modern capital is burdened by the problem of overproduction so that markets can only be stimulated by creating needs, needs which are the result of capital rather than human logic and therefore, inevitably, false (see Frith 1983:44/45). However, in the 1930's Walter Benjamin was celebrating the positive possibilities of "the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction" (1973) by arguing that the technology that made mass reproduction possible had broken the "aura" of art and was therefore progressive because it changed the relationship of the masses to art. Mass artists were democratic artists; their work was shared with an audience in
which everyone was an "expert". Perhaps then it makes little sense when it comes to popular music to argue that it follows that he who controls the market controls the meaning and that therefore the mass audience plays no part in cultural creation because even its market choices are manipulated. Frith explains: "The vast bulk of the music that is aimed at the mass market never reaches it. The music business is organised around the realities of overproduction - its daily practices reflect not the problems of creating needs but of responding to them. Few labels have the capital or the courage to risk stirring up new demands, and the record industry has always made its money by picking up on needs independently expressed" (1983:61/62).

Calypso music, being both traditional and popular, is perhaps not really "subculturish". It is a constant (even if it is not played consistently throughout the year) and is even accepted as a national symbol. It is also tied to its context, i.e. carnival, and to whatever it is that the social commentaries are commentating upon, and so it cannot choose when it will manifest itself. Nevertheless, within these bounds there is still a lot of scope for movement. It is usually the calypsonians who will create the themes that make each carnival distinct and memorable, whether it be frivolous fun as evidenced in the "donkey dance" of 1993, or the sharp political metaphor of the "Sinking Ship" of 1986 that allegedly brought down the PNM government (see chapter 10 for analysis of these). Examples such as these will be used to show that "...readers [or listeners] are not isolates but form communities of response and judgement" (Appadurai and Breckenridge, 1995:3/4). The calypsonian is a producer of messages and, as Morley points out: "Before messages can have 'effects' on the audience, they must be decoded" (1995:301).

"Effects" being "the point where audiences differentially read and make sense of messages that have been transmitted, and act on those meanings, within the context of their situation and experience" (ibid).
There is a certain amount of consumer power that lurks in-between the message and the interpretation which is perhaps clarified by Stuart Hall's (1973) "encoding/decoding" model of communication. There are, as laid out by Morley (1995:300), three premises of the model:

1. The same event can be encoded in more than one way.
2. The message always contains more than one potential "reading". Messages propose and prefer certain meanings over others, but they can never become wholly closed around one reading: they remain polysemic.
3. Understanding the practice is also a problematic practice, however transparent and "natural" it may seem. Messages encoded in one way can always be read in a different way.

We shall see, particularly in chapters 4 and 6, how calypsonians, through the use of such devices as double entendre, maximise the space for differential interpretation, and various examples, particularly in chapters 8 and 10, of how certain calypsos have escalated and caused uproar from the envisaged potential multitude of their meanings. These show consumption as well as production to be creative.

Frith states that; "rock [music] fun is never really 'innocent' -there are always manipulative processes involved; but neither is rock consumption necessarily 'passive' -rock meanings aren't determined by their commercial means of production" (1983:38). With calypso it is perhaps more complex when it is considered that while calypso itself may be a "commodified master form" (ibid) the calypsonian, to a certain extent, is a "free" agent of public culture, a licensed "loose cannon" as it were. What this means then, especially when it comes to the social commentaries, is that the community is responding or judging a response or judgement already made by the calypsonian. As will be seen, this is the license and the power given to the calypsonian and chapter 10 will show some of the far reaching effects that this has had, but it will also show, as will other chapters,
how, in the words of Peter Manuel "Listeners may interpret or use popular songs in ways which are irrelevant or even contradictory to their producers intentions..." (1993:17). The argument set forward by Morley that "The power of viewers to reinterpret meanings is hardly equivalent to the discursive power of centralised media institutions to construct the texts which the viewer then interprets" (1995:313), must always be borne in mind when considering consumer power.

The calypsonian as social commentator, can only comment on what has happened (as an agent of carnival music he/she may be both restricted and inspired by what has succeeded before), but as an individual calypsonian he/she has, to a much larger degree than the national press for example, a licensed freedom to interpret it as he/she will. This is why I use the phrase "loose cannon" and why calypso does, and always has had, the potential to excite controversy. For the moment, subculture is perhaps the best example of music-society articulation that has been studied so far, most notably Hebdige's own work entitled "Subculture" (1979), and remains as an example of how consumption can be "creative". This thesis will show how popular music, in this case calypso, is a contested area, or "a site of negotiation" (see Manuel 1993:10) where dialectics of ethnicity, gender, age, region (ie city/countryside) and modernity are "re articulated". What will be made evident is that, despite restrictions of text, the ascription of meaning to popular music is often itself a site of contest or struggle.

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This part of the thesis has offered one theoretical starting point but the following chapters are largely devoted to wider issues of context to encompass the more general problems of how calypso fits within a wide range of social parameters. Each chapter will look to see how calypso relates to various aspects of Trinidadian
society, for example gender and ethnicity. The thesis realises its fullest concern with consumption towards its end, when, in chapter 10, it deals with issues such as politics and advertising, and other areas where calypso has had effects that can be made tangible.
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY AND ETHNOGRAPHY.

The first chapter will provide a brief account of Trinidad's history followed by an ethnography derived from the researcher's stays in Trinidad over the carnival seasons of 1992, 1993 and 1994.

GENERAL HISTORY OF TRINIDAD.

A general history of the Caribbean over the last 500 years may be divided into three sections, from the first discovery to the period of emancipation, through this to full independence, and finally the time of nation building that the majority of the islands are in today. The oldest independent state is Haiti which liberated itself from France and slavery in 1804, but is unusual for this. It was nearly 100 years later before Cuba became independent in 1902, while other British West Indian colonies were still winning their independence as late as the 1960's and 1970's. Trinidad, the southern most Caribbean island, as a British colony, did not achieve independent status until 1962, when the People's National Movement (PNM) won power.

The most comprehensive recent social and political history of Trinidad has come from Bridget Brereton, "A History of Modern Trinidad 1783-1962" (1981), with other works covering smaller periods; Brereton, "Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad 1870-1900" (1974), and Donald Wood, "The Years After Slavery" (1968). The history of Tobago is quite separate from Trinidad up until 1889 when it had its first administrative ties to the larger island. Trinidad fits the basic historical divisions of discovery, emancipation and independence, that apply to the Caribbean in general. It is unnecessary to provide a detailed analysis of Trinidad's history, but a brief outline of some of the more important events, particularly related to the introduction of the various ethnic categories that make up the population of Trinidad today, will provide the necessary background.
The indigenous population of Trinidad were Amerindian peoples of the Arawak group who inhabited the island at the time of the chance arrival of Christopher Columbus on 31st July 1498. The Arawaks were virtually the only source of labour for the Spanish-owned estates up to the 1780's, with Spanish interests being diverted, for the main part, to mainland South America. Trinidad remained under Spanish rule for nearly 300 years but as one of her most "underdeveloped" American possessions (Cowley 1996:9). It was nearly 100 years after Columbus before the first permanent Spanish settlement, San Josef de Oruna (St Joseph), was established on Trinidad.

Under Spanish rule, the Arawak population in Trinidad declined rapidly into virtual non existence by the nineteenth century (Wood 1968:43). However, their mark can be seen today in the place and town names of Trinidad. Arima, one of the central locations for these Indians, is derived from Hyarima, an Arawak chief; while Arouca is named after Arauca, an Arawak tribe (for others see Brereton 1981:21).

Between 1777 and 1783 there had been a steady trickle of French immigration into Trinidad. The Spanish government fully recognised the idea of foreign immigration with the Cedula of Population in November 1783, which offered a free grant of land to every settler who arrived in Trinidad with his slaves (Wood 1968:32). The Cedula did not allow for any non Catholic immigrants, making it difficult for potential English settlers, although some Irish planters were attracted. In a very short space of time, this decree transformed Trinidad from a society dominated by Spanish and Indians, to one that was essentially Afro-French in character (Brereton, 1981:15, Cowley 1996:9, MacDonald, 1986:24). In this way it has had very far reaching effects on the culture of Trinidad.
From 1783 until emancipation, African slave labour was the basis of Trinidad’s socio-economic development. The French landowners formed a powerful elite that, through its control of slave labour, were able to open up the island to plantation agriculture. The French revolution had far reaching consequences in the Caribbean, especially when in 1794 the French Convention not only abolished slavery, but declared that equality applied to all men and that therefore men of all colours were now considered to be French citizens. This frightened slave owners throughout the Caribbean causing the greatest unrest in Saint Domingue, but more significantly for Trinidad the uprisings in the French colonies of Guadaloupe, Martinique, and St Lucia meant a further influx of refugees (see Brereton, 1981:29).

By 1796 Trinidad was a Spanish colony largely occupied by French planters with African slaves, but in 1796, when Spain declared war on Britain, Trinidad came into the hands of a third European force. By 1797 Trinidad had been captured by Britain and five years later was officially ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Amiens. It was to remain a British colony until its independence more than 150 years later.

Due to the mass immigration of French West Indians into Trinidad the vast majority of its free citizens were Roman Catholic whose slave status had been replaced by a lower class status. The ending of apprenticeship meant that the majority Roman Catholic settlers were to be governed by a Protestant flag. Thus, the free classes of Trinidad were divided by class and religion, something that made Trinidad quite different from the older British colonies in the Caribbean. Trinidad is also unusual in the Caribbean for the direct contact it has had with the three major European colonial powers of Spain, France and Britain.

In 1807 the British slave trade was abolished, and in 1834 the slaves of the British empire were finally emancipated. However, to prevent a sudden shortage of labour a compulsory six year period of apprenticeship was to follow for all ex slaves. This
meant that although the ex slaves were free in name, they would be doing exactly
the same work as they were as slaves only they would be receiving a nominal fee
for their services. On emancipation day this provoked the call "Point de six ans"
(no more six years) from the new apprentices and the feeling that absolute freedom
had been denied them (see Wood 1968:46). In fact apprenticeship was only to last
another four years. Its demise presented problems for the landowning elite and the
ruling bodies of Trinidad which sparked off a whole new wave of immigration,
most notably of East Indians, but also some Chinese and other Africans. The
policy of importing Chinese labour proved impractical and uneconomical (see
Wood, 1968:163ff, Brereton, 1981:100), and only 2,500 ever came to Trinidad in
the seasons of 1853, 1862, 1865, and 1866 (see Wood, 1968:160). Today the
Chinese make up approximately 2 or 3 per cent of the 1.2 million population. The
new immigrants nearly all came in the form of indentured labour used to work the
sugar cane fields and, to a lesser extent, the cocoa plantations, that had now been
deserted by many of the free Africans.

Many of the ex slaves had just got up and left to set up their own smallholdings on
Crown lands. Much of Trinidad had yet to have been opened up to agriculture and
it was relatively easy just to stake a piece of undeveloped land and work it as your
own. The Crown viewed this as squatting but, although attempts were made to do
something about it, it was extremely difficult for any effective measures to be
taken. The more serious problem was the loss of labour this entailed. Initially the
East Indians were shipped over on five, and later ten year contracts with the
various plantations, where they were housed in barracks. However, many East
Indians had little desire to return after their contracts had expired, on average only
about one in five actually did (see Vertovec 1992:73), either because they would
be rejected by the caste systems of their own country due to the intermingling that
inevitably occurred abroad, or because they were simply better off in Trinidad. In
fact many East Indians, if they could accumulate enough money, would later send
for other members of their family.

Between 1845 and 1917 a total of 143,939 East Indians were introduced into Trinidad as indentured labourers (see Vertovec, 1992:68, Yelvington, 1993:6). Due to the now negligible amount of indigenous Indians in Trinidad these East Indians will now be referred to as just "Indians" or "Indo-Trinidadians". In 1851 there were 3,993 Indians recorded as living in Trinidad forming 4.8% of the population, but by 1901 Indians made up 31.5% of the population (see Vertovec, 1992:80). According to the census of 1980, there were then 429,187 Indians in Trinidad making up 40.7% of the total population, a fractionally lower percentage than those classing themselves as being of African origin. At the 1990 census the Indians were actually found to represent the largest ethnic group despite a drop of 0.4%. The reasons for this were due to losses from all races to the mixed element. The Afro-Trinidadian population took a larger loss of 1.2%, while those classifying themselves as "mixed" increased its share from 16.3% to 18.4% between 1980 and 1991.

The introduction of such a large group as ethnically and culturally different as the Indians were from the majority African population, has had a significant effect on the development of Trinidad in terms of its own sense of national identity. Social relations between the two groups were never easy, but this is not to say that they were violent either. What is rather more significant is the lack of interaction between the two groups, whether it be positive or negative. Despite the sizeable disproportion of female to male Indians it would appear that as late as 1871, according to Dr. Henry Mitchell, there was not a single example of an Indian cohabiting with a Negro (see Brereton, 1981:114, Wood, 1968:138). Indian culture, in terms of its religions, dress, food, language, would have alienated them from Creole society, but it seems that generally these differences were viewed with suspicion rather than interest.
Some of the reasons for the apparent disdain, or at least disinterest, shown to the Indian community, may have stemmed from the nature of their employment. For those Afro-Trinidadians who were prepared to work on the plantations the Indians were a potential threat, especially as they were prepared to work for cheaper wages. As a result, the planters now viewed liberated African labour as "unreliable and unproductive" (Vertovec 1992:66). Conveniently, the Indians could replace the free black worker at the bottom of the class system. Also the Indians had officially only come to Trinidad as short term workers and were not therefore seen as permanent fixtures in the society. They were assessed as an economic unit, often judged merely by the ability to work effectively rather than for more human qualities. A stereotype had quickly emerged (and still exists today) that the Indians were miserly, preferring to hoard their money than spend it on anything that was not strictly necessary (see Yelvington 1993:9). Eriksen also tells of a saying in Mauritius, where both Africans and Indians are also prevalent, that; "if a black has 10 rupees, he will spend 15; but if an Indian has 10 rupees he will spend 7 and hoard the rest" (1992:135). I noted a similar quote in Trinidad during the research period which went to the effect that a black will always give the impression of having more money than he has, and an Indian of having less. In fact the average income of blacks and Indians in Trinidad is now identical (Eriksen, 1992:135).

Brackette Williams, in her study of a Guyanese community, where there is again a similar proportional ethnic make up to Trinidad, looks at how such racial stereotyping develops, and how it is dealt with when the stereotype does not coincide with the reality; what she calls "Getting a Shock" (1991:177). She reports of East Indian informants "getting a shock when confronted with Africans whose material worth they judged not only equal to but greater than appearance would suggest. The shock was most jarring where they could find no proof that the African had adopted some other ethnic culture" (ibid). This worked equally the other way around, but she states that despite these "shocks" her informants would
argue that "... racial/ethnic heritage 'will out' (that is, manifest itself) in the long run: what is in the 'blood' will sooner or later show in one's behavior" (1991:57).

The question as to how these stereotypes came about is also addressed by Williams. She draws on Bartels' work on modern Guyanese society, concluding that "... subordinated ethnic groups... took over racial stereotypes used by the 'ruling class'" (1991:158), initially in an attempt to compete for "second place" in the hierarchy. In the case of Guyana, she identifies the failure of the 1847-48 strike as something that led to these racial stereotypes, taking root amongst the subordinated groups to, and she quotes Bartels' here: "'explain' their social and economic successes and failures and to justify their roles in struggles against other subordinated ethnic groups for economic resources and political power" (ibid). This then led to the situation where the subordinates themselves "viewed the sociocultural order as a hierarchy of ethnically differentiated groups" (1991:159), something that was then only reinforced and encouraged by formal and informal administrative policies so that, like Trinidad, this resulted in the "notion that political representation along ethnic lines was essential to protect the interests of the different groups" (ibid). To return to Trinidad and an aspect of the racial stereotype fitted to the Indo-Trinidadian, the notion that he is thrifty or constantly saving began as a reality with the initial indentureship when the idea was that they should save enough to then leave with money to take back to their native land. The fact that in this pursuit they were not contributing to the internal trade of the island may have angered the Creolized Africans, but it was in reality only a small percentage that chose to return, with the rest choosing to forgo their passage in return for land (see Yelvington, 1993). Nevertheless, this stereotype has remained and is perhaps a major contributor to the initial gulf that existed between the Creole and Indian populations of Trinidad.

The most noticeable manifestation of this divide can be found in the political
parties of Trinidad. The 1956 elections were perhaps the first that fully realised this legacy of racial party politics. The Indian PDP (Peoples Democratic Party), under the Hindu-centred leadership of Maraj, gained 5 of the 24 seats in the Legislative Council, and the PNM, with its overwhelming support from Afro-Trinidadians, secured 13 (see Vertovec, 1992:85). By far the most influential party in Trinidadian politics has been the PNM which, since 1956, has suffered only two terms out of office. With the PNM came the emergence of Trinidadian nationalism. They were the first pro-independence nationalist party to come to power in Trinidad and they played a major part, under the leadership of the historian Dr Eric Williams, in rallying the people to believe that they could take on this independence. Ryan (1988a:142), in his analysis of the first 25 years of PNM rule, credits them with mobilizing the people of Trinidad and Tobago with the belief that they were capable of taking on independence, and for introducing the first effective system of party politics. This was clearly a slow and difficult process when we consider the figures presented in Ryan's second essay covering statistical data related to peoples attitudes towards independence (1988b:217). These show that 53% of the population in 1976 actually agreed that Trinidad and Tobago would have been better off had it not become independent. By 1987 this figure was down to 20% with 65% disagreeing.

It only took six years of PNM rule before independence was achieved, but as an independent nation Trinidad required an independent national identity. The PNM had led Trinidad to independence and were responsible for developing the nations own sense of itself. But the PNM "... was the creation of a group of middle-class professionals, mainly but not exclusively black" (Brereton, 1981:233) and the core of their support were urban Afro-Trinidadians. However, it was the stated purpose of the PNM to establish a society in Trinidad in which every creed and race would find an equal place, but the Indo-Trinidadians, particularly the Hindus, could not, for the most part, associate themselves with the PNM. To many Indians,
Trinidadian nationalism was a black ideology that made no concessions to Indian culture, making it impossible for them to be both Indian and Trinidadian. Their only recourse was to pledge their allegiance to a different party so that ethnicity rather than politics came to determine which way the majority of the electorate voted. For the Indo-Trinidadians who, until recently, represented a slightly smaller percentage of the population than the Afro-Trinidadians, this effectively meant being consigned to a position of permanent political opposition.

In 1986 the PNM was finally successfully opposed by a Black and Indian alliance party, the NAR (National Alliance for Reconstruction). This victory by a truly mixed coalition was paradoxically perhaps the realisation of "the goal which the PNM [had] sought to establish" (see Ryan, 1987:151). The NAR only managed to survive one term in office before being replaced by the PNM, primarily because the Indian UNC withdrew their support soon after the NAR were elected. It may be though, that the NAR triumph marked a move away from racial voting. It at least put pressure on the PNM to spread power equally among Indians and Africans; something which could, in any case, be in the PNM's own interests considering that the Indo-Trinidadian now forms the largest racial segment in Trinidadian society.

The Trinidadian political scientist Selwyn Ryan, at a conference on "Ethnicity and Political Coalition Building", went as far as to predict that the Indians would have political control by 2006 (see Trinidad Express 02/03/94). This prediction was based on the movement of the Indian population. The Indians were becoming more urbanised, and accounted for about 25 per cent of the population along the east-west corridor. The electoral boundaries had been drawn in such a way as to guarantee PNM victory for a few more years, but the shift of the Indian population has now meant that the UNC can, and have, successfully challenged PNM strongholds. Ryan's prediction, originally felt by many to be premature, was in
fact nearly ten years too late. In 1996 there is now a UNC government headed by Basdeo Panday. This is obviously a major change and must be given more time before comment, but with such a large mixed population it makes it difficult to predict future power changes using ethnicity as the only marker. The failure of the NAR experiment to govern as a unitary party incorporating the then Indian ULF (United Labour Front) has only served to harden the political tension between the Indian and African communities and has, at present, discouraged any other attempts.

Although little has been said about agriculture, Trinidad's economy, prior to the twentieth century, was almost entirely dependent on it. Its primary exports were sugar and cocoa, which, after slavery, employed most of its labour force. But for much of the twentieth century, oil has formed the backbone of its economy in a way that has made Trinidad and Tobago unique within the Caribbean. Oil was first struck in 1857 but it was not until the 1890's, and the development of the internal combustion engine, that the oil resources began to be effectively exploited. By 1919 oil accounted for 10% of exports, rising to 50% in 1932 and peaking midway through World War Two at 80%. But, despite the fact that by the 1940's Trinidad had virtually become a one export economy, relatively few people were employed in the oil industry. Figures for 1944 (Brereton 1981:205) show only 15,000 employed in the industry when it was in a boom period, compared to an estimated 40,000 employed in the sugar industry in 1930. The post war period also saw increased oil production with a record 55 million barrels in 1966. To show its effect; between 1974 and 1980 the number of cars increased by 65%, the number of television trebled and electricity became more readily available throughout the island (see Vertovec 1992:138). It is then ironic that it was out of the oil drum that the masses of unemployed workers fashioned the steel drum that is probably now the country's most potent national symbol and will surely last long after the oil has run out.
ETHNOGRAPHY. (See also annex on p294)

This section will provide the context within which the research was conducted. Although I moved in wider circles than this, this was the area, and these were the people, with which I was most closely associated. The following descriptions of family members provide a context for quotations from these people that will be used to illustrate points made in the following chapters. It is limited in that it is entirely from the view of a single male researcher, and is of one group of people in what is a culturally and ethnically diverse society. However, by providing such a detailed description of the social environment within which I was operating it is hoped that this will enable the reader to reach a measure of objectivity when it comes to evaluating the assessments made by both myself and the informants. Rather than attempting to provide objectivity through spreading the research across social boundaries, it is hoped that a certain objectivity may be reached through concentrating it on one area. By stating precisely the context within which the research was conducted, those comments made by the informants may be understood both within their own smaller and more detailed environment, as well as a part of the wider context of Trinidadian society.

The thesis makes extensive use of quotations taken from comments made by the informants described below. Generally these comments were made in the residence or the area marked "key liming area" in figure 1 which will be described later. The comments quoted are usually ones I had overheard rather than the results of questions or conversations I had initiated. The position of the residence is such that it allowed me to see and hear when there was a gathering or any significant action at the local meeting place or "key liming area". Whilst conversation would often be loud and could be overheard from the residence, thus enabling it to be copied word for word, generally I would take it as a cue to move down to the cross-roads for more "low key" participant observation. Any significant comments would then be copied down from memory at the end of the day.
The main locations for participant observation were dotted along the east-west corridor, a residential strip that follows the main road stretching from the capital, Port of Spain, about 30 kilometres inland, to Arima. This is the most densely populated area in Trinidad and, while it is ethnically mixed, it is still more heavily populated by those of African origin than is represented in the national average. Within the East-West corridor I was located in an area known as El Dorado, where I resided with a low income black family to whom I paid rent. I shared a room with the two young grandsons of the matriarch described below and ate with the family. I was befriended by this family on my first trip to Trinidad in 1992 after meeting "Bongo" at his carnival booth, described below, and will be eternally thankful to them. Whilst I was always an "outsider" their friendship meant I was conducting my research within the heart of a large Trinidadian family and allowed me access to daily Trinidadian life that I otherwise would not have had.

THE LOCATION:-

The location of the residence was a primary factor in the decision as it was situated overlooking a cross-roads that was a key meeting place, or "liming spot", for many members of the local community. "Liming" will be discussed in detail at the end of the chapter but must be mentioned here to stress the significance of the location of the residence. Figure 1 shows the key liming spot at the second set of cross-roads away from the main road. The first set would be considered too close to the main road for anything other than a temporary meeting, whereas the second junction allows those who are there to have a good long look at any vehicles or people that are passing up that road from the main road, whilst still being close enough to the main road to see what is passing along it. The main concern is with police or other undesirable outsiders entering the neighbourhood. The other two liming areas marked on the map, whilst often used, do not have the advantages of the location described as the "key" liming area, but rather are secondary to other sources of
entertainment; the pan yard and the rum shop, "vino's". As a result these are not as localised as they attract people from outside of the area. Figure 2 is a local artist's impression of the key liming area.

The residence itself, apart from being situated at this prime junction, was also on the second floor of a two floor house that was shared by two families; one on the bottom and the other on the top, with a communal yard and front gate. Figure 3 is a local artist's impression of the residence. Situated on the second floor, as it was, allowed me an unobserved view of this key liming spot.

Figure 4 shows the layout of the residence and the surrounding yard. The sofas in the living room area would be used as beds by whoever was last to come in, but never by any of the female members of the family. The house was rented at a cost of five hundred Trinidad dollars a month (about £80) and owned by a private landlord. As much of the rent was collected by the mother from her sons, according to how much money they had earned, this could often lead to heated arguments.

Whilst the residence appears to be well equipped with electrical appliances such as washing machine, fridge, television, and cooker, these were all of extremely old make and, apart from the television, were all constantly in a process of being repaired. Only on a few occasions was the washing machine seen in action, with clothes nearly always being washed by hand in a concrete basin outside. The television, whilst old, always worked, and, during waking hours was usually on, even if it was not being watched. The family did not possess cable TV but were constantly on the look out for ways of obtaining it for less or no money. A similar desire was also expressed for a video recorder which was fulfilled during the time of the stay after the family clubbed together to buy it off a relative. The family also owned a unit consisting of a record player, tape recorder and radio, which was
nearly twenty years old. The record player was never used, primarily because the family did not possess any records. Occasionally the tape recorder came into operation over carnival when the male members of the family would acquire free or discounted tapes of calypsos from that season, or recordings made from the Panorama finals. The television was clearly the most important form of electronic media within the house, but when this was not on then the radio would be, especially at weekends or holidays. Rarely was there silence.

Over the road was a small shop or "parlour" that sold newspapers, beers, soft drinks, cigarettes, cigarette papers and sweets. This shop was a small extension to a house and was run by the members of that house. It had no set opening hours and often, if service was needed, the prospective customer would shout to see if any one was in. These types of shops are to be found in plenty within any residential community and generally cater for the immediate local community. This added to the importance of this position as a key liming area.

The land that surrounds a residence is known as the "yard" and, in this case, the yard was shared by the two families living on each floor of the house. It was not divided. Like many yards it was treated as an area for potential profit making. Most yards would have a variety of fruit or vegetable producing plants. Within this yard there were pigeon peas, figs (small bananas), sugar cane, portugais (orange like fruits) and cherries.

The yard is treated as a kind of half-way place between the street and the home.

THE FAMILY:
This section describes the family that I lived with during the research period, both those members who lived with their mother, and those who had left but were still regular visitors. The most dominant figure within the household, as with most Trinidadian households, is the mother, and it was in her household that I resided.
This was particularly useful for the research because the mother was a "magnet" for the rest of the family; the family came to see her. To avoid using her name I shall now simply refer to her as "the mother".

Trinidad is essentially a matriarchal society and the importance of the mother cannot be overstated. My position as a single adult male meant that I spent much of my time with her sons and so their characters are perhaps drawn in more detail. However, the mother's presence and influence over their actions was particularly noticeable. Whilst it may seem that there is much in the way of complaining and criticism aimed at the mother from the rest of the family, and vice versa, she is the linchpin of a very large family; the one who must be respected, but also the one whose respect you must have. In effect, the mother is the reason for action; she is why things are done. This mother had had ten children; eight boys and two girls. These were by three fathers, none of whom lived in the house. Of the ten children, three still resided with their mother. We will now look at the children with this in mind, before then returning again to the mother.

Of the eight boys, two of the older ones had been living in Toronto, Canada for about twenty years. Toronto, New York and London are very popular destinations amongst Trinidadians, and many Trinidadians will have at least one relative residing in one of these cities. It is no accident then that these three cities play host to the largest Caribbean style carnivals outside of the Caribbean.

Of the two brothers who had emigrated to Canada one, who was forty two, returned regularly, usually once a year for two weeks over carnival. He was called by his nickname, "Whitey", which had been given to him because he had a fair complexion at birth and not because he had white ancestry. Many male Trinidadians are given nicknames that may arise at any time of their life and will
Fig. 4
usually stick forever. They are used usually only amongst men. If a man is referring to another man whilst in conversation with a woman he will rarely use the nickname. From now on the other male members of the family will be referred to by their nicknames. Nicknames like "Whitey", concerning the complexion of the person are very common. Another example of this could be "reds" or "red man" which has to do with the paleness of the skin allowing the colour of the blood to show through.

Whitey rarely had much money to spend when he visited and was often the source of complaint from the rest of the family who felt that he spent all of his money at once on rum and good times and then came to them for money. He would not stay at his mother's home but would visit nearly everyday of his stay, often drunk, and often the stay would end in an argument over the fact that he had not sent money. It is immediately assumed that any Trinidadian who has made a life abroad must have achieved a measure of success and should therefore send some money to the family back home. Whitey had married a Trinidadian of Chinese ancestry, and emigrated to Canada at the age of nineteen with his wife. He worked as a machine engineer, as did the other brother who had emigrated with him.

The other brother in Canada, who was two years older, was also married. These were the only two sons who were married and significantly neither of them lived in Trinidad. He visited very rarely but was held up as the example to the family as he did send back money regularly. The fact that he did not return to visit did not seem to matter. This brother did not have a nickname but was always referred to by his first name, the only one of all the brothers who was. This was probably because a nickname had not been established for him by the time he left Trinidad, although nicknames are far less common amongst middle class Afro-Caribbeans and the fact that this brother had not been given one was perhaps an acknowledgement that he was now a member of the middle class.
The eldest brother "Jericho", lived about two kilometres down the road where he rented a room from his cousin's family at a cost of $300 TT a month. His nickname was derived from a calypso by Shadow (Winston Baily) about a pan man known as Jericho, which he was said to have loved. He was a gifted pan man, playing tenor pan for two or three steelbands. His loyalty was to his local steelband known as "Scherzando" for whom he had played every year for more than twenty years. He was in his late forties and had a job in a local bakery. This involved manual and delivery work. Of all the family he was perhaps the least respected. He had a reputation for making "a whole set of noise", meaning that he tended to over dramatise things and was quick to flare up and get into an argument. This was coupled with a reputation for heavy drinking about which he made no secret. He was greatly respected for his ability to play pan although this did not hide the fact that his family found him "ilik too much hard wuk."

Jericho, like many Trinidadians, had had a child at a young age so that consequently his daughter was about the same age as Jericho's youngest brother. His daughter too had had a daughter at a young age, making Jericho a grandfather well before he had reached forty. Jericho's mother effectively brought up his daughter who was at this time about twenty. Her daughter was about three. After a period of separation, Jericho's daughter had gone to live with the father of her child, but during most weekdays she would come over to her grandmother's place with her daughter. There the child would play with the other children while her mother would perform certain household chores for the matriarch. Often arguments would arise between grandmother and granddaughter, usually concerning the father of the child and the fact that she, like Jericho, had been a disappointment in having a child so early. She still returned to her grandmother's house nearly every weekday where she and her daughter would usually eat a meal that she would have helped prepare.
The next brother, who was in his mid thirties, had been given the name "Ras", a common name for those who have let their hair grow in the rastafarian style; that is, without cutting or washing it so it forms "dreadlocks". During the first period of research he lived in rented accommodation, separate from the family. This accommodation was a small one room apartment with a shower and toilet but no kitchen. Ras had acquired a bed, a table, and a television, as well as a small gas burner for cooking. The apartment, although relatively cheap ($400 TT), was in Trincity, one of the more affluent areas in Trinidad. It was part of a much larger house that had been separated off by the family who owned the house, to make a separate flat to provide them with some extra income from its rent. Ras supported himself through selling things like T-shirts as a street vendor. The employment was not permanent and when the researcher returned after a six month break Ras had been forced to move back to his mother's residence. Whilst living there he literally only slept there and often would avoid this if he could stay somewhere else.

The next brother, aged about 30, had been given the nickname "Bongo" which dated back to a time when he too had dreadlocks. The locks were now gone but the name remained. Bongo was a permanent member of the household and a key member in the running of it. Of all the men in the family he was there the most, and was known for his skills in cooking. Most of the food would be bought in bulk and he would also see to this on the instructions of his mother. The mother often lamented that she could not do more to help in the cooking of meals due to the pain she experienced in moving, but she would still oversee Bongo and the visiting female relatives.

Bongo had worked in, what he called, "construction", for all his working life. This meant that he worked as a labourer on what were usually government building projects. Both at work and in his free time he was also a regular smoker of
marijuana, of which he had no trouble obtaining, given adequate finances. He had at one time been a dealer of both marijuana and cocaine, but had since given it up as a business enterprise. As a result, he had established many contacts in all walks of life that would allow him "special" treatment or inside information that may be useful to him. Bongo was respected as a hustler and was known for his ability to attend any carnival fete or musical event without ever paying. As a hustler he came into his own around carnival time when he had a prime location booth for selling alcohol, soft drinks, cigarettes and food.

Bongo also involved himself in street vending in the capital, buying such things as table cloths or T-shirts at wholesale prices and selling them at approximately a 30% profit. The time that he made most of his money was over the carnival season. Perhaps the greatest asset the family had was the assurance of being allowed to rent from the Carnival Commission one of the two hundred or so wooden booths constructed every year on and around the Savannah for selling refreshments or alcohol to carnival revellers. The biggest problem was in finding the capital to purchase these items. The booths were over subscribed by about ten to one, but due to Bongo's connections he had for the past four years been able to secure the same booth in the most prime position, the first in a series of booths that line the way directly off the Savannah stage. The family operated this booth but it was up to Bongo to organise this each year, beginning around Christmas time with the securing of it from the National Carnival Commission.

The next brother in age was in many ways quite different from his brothers and, apart from those living abroad, was the least attached to the family residence. He had been nicknamed "Froggy" by his cousins due to his "leap-frogging" from one woman to another, although he was always called by his first name by his brothers. The fact that he was on more formal terms with his brothers is indicative of the distance between them as was the fact that they rarely limed together. His brothers
generally treated him with caution and suspicion claiming that he was a "smartman"; an uncomplimentary description for someone who cannot be trusted and will scheme for his own ends. "Watch he, he like to play too much-a-tricks" his mother would say.

Ironically his main interest was in politics and he was heavily involved with the NAR party. He enjoyed talking politics and would often get himself into arguments with complete strangers. His involvement with the party was as a campaigner, and then as a government checker checking that government labourers showed up on time and did the work they were supposed to. At the last local elections he had run unsuccessfully as an NAR candidate. As a result he knew many people.

After a period of about a year and a half of temporary employment and unemployment following the NAR election defeat, he had managed to land a job with a new "company" in Trinidad. The "company" was effectively a wealthy Trinidadian family that had bought the licensing rights to sell a well known European brand of toiletries (Fenjal) in the Caribbean. The plan was to start off in Trinidad and expand the business from there. The set up was extremely small. Froggy had somehow succeeded in finding his way into this family and he took great pleasure in describing himself as the "marketing manager". This amounted to him persuading shopkeepers to stock the product. For this job he received $250 TT a week which made him the highest wage earner in the family at this time (excluding those in Cananda). However, he contributed little to the family and commanded little respect from his brothers, and he only occasionally slept at the house. When he did come to the house it was usually to see his daughter, aged five, who spent her time either at his mother's house or at her mother's sister's house. The child's mother was studying in New York. He perhaps saw his daughter once a week for a few hours. The main ambition of this brother appeared to be to live the "high life", for which politics served as a vehicle. He certainly
gave a good impression of living the high life, always taking great care to look expensively dressed. However, upon further examination it became clear that behind the expensive appearance he was effectively homeless. This is not to say that he slept on the streets because he did not. Coming from a family of ten brothers and sisters, and from a mother who had herself been one of eleven, he had more than enough relatives to call on who would let him stay for a week, even if it was just to sleep on the floor.

Trying to impress and seduce women would take up a lot of his spare time. His routine for this would often be to introduce himself as the marketing manager of a foreign company and then make up some story about how he had just flown in from America or Europe. Often he would also try to put on an American accent. To sustain the woman's interest he would suggest possible employment with the company or promise to organise an interview for her upon which he would promptly pull out his business card headed "Marketing Manager" and give it to the woman. On very few other occasions did this business card ever get used.

The next brother followed closely in age (twenty six) and had been given the nickname "Doctor", as he liked a well known Trinidadian DJ who went by the name of "Doctor Hyde". He lived in the main family residence with his mother. Like Bongo, Doctor was a core member of the household. He slept there almost every night, helped discipline the younger children and contributed to the upkeep of the house, as well as aiding in the repair and maintenance of any household appliances that had broken. As he once said; "Nobody in Trinidad is buying anything new, yuh know. It jus de parts dey buying. De outside staying de same but de inside will have one set of different parts."

Doctor's employment was temporary until the last six months of the research period when he seemed to have secured a steady job working at the flour mills in
Port of Spain. It paid $200 TT a week, Monday to Friday and sometimes Saturday, and entailed packing and helping off load the flour from the trucks at their delivery destinations. Doctor, like many Trinidadians, believed his future lay outside of Trinidad in either Canada, America or England, and that all he needed was a lucky break. He was of the opinion that in another country his capacity for hard work would be better rewarded.

Doctor also played a major part in the running of the carnival business. Although Bongo was ultimately responsible for it, Doctor was his right hand man and clearly enjoyed the work. During a period of unemployment Doctor, also like his brothers Ras and Bongo (and many other Trinidadians), engaged himself in forms of private enterprise. One such enterprise was to build a chicken hatch in the yard. He purchased fifty chicks with the intention of rearing and selling them. Although this venture was not unsuccessful, it was not as successful as he would have liked. Few of the chickens were actually sold for money, about twelve died, which was expected, and most of the rest were chopped and cooked by Bongo for family consumption, or else traded within the neighbourhood for other products of the yard. The chickens saved rather than made money.

The youngest brother was about twenty-one and from a different father to the rest, but from the same as his elder sister. He had joined the Trinidad army where he had earned the nickname "Madman" for his antics, although he was also known as "Tony" to his brothers and friends born out of his love of Italian gangster films. When he was not on duty he resided at the house and, along with Doctor and Bongo, he formed the male core of the house physically responsible for its upkeep and the discipline of its children. His main interest was in playing football which was his primary motive for joining the army. As there is no professional league football in Trinidad most serious players join either the police force or the army who both have teams that compete in a national league. This way they can train,
play football and receive pay. The league is, more often than not, won by the army, who, in 1994, had won it thirteen times out of the last fifteen. Like many young Trinidadians, Madman prided himself on his fitness. Once he had joined the army the training took care of his fitness but, prior to this, he would "take a sweat" every day. Both Bongo and Doctor would also do this about twice a week which would usually entail a run of two or three miles, or an organised game of "small goals" football. The latter is a very popular game in Trinidad and, along with cricket, was the most commonly played game in the neighbourhood. It differed from regular football in that there were less players; usually three, four or five aside, with no goalkeepers, hence the small goal which would be only slightly wider than the width of a football. Madman was acknowledged and respected as the best player in the area.

Madman was usually the brother responsible for dealing out corporal punishment if any of the younger children stepped out of line. Corporal punishment or "licks" was a standard method of punishment in this family, as it was with most families in the neighbourhood. This would happen about once every other week, but the threat of licks was an almost daily occurrence.

Over carnival Madman would secure as much leave as possible to help his brothers operate the business in the Savannah. He would also lime freely with the locals when he could. Being in the army he was no longer a regular but took pleasure in the fact that he still "limed with the yardies", something which he claimed some of the other soldiers no longer did. For this he was accepted and respected. Along similar lines the Jamaican dub artist Buju Banton was praised one night by the regular men in the lime when one member informed them that: "Buju does still lime wid de yardies yuh know. Doh feel dat he doh do dat jus because he now famous. Dis is de life and he know dat." Whether or not there is any truth in this information cannot be said but the idea that a man who has achieved fame and
fortune should still choose to be around yardies won their respect. It not only gave him credibility but them also.

The mother had only given birth to two daughters and tragically one of these had died in a car accident. Road accidents were the most common cause of death in Trinidad, claiming 127 lives in 1993 alone (in 1994 AIDS took over as the biggest killer). Most Trinidadians will know of a relative or friend who has died in an accident. The death of this daughter had meant her two young sons (from different fathers) were adopted by the mother despite the fact that she had already raised eight sons by this time. They were around the ages of twelve and thirteen, or "small men" as boys up to the age of about sixteen are commonly called.

These boys never had it easy at home where either one or other of them would constantly be called upon to perform household duties. As far as they were concerned life was easier at school. However, they too had plenty of local friends whom they socialised with, usually within earshot of the house so that they could hear when their grandmother shouted for them to perform a task for her. When they were free they spent much of their time next door at an Indian household. This house was raised on stilts, a common feature of houses in Trinidad as it makes them more effective at keeping out various bugs or snakes. It also provides the option for filling it in at a later date to make a larger house. In the meantime it made for an outside sheltered area below which, for these boys and the children of that household, was a prime play area. Makeshift games of cricket played with a tennis ball were commonly played, and girls would also often participate in these games. At this age it was far more common to see groups of males and females liming in the neighbourhood. A basketball hoop had also been erected in this yard and was also often the centre of yard activities with the children.

The sole living daughter was aged around twenty-four and had the same father as
Madman. She did not reside at the house but would be constantly around with her four year old daughter. She lived with the child's father in "Five Rivers", an area where the family used to reside. The child's father, who rarely came to the house with her except occasionally to pick her up, worked in the day in what she described as "home construction".

On week days she would generally arrive as early as 7am and leave around 6pm. During this time her daughter would play with her brother's (Froggy) daughter, if she was there, or with some of the younger children who lived in the house below. The sister spent the day keeping her mother company and helping to prepare food. Between about 11am and 1pm they would watch the soap operas that were packed in around this time on the television. These were either American or Australian, the most popular being "The Young and the Restless", "Neighbours" and "General Hospital". Often the brothers would say that this sister enjoyed "too much ah talking". They called this "small talk" which was mainly concerned with gossip about the wide range of relatives linked to this family. As the family was large the extended family was naturally very big, and this sister would bring news and gossip about them back to her mother. The accuracy of her information was sometimes doubtful and then her brothers may say that she caused "too much ah commess", meaning that through her talk she set off all kinds of family arguments and petty rivalries. At any one time during the day there may be the three young girl children, this daughter, the granddaughter (ie Jericho's daughter, the mother and the mother's mother.

The mother's mother had no fixed residence of her own but would spend time with each of her surviving daughters. This meant that she spent approximately three months of the year living at this residence. She slept in her daughter's room, as did any female that slept there. She spent most of her time reading through the bible although her reading abilities were limited. Otherwise she would sit and hum religious songs to herself. At eighty eight she was a great great grandmother.
The central and most dominant figure of the household, at 66, was the mother. Senior (1991:189) points this out as a more general fact in the Caribbean: "Despite the ideal image of man as protector and provider which women say they hold, women do not really look to men as their protectors and guardians. Often the woman herself is the head and manager of her own household and economic affairs. Where there is an adult male present in the household, she - and society - will acknowledge him as head even if this is not objectively so."

After giving birth to ten children she had put on a great deal of weight and suffered from many bodily pains that could come on at any time. These pains particularly affected her feet and legs, and she was rarely able to leave the house. She described herself in joking terms as a "housebug". She was not bitter at this but regretted that she could not take a more active role in the running of the house. However, she was still the final authority in the house and had plenty to say in the way it should be run. The extent of her power and the presence that she has can be illustrated by one observation. As I have mentioned, it was customary for many of the son's to spend much of their time at the key liming area marked in figure 1. This area is visible from a patio area at the top of the stairs leading to the house. The mother would spend most of her time inside the house and out of view. However, if she was "vexed", or wished to display disappointment or disapproval to any of her sons she would simply move her chair onto this balcony and say nothing. It may be that sometimes she would do this just to get some air but either way it considerably affected the behaviour of any of her sons liming down below. Her presence was noticed immediately and the son would then begin to question whether he had done anything to upset her. If he was smoking marijuana he would cease to do so although he would also state that his mother did not mind him doing this. He would not leave the lime while she was there but would try to act in a "casual" way. When she left the balcony he would be notified by another member
of the lime. Soon after this he would then go up to the house.

All contributions towards the running of the house had to be made to the mother and she would then decide what the house needed and who was to buy it. A conversation heard in a lime, again about the famous Jamaican dub artist Buju Banton, illustrates this attitude. The members of the lime were speculating as to how he spent his newly acquired wealth when the leading authority on Buju Banton concluded: "Yuh tink Buju spending all dat money heself? Yuh meking joke, he doh see a cent of dat money. Dat money all going to he mudder, yuh know dat."
The truth of this cannot be substantiated but the point is that even Buju Banton, who was perceived by many as being the ultimate yardie, was still accountable to his mother.

Apart from the rent of the home, the main outgoings were electricity, water and food, as well as clothes for the two boys. There was no telephone. The most common household argument between the mother and one or other of her sons would be over money. Usually it would be that they felt she was asking for money unnecessarily. They claimed she "liked money too bad" and had a love of money for its own sake but they always gave it to her despite any protestations. For herself, the mother received a pension and would also collect the pension for her own mother. This was really the only time she left the house but she knew she could rely on the respect due to her as the mother of a large family to get her sons to run around for her.

Most days the mother would rise between 6am and 7am, and take a seat in the living room. At this time the radio would come on, Doctor and Bongo would be getting up to work, and the two small men would be preparing to go to school. The mother would frequently call the boys to do certain small jobs for her like buying the newspaper, and would give them instructions for the day which would usually
be to "wash de wares" (wash all the dirty crockery and cutlery), and to sweep out the house. These boys were also responsible for keeping the yard clean and this would be supervised by Bongo.

In the late morning the television would come on for the midday soap operas by which time the mother's daughter and granddaughter would arrive. Mother and daughter would then sit and talk while half paying attention to the television, but often commenting on the behaviour and dress of the characters as if they knew them personally. The mother's favourite programme was the Oprah Winfry show, a massively popular American chat show. She would watch this every day. None of the males paid any attention to these programmes believing them to be "chupidness" and a waste of time. The male members of the household watched very little television. If they watched anything it would be sport; cricket, English football matches or American basketball. They would visit the cinema on an almost weekly basis and, with the arrival of the video recorder, they would rent a few videos a week which would give them freedom to watch something late at night when the rest of the family had gone to bed. The videos they tended to hire were mainly action or mafia movies from America, or Chinese martial arts films which are very popular in Trinidad. Even then these would usually be watched in twenty minute bursts as something just to put on before going to bed. The male, as a rule, spent very little leisure time in the home.

Despite the mother's inability to move around there were always relatives that would come to visit her. She was extremely wary of anyone who came to the house who was not related to her.

Once a heated argument arose after a soldier friend of Madman's, who the mother had not seen before, came to visit him at the house. Their house had never been burgled, probably because, as Bongo pointed out, "it has too much ah men", but is a fear bandits that is general across Trinidad. Another, perhaps deeper fear is that
strangers would know their "business". "Trinidadians like to talk", the mother would say, and she was living proof of this. The fear then became that some kind of "commess" or "bacchanal" would spread, although most of this type of gossip was usually amongst the wide circle of relatives that this family had.

The men, if they lived in the area, would see themselves as being at home if they were liming in the street at the cross-roads. Bongo was the only one of the four brothers who lived with the mother who had a steady girlfriend. He would see her usually once a week but always at her parents' house. In this sense Trinidadian attitudes to courting could be quite conservative. If a male friend came from outside the area to visit one of the sons he would generally not be invited into the house, nor would he expect to be. When I asked one of the male members of the household why his friends never came into the house he explained: "Why dey want to come in de house. Ah nah dere. It only have one set of noise. Women talk, talk, talking. And children cry, cry, crying." The important point is though that to bring an outside male or female into the house would be against the express wish of the mother and therefore would not be done unless made by appointment with her. The procedure otherwise would be for any male friend to wait at the liming spot until word got to the person he had come to see. He may then come into the yard but would be more likely to spend the entire visit in the street. Local friends would not need to come to the house as they would know where whoever they were looking for was likely to be. If they had gone somewhere else they would let certain other locals know where they had gone to pass on the information: "ah jus go up de road to come back" would be a standard message left with the regulars at the key liming spot. It was always a talking point if one of the locals was not to be found and nobody knew where he had gone.

LIMING AND LIMING ACTIVITIES:-

This section will look at the Trinidadian activity of liming that formed the
background from which much of the information about how calypso was received in Trinidadian society was obtained. Liming is an activity that is difficult to tie down to any one definition, or even to describe. Little work has been done on it with the notable exceptions of Lieber's "Street Life. Afro-American Culture in Urban Trinidad" (1981) and Eriksen's article "Liming in Trinidad: The Art of Doing Nothing" (1990). Liming is a leisure time activity, but it may be that through liming, work or a potentially money making deal, may arise. Eriksen titles his article "The Art of Doing Nothing" but there are a great many activities that the members of a lime may be engaged in whilst liming. Liming does not necessarily mean inactivity but rather that the activity; be it the playing of a card game, the exchange of stories or jokes, or just drinking beers and smoking cigarettes or marijuana; will have "no explicit purpose beyond itself" (Eriksen, 1990:26).

Liming is a blanket word that covers a whole range of activities that may go on anywhere; from men just "hanging around" on a street corner doing nothing in particular, to a trip to the cinema. In everyday language the word can now be stretched to cover any leisure activity. In Trinidad it has become part of the national consciousness, an example of what it is to be typically Trinidadian. Although there are, by its very nature, no directions as to how a lime begins or progresses, there are some things that can be said about liming. It is both social, in that one cannot lime alone, and public, in that a lime will not occur in the home but will be in the street or a park or it will be in some other public place such as a bar or pool room. A lime is open to the possibility of others joining it. Eriksen states that: "A typical lime begins when two or several acquaintances... meet more or less by chance" (1990:27). The meeting will not have been planned and will have an element of spontaneity about it. There is though perhaps less "chance" about such meetings as there would seem. There are relatively few houses that have telephones in Trinidad and even those that do are of little use to the average
adult male who spends much of his waking time away from the home. People
become known by their habits, and, as we have seen, certain pivotal areas become
known as liming spots. Each person is also careful to let others know where he is
likely to be so that he can be contacted. It is also possible to organise a lime or
"mek a lime", and this will involve some sort of arrangement to meet and maybe
go out somewhere like a fete, the cinema or to play some pool in a bar. In this
sense too, a lime may not always be a chance meeting but it will always be open to
spontaneity.

Unemployment for the third quarter of 1993 was estimated by the Central
Statistical Office to be 19%, as based on a sample survey with a standard error of
1.4% (see Trinidad Guardian 9/3/93). In reality unemployment is even higher so
that for many men liming is a major part of daily life. Essentially it always should
function as a way to pass time enjoyably in the company of others but it may also
act as a kind of network or grapevine through which information as to work or
potentially profit making ventures may be heard and exploited.

Liming is not restricted to the lower class nor to those not in formal employment.
However, a person who has no such working responsibilities will be able to lime
more effectively. In Eriksen's words (1990:30); "Liming presupposes then, that no
necessary activity must take place, that one is available for what might happen...
Liming expresses availability as a positive value." Someone who allows other
commitments to take him away from a good lime may be told "he doh know how
to lime." The ability to lime often came up in conversation whilst liming, usually
in a boasting way where one member may brag of his capacity to lime for several
days without sleep, or criticise another for not being able to "go the distance."

Women do lime but never publicly in the street as the men do. The nearest they
will come to street liming is to congregate in a yard or on a balcony. If a woman is
seen liming in the street it could damage her reputation within the community. Liming is, then, largely a male activity, but, while it will rarely consist of mixed sexes, it is not uncommon for a lime to be ethnically mixed.

From looking at the map (fig 1) it can be seen that there are several key locations that are marked as "liming areas". This is primarily due to their location within the urban topography. For example, they are all at a junction of some sort. Other factors such as the presence of steps, or the cut of the pavement that makes it easy for limers to sit down, will make for a natural liming area. The liming area outside the residence is noticeable as such, even when nobody is there, as a number of large stones have been moved there to be used as makeshift seats. Regular liming areas like this, act in some way as a kind of substitute living room for the men.

The smoking of marijuana was a major activity of the local street limes that involved even those who did not smoke it. Growing and smoking marijuana is illegal in Trinidad and therefore, no matter what was going on in the lime, every member would also be studying the roads for police or for vehicles which they did not recognise, that could be police. Each "homeboy" prided himself on his ability to see the police before they saw him. They would know the number plates of all the regular cars and even the sound of their engines. The one thing he would never do would be to sit with his back to the road. There was a genuine fear of the police by all, whether guilty or innocent, as they knew that the police could always "set we up", or plant something illegal on them. Corruption in the police force was widely publicised in Trinidad, and acknowledged with fear by those who knew they could become victims of it. The police would make the rounds of this area about every two weeks either in marked police cars or in other government vehicles such as those owned by the water authorities WASA. Whilst smoking the marijuana it would be "palmed" which would mean holding it in such a way that the palm of the hand obscured it from the view of an onlooker. Once an
unidentified vehicle had been spotted, smoking would stop immediately and the "joint" would be held over a drain or hole where it could be irretrievably dropped if necessary. Some members of the lime would smoke cocaine as well, but this was never done in the main liming areas. Anyone who did this would go to more secluded spots, in fear of the police, but also to avoid the watching eyes of the neighbourhood. For marijuana smokers the major fear was the police, but those who smoked cocaine also had to fear the disapproval and suspicion of the neighbourhood as someone who smoked cocaine regularly in a poor neighbourhood would not be trusted. The mother herself often vented this view: "Ah doh mine people smoking de marijuana. Ah know some men mus do dis and ah feel it nah so bad. Ah never hear anyone geh hurt for dis. But once a man start to smok de cocaine den yuh mus watch out. Den he wud even teef from he own mudder."

A bar is a common place for a lime, and the consumption of alcohol may often go hand in hand with liming. Significantly, some bars at fetes have taken to offering drinks packages that they have marketed as "small lime" or "big lime". A small lime, for example, could be a half bottle of rum with two mixers, some ice and some cups; a big lime would perhaps be double this. A lime can move all over the place. Some Trinidadians who were old enough to have been able to profit from the oil boom years still boast of limes that ended up in Tobago or even Miami, but, for most, liming is an activity that is viable because it involves spending little or no money.

Small time gambling was also a popular street liming activity and this came in several different forms. There are licensed betting offices in Trinidad covering mainly British and American horse racing and these are popular, but much of the gambling that goes on in Trinidad is illegal. Although the laws governing this are not strictly enforced it must still, in varying degrees, be kept hidden from the police. One of the most popular forms of gambling was with cards
and, in particular, "Three Card Brag", "Whappie", and the Trinidadian game of "All Fours" a game that had to be played with four players in two teams of two. When played in the street the stakes were generally very small but the gambling element would give the game a sense of purpose and seriousness. As it was unlicensed gambling the fear of police intrusion would always be there. Players would constantly be looking out for the police and so the money that was being gambled, which is the only thing that could give them away, would be put in the centre, usually in the empty card box. If there was a police alert then one person would quickly pocket the money and, either the game would scatter, or they would commence playing a game that could not be connected with gambling. The chances of police action being taken for such a petty offence as this are unlikely but the offence itself gives the police a pretext to make searches and ask "fuck up" questions that could result in allegations of more serious crimes being brought against certain players. However, while the police are to be monitored and avoided at all costs, their unseen presence seemed to add an extra interest and significance to the lime. Many members of the lime expressed a distinct pride in being one step ahead of the police or that they were too clever to get "tied up" by them. If the police had passed through that day then it would be a talking point, and if they had stopped or questioned anybody it would be a major talking point.

Whilst women were not part of a street lime they were often the focus of its attention. Women had to walk past this spot and, unless they were old, with children, or accompanied by a man, they would always attract attention and some form of verbal comment would inevitably follow. These would range from a loud hissing sound to attract attention, to a whole string of compliments tinged with sexual innuendo that would often continue long after she was out of earshot. Yelvington refers to this as "dropping words" (1995:159) which the victim must ignore "lest the accusation be legitimised" (ibid). The fact that the woman would usually completely blank her admirer would never deter the man. An example may
go as follows. A woman passes and one member of the lime will take it upon himself to attract her attention. This he may do by hissing or making a kissing sound with his lips. The woman does not respond. He calls her: "Sugar... sweetness... honey... yuh looking nice. Ah lik wah yuh wearing. Leh meh and you go from here. Ah lik wah yuh wearing. Leh meh and you go from here. Ah lik yuh. Leh me show yuh a real man. Ah want it. Ah ready for yuh. Yuh jus leh me know." Yelvington further explains (1995:164) that even if the women wanted to respond to this kind of banter fear of losing their standing amongst other women would prevent them: "The behavior of 'respectable' women is circumscribed; they are expected to remain in the home, take care of children, remain faithful to their men, and not engage in, for example, public drinking or swearing" (ibid). For the men, the sight of a woman meant a certain pressure from the group to make a response.

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There are naturally many more characters that could be included here but these, and the activities described above, should provide enough detail. In many ways these characters were the ideal informants for the research considering their active involvement with both selling and enjoying carnival. Carnival, like liming, is associated with the streets. Abrahams (1983:98), makes a division between the yard, which he associates with family and with privacy; and the road, which he associates with "sportiness", "rudeness", dissension, and trouble. These may be headlined by the festivities of Christmas, which he sees as an orderly invasion of the yard; and those of carnival, which must be kept on the road as it is an overt threat to social or yard values (ibid). The values of the lime, the emphasis it places on freedom from restraint, on reputation, as described by Wilson (1978), and on performance and "talking broad", as described by Abrahams (1983), make it the ideal background for understanding carnival. In short, the values of the lime are
closest to those of carnival.
CHAPTER 3: THE HISTORY AND BACKGROUND TO THE PERFORMANCE OF CALYPSO IN TRINIDAD.

THE GENERAL HISTORY OF CALYPSO.

Raymond Quevedo, the prominent calypsonian Atilla the Hun from the 1920's and 1930's, claims that the first word that he heard describing the song form known today as calypso, was "kaiso" (Quevedo, 1983:4). It described the song but also the ecstatic satisfaction over a particularly excellent kaiso. Errol Hill (1967:10/11) finds that kaiso stems from the Hausa word kaito or kaico; Hausa being the language of the largest tribal group in Nigeria and probably the most widely spoken language in West Africa. The word may be defined as an exclamation expressing great feeling on hearing distressing news. Alas! What a pity! It may also take on a meaning similar to the English "bravo". Today the Hausa singers of Northern Nigeria still sing songs of praise and derision, and the word kaiso is still commonly used in Trinidad, usually to describe those calypsos inclined towards social commentary. Other words that calypso has been traced back to are the French carrousseaux, a drinking party; the Spanish caliso, a topical song; and the Carib carieto, also a topical song (ibid). The earliest use of the word "calypso" in a song can be found in an edition of the Port of Spain Gazette dated 20th January 1900 under the heading "1900 Masquerade Calipso" (see Cowley, 1996:147), which would seem to suggest that the song "Masquerade Calipso" was a lavway (la voix) or "road march" tune, and not necessarily a social commentary.

The roots of calypso in Trinidad begin with slavery, and the earliest would have been sung in French Creole (see for example, Quevedo, 1983:8ff). Generally though, black music in Trinidad is little documented prior to Emancipation, with only occasional reports of drum dances, and the lyrics to only two songs (from 1805, and the 1820's) extant (see Cowley, 1996:232). It was not until around the 1890's that the transition was made into English (Rohlehr, 1990:42). The slaves
brought over to Trinidad by the French planters in the 1780's also carried with them a tradition of improvised song of either self-praise or scorn, that resulted in a form known as "picong" or "mepris". This was a form of improvised verbal duelling that is still celebrated today with the extempore championships and is a talent much respected in calypsonians (see chapter 9 for a full account of this).

Calypso is probably a synthesis of several song forms of various ethnic groups, but the dominant element is "undeniably African in origin which was brought by the African slaves to the West Indies" (Quevedo, 1983:2). Gordon Rohlehr (1990:2), in his comprehensive work "Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad", asserts that the origins of the political calypso "probably lie in the African custom of permitting criticism of one's leaders at specific times, in particular contexts, and through the media of song and story." Pearse (1956b:252) offers an account given by Mitto Sampson from which he terms "a realistic starting point at the beginning of the nineteenth century." This account states that a planter named Pierre Begorrat, from the French speaking island of Martinique, lived on an estate in the north west part of Trinidad with many African slaves, some of whom were singers of "cariso" or "caiso", a source of entertainment for his guests (see Pearse, 1956b:253). This too would confirm that African slaves started the singing of calypsos in Trinidad.

Verbal duels were also an important part of the music used to accompany the Calinda, which in Trinidad, took on the form of a kind of stick fighting African martial art. The Calinda was a dance characteristic of French Creoles that could be found in various different forms in the Antilles and in Louisiana, for example, where it made no use of sticks (Rohlehr, 1990:13). Andrew Pearse (see Rohlehr, 1990:14) describes the calinda, as it had developed in Trinidad, as a dance incorporating "some of the violent movements of stickfighting, is by a man or woman and is a dramatic duel between the drummer and the dancer in
counterpoint" (see Rohlehr 1990:14). Stickfighting bands formed and, like the later steelbands, associated themselves with strict territorial boundaries that were either to be defended or attacked.

1883 saw not only the suppressing of the calinda bands, but also a ban on the playing of drums after 10pm (Wood, 1968:242) which had a profound effect on the development of a new music type, the tamboo bamboo, and, it may be argued, led to an increase in verbal violence (see Rohlehr, 1990:54). The tamboo bamboo made its sound from the stamping on the ground of tuned lengths of cured bamboo that would not carry as far as the drums but provided an essential polyrhythmic background for the lead chanters or "chantwells" and the call and response of a chorus (Rohlehr, 1990:40; Quevedo, 1983:11). The calypsonian Caresser was still singing its praises in 1937 despite the fact that it had since been superseded by other musical techniques:

I don't want Blue Rhythm to play for me
Nor Jazz Hounds with the melody
A bottle and spoon I could make them do
With Cut-Outer cutting up the bamboo.

With the outlawing of the drummers, the 1890's also saw widespread dancing to the accompaniment of string bands, and middle and upper class open participation in calypso and carnival (see Cowley, 1996:136). Wood (1968:242) states that: "The dancing, the drumming and the singing, the keeping of wakes and the practise of obeah [a local form of magical practices and beliefs] were the main manifestations of Negro Creole culture to receive any comment from the upper classes, and their comment was uniformly unfavourable." Now the business men recognised the commercial potential of carnival funded competitions for masquerading bands they wanted to improve the moral tone of carnival to bring it more in line with bourgeois taste. Calypso competitions were sponsored too and
perhaps its best known early patron was the business man Ignacio Bodu (see Rohlehr, 1990:26). The Venezuelan type string bands that gained popularity in the 1890's would consist of the mandolin, guitar, cuatro, banjo and shak shak (with probably the flute and violin being added in Trinidad). The use of string instruments was a significant development as the newly evolving calypso singers stressed the importance of the words to their performance and needed quieter accompanying instruments.

The effect of sponsorship on calypso reached new levels when a trend developed at the turn of the century for the offering of prizes to the chantwell who could sing the best praises promoting the merchandise of the sponsoring companies (see Rohlehr, 1990:51). By the 1908 carnival, prizes were being offered in the masquerade for a Marine Square (now Independence Square) competition by business firms such as Messrs. Smith Bros. & Co., Wilson Ltd. and Stephens Ltd. (see Rohlehr, 1990:50). This carnival also saw certain bands singing the praises of certain competing brands of liquor (see Rohlehr, 1990:51). This form of competition provided a relatively cheap advertisement for any business that cared to get involved and continued in the tents well into the 1940's (ibid).

The use of the soubriquet, which now appears to be dying out, highlights the calypsonian's competitive stance. Hill (1972: 73/74) claims the origin of the calypsonian's desire to use a soubriquet came with the upgrading of the carnival in the 1890's when many of the chantwells were more literate, with some even having had attended secondary schools: "They had studied history and felt very patriotic toward the 'mother country'". At the time Britain was involved in the Boer War, and to show their support they took the names of famous warriors like Richard Coeur de Leon, Duke of Wellington, or other such titles like Lord Executor. The continuance of this trend shows the mentality of the calypsonian as one who saw himself competing in his own battles with his contemporaries. In more recent times this has led to such names as Roaring Lion, Lord Kitchener, Atilla the Hun or
Mighty Terror. It was a show of grandeur designed to inspire confidence or create fear. In an interview with Roaring Lion he maintains that if a calypsonian arrived at a tent without a name they "were promptly given one by the older calypsonians depending on what was most striking or characteristic about the newcomer" (see Warner, 1982:15).

One of the earliest calypsos to be sung in English, "Jerningham the Governor", has been dated to 1898 (see Rohlehr, 1990:59). Quevedo (1983:10/11) cites this as the first calypso to be sung completely in English, while Cowley (1996:145) recognises it as the first calypso in the English language to achieve popularity. Other English calypsos before this had a tendency to slip into the French Creole in certain parts. In any case it stands as a tangible landmark to the British policy of Anglicization, although it is also perhaps a testament to the enduring influence of the French when we consider that it was over one hundred years prior to this, in 1797, that the island had capitulated to an expedition led by Ralph Abercromby. It had taken one hundred years of British rule before the English language was understood widely enough to be used in popular song. The calypso itself was sung by Norman Le Blanc (a white man) and, paradoxically, was a social commentary on the heavy handedness of the British governor of that name who had disbanded the Port of Spain Borough Council (see Rohlehr, 1990:44/5).

Calypsos from this time onward were increasingly sung in English, and as the calypsonians became more comfortable with the language a new oratorical style emerged designed to display the calypsonians expert knowledge of English. Some calypsonians became so expert in English that it became a challenge to other calypsonians to equal them. Lord Executor (Philip Garcia) started a trend by taunting his rivals over their poor education. One such famous war of words developed between Executor and Atilla the Hun. Here Executor explains to Atilla what it takes to succeed in Oratorical Calypso:
I admire your ambition, you'd like to sing
But you'll never be a kaiso king
To reach such a height without blemish or spot
You must study Shakespeare, Milton, Byron and Scott.
But I'm afraid I'm casting pearls before swine
For you'll never inculcate such thoughts divine
You really got a good intention, but poor education.

It seems that in the early years of the century melody became almost a secondary consideration and a calypsonian's success depended more on his use of high sounding English than anything else. Cowley (1996:198) cites evidence from Lord Beginner to explain the increased use of English in calypsos at the turn of the century. Beginner recalls the advent of the war as sparking a renewal of patriotism for England but, more significantly, he also claims that "the big-shots began taking an interest in Carnival" (ibid). This meant the offer of prizes and competitions that were judged by the English elite. This not only discouraged the use of French Creole because the "big shots" claimed they could not understand it, but it also led to the increased use of high sounding English to impress them and to reciprocate their interest. Beginner goes as far as to claim that he lost a contest in 1927 for using a single French Creole word (see Rohlehr 1990:121).

The Oratorical Calypso, also known as the "Sans Humanite", was most popular between 1900 and 1925. The refrain of these songs, "sans humanite", is believed to have been retained from the old calinda stickfighting songs and like many calinda chants they were sung in a minor key requiring two or more singers for performance so that they might improvise insults against each other for the pleasure of an audience (Rohlehr, 1990:57). Rohlehr (1990:58) surmises that the origins of the Sans Humanite melody can be found in the litanic chanting of the Catholic Church. It was the increased length of the stanzas from single tone to
double-tone that was most preferential to the oratorical calypsonians. The double-tone featured eight-line stanzas and thus allowed the calypsonian more room to express ideas. The Oratorical Calypso was opposed by the simpler and more rooted four-line single-tone style that would mostly have been accompanied by the tamboo bamboo bands and had its roots in the language of the people. Rohlehr's (1990:73) analysis of the outcome of this confrontation is that essentially the more rooted form prevailed, but that out of it two tendencies emerged: "(1) the highly rhetorical Oratorical mode simplified its language and was shaped by Executor among others into a vehicle for story-telling. (2) the single-tone tradition of picong grew into a style of wit and abuse based on simile, conceit and pun, fundamentally different from the picong of the Sans Humanité type. It was homely and grounded and required, not the big word, but rather the effective varied and colourful use of ordinary idiom."

Towards the end of the 1920's it was apparent that the Oratorical style would not eclipse the single-tone style, but rather the oratorical style was now being effectively used as a vehicle for nationalistic expression and opposition to colonial rule. The result was that police spies were planted in the calypso tents with pen and paper to record any such utterances in an effort to implement the Sedition Bill of 1920. During the 1920's the calypso focused increasingly on topical issues, and by the mid 1930's certain calypsonians developed a political awareness so acute as to lead to direct censorship of the form whereby anything to be recorded or performed would first have to be approved. The Colonial Secretary had the power to ban any record, and the Theatre and Dance Halls Ordinance of 1934 meant that English police officers could censor song texts (see Rohlehr, 1990:189/90).

During the period 1912 to 1934, American recording companies, and particularly Decca, also recognised the commercial potential of the calypso and set about fostering it and making many recordings both of contemporary songs as well as of contemporary calypsonians performing older already established calypsos. The
record companies were interested in developing calypso commercially to suit international tastes and initially promoted Trinidad's music as an aspect of Latin American music. Performers like Belasco who made a habit of recording old calypso folksongs in their own style termed these recordings paseos. Houdini, the first calypsonian to emigrate (he went to New York), used the term "semi tone" to describe his recordings. Other terms used were "Single tone Calinda", "Single tone Paseo", "Calypso Swing", "Trinidad Carnival Paseo", "Calypso Fox Trot", etc (see Rohlehr, 1990:147). A similar comparison can be made today where the term "soca" is the trading title under which many would be calypsos go. The nature of calypso is that it is both traditional and flexible; a tradition that incorporates change with ease.

Certain calypsonians eventually found themselves in a position to set up their own tents or syndicates that were independent from the carnival masquerade bands, and charge admission. Quevedo (1983:36) attributes King Fanto, brought to the capital by the Red Dragon Syndicate, as being the first calypsonian in 1919 to command an entrance fee. However, Lord Executor remembers Cavalry charging a fee as early as 1906 (see Cowley, 1996:218) although this would clearly have been unusual and probably died out by 1910. By 1929 collectives or syndicates of calypsonians were operating together under a single tent name to compete against their fellow calypsonians for audiences. Sponsorship still continued but not just in the form of offering prize money for competition; for example, the Toddy Syndicate named itself after a chocolate malt drink and invented a jingle in praise of it.

The calypso tent has a long history stemming from the custom "for masquerade bands to assemble at night in backyard tents, and rehearse their calypso choruses" (see E Hill, 1975:73) in the preceding weeks to carnival. It was after World War One that practice tents could attract so many people that they then began charging
small entrance fees. In 1931, Railway Douglas, a calypsonian and ticket collector on the government railway, opened a tent with galvanised iron roofing and electric lights named "The Crystal Palace", which, seating 300 people, was said to be bigger, brighter, cleaner and more comfortable than any other (Rohlehr, 1990:120). Douglas had the single largest influence in converting the calypso tent into a thriving entertainment industry. By the late 1920's business men like L.J. Williams had recognised that money was to be made not just out of calypso singing, but out of the management of tents. One man in particular, an agent for Decca and Columbia called Sa Gomes, provided the calypsonian with the prospect of attaining the respect he had always desired as a professional entertainer who could make a realistic living from his work (see Rohlehr, 1990:119). The interest of Sa Gomes and the major record labels meant there were major possibilities for successful calypsonians like Beginner. The first wave of professional calypsonians has become known now as the Old Brigade and included names such as Atilla the Hun, Lord Beginner, Tiger, Roaring Lion, Growler and King Radio (see Quevedo, 1983:85).

The transition was being made into a new era of professionalism. Calypsonians could exist independent of carnival bands (few bands could now afford the services of the best calypsonians) and it was now through the mass media, mainly the radio, that calypso could most often be heard. The interest of major recording companies also meant that calypso had a wider audience both at home and abroad. A significant time came in 1934 when two of Trinidad's most prominent calypsonians, Atilla and Lion, were called to America to record for Decca and Brunswick, and promote their calypsos (see Quevedo, 1983:50). America had taken to calypso and in the period 1934-37 these calypsonians recorded in the presence of both Bing Crosby and Rudy Vallee, and Lion's "Ugly Woman" received a coast to coast broadcast by the NBC (see Quevedo, 1983:51). This success abroad gave the calypsonians even greater success back home (see Rohlehr
Imported recordings of both Atilla and Lion flooded the stores in Trinidad after they had received the stamp of success from America. Atilla explained in a commemorative calypso of the visit:

A prophet hath no honour in his own land.
The truth of the proverb I now understand.
When you sing kaiso in Trinidad,
You are a vagabond and everything that's bad.
In your native land, you are a hooligan.
In New York, you are an artiste and a gentleman,
For instance, take the Lion and me
Having dinner with Rudy Vallee.

Calypsonians began to travel regularly to America after this but, despite this success, it was a nasty shock for both Atilla and another calypsonian, Lord Beginner, when they were detained on Ellis Island as undesirable immigrants until the Trinidadian musician and arranger, Gerald Clarke, testified on their behalf and agreed to take responsibility for the duration of their stay (see Rohlehr, 1990:78/9). The US authorities did not recognise their claim to be famous calypsonians believing that there were already enough calypsonians in America. This did not occur until 1944 when America was involved in the Second World War and, as Rohlehr points out (ibid), it seems it was at a time when America was even more obsessively racist than usual in its immigration and detention policies due to the huge influx of refugees it had taken on.

There was a tremendous amount of calypso music being recorded from the 1920's and 1930's, more so than in the 40's and 50's, and these recordings were not of improvised performances. Recording was an entirely different affair from the improvised battle of words in the calypso tents. Songs that were to be recorded would have been performed many times in the tents first and were carefully
arranged. Due to the nature of the tradition of improvisation very few single tone songs, Calindas or Sans Humanite minors, have been recorded and there are consequently also very few transcriptions of them to make comparisons with. The recording industry had a significant impact on the expression of calypso as it meant that calypsos were in direct competition with popular music from America and, to a certain extent, its musical accompaniment had to bear some resemblance to these sounds. This may account for the demise of the tamboo bamboo bands in favour of the string and wind bands of the Spanish/Venezuelan type, and the saxophones, clarinets and trumpets of the Jazz bands. By the late 1930's, in the more urban areas, tamboo bamboo bands had been replaced by new style percussion bands that made their sound from discarded industrial metal, dustbins, paint tins, etcetera, and they were also popular with the carnival masquerade bands. Thus the African preference for percussion was still upheld but in a distinctly innovative and urban form.

The Second World War had its impact on Trinidad's society which is reflected in many of the calypsos of the time. The US government was given a 99 year lease for a major naval base at Chaguaramas, and airforce and army bases were also built. The result was the sudden creation of many more jobs that could pay up to twenty times the average wage that a Trinidadian labourer would otherwise receive. The sudden influx of American servicemen with money to spend was also good for the entertainment industry. It also led to a growth in prostitution which could provide a woman with money she could otherwise hardly dream of having. Many calypsos were written about this and the subsequent resentment of the Trinidadians who could not compete with the Americans financially. In 1956, ten years after the Americans had withdrawn, the calypsonian the Mighty Sparrow was still rejoicing at their leaving with his very popular calypso about two prostitutes "Jean and Dinah" who, having lost their American clients, would now have to let "Sparrow take-over now." The best known song of this time was Lord Invader's
"Rum and Coca Cola" of 1943. This song also has a very similar theme:

Since the Yankees come to Trinidad,
They have the young girls going mad.
The girls say they treat them nice,
And they give them a better price.

They buy rum and Coca Cola.
Go down Point Cumana.
Both mother and daughter
Working for the Yankee dollar.

Typically though, Invader experienced many problems before he received the wealth due to him for the success of this tune. The American Andrews Sisters recorded a cover version of the song selling 4 million copies and only paid the copyright after Invader won a narrow court room victory (see Quevedo, 1983:77; Rohlehr, 1990:361/2).

During the war years the calypso tents were kept open although the carnival was put on hold until the war had finished. The result was an intensification of the public interest in calypso. As Rohlehr states (1990:409): "In the absence of Carnival, Calypso had become their J'Ouvert, their Las' Lap, their entire Mas."
Quevedo (1983:75) claimed the calypsonian "was finding himself in a new awakening and discovering he was now a celebrity" (see also Stuempfle, 1990:65).

1939 was the year when the Carnival Improvement Committee finally decided to actively make carnival, in its own words, "one of the star attractions of the tourist season. The Carnival Improvement Committee wanted to project an air of decency and respectability to the visitor which effectively involved the devaluation of calypsos based on rhythm, energy and verve and the preference of the 'heavier' more serious type of calypso" (see Rohlehr, 1990:329), a battle that is still being fought in calypso today. It organised competitions in each of the calypso tents
whereby the first two in each would progress to a final competition held at the Prince's Building. The winner of this would be awarded an attractive prize, but would also be recognised as "the Calypso King of the season". The first winner was Tiger who sang "Advice to West Indians". These competitions are the visible origins of the Calypso Monarch/Queen competitions.

Due in part probably to the presence of the American G.I.s over the war period there was an emphasis on entertainment, as opposed to political satire that would otherwise hold little interest for those not familiar with the politics of Trinidad. The result was the emergence of a set of commercially oriented calypsonians who this time called themselves the "Young Brigade". This movement included such names as Lord Kitchener, Mighty Spoiler, Lord Melody, Mighty Dictator and Mighty Killer (see Quevedo, 1983:84/5). Kitchener, in a 1972 interview (see Rohlehr, 1990:346) talks of this period as a "marvellous time", but although it may have been for anyone involved in the entertainment industry the American presence was not always welcomed by the Trinidadians. Later in the interview Kitchener provides some indication as to why this was: "We had a lovely time. And the tent used to be packed with people. As a matter of fact, the native Trinidadadian couldn't easily get into a tent... The tourists took up the entire tent... But of course, we, the tent, looking for money, and we had to look for money. Therefore we had to entertain the foreigners. For that's where the money was" (ibid). Although the American presence brought a certain amount of wealth with it, it also generated some resentment. This is noticeable in calypsos like "Rum and Coca Cola" mentioned above, which ironically was particularly popular with the Americans it criticized.

The Young Brigade soon broke the monopoly of the Old Brigade when they opened up their own tent. They were popular with the American marines and the middle classes particularly as they concentrated on singing more about fantastic or
humorous situations than on social commentaries. They were conducive to the
general feeling of elation over the end of the war. Atilla, the social commentator of
the Old Brigade, describes their songs as being sometimes "silly" but recognised
"the change in the melodic pattern and the musical energy" (Quevedo, 1983:85)
which clearly separated them from the Old Brigade. Atilla himself never gave up
political calypso and was elected to the Trinidad Legislative Council in 1950. He
immediately attacked the 1934 Ordinance that required calypsonians to submit their
work to censors.

The carnival of 1956 saw the first Calypso King competition to be sponsored by
the Carnival Development Committee, set up after the coming to power of the
PNM, which became recognised as the official competition. Sparrow won the title
with "Jean and Dinah", one of the few aspects of the carnival that did not celebrate
the American commercial presence on the island. He was praised for his
versatility, not only incorporating different themes, but for successfully blending
elements of jazz, Latin and rock styles into his music and thereby being able to
compete with international markets. Rohlehr (1990:529) states; "Sparrow’s real
achievement... was to revitalise and update the major elements of the traditional
calypso." Sparrow was recognised as a new member of the Young Brigade and,
although the type of songs associated with this group were on lighter themes, the
political calypso never disappeared. As independence drew nearer in the mid 50’s
they again became increasingly more important but still the most popular themes to
do with love, relationships or sexuality prevailed at carnival, as they do today.

During the late 1960’s, after Trinidad had lived through the first years of
independence, the lyrical calypsos absorbed the impact of the Civil Rights and the
Black Power movements that had emerged publicly in America. The new
generation of calypsonians did not go under a collective banner but concentrated
far more on political and social calypsos than did Kitchener, Sparrow, Terror and
the Young Brigade of the fifties and sixties to whom the political calypso was only one of many aspects. This new group of calypsonians most notably included; Explainer, Mighty Chalkdust and Black Stalin, the latter two of which still perform in the 1990's, as do Kitchener and Sparrow.

What developed as a result of the parallel inclinations between songs of social commentary and songs on lighter topics with "catchy" tunes conducive to dancing or wining, was a predictable pattern in the CDC's calypso competition which, requiring as it did the performance of two songs, meant that a successful calypsonian would often have to sing one of each. Chalkdust protested:

If you want to win the crown,
Sing about wine, women and song.
Sing about your neighbours wife.
Sing about your sex life.

The women's' movement also had a big effect on calypso in the 1970s which had traditionally been a bastion for male supremacy. In 1977, Calypso Rose won the Road March, which she retained the next year when she also became the first woman to win the Calypso Monarch, now changed from the Calypso King in recognition of the female presence. The late 1970's also saw the latest change in the musical sound of the calypso to incorporate the technological advances that were being used in the production of popular music in America. This new style was named "Soca music" which suggests that it is a mix between soul and calypso music, but its most important aspect is its movement towards the modern studio produced sounds and techniques. Many calypsonians regretted the necessity of conforming to this style. Maestro, generally reckoned to be one of the first calypsonians to master the soca style, stated in song:

I did not intend to lose control,
To promote my calypso through soul,
But it seems it is the only way
To survive in this business today.

Today we can recognise that soca is just another incarnation of calypso that ensures its survival. It has been formally recognised, in 1993, with its own prestigious competition the "Soca Monarch". Today though, calypsonians are still expressing what matters to them, whether it be sex, or the latest figures for unemployment. What has particularly become more prevalent are the number of women involved in singing calypso and the influence of the East Indian on calypso.

CONTEMPORARY CALYPSO AND THE CONTEXT FOR ITS PERFORMANCE.
Calypso in Trinidad is performed against the backdrop of carnival and has become almost inextricably bound to it. There is in Trinidad a definite calypso season which generally ranges from around Christmas time, when the majority of calypsonians release their work for popular consumption, to the Ash Wednesday of the following year when the carnival officially ends and the various calypso competitions have all reached their climaxes. Although the official street carnival only occupies the two days prior to Ash Wednesday, the build up to the carnival, and carnival activities, begin as soon as Christmas is over.

Carnival, like calypso, is also seasonal covering the same space in time as the calypso season. Calypso and carnival in Trinidad are effectively bound to each other to the point where it is difficult to imagine the one without the other. The calypsonian theoretically can release his/her work at any time of the year but in reality the majority of calypsos will be on the market during the first month of the season. There are many complaints voiced in the media expressing disappointment that calypsonians do not generally release calypsos outside of the carnival period and that radio stations also cut down dramatically on the amount of air time given
to calypso when it is not carnival. However, the consensus among the Afro-
Trinidadian informants from the neighbourhood described in chapter 2 was: "dat
carnival is really de only correck time to be hearing calypso. It is only at dat time
yuh cah really geh on bad, and dat is wah de calypso is aboud." Carnival is a time
that requires music, but calypso is the music of carnival and commercially it makes
sense for new calypsos to be released at the beginning of every carnival season.
However, while the calypsonians are swayed by what makes commercial sense,
many are also concerned with maximising their chances of winning the Road
March at the end of the carnival. Two of the most popular calypsonians of the
early 1990's, Crazy (Edwin Ayoung) and Super Blue (Austin Lyons), have their
own tactics for achieving this. Crazy will always release one calypso right at the
start of the season which will receive a lot of air-play, thus giving the public
maximum time to become familiar with it and buy it. Super Blue however, is
usually one of the last to release his calypso. This tactic creates a feeling of
anticipation and ensures that his calypso will get maximum air-play in the week
leading up to the Road March. It also means that the public will not have had time
to become bored or "sick" of it.

The season is approximately ten to twelve weeks with the three weeks prior to the
carnival being the most intensive period for calypso. This will then be followed by
the sudden and almost complete cut off of calypso sounds for Lent. In 1964 one of
the most respected post war calypsonians, Kitchener, sang out in frustration at this

Ah go dance in de Lent
Ah don't care who say
Ah can't wait until Gloria Saturday.

Today there is still religious opposition to both carnival and calypso but the
question now is perhaps rather how is it that Lent has any influence on when
calypso is heard? However, although the weight of this tradition has still carried
through, some calypso can be heard in Lent. Calypso can still be heard outside of carnival with Radio Tempo, the national radio of Trinidad and Tobago, claiming to play calypso right through the year. There will also be various other competitions hosted in other Caribbean countries that may momentarily stir up interest in calypso. Essentially though interest in calypso dies with the end of the carnival. This is something that many calypsonians complain about and have used the power of calypso to comment upon it. A notable example of this came from Black Stalin who sang "Part Time Lover" in 1986. The first verse of this calypso brings out the calypsonian's bitter resentment at being loved for only part of the year and also makes a reference to the censorship that can prevent calypso being heard even when it is in season:

You walk about and say you like kaiso
But he only see you one time ah year.
You say that you will never let him go
But when he in need you are never there
And when you hear that one time come around
All he get is ban and criticism.
If that what you calling love you putting out
That kind ah love kaiso could do without
Without ah doubt.

Complaints like this are common amongst calypsonians. Events conducive to social commentary may obviously happen at any time, but may only be commented on at one time. However, as one informant explained; "...it mus only be de carnival time when de calypsonian cah speek. It is only den dat he will be allowed to sing." In other words, his music, which essentially questions the basics of the society he lives in, is a part of the mood of carnival and under the banner of the carnival it may (or may not) be tolerated. Today carnival forms the background to calypso's expression and is a major influence on the way calypsos are produced and how
successful they will become. For these reasons it is essential to have an understanding of how Trinidad Carnival works in order that we may see the calypso in context.

THE CARNIVAL:-

Trinidad Carnival, as an event, originated with the French planter class in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but was developed by the African population who, excluded from the festivities of the wealthy white elite classes, found their own alternative ways of celebrating carnival (see Wood, 1968:245; Carr 1975:57). Today carnival is participated in by members of all ethnic groups in Trinidad but it is still "by and large associated with what is locally known as urban Creole culture" (Eriksen, 1992:146). However, as Eriksen also stresses, there are certain apparently purely religious feasts, such as the Hindu feast of Divali, that have also come to be major events for members of all communities (ibid). It would seem that these events, in losing some of their ethnic specificity and religious significance have come to be more a celebration of national identity, although "the ethnic origins of the celebrations are evident" (ibid). Carnival, as with calypso, the steelband and liming, may be linked to the ethics of reputation, which in turn may be largely associated with the working class, and are "key symbols - not only in the self-image of the working class, but also in official Trinidad" (Eriksen, 1992:156). Trinidad has reached a situation where, upon achieving its independence its "low culture" or culture of resistance, has now become its "high culture" or its national identity, a paradoxical situation that is clearly the legacy of colonialism (see Abrahams 1983:91).

The Trinidadian writer and playwright Earl Lovelace attempts to portray what carnival means for many Trinidadians in this extract from his play "Jestina's Calypso" (1984:7/8). The play is set in Laventille, one of the poorest areas of Port of Spain:
Prettypig: What it have in this island to come back to? What? No. Serious. I mean, if I go away, if God help me and I manage to get out of this spit spot of an island, what I coming back here for? What could bring me back here? (they look at her amazed) True (with sincerity).

Pappyshow: This is home. We have sunshine here.

Prettypig: I going to have winter coat.

Toto: Beaches with white sand.

Prettypig: Swimming pool.

Mako: We have democracee. Republic.

Prettypig: Don’t talk no politics to me at all at all, at all, I vote for William in sixty-one and not a bitch getting me to stain my finger for him again.

Doctor: (languidly and with provoking certainty): You will come back for carnival.

They all smile at her triumphantly.

All: Yes she will come back for carnival.

Prettypig (thoughtful and serious): You know I wouldn’t even come back for carnival.

Toto (accusing and outraged): You wouldn’t come back for carnival? All Stars Steelband going down Charlotte Street, J’Ouvert morning...

Mako: Panorama in the Savannah, the Queen Show, playing history in the Saldenah band.

Toto: A bottle ah rum in your backpocket, your cape over your shoulder, and a sword in your hand, and you chipping down the open road for everybody to see you holding up your man... You wouldn’t come back for carnival?

Pappyshow: You wouldn’t come back for carnival? People like peas grain floating down the road and man and woman wining back and iron ringing, and pan pan pan. And to hear robber speech and watch jab jab whips crack across jab jab back, and sailors fulla rum tumble down in the gutter and get
back up and let tourist snap your picture and your face full up with powder
that See Bees throw. You wouldn't come back for that? You wouldn't come
back?

Mako: You wouldn't come back?
Toto: You wouldn't come back?
Doctor: You wouldn't come back?

All eyes accuse her. Prettypig's posture slackens in the face of their accusation
and threat.

Prettypig: Okay, okay. I will be back for carnival.

Carnival is represented as the one thing that a good Trinidadian, particularly of
African origin, will participate in. In the words of more than one Trinidadian
interviewed by the researcher "yuh doh mek joke wid carnival".

Whether or not a Trinidadian participates in carnival he/she will know something
about it and will usually have something to say about it. Carnival can permeate any
conversation and is often a way into conversation. There may be speculation as to
who will win what competition, or who deserved to win it, there will be stories
about what this or that fete was like, or whether or not a certain calypso should be
banned. An article printed in the Trinidad Mirror took a humorous approach to
how carnival crops up in the everyday conversation of a Trinidadian, but also
manages to convey the seriousness with which many take the events that make up
the Trinidad Carnival:-

  Success at staging carnival should be easy in this country
  - since it seems that everybody is an expert at Steelband, calypso, the
    production of carnival bands and throwing fetes.
They are - at once - historians too.

You are, in fact, hereby warned that the pre-qualification for entry into any conversation on these subjects, is that you must remember trivia and petty details concerning every detail of the festival.

To mis-speak on matters of which year who sang what, is to display a callous indifference to your own culture.

(Trinidad Mirror 24/01/93)

The above article was titled with the words "The greatest show on earth", and this was often how the informant Trinidadians would try to promote carnival to someone who had not experienced it. Carnival, and everything that comes with it, is consciously recognised as playing the major part in the culture of Trinidad. When asked about carnival, many Trinidadians are of the opinion that "it is we culture". Carnival is deep seated and inherently a serious matter that is often a source of pride to Trinidadians and something that should be known about.

Today carnival has three components. The calypso is one and its position in carnival will be examined last. The other two are the steelband and the mas or masquerade. All three have their own competitions within the carnival season.

The steelband is an orchestra-like set up of steel drums of varying tones that can include up to 130 musicians. A player in a steelband is said to "beat the pan". The pan was originally fashioned out of empty oil drums sometime around the middle of the 1930's and there is still a great deal of dispute as to who actually invented the first pan. It would appear though, that whilst the steel drum itself was a new invention, the steelband was a development from the tamboo bamboo bands, that it
eventually replaced entirely. S Steumpfle, in his Ph.D on "The Steelband Movement in Trinidad and Tobago" (1992), finds that the steelband in concept has been developing for well over a century on cultural practices. For example, the pans were modelled on bamboo instruments that in turn were modelled on skin drums (1992:27). The use of steel then was an innovation that transformed an already established tradition.

Steelbands associate themselves with certain areas, for example the "Desperados" with Laventille, Port Of Spain, or "Exodus" with Saint Augustine. Today the major competition for steelbands is known as the "Panorama" and is held during the carnival season. There are preliminary rounds to determine which bands will appear in the semi-finals. The semi-finals are held in the Queens Park Savannah stadium, Port Of Spain, as are the finals. Each band is given exactly ten minutes to perform on stage before they are judged. This competition is taken extremely seriously by all competing bands and there are nearly always disputes over the marking and end results. The steelband will choose one of the calypsos of that year from which it will generally take the basic melody and modify it to make it work for the steelband sound thus making for a strong link between the steelband and the calypso.

Although the mobile sound systems used on the two days of street carnival are by far and away the most predominant sounds, and the marching pan-around-the-neck bands are only occasionally seen, it is possible to hear all the major steelbands practising throughout the carnival season in their respective areas. The emphasis on succeeding in competition is the primary motivating force. The intellectual seriousness with which the steelband competitions are taken was perhaps best summed up for me by a remark made on the radio by Pat Bishop, a leading expert on the steelband, who commented after one performance of a steelband was particularly well received that she was "always wary of bands that get a lusty
crowd reaction. Razzle dazzle does not impress the judges."

The second element of the Trinidadian carnival, the mas, is one common to
carnival throughout history. For many, playing mas is an essential part of their
enjoyment of carnival and they will generally purchase their costumes from one of
the mas camps. However, playing mas in Port Of Spain is expensive and therefore
largely confined to the middle classes and to tourists, although, as the informant
Bongo pointed out: "dere plenty people who save all year jus to luk good for dose
two days." There are though carnivals all over Trinidad, and many schools will
make and parade their own costumes at these, and they also provide the
opportunity for less serious and amateur designers to parade and test their
costumes. Competition is still prevalent even in the smallest carnivals with money
prizes being awarded to the best carnival band as well as for the individual
Carnival King and Carnival Queen competitions.

The calypso is also linked to the mas bands as each of the parading bands must
play their mas to the music of one of the calypsos written for that year's carnival.
Carnival is a time of renewal, and emphasis is placed on new costumes and new
calypsos. The choice of calypso made by each of the bands is important as it will
go towards determining who will win the Road March. The winner of the Road
March is simply the calypsonian who has his/her calypso played by the most
amount of bands as they cross the stage. The Road March and the mas band
competitions are the only competitions that actually take place over the two days of
carnival and are linked together.

CALYPSO AND THE CALYPSO FETE:-
Over the carnival season there are many large fetes that become more frequent the
closer it gets to carnival. In recent years "Soca Village", or "Spectrum" as it is
now called, has become one of the most regular and popular of the large scale
fetes. This is actually set up as a site to host fetes throughout the season. However there are certain sites that play host to fetes, usually once or twice in the season, every year, that have now become part of carnival tradition. Two of the biggest are at the Water Authorities compound and at the National Flour Mills, both of which are state owned sites. Spectrum is the mainstay of carnival fetes, running at regular intervals throughout the season, but people will also be looking out or listening on the radio for news of when these fetes will be. At all these fetes there will be two, three or even four stages set up around the site so that when one band has finished another will come on immediately on another stage. This also means that those at the back for one band may find themselves at the front for another. There will be three or four different bands playing throughout the night with many calypsonians making guest appearances to sing one of their Road March contenders for that year. The bands, with names like "Taxi", "Blue Ventures" or "Massive Chandileer", comprise their set of all the most popular calypsos so far that season which can mean that one calypso may get up to four live performances in a night. These bands, with some exceptions, most notably in recent times "Taxi" and "Atlantic", will rarely perform calypsos written by themselves. They are live entertainers, and as such, are an important medium for a calypsonian if his calypso is to be popular that year. What is played at the fetes is what people will be "getting on" to and what they will associate with carnival and with enjoyment. By the time of the carnival all the main Road March contenders will be well known through the fetes as well as the radio.

Apart from these large scale fetes there will also be numerous smaller "block" fetes within the community and many other work fetes. At these there will rarely be live performances but rather there will be a sound system playing soca music. There will be various stalls selling alcohol and food, and they will also give those locals who have been working on presenting a mas for carnival, the chance to display it. This will usually be done through coloured diagrams of the various costumes that
are pinned on a board with the various costs below. These will usually be for children to play mas at "Kiddies Carnival" on the Sunday before carnival. These also provide the opportunity for participation for many of those who would not otherwise go to the larger fetes either because they are too young, too old, or because the idea does not appeal to them. Many schools will also host their own fetes which raise money and are usually very popular and are by no means just for members of the school.

One phenomenon that is common to fetes, and other musical events such as the Panorama, is "storming". This is the act of getting into a show without paying. It should be said though that it would be rare for someone to think of storming a tent where, to use Wilson's terminology again, it is "respectable" to pay. Most of the big fetes will charge around $20 for entry which many Trinidadians would claim they just cannot afford, but storming could not solely be described as a reaction to poverty. For many, the vast majority of whom would be males between the ages of sixteen and thirty, it to is part of the reputation building process. To successfully storm into a fete is something to boast about. The act of storming though is often not as adventurous as it sounds but may be done in many different ways. Often it can just be a case of knowing the security or someone who works at the venue to let you in, or having a counterfeit ticket. Other times it may involve climbing over the wall. For some Trinidadians it was a matter of principle not to pay. As a result, what tended to happen was a build up of people around the entrance and perimeters of the show. If storming proved to be too difficult then a reduced group price may be negotiated but often one may go to a fete and not actually go in at all. It may be that someone will go to the show undecided about whether they are going to go in, and make their minds up from this. These people who collect around the entrance will be "jibbing", that is just waiting to see what will happen or how things are. If they cannot storm then they will decide whether it is worth paying, depending on the "vibe" they get or the people they meet before they go.
in. On one occasion the informant, Madman described in chapter 2, upon returning from a fete, bitterly complained at having paid to get in: "Ah wish ah never dun gone in to dat fete. $25 ah leh go jus for dat and de sound nah even wuking. Ah do better jus staying where ah was. Ah having fun wid de homeboys jus jibbing". As it turned out, the overriding factor that made Madman leave his friends and pay to go into the fete was the sight of a woman he had long admired from the neighbourhood. Needless to say the admiration was not mutual but it does emphasise that sex, the promise of sex, or just the possibility of an encounter with a member of the opposite sex is a major attraction of the fete. Either way though, part of the fete experience can also be what is going on outside, and have nothing to do with calypso.

At the large fetes alcohol is always on sale, usually in the form of beer or rum, and this, for many, plays a large part in the fete experience, as also does the smoking of marijuana, but essentially it is through dance that the people enjoy themselves. Wining is how many Trinidadians initially respond to, and experience calypso at a public event such as a fete or a party (but not in a tent). Many recent calypsos have made wining their subject, hence the "wine and jam" phenomenon. In 1992 the Road March winning calypso was commonly known as "wine on something". Wining may be described as the moving of the hips in a gyratory dance like fashion. Often the feet and the head remain fixed points so that the dancer may often remain on the same spot. Daniel Miller's article (MAN 26 2 1991) presents wining as a form of "absolute freedom" and he continues the examination in his work on modernity in Trinidad (1994). The significant point is that the dance may or may not involve a partner. Usually if a man and woman wine together then the woman will be in front of the man and facing away from him; there is little facial contact but rather the couple will rub genitals as they gyrate. In this respect the dance appears erotic, which it is, and intimate, but as Miller points out (1991:326), the fact that a couple are wining does not necessarily mean that any further
relationship between them can be implied. Miller observes (1994:74): "Even when the couple have remained together throughout the evening and developed into hours of grinding, once the fete ends, (for example, when her companions signal to her that they are ready to go), she may leave the dance floor with merely a token wave, sometimes without even knowing who the male was." Facial contact such as kissing or even just prolonged eye contact is clearly a far more poignant indicator of a possible sexual liaison than a night of wining.

The view held by all the male informants was still that "de fete is a place yuh cah find ah woman", but, as with Madman’s account mentioned above, this was often not the case. Madman’s elder brother, Doctor, once explained the pitfalls to him: "Yuh see it comes lik de woman, she know dat we watching she. She lik dat but dat doh mean anyting. She may leh meh or he wine wid she but dat still doh mean anyting. She lik to luk nice and sexy and she lik to tease. We [pointing to all the men in the lime] mus be very careful of dis or she will have we wining all night, spending our hard earned dollars on she and den suddenly she leave wid her friends and not even give yuh any tanks." This would indicate that the men are aware of the sexual politics of wining, but to wine with a woman, or to see her wine, are still one of the fete's major attractions.

Wining now seems as much a part of carnival as the steelbands and the mas. The examination of this phenomenon has been largely neglected by most writers on calypso in favour of a treatment of calypso based mainly around its lyrical content. This may work well with those calypsos concerned with social commentary but these clearly represent only one side of calypso. The road march calypsos are the ones that achieve popular status and are played consistently on the radio throughout the carnival period and provide the music for the fetes and parties. The people will be more familiar with these tunes which they will often hear whether they want to or not.
THE ROAD MARCH AND THE CALYPSO MONARCH / SOCIAL COMMENTARY VERSUS "JAM AND WINE".

There is a distinct dualism that exists in the way calypso is expressed in Trinidad and this is perhaps best shown by the two major annual calypso competitions. The first, the Road March, is accepted as an expression of popular tastes and culture. The other competition is the Calypso Monarch, the final of which is held on Dimanche Gras, the night before the carnival begins, and in this competition the calypsos are judged on their aesthetic merits.

The Road March is an open competition in that any tune is eligible, but the fate of the tune can ultimately only be determined by the bands over the days of carnival and they require, above all else, a tune that can be danced to.

The Road March is decided unambiguously, in that there can hardly be any dispute as to which calypso has been played the most times after they have all been counted up. This is a contrast to the Calypso Monarch competition which, like the Panorama, always provokes a great deal of discussion and controversy. The Road March is dependent on recorded sound; the calypsos that are played by the bands over the carnival are recorded versions played from sound systems stacked up on small trucks so that the sound is as mobile as the mas players. The Calypso Monarch however, places a premium on live performance and it is as much for this as for the quality of the songs that the calypsonian will be judged by.

For the Monarch competition the calypsonian is expected to perform two songs for which it is generally expected that at least one will be a social commentary, usually commenting either on home affairs, foreign affairs or on the state of the world in general. A calypsonian may elect to sing two social commentary songs but usually the other tune will be a "party" tune. A calypsonian who elects to sing two party 105
tunes cannot expect to progress too far in the competition. This point was again proved in the 1992 competition when the eventual Road March champion Super Blue went out in the semi-final stages because, as the press later surmised, he sang two party tunes. Very few calypsonians have been able to succeed in both competitions and it is almost unheard of that a calypsonian should succeed with the same tune in both competitions simultaneously.

The winner of the Calypso Monarch, apart from winning a large cash prize and a car (this competition holds the largest material rewards of all the carnival competitions), also earns the prestigious title of Calypso Monarch of the World. The female calypsonians do have their own competition for the Calypso Queen but they are also eligible to compete for this competition. In 1992 three of the ten finalists were women, although so far only one woman, Calypso Rose, has ever won the competition.

We have seen here the carnival context within which calypso operates, and the history from which it has grown. Carnival and calypso in Trinidad are inextricably linked, both fuelling and defining each other. Calypso is the music that the bands masquerade to, and the melody that the steelbands beat. It is perhaps now at a point where "calypso", as a term, has become too vague. Soca is a specific type of calypso that has emerged as being definitely to do with dance and party, whereas, the now widespread use of the older term "kaiso", for social commentary type calypsos, is a reaction to this. Possible polarities contained within calypso have been suggested in the last section headlined by the two main competitions, the Road March and the Calypso Monarch. The dualism in the Caribbean, as defined by Wilson (1973) and Miller (1994), may also be found here. Respectability is attached to the tents and good social commentary, and reputations may be won at
fetes and by the "rude boy" behaviour so well embodied by the calypsonian Sparrow.
CHAPTER 4: TYPES AND THEMES IN CALYPSO.

"The modern calypsonian is the sum of many traditions, any of which may surface from time to time" (Warner, 1982:29).

THE DUAL NATURE OF CALYPSO.
Traditions continually acquire new dimensions as they persist beyond the era or original context in which they were conceived. When a tradition is conceived, if such a thing can be said to happen, it cannot be apparent to its initiators at that moment that it is traditional, but becomes so through its persistence from one generation to another. Naturally, as the tradition outlives each generation, it is open to reassessments and reinterpretations that will be set against a continually shifting contextual background. Roger Abrahams (1983) suggests that, rather than taking on new cultural values from the whites, the old Caribbean colonies added new ones to those already existing. To quote Paul Radin the "Negro was not converted to [the White Christian] God. He converted God to himself" (see Abrahams 1983:54). Paul Gilroy (p19 :16) offers a useful insight into the nature of black music when he states that the music of black people should be approached as a *changing* rather than an unchanging same." Tradition is not passed through time as a fixed unchanging essence but is reinvented: "New "traditions" are invented in the jaws of modern experience" (ibid). It is the invocation of tradition that is important as a stand against the destabilising flux of the modern world. Hence a new hybrid type such as "Hip Hop" may be effectively used as a symbol of authenticity. The essence remains the same but automatically adapts its expression to its spatial and temporal environment so that it may be better understood. A tradition can maintain itself if it is strong enough in its central purpose and pliable enough in its expressive tendencies, to withstand this.

Calypso has been embraced by successive generations and is valued today for its
intrinsic cultural value. It has become something by which a people define themselves and, whether they choose to be associated with it or to disassociate themselves from it, it is part of the national consciousness. One of my main informants, Bongo, derived much of his yearly income from carnival and was once told how lucky he was that Trinidad had a carnival. His reply was revealing and won much support from the rest of the lime: "Lucky? Yuh feel ah lucky? Yuh from Trinidad? Sometime ah feel yuh from a nex place. Cah yuh tink of Trinidad widdout tinking of carnival? or calypso? or steelband? Yuh mad or wat? Trinidad is carnival. We are carnival. Dere eh no luck aboud it. Dat carnival is dere for yuh, meh and every Trinidadian. If ah mek money jus so it because ah is Trinidadian." Feelings about calypso tend to run deeper and across a wider age range than for other forms of popular music. The point here is that the long and rather confused history of calypso has meant that it is difficult now to talk about it as a whole, without first considering the rather diverse aspects that are part of the calypso tradition.

The introduction of the soca beat in the mid to late seventies was an immediate hit with dance audiences and is now the predominant form of calypso. Many of the older calypsonians have felt the pressure to conform to this new style, even Sparrow felt the "Soca Pressure", as he called it in his song of that name. Later however, he clarified his position: "People nowadays keep saying that we have changed calypso over the years. I say why not? We had to change for calypso is a live and living thing. The very people complaining about Soca and the like would be the first to boo if you come with the same kind of calypso every year" (see Warner, preface:1982). The need for variety in calypso was the motivating force behind Lord Shorty’s soca invention. 1993 saw a further manifestation of the effect of soca with the first staging of a Soca Monarch competition, marking an official divide in calypso. Most of the contenders were also considered to be contenders for that year’s Road March, and the first winner, Super Blue, did go on to win the
Road March as well. Soca has proved to be the most commercially successful form of calypso in the modern era and is therefore, most predominant in the Road March.

In an article from one of Trinidad's many weekly papers the calypsonian Sugar Aloes is praised for being "a well seasoned all rounder in the calypso arena". This means, according to the paper, that: "He can sing almost anything from love ballads, party songs and hard hitting socio-political tunes" (Weekend Heat 27/02/93 p19). For a calypsonian to be considered competent in all these areas is itself unusual enough to be worthy of media interest which, in this case, rightly indicates that most calypsonians tend to be known for their achievements in one area of calypso. Very few calypsonians tend to sing love ballads but, as was established in chapter 4, calypso can be largely divided into two categories that may be referred to as "party" or "jam and wine", and "serious" or "social commentary" (a third more specialised component is calypso that is composed particularly for interpretation by the steelbands). It is this divide that is the cause of so much discussion when talking about the general nature of calypso.

The most basic duality is within the calypso itself. This appears to be recognised within the categorising or titling of the music. There would not be a social commentary that was also a "wine and jam" or "party" calypso, and while a social commentary may use a soca beat it would not be referred to as being a soca calypso. Soca calypsos are for dancing to and for playing in party situations to help create a party atmosphere and are therefore associated with the Road March. Kaiso is a traditional term and has now come to be used for social commentary type calypsos or calypsos that have a serious point to make, although these calypsos will also often be humorous as well. Chalkdust (Hollis Liverpool), who is probably the most prominent of the dedicated social commentators, constantly refers to his music as "kaiso". This though is not to say that the social commentary aspect of
calypso is any more "traditional" than the Road March calypsos. These different aspects of calypso have always been there. The rest of the divisions follow from this division within calypso music itself. These are to do with how the music is received, and when and where it may be played.

The dual aspect of calypso is best headlined by its major competitions as outlined in chapter 3. On the one hand there are the Road March and the Soca Monarch competitions, and on the other the Calypso Monarch and the Calypso Queen competitions. Here the division is formally realised. These are the major carnival calypso competitions and they, to some extent, define the calypsos that are involved in them. However, it is not as simple as this as some calypsonians do compete, and do well, in both competitions using the same material. Most recently Super Blue (Austin Lyons) won the Road March in 1993 whilst also reaching the finals of the Calypso Monarch. More impressively, in 1988, David Rudder achieved a very rare feat by actually winning both competitions.

Apart from in competition, calypso music, as an event, is either played at fetes, or in tents, and here we see further manifestations of its duality. For example, you would not go to a fete to hear social commentary. At a fete the emphasis is on partying and dancing and so calypsos that promote this will be played. In a tent the calypso will generally be listened to in a seat by an attentive audience who will clap or jeer each calypso. There is a slight overlap here though in that soca and road march calypsos will also be performed in tents, although they will be considerably outnumbered by social commentary calypsos. The most apparent difference is the way each calypso type is received by the listeners, with one inspiring dance and revelry, as found at fetes, and the other attentive seated listening, as found in the tents. It is noticeable that it is only when road march calypsos are performed in the tents that the audience may rise from their seats to dance, although it is far more restrained than at a fete. The distinctions are
obviously not cut and dried but there is clearly a duality in calypso, highlighted by the competitions, but based on the necessary function, either to inspire dance and revelry, or thought and awareness.

Many of the crowd pleasing calypsos played on the radio and at fetes do rely on the same tried and tested jam and wine formula which can give this type of calypso a rather impersonal feel. However, the music is still valued for its danceability; the primary ingredient in a successful road march calypso: "If it is Road March yuh hav to go wid de beat. Ah may lik a calypsonian to win Road March but if he go in de Monarch I nah lik he to win." Remarks like this show why it is a rare achievement today for a calypsonian to succeed in both competitions, but also highlight the divide within calypso. This divide stems from the place that lyrics have within the overall construction of the song. Those calypsos that are described as jam and wine emphasize the beat and rhythm, and are meant for the dance hall. For these, lyrics are not secondary or meaningless but are taken from a stock set of phrases, instructions and descriptions, of which the words "wine" and "jam" are the most common. These tunes will be set to a soca beat, and well produced for play on the radio where they will achieve popularity and become challengers for the Road March title. Figure 5 is a cartoon joke taken from one of the most popular Trinidadian weekly newspapers which highlights the extent to which these calypsos are heard playing on radios all over the country.

The more serious social commentary calypsos will have far less radio time, but may be heard live in the tents. For this reason they will rely less on studio production techniques as it is their live performance that will determine their success. The Road March today is dependent on recorded sound. The calypsos that are played by the bands over the carnival are recorded versions played from sound systems stacked up on trucks so that the sound is as mobile as the mas players. In contrast, the Calypso Monarch competition places a premium on live performance,
Well, here we go, folks... anudder season of **DIABETES & CIRRHOSIS of the LIVER**...
the quality of which is also judged. The trend that has developed here is that certain tunes are produced with the Road March in mind. These tunes are pressed up into records or tapes for public consumption and receive the majority of the radio air play. The melodies must be instantly recognisable and the lyrics easy to remember.

Unlike the Road March, the Calypso Monarch competition demands live performance so that the producer will have little influence in the success of a calypso in this competition. The prominence of these two competitions headline the divide within calypso. This is suggested by the fact that there are two primary competitions. The Road March has been described as "the peoples choice" and the Calypso Monarch represents "the experts choice" and as such, the one carries popularity, the other prestige. The competitions themselves are not what the divide in calypso is, they are merely the headlines for a whole series of divides that are can be found in popular music.

ATTITUDES TO CONTEMPORARY CALYPSO.

Today the calypsonian is still recognised as the mouthpiece of the nation, and even as an alternative teacher. One 25 year old informant, Doctor, said of calypso that: "As ah geh older ah now understand. Ah appreciate it more. Ah now see dat it have someting to show meh. Dis is someting ah cud not tink six years ago when de only ting ah hearing was dub." His idea here was to try and convey to his two nephews, aged twelve and fourteen, the worth of calypso. They had complained when he switched the radio station playing in the yard over to a station playing social commentary type calypso, that it was "boring", and that they wanted to listen to some dub. Doctor was also still a fan of dub but the two boys had recently been in trouble for some bad grades at school. He had done this as much as to say that perhaps if they listened to more music like this they might achieve better grades.
Different views are voiced by various members of the Trinidadian public concerning the present state of calypso: "It go wid de times. Today dey singing for what meks money, but wid ole time calypso, ole time calypso yuh cah go back and still enjoy it. New calypsos cyah stand de test of time. Dey designed for only a short period of time." These were not nostalgic memories voiced by an elderly person, but were spoken by a young man aged twenty-one, though they are not necessarily representative of youthful attitudes to calypso. Given a choice, many of the younger generation would prefer to listen to Jamaican dub music and would struggle to identify many of the older calypsos. A more typical response from those asked how they felt about calypso in its present soca format was that: "Changes are good, the soca beat has enhanced the calypso music." However, when quizzed further it became clear that the criterion cited by informants as to why soca is an improved form of calypso was often not always their own: "It has progressed, ah mean fifteen years ago we nah having calypsonians flying to Japan", was one reply. The state of calypso often seems to be measured by the success it has had abroad. Another informant, almost in the same breath, exemplified the contradictions inherent in such an attitude: "Ah feel calypso has moved on. Tanks to soca it is now recognised all over de world. De quality? Ah cyah really say dat is better. Nowadays dey sing to please de crowd. Long-time it was more personal." It seems here that the music itself can, to a certain extent, be overlooked, so long as it achieves success abroad. This need for foreign approval does betray a certain insecurity Trinidadians can have about anything Trinidadian. However, comments such as these do show that many Trinidadians are conscious that calypso is distinctly Trinidadian and is ultimately a national symbol that can promote Trinidad to the rest of the world.

The following excerpt is taken from an article in a daily national newspaper and
was entitled "Calypso an art form in decline". It provides an overview of what calypso is supposed to be and expresses the anxiety over its present state:

I wish I had a million dollars. That might just be enough to pay off this season's calypsonians and give the true art of calypso a chance to be revived.... As it stands right now, there is a cash flow problem in the calypso world [this has probably always been the case], so everybody is singing catchy songs to earn quick cash... the true meaning and significance of calypso is being lost. For decades this art form was used as a way of educating the masses. Topics of social and political issues gave an overview of what was happening in the country. Calypso formed part of our cultural heritage since it was passed on from generation to generation... Today, the only education being derived from calypso is who should "wine on a bumsee" or what fete or party we should go to, among other unimportant topics calypsonians now choose to sing about.... If we don't take stock of calypso's demise, pretty soon we would have nothing cultural to offer our children. As it stands now, few of them below the age of 10 have heard about Atilla the Hun, Chalkdust, Terror, Roaring Lion, Pretender and the host of social commentators who have made and left their mark on society.... What bothers me most is the decades dedicated calypsonians have spent building the art and the few seasons the culture vultures are taking to destroy it... at the expense of our children.

(Express 23/01/93).

What emerges from this article, as with many others, is the strong feeling the writer has for calypso as culture or "cultural heritage", and hence a deep concern for how it is progressing. A worry is that too many of today's calypsos are devoid of good lyrical content, but concentrate only on setting trivial lyrics to "catchy" tunes designed to have mass appeal and so make the money that the more serious
calypsos do not seem to be able to make. The result has been, what many consider to be, an unhealthy deluge of calypsos with little cultural or educational value. It seems though, that calypso has suffered a history of these types of complaint. Cowley (1996:172) points to a review in the Port of Spain Gazette of the 1907 carnival which bemoans how "the people have harked back to the same old thing" with "usually meaningless" songs and "common placed" and "monotonous" music. Party type calypsos form the musical core of the carnival celebrations and, come the carnival, often many of those that have criticised them may also be found "jumping up" to them. Cowley also points out that as early as the 1870's "... a particular criticism of the festival [Trinidad Carnival] was corruption of children by 'lascivious' dances and 'obscene' songs" (1996:234). It seems that calypso is not something that has declined through time, but rather its dual nature has meant that some have never been able to accept it fully. What is also surprising, and will emerge, is the inability or refusal of some to recognise the value of calypsos that are not primarily concerned with lyrical content.

It appears that there is a strong feeling of resentment among many of the more "serious" calypsonians towards the jam and wine calypsonians, who they believe are destroying the art. In 1993 the calypsonian Chalkdust won the Calypso Monarch singing, as one of his songs, "Kaiso in the Hospital". In this he laments the damage he feels that has been done to calypso by certain calypsonians, and the influx of foreign music, mainly in the form of dub from Jamaica, and pop and rock music from America. Significantly Chalkdust prefers to use the older word "kaiso", instead of calypso. In the verse below he continues in his clever vein of hospital metaphor:

Then a pharmacist by the name of Arrow
His greed make Kaiso bleed
He raise Kaiso heart from sunrise to sunset
And then give Kaiso a dose of rum tablets
And while his medicine brings him plenty capital
Kaiso sick in the hospital.

In the true tradition of the calypsonian, Chalkdust is not afraid to name names and in this verse he cites Arrow as one of the men responsible for the poor condition of calypso. Arrow is commercially one of the most successful calypsonians, but he is portrayed here as using calypso just to line his own pockets with little regard for the damage he is doing to it. This though is a good example of how a calypsonian dedicated to one aspect of calypso cannot accept its duality.

**THE LYRIC IN CALYPSO.**

There are many calypsonians who write and perform their own songs but there are also a large number of calypsonians who just sing other people's work. One elderly informant put his view across very succinctly: "Dere are two types; de calypsonian, who writes and sings he own ting, and de calypso singer, who jus sings udder people's work." The latter type he referred to as "jokers". Throughout the history of calypso, calypsonians have often sung songs that they did not write themselves. Today the two most prolific writers are probably Winsford Devines and D Williams (better known as Merchant). The latter has been described as "...the man most responsible for the mass calypso appeal" (Sunday Punch 16/02/92), and for the 1992 calypso season he was responsible for writing 26 calypsos. However, he has been nowhere near as successful as a calypso singer, and receives little in the way of media coverage as a result. The listening public generally have little concern for anything other than the performer, as Warner explains: "The calypsonian is accepted at face value. Calypsos are inextricably associated with the calypsonians presenting them... In its own way, the Trinidad public has made the hidden composer issue a very academic matter by not seriously bothering with it, by willingly ignoring it once the calypsonian pleases in his performance. Whoever first sings a calypso publicly has authorship bestowed on him and there the matter rests" (1983:25).
Lyrics such as those uttered by calypsonians may draw attention to social problems and injustices, acting as a voice for the people to "help clarify local opinion on social and political issues" (Hebdige 1987:87 Cut). The listener may take consolation in the knowledge that he is not alone in his concern. Calypso music has a tendency for making topical themes its object. It also has the power to both bring certain social issues to the fore and to ridicule them. Abrahams (1983:74) argues, in relation to his analysis of adolescent rhyming and joking in Nevis and Tobago that: "There is no joking, then, unless there is an order that can be overturned or at least challenged by the establishment of new communities and relationships. But simply because a joke relies upon this previous social order indicates that it acts in response to certain pressures already existing within that order, tensions that are shared by the group who participates in the joking." The calypsonian who sings social commentary may be likened to the rhyming "joker" and, like him/her, exposes problems and contradictions that, in the manner of the Blues or Soul singer, may be eased (but not solved) through sharing, or what Abrahams later calls "a ratification of common feelings" (1983:75). Road march calypso lyrics may also unify the audience in a simpler and more apparent way through issuing such participatory instructions to the crowd as "jump and wave."

The lyrical calypsonian is still much respected as a cultural figure even by those who do not listen to calypso. He/she may be heard, as ever, in the calypso tents, which are still very well attended. However, with the advent of modern recording techniques and the pressure to sell records, combined with the viability of the radio as a medium through which music may be heard, there are now a great many calypsos of the road march type that are not concerned with presenting a complex lyrical content, but rather with an effect that is short, sharp and simple. This has been seen by many Trinidadians as a decline in the standard of calypso where too many calypsos are only about jam and wine. Chalkdust again is a good example of
this criticism when in 1986 he had a calypso entitled "Too Much Quacks". The "quacks" refer to those calypsonians that, in his opinion, sing substandard lyrics that they usually have not even written themselves. Some excerpts from the calypso should clarify some of the concerns of the "serious" calypsonians:

Too much quacks and invalids
The Kaiso boat overcrowded
Leaving out big space for music
Because they have no damn lyrics.

...As soon as they make a hit is
Merchant or Devine who compose it.

...The day that me and Duke resign
The thing go turn to only jam and wine.

Such criticism over the present state of calypso, and name calling other calypsonians, either in praise or damnation, is an important part of calypso. This again signifies the division of calypso, and the varying attitudes and concerns of the calypsonians towards its present state. This is easily done from an analysis of calypsonians like Chalkdust who set a premium on lyrical content and seem, in the main, to resent that side of calypso concerned with carnival revelry.

It is inappropriate to claim one type of calypso is better than the other as they set out to have completely different affects on people and therefore the success of a calypso must be measured in these terms. For example, the calypso "Jump and Wave" that won the 1994 Road March for Preacher, would never claim lyrical excellence but it succeeded in making many people literally jump and wave. To say that its lyrics were incidental could not be the case as it was through them that this calypsonian could incite the audience. Warner (1982:20) describes the ideal Road
March winning calypso as having "a very catchy tune, with a chorus that the revellers can sing in toto or in part" (Warner 1982:20). Pearse (1955), defines a road march tune as a "...short incessant reiterated chorus sung or played, usually a fragment of calypso chorus.... Music for street to lead dancing by carnival bands." To criticise a road march style calypso for not being lyrically complex is therefore to miss the point, and perhaps just shows one person's preference for a particular type of music.

The lyrical content, aside from the lyrical quality, of the party oriented calypso has also come in for some considerable criticism over its over concentration on sex. Calypso has long had a fascination with sex, which was especially brought to the fore by Sparrow. What seems to be the case is that the calypsonians are now becoming more overt in the way they sing about it. An interview with the prominent jam and wine calypsonian Iwer George explains the contemporary attitude to sex in calypso:

... for years calypsonians have been coming clean and still, on carnival day as you're walking in the street, the moment the deejay puts on one of those X-rated dub songs, the place goes wild. So, I decided if they don't want calypso in its clean form then is sex dey want... My critics don't really understand the new era soca music is going through. (see Trinidad Express, 24/01/92).

The interview hints at the influence Jamaican dub music or more specifically its "slackness" has had on calypso which is examined in chapter 6. Calypso's trick is to sing about sex indirectly through employing such methods as the double entendre and, despite this, it still is today. Perhaps what should be lamented is not calypso's obsession with sex, but the way it may sometimes slip from clever innuendo into shocking explicitness. This tendency though has also always been there; even as early as 1849 there was a clause inserted in the Police Ordinance concerning the singing of profane or obscene ballads (see Cowley 1996:50).
Sexual allusion is a key part of carnival and calypso enjoyment, and is the major appeal of many calypsos. There will rarely be any direct references to sex in a calypso and if there are the public makes a show of not tolerating them. Roaring Lion, the oldest living calypsonian, advocates that there is no such thing as a smutty calypso; if it is smutty it is not a calypso. Calypso’s way around this, or any taboo subject, is usually through double entendre or the use of extended metaphor. Warner explains that: "In its milder form it allows the calypso to escape the self imposed censorship of the radio stations; in its more vicious it parallels the very vulgarity or eroticism it is seeking to mask" (1982:107). Calypsonians can go to great and varied lengths in their search for a metaphor relating to a sexual encounter, and this itself is part of the skill and enjoyment of calypso. Even Kitchener, who is often cited by the establishment as being one of the greatest exponents of calypso, often used sexually suggestive double entendres; "My Pussin", for example, in 1968. Today the calypsonian Crazy is probably the most notorious user of the sexual double entendre. The lyrics of the chorus from his 1988 calypso "Drive It", where Crazy portrays himself as a "mechanic" who is visited by a woman with a broken down car, are a good example of the sexual double entendre in calypso:

   Ah friend of mine
   Recommended you as a good mechanic
   So drive it come Crazy drive it
   Something inside shaking
   Ah bolt ah screw must be missing
   Drive it come Crazy drive it
   Ah know you could fix it
   So drive it drive it drive it.

The use of metaphor in lyrics is an important aspect of musical communication. Waterman (1990:218) described its function as establishing "synthesaic
correspondences across distinct realms of sensory experience." The use of metaphor as a tool for expression arises out of its ability to let us know one thing that may be unknown or need clarifying, in the terms of another already established thing. It acts as a bridge that enables progression from the known to the unknown. The dynamics inherent in the metaphor do not lie in the pulling together of two thoughts for comparison, or from a realisation that regards either one as "substituting" the other, but in the interaction of the two thoughts. Victor Turner goes as far as to say that "they 'engender' thought in their coactivity" (1974:29).

As an effective method of expression, the creation of a metaphor involves all the natural dimensions of experience. Ruth Stone (1982:3) notes the ability of a skilful Kpelle performer to bring into play and unify events or objects that otherwise would appear to have no relationship. If a metaphor is successful, that is if it is widely understood and accepted within the circles it is used, this is because the selections made are already understood and are in some way representative of that culture. In this way the cleverness of the lyrics is to be admired in many of the party calypsos.

Apart from metaphor and double entendre the calypsonian will also use obvious word play for the ear, with help from his own phrasing, to get across taboo images. Again, in recent years, Crazy has used this to great effect. In 1993 he sang one of the most popular calypsos of that year "Paul, Yuh Mudder Come", which, when sung at fetes, was often rephrased as "Haul yuh mudder cunt". This calypso caused a great deal of controversy and is examined in more detail in chapter 10. In 1994 Crazy came with another very popular calypso entitled "For Curiosity". In this the calypsonian speculated, "for curiosity", how many of the audience were there with "outside" men or women, or, in other words, how many were at the fete as part of a date with someone who was not their recognised partner. For the chorus he played on the words "for curiosity" by singing "for q, for q, for q-ri-
osity". To the naked ear this could sound like "fuck you". In an interview in the Trinidadian Sunday Express (10/01/93) Crazy told the people of Trinidad "Don't blame me... Nothing wrong with my songs. Crazy coming clean. Crazy is misunderstood." The picture with the article shows Crazy reading a bible and, like the interview, is clearly "tongue in cheek". However, Crazy does have a point when he says "don't blame me" as, although he may incite an audience to use swear words, cleverly, and in true calypso style, his songs do not contain any. This is perhaps even more annoying to the self-righteous listener because he forces him/her to admit that they know the terminology, should they wish to complain about his calypso.

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There appears to be a constant struggle within calypso between its traditional self and its need to constantly reinvent itself. Carolyn Cooper (1993), in her analysis of slackness (a term used to describe the trend for the use of sexually graphic and explicit lyrics by DJ's and dub artists in Jamaica), makes the point that; "Slackness is potentially a politics of subversion. For slackness is not mere sexual looseness - though it certainly is that. Slackness is a metaphorical revolt against law and order; an undermining of the consensual standards of decency. It is the antithesis of Culture" (1993:141). In a similar fashion to those printed above, Cooper points to letters of outrage printed in the Jamaican Daily Gleaner (1993:144) from so called "decent" people protesting this incarnation of reggae. Perhaps the message is here, in the words of Ruth Finnegan; "Once one starts thinking not about 'the best' but what people actually do - about 'is' not 'ought' - then it becomes evident that there are in fact several musics, not just one, and that no one of them is self evidently superior to the others" (1989:6).

Two sides of calypso have clearly emerged here; the political and the social
commentary songs, that whilst often being controversial are "respectable" in the sense meant in the term as applied by Wilson (1973); and the party calypsos referred to as jam and wine. While they at present appear to be at odds with each other, they also define and fuel each other. Each thereby clarifies a particular function of music, but ideally the best calypso will successfully combine the two. This topic of duality within calypso, which is perhaps also indicative of a duality within music generally, runs throughout the thesis.
CHAPTER 5: SELLING CALYPSO: THE CALYPSO INDUSTRY.

This chapter will examine calypso as a working industry. It will look at the various methods it uses to sell itself and how it uses them. It will also look at those through which it regulates itself before determining how its commercialisation has affected it as a music form.

THE STATE OF THE CALYPSO INDUSTRY.

With a population of just 1.2 million the market for calypso in Trinidad and Tobago is immediately quite limited. It could be expected then that only a few calypsos would make it to the record press each year. In fact, in recent years, the number of calypso LP's released annually has exceeded twenty. This becomes even more surprising when we also consider the growing numbers of extended calypso 45's and LP's released each year, as well as the growing number of calypsonians and other professional and semi-professional local musicians.

Calypso does extend beyond Trinidad and Tobago, particularly to other Caribbean islands, and other cities that play host to Trinidad style carnival like New York, Toronto and London, but these do not significantly add to the figures for a market of potential "buyers" of calypso music. The reason for this is that calypso is not essentially for consumption in the home. It is heard in public places where it creates a party or carnival atmosphere, or it is heard in tents. When I asked Doctor, one of the main informants described in chapter 2, why, considering how much he seemed to enjoy soca music, he never bought any to play at home, best summed this up: "Yuh meking joke? Wah meh be doing wid a calypso record. It hav it on de radio, in de taxis and at de fetes. If ah want to hear it ah go to a fete nah sit around at home. When yuh ever see meh at home anyway?"

The professional calypsonian will be looking ultimately to achieve success in
competition and to sell records. There are plenty of competitions in Trinidad but its recording industry is not as developed as it should be considering the emphasis it places on musical activity, and is fraught with problems. One of the main problems is that nearly all recordings and all record pressings are done abroad. The first records of Trinidadian music were made in New York (see D Hill, 117:1993) and little has changed. This means that calypso must then be imported into Trinidad before it can be sold in the shops. A calypsonian may record in studios in Trinidad, and is now more likely to do so than ever with the newly built Caribbean Sound Basin studios, but often this work is done in studios abroad, if not in full then in part, with any mixing or additional work also being carried out in studios abroad, particularly in New York. After this, the main problem is in pressing the records and this cannot, at present, be done in Trinidad. Jamaica and Barbados are two of the most common places used for pressing calypso records, as well as the jackets and sleeves for the records. This leads to high production costs, with the calypsonians incurring the extra costs of air fares and living expenses abroad, as well as recording expenses, purchase tax and duty, and negotiations over half the hemisphere, to produce one record (see Warner 1982:23). Many calypsonians attempt to combat this in some small way through sponsorship or advertising on their record sleeves. The BWIA logo is particularly common on record sleeves as calypso records will also be exported and purchased by Trinidadians living in London, New York and Toronto. 1980 particularly highlighted the potential consequences of this when many of the calypsonians had recorded their material but the public were still left waiting on their records to be pressed (ibid).

After radio, the calypsonian's most important vehicle for promotion is live performance. This can either be in the tents or at fetes. Very few calypsonians will have a contract manager who will look after their interests on a long term basis, so the main task for most calypsonians each season, after they have the material they are to sing, is to get themselves attached to a tent. Most calypsonians, if they are to make money, will make it out of performing in the tents. The tents are where the
calypsonian must make his/her mark. There are certainly opportunities for calypsonians inclined towards both social commentary and soca, to get work in the tents, and all the major tents hold auditions which are advertised in the papers. Even so, there are always complaints that there are not enough tents to meet the number of talented calypsonians. There is particularly a noticeable lack of tents and calypso entertainment in general in the south of Trinidad. This is probably rooted in the common conception that, as the south is an area more commonly associated with Indo-Trinidadians, there is therefore less demand for a calypso tent there. A tent based in Port of Spain, or along the east/west corridor, will also have more of a chance of attracting the large tourist audience that arrives in Trinidad over the carnival season.

**MAKING CALYPSO POPULAR.**

M. Lieber, in his detailed ethnography of Port of Spain, talks of the "emergence of cynicism as a distinctive outlook toward social life" (1981:105). This cynicism, though bitter, has been merged with a mellowness and gentleness in public behaviour that especially shows itself in Trinidad's calypsos where the lyrics, whilst often being scathing, will usually be witty and set to a deceptively sweet melody. The sweetness of the melody is an effective vehicle for delivering words that may otherwise sound excessively angry and bitter. One of Trinidad's hardest hitting social commentators, Michael Osouna, took the name "Sugar Aloes", which best represents this idea. Hebdige states that melody played a significant part for the West Indies' most commercially successful musician, the Jamaican reggae artist Bob Marley: "Like the calypsonian, Marley knew how to drive his message home behind a lilting refrain or a jaunty beat" (1987:81).

Melody is used by calypsonians to make lyrically complex calypsos more manageable for the listener, and so is particularly useful for delivering social commentaries which may otherwise struggle to hold the attention. Whilst a
calypsonian skilled in social commentary will win a lot of respect, it is certainly not the most commercially viable form of calypso. Soca or road march style calypsos are what the people come to hear in their thousands at the eagerly awaited carnival fetes. The demand for this has led to the somewhat formulaic calypsos known as "jam and wine" discussed in chapters 3 and 4. The problem is that once a certain style has proved popular then it becomes a safer business proposition to imitate than to experiment. Frith highlights this in relation to all popular music: "The problematic issue that runs (if in different ways) through the history of all forms of popular music since the development of industrial capitalism is the relationship between music as means of popular expression and music as a means of making money" (1983:38). Figure 6 appeared in the Trinidad Guardian and rather cynically sums up what has happened.

Warner explains the way the calypso industry works in the modern day: "Both calypsonian and record producer must take into account the varying tastes of the market, saturated as it is with so much other material. Consequently, some calypsos are aimed fairly and squarely at the buying public at Carnival time with the resultant loss of the 'genuine' nature of some of these songs and the composition of rather stereotyped lyrics. Finally hard selling marketing techniques are being employed more and more as attempts are made to recoup initial financial outlays" (1982:23). The effect that this has had on calypso and calypsonians is evident. An interview with a minor but up and coming calypsonian, Leon Coldero, provides an insight into the way some calypsonians are thinking. In 1994 Coldero sang a calypso called "De Cow" about a two-footed cow and its encounters at a carnival fete. This was clearly an attempt to cash in on the popular "Donkey" songs of the previous year (see chapter 10). The calypsonian admits; "De Cow is a stupid song and is way below my capabilities, but it is what people want to hear... Artists are faced with presenting mediocre songs to
Soca running after big bucks
an audience because that is what sells", he then went on to say that there was no longer any room for "big lyrics tunes since even the radios don't have time to play them. With the welter of party songs, there is no room for social commentary" (Trinidad Guardian 02/02/94).

The social commentary/road march duality within calypso, already discussed in chapter 4, does not need elaborating, but the point here is that social commentary or "big lyrics" calypsos do receive far less radio play and therefore are not so profitable. It would be wrong to say that party type calypsos far outnumber social commentary calypsos, as will become apparent to anyone who visits a calypso tent. Party calypsos are far more in evidence because of the radio preference for them. One particularly insightful informant explained this in a letter published in the Trinidad press (a place where it is far more common to find letters of outrage at the declining quality of calypso);

...The ones who say that there are more 'wine and jam' calypsos than social commentaries are the ones who do not pay to visit the calypso tents or calypso competitions held across the country. They depend on the radio to give them everything for free not realising that the radio only plays what is popular, which is more often than not the 'wine and jam' calypsos.

(Trinidad Express 15/12/93)

CALYPSO AND THE RADIO.

The pressure is on the disc jockeys to play what they feel is right or what the public calls for. The veteran Jamaican calypsonian, Byron Lee, who comes to Trinidad every season to perform party calypsos with his band "The Dragonaires" explains this: "If soca music appeals to the majority and because of the high competitiveness of the radio stations, announcers will have to play what is hot otherwise people will switch to other dials [stations]" (see Trinidad Guardian
10/02/93). The informant known as Madman, himself commenting on this article, stated: "Yuh see it already hard enough for calypso having to compete wid de dub. Soca is Trinidad's ansa to Jamaica's dub music and so de DJ's mus pley dis. If dey pleying all dis serious kaiso den de kids will jus turn de dial for some Buju [Buju Banton, a popular Jamaican dub artist] and den dey will never hear calypso at all."

The idea that a radio station that wishes to stay popular will do so by playing popular music is straightforward enough. What represents popular calypso are the "wine and jam" or Road March winning calypsos. To take a literary example, Earl Lovelace's "The Dragon Can't Dance" is the fullest treatment of the calypsonian in the contemporary Trinidadian novel and, set in the 1960's, it is the sexual double entendre that brings the calypsonian Philo his fame which allows him, as an established calypsonian, to revert back to social commentary at his leisure, safe in the knowledge that he also has the formula to make popular calypso (1979:112).

The radio must play what is popular but it also has, to a large extent, the power to make one calypso more popular than another. It is the chief form of promotion for calypso in Trinidad. This is perhaps best shown by what could be termed "the exception to the rule". Banning or censorship has long gone hand in hand with calypso and in recent years the calypsonian "Crazy" (Edwin Ayoung) has been a victim of this. In 1993 his calypso "Paul, Yuh Mudder Come" (see chapter 10 for a detailed discussion of this calypso) was banned by Trinidad's most respected calypso disc jockey, David Elcock, who felt the calypso was vulgar and encouraged bad language. Despite this, the calypso went on to be one of the most popular and best selling calypsos of that year. In an interview with a weekly paper Crazy went as far as to thank Elcock; "I want to tell Elcock thanks for banning my song because he helped me with record sales" (see Bomb 07/01/94). The fact that a respected DJ was refusing to play this calypso succeeded only in promoting it further. A parallel example may be used from the British popular music charts
when, in 1984, the British band "Frankie Goes To Hollywood" found that their song "Relax" was banned by the national radio station, Radio One. Following this announcement it went straight to the top of the charts the next week. However, the next year Crazy did take the precaution of releasing two versions of another potentially controversial calypso, "For Curiosity", one for the radio and one for the shops.

Today censorship is a small thorn in the side of the calypsonian, the first problem being to get the radio stations to play his/her calypso, let alone preventing them from banning it! The tendency is for the radio stations to give special priority to a select few calypsos that will receive constant airing up until the Road March. Frith (1983:117) refers to the disc jockey as the most significant "gatekeeper", a gatekeeper being one of the people in the music industry that effectively filters the music that the public will hear. Before the public can make any decisions the choices are limited by people who have made decisions before them. In effect, the disc jockey will determine which calypsos are in the running for the Road March, but their decisions will be based on what they think the public will want. In this sense public demand may be said to be the organising idea but ultimately all that people can "want" is what they can get (Frith 1983:92).

The radio and its disc jockeys have the power over what is to be played, and allegations have been made that they abuse this power. Two of the nation's top calypso disc jockeys, Eric St. Bernard and Phil Simmons, also manage some top calypsonians. Allegations have been made that these calypsonians have received special attention on the radio. St. Bernard denied this and stated "...I can't make nobody's hit song. The most you can do is expose a song. If the people like it, they like it. If they don't like it, they don't like it" (Sunday Mirror 19/02/95). On the other hand, it may be argued that if a calypso is to be popular people must hear it. It is, of course, possible that they will hear it and not like it, but getting it exposed, particularly on the radio, is all important if it is to have any chance of
success. It is also significant that two calypsonians who had radio DJ managers, Iwer George and Denise Belfon, were among the most popular calypsonians in 1995. Radio may not only favour a certain type of calypso but, within this, may choose to concentrate on a set few calypsonians. The result is that only a fraction of the annual crop of calypsos become well known to the public.

Calypso is not just tied to carnival but also to competition. However, success in competition may also be dictated by the radio, particularly when it comes to the Road March. Usually most of the big name calypsonians will hold back the calypsos that they feel stand more chance in competition until nearer the carnival, the idea being that their popularity will peak over carnival when the Road March and the Calypso Monarch come to a head. If a lesser known calypsonian is to have his/her work aired at all then it will need an earlier release so as not to be initially in direct competition for airspace with the bigger calypsonians, thus allowing the calypso time to gain popularity (or not) and so go on to compete with the calypsos from the established calypsonians. When Whitey (one of the main informants described in chapter 2), had returned to Trinidad from his home in Canada for the two weeks leading to the carnival, was being baited by his younger brothers for missing out on the fun of the earlier part of the carnival season he replied: "Yuh know it doh bodder meh too much. Yuh see by de time ah arrive it have all de big calypsos for dat year alone playing and ah doh hav to hear all dem small ones dat lead up but never mek it."

Crazy, one of the most popular calypsonians, points out that "the Road March prize is only worth $5000 [1993]... All I studying these days is good music, selling records, making money and getting the music to the four corners of the earth" (Sunday Express 10/01/93). Success in competition is important to the calypsonian and is a key part of both calypso and carnival (see chapter 9), but the main source of income for the calypsonian is record sales, performance contracts, and royalties.
from the calypsos being aired on the radio or being used as part of advertising campaigns. Radio air play is vital for success in these areas too. The problem that has emerged was outlined by an investigation made by Trinidad’s Sunday Express into the way Trinidad’s radios operated. It concluded thus:

One disturbing new trend exposed in 1993 was the preferential treatment extended to a few calypsos on the radio through a legal, but certainly unfair system. With almost all fete and show promoters, and calypso tent operators opting to purchase 'blocks' of advertising airtime, a vast proportion of the music released this year was deprived of air play. The system worked like this: promoter X, or calypso tent Y, staging an event, would purchase a solid portion of prime time advertising, stipulating that only the music by the artistes contracted to the event would be played. This resulted in just about 20 of hundreds of new calypsos being played on the radio through the carnival period.

(Sunday Express 14/03/93)

The power has shifted out of the DJ’s hands and is even, to a certain extent, out of the radio station’s control. Advertisers can and do apply pressure on the radio stations to play calypsos they have an interest in, but the advertisers are more involved in promoting calypso events. Whilst the article refers to this as a "new trend", the result, that "a vast proportion of the music... was deprived of air play", is not itself unusual. Eric St Bernard, a regular disc jockey for Radio Tempo, the national radio station of Trinidad and Tobago devoted entirely to playing home grown music, claims that radio stations have to air more than one hundred calypsos in a season (see interview Sunday Mirror 19/02/95), but the tendency has always been for the top radio stations to stick with playing the same few calypsos for the majority of their air time. A major weekly paper "The Weekend Heat", responsible for conducting one of the most respected weekly music surveys to determine the most popular tunes in Trinidad, summed up the 1991 calypso season thus:
What occurred was that last year all the big name entertainers and calypso recording artistes release their material ultra early because of a short season...

When the lesser-known artistes released their tunes in January, therefore, it was a desperate struggle to overcome the fantastic head start already accomplished by Stalin and company. No matter how hard people like Devon George, Wayne Thomas and other budding young stars tried, they just couldn’t stop the 'big guns' from swallowing up the airwaves. (07/03/92)

The "big guns" or established calypsonians will generally always be the ones who receive the most play, at least when their calypsos are first released. This is not surprising as these are the ones that most people are waiting to hear. It was, in this case, a poor marketing strategy for young and up and coming calypsonians who were caught out by the shortness of the season.

In recent years another trend has developed that has seen calypsonians changing the chorus or "hooklines" of their calypsos, to promote certain radio stations so that they will, in exchange, air the calypso more regularly. It is not unusual for a calypsonian to alter his/her lyrics to promote a certain product or even invent calypsos to promote a product. In recent times, Scrunter’s "Call Me", examined in chapter 10, is a good example of this, but the trend goes back to the late 1920’s when calypsonians began to set up their own tents, independent of masquerade bands, and would often secure the sponsorship of businessmen in return for advertising (see Quevedo, 1983:39).

Today the radio is the most important medium through which calypso sells itself and the calypsonians, if they wish to achieve popularity, have had to court the radio stations. In 1995 allegations were made in the Sunday Mirror "that disc jockeys are making calypsonians turn their songs into commercials for their radio stations, in order to get air play" (19/02/95), which was described as "stooping to the lowest level... and very degrading for a calypsonian" (ibid). The president of
the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians Organisation, Winsford Peters (better known as the calypsonian "Gypsy"), did not agree that it was "degrading" but claimed that "It's unethical, and it does not augur well with me or my organisation" (ibid). Ethical or not, this trend signifies the increasing commercialisation of calypso.

In 1986, as part of the Calypso Research Project, A Guisseppi presented a paper on "The Recording Industry in Trinidad and Tobago" in which he bemoans the lack of support for calypso from local radio stations: "It has been estimated that at times the proportion of foreign music played on these stations was as high as 90% and that even during the Carnival season this proportion was only slightly lower" (1986:5). Indeed the government owned NBC (National Broadcasting Service) used to remind its audiences as it ended its transmission that calypsos accounted for less than 25% of songs played during the non carnival months of the year (see Warner 1982:23). This latter point is not that surprising given many Trinidadian's attitudes to calypso outside of carnival. About one month after carnival Jericho, the pan player, once made the point that "... it nah right dat we cyah hear kaiso at dis time. Ah feel it should be dere all de year round. It de music of Trinidad jus lik de pan." The response he got from the rest of the lime was unanimously against this. The replies ranged from; "...yuh meking joke. Meh ah so sick of dat music it mus tek meh ah whole year before ah feel to hear it again", to "...Jericho, ah mus congratulate yuh, yuh mus say dat cus yuh rely on dat music to give yuh someting to beat on dat dere pan, but as for de res of we, we enjoy de calypso at carnival time when we cah wine up and do we ting. We cyah be doing dat all de year, yuh know, else wah do yuh tink wud happen to Trinidad?"

In Trinidad today there are, at any one time, as many as nine or ten radio stations in operation, which, considering the relatively small population of Trinidad and Tobago, indicates its importance in Trinidad life. The competition between the stations is fierce although stations will also target themselves at niche audiences.
During the period of research the two most important stations were Radi Yo (as it was known) 98.9 FM, and Radio Tempo 105 FM. The former was the most popular station, especially amongst the young, and the latter was the national station that had a policy of only playing home grown music.

98.9 FM promoted itself as "Radi yo for the people" with an average weekly listenership of 68,790 (see results of HHB & Associates Survey December 1993, Trinidad Guardian 09/03/94). It also sold itself as "the urban sound", equating this with up to date music, particularly from black America. However, only an estimated 52% of their listeners were over twenty and, although this still made them the leader in the adult market, with 35,771 listeners over twenty, 98.9 FM was still at its most popular with the youth. Its music policy is reflective of this with its concentration around either American style pop music, rap or hip hop, or Jamaican dub and dancehall, with some attention paid to soca over carnival. Radio Tempo on the other hand, marketed itself as "the cultural station of Trinidad and Tobago" where "all the calypso hits can be heard first." This was where a calypsonian could hope to have a new release aired, but the problem was that the size of its listenership was less than a third of 98.9 FM's, and, because its music policy was well known, often it was preaching only to the converted. If ever this station was on in the house the two boys would always complain "...dis station does only play one set of ole kaiso. Leh we turn it to someting wid more style."

The fact that 98.9 FM is so dominant with the youth perhaps also indicates that calypso is less popular amongst the youth, and fuels worries that foreign music is killing calypso. When I put this question to one of the informants, Madman, he replied; "Doh yuh know, calypso cah never die. If we have no calypso, we have no carnival, and den... well den we have no Trinidad." However, whilst this attitude indicates how deeply calypso is ingrained in Trinidadian consciousness, the consequence of it may be a tendency to "take it for granted" and perhaps therefore neglect its progress.
PROMOTING CALYPSO: A CASE STUDY.

In recent times, one man in particular has attempted to promote calypso both locally and internationally. Robert Amar, one of Trinidad's wealthiest men, has been one of calypso's main benefactors. The Caribbean Sound Basin (CSB) is a division of Amar Entertainment, which also includes Lamar Record Company (international), Kisskidee Record Company (local), Hickey Music Publishing, Kess Music Publishing, and Robert Amar Artist Management. Robert Amar is one of Trinidad's leading businessmen, although it was his father Boland Amar, a motor car dealer, who originally amassed the family fortune. Amar clearly sees himself as a patron of Caribbean musical talent, and the CSB, which features three studios, one with the capacity to accommodate an entire steelband, is the realisation of his desire to offer artists state of the art technology in every step of the recording process (Caribbean Week 02/10/93)

Amar was behind the Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan in 1994, which was, effectively, an expensive promotions experiment, budgeted, according to Amar, to lose $1 million (see Express 16/01/94), but designed to elevate local talent internationally, as well as to regenerate local interest in its own music. This should also have helped boost record sales of artists contracted to the Kisskidee label, enabling Amar to eventually recoup his losses. Although the idea did not work, the introduction of a third major tent did at least provoke a genuine inter tent rivalry, especially as the new tent poached many of its big name calypsonians off Spektakula (see chapter 6 for an analysis of this tent). Despite the failure of the Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan, it was genuinely a new kind of tent that came some way towards combining a tent with a fete. Officially it was a "roving" tent which meant that it would play at various venues around Trinidad and Tobago. These venues were all open air, and could also hold many more people than even the largest tent.
Profit not being the immediate motive for Kisskidee, Amar claimed to be satisfied with the feeling that he was giving calypso a boost in Trinidad, and as a Trinidadian thing internationally. It is then, important to see how Trinidad's highest profile businessman thought this should be done. The shows themselves were organised one off events at the biggest venues over Trinidad and Tobago, all hugely promoted on the major radio stations. Kisskidee succeeded in poaching many of the biggest calypsonians from other tents, as well as persuading Sparrow, the most successful calypsonian of all time, to sing for them. One of the main points it hyped itself on was the chance, at each show, to win a new Toyota Corolla car (the same as that won by the Calypso Monarch for that year) in a raffle made of all the tickets sold. The Karavan manager, Gary Dore, claimed; "We have been able to give the public the opportunity of winning a prize that is as grand as that previously won by the calypso monarchs. We feel that the paying public is too often overlooked by promoters" (Trinidad Express 14/01/94). These shows were a lot bigger than the average tent shows, attracting around twenty to thirty thousand people, numbers more akin to a very large fete, and were like a fete in that they were also outside.

Dore stated, on behalf of Kisskidee, that they saw that calypso's main problem was that it was failing to attract the nation's youth. They had found that patrons at a calypso show were generally over thirty. Before the opening of the first show of the Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan he promoted it thus: "We have designed a cast which comprises some of the traditional superstars, including Sparrow, Black Stalin, Shadow, Duke and Super Blue, alongside tomorrow's musical stars like Ajala, General Grant, Kindred, Home Front and Super Chile. We feel that our cast will attract the youth and expose these fans to the traditional side of calypso. This tent is intended to cross over all socio-economic barriers" (ibid).

The new generation of musicians included here were supposed to represent the
musical direction in which calypso was going.

While, strictly speaking, many of the Kisskidee protégés are not thought of as calypsonians, their popularity, especially amongst the youth, would suggest that they will be the ones redefining calypso. Kisskidee had previously released four of these acts as new in 1992, General Grant, Sister Ron, The Ghettoarians and Kindred, on one twelve inch record entitled "No Compromise". This was easily the most popular record containing Trinidadian artists for that year. General Grant's "D Shot Call", a gangster term used to tell a man that he is marked for death, was still commonly played at discos and parties in 1994. The type of music being produced by these artists, and others like them, is termed "ragga binghi", a name which suggests Jamaican influence. It is, in reality, heavily influenced by the Jamaican style dub and dancehall. General Grant is considered to be the biggest Trinidadian dub artist, and Jamaican dub is certainly very popular amongst the Trinidadian youth. The fact that he was considered amongst the forerunners for the 1994 Road March also suggests that dub will continue to influence the sound of calypso. Another indicator of this was that the two boy informants of the house considered him to be their favourite calypsonian, while Bongo, Doctor and Madman all considered him their favourite Trinidadian artist.

The Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan, in presenting this array of artists, was trying to bridge the "happening", with the established. Amar lavished previously unheard of amounts of money for a calypso event, in an attempt to give the sort of spectacle that would be more in line with a mega American popstar. It was no secret that Kisskidee had imported US $850,000 worth of equipment, including stage, sound and lighting, and pyrotechnics. Gary Dore proudly claimed: "This equipment is similar to that used abroad by top acts like Mariah Carey.... We feel that our local artists cannot be represented in a primitive environment if they are seriously to be considered as being able to breakthrough on the international market by the mega labels out there" (ibid). Despite this it did not appear to work. One of the reasons
for this was precisely because the calypsonians were not American popstars and were as uncomfortable being dressed up as such, as the audience were seeing them presented in this manner.

The problem also lay in the Karavan's ploy to catch both the tent and the fete audience. These may often cross over but essentially are two separate, and distinctly different events. The Karavan was trying to tie together the dualism that exist within calypso and make it what it is, a complete musical form. However, the audience were unsure how to behave and the atmosphere was restrained. The intention was to impress big names and foreign record labels but Trinidadians cannot conceive of their calypsonians in the same light as American popstars. Bongo, from the main family of informants described in chapter 2, made this abundantly clear when, after having taken the trouble to "storm" the first Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan event, he stated: "Who dey trying to fool? Dis cyah work. It have no big stars in Trinidad.... All we want to do is geh on bad but it has chairs all over de place."

The Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan was the subject of much discussion around Trinidad as, due mainly to the size and publicity of its every performance, it was hard to escape hearing about it. It seemed that it was a victim of its own hype. One of the older informants (Ras in chapter 2), claimed that "... dere so much talk aboud disting ah tink ah go leave it alone", while Doctor later admitted that "all ah studying was to win dat car and dat de only ting dat wud mek meh happy." The main problem though, lay in the inescapable fact that there is simply not a large enough market in Trinidad to consistently fill the type of venues that the Karavan was playing. The idea could, therefore, never financially secure itself into an annual tent, condemning it to a one off gesture.
COPYRIGHT AND CALYPSO ORGANISATION.

Aside from the inherent difficulties that record companies and other calypso related businesses face in trying to sell calypso they must also contend with the problem of "piracy" in a number of forms. Tape piracy is quite apparent and lucrative and, until recently, has been tolerated. Ticket piracy too is also a side business for some Trinidadians. This is the forging of tickets to be sold outside the venue at cheaper prices than the entrance fee. This activity is usually associated with fetes, but was particularly noticeable at the 1994 Dimanche Gras show when the overwhelming amount of forged tickets led to overcrowding and constant pleas from the emcee to buy tickets from the NCC ticket outlets only. One of the main informants, Madman, was admired for his forging skills, and every year he made a point of forging tickets for his two brothers Bongo and Doctor to sell at their local fete. Their attitude was: "Yuh expec we to pay for we own fete? We nah picking anyone's pocket. We luking after we people. Calypso mus pay for everyone. We mus mek money how we can. De family need dis money. Dis ent do nobody any harm."

Pirate tapes are tapes that contain illegal recordings, made from the original records, to then be sold. Many Trinidadians have made small businesses out of this and, in Port of Spain, vendors can be seen openly selling these cassettes. The problem is that neither the calypsonian nor the record company make anything out of these, on the contrary, all they do is lose potential sales. Manuel points out that "For many musicians and recording producers, cassette technology is seen not as a blessing but as a curse which has bankrupted legitimate music industries throughout much of the developing world" (1993:30). The advantages to the consumer of buying pirated cassettes are very strong. Apart from being a third of the price, they will include many more songs by a variety of artists. The tapes will usually include a selection of the most popular calypsos that year whereas a legal record or tape will only contain songs by one artist and, of these, probably only two, at most,
will be familiar to the purchaser. Some calypsonians have attempted to combat this by getting together to release collective tapes but these are still more expensive than pirated ones and this trend has yet to have been followed by the more popular calypsonians.

In 1983 the calypsonian Shadow (Winston Bailey) sang "Yuh say yuh love me, but yuh love me to suffer, pirates", a direct retort to the Trinidadian public who buy pirate cassettes. In order to determine the Trinidadian attitude towards this, one hundred people were questioned by the researcher at a local fete, and as many as 85 admitted they were happy to buy pirate tapes, and 71 thought it should be legalised. Three of the most representative views were:

Yuh mus hav pirates because de originals too damn expensive. Dem calypsonians too greedy.

Wid de pirate yuh get variation. One calypsonian alone cannot give you dat.

Ah find it should be legal. Take Crazy for example. Yuh see, he have one gud song so ah doh want to buy de whole album.

These views make perfect sense when looked at solely from the view of the consumer. The buying public have everything to gain and nothing to lose, except their calypsonians, if the trend continues. It is not surprising then that very few of the people interviewed could look at it this way. Of those that did, the most concise answer was: "Yes, dese tapes should be illegal, because dey do not have de copyright. De wrong people meking money, not de calypsonians and it is only carnival dat de calypsonians have to mek a living. How dey spose to live?"

It is up to the government to protect the calypsonians, but the fact is that home recording is already illegal in Trinidad, as it is in much of the Western world. In the 1970's and 1980's many record sleeves by Western artists carried the symbol
of a tape with crossed bones and the warning "Home Recording is Killing Music". The problem is the difficulty in enforcing such a law, but it is possible to prevent the open sale of such tapes, and this is where the calypsonians felt the law could be enforced.

The calypsonian whose works are being pirated has only the Copyright Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago (COTT) to protect him/her, and this organisation is effectively powerless to stop "street pirates". Its administrator, Ottie Mieres, stressed the need for "more police action on pirates" (see Blast, 22/01/93)). 1993 did see a clamp down on pirating, especially with the publicised action that was taken against Double A Electronics (ibid) who were caught infringing the Copyright Act, and it is certainly now harder to buy pirate tapes than it was. The point here though, is that this has not led to noticeable increases in the sale of calypso records, and it is unlikely to, due to the nature of popular calypso, or soca, as a carnival phenomenon. The attitude to pirating of any kind seems to be fairly relaxed, with the public taking the view that people must make a living.

The main responsibility for COTT is in collecting payments from the calypso tents and local radio stations, and this too is not always without its difficulties. An example came in the build up to the 1992/93 season when a dispute arose between the new COTT administrator Ottie Mieres, and, possibly the largest calypso promoters in Trinidad, the Martineau brothers, responsible for the Calypso Spektakula tent. According to COTT, Spektakula were $29,000 in arrears for royalties owed for the previous season. Spektakula were to stage a pre season concert featuring three of the biggest calypsonians, David Rudder, Super Blue and Black Stalin. COTT were threatening to cancel Spektakula's licence and take legal action if the promoters did not make a payment of $6,000 towards this, as well as a payment of $1,500 for using the songs of these artists on radio and television to advertise the show (see Punch 15/11/92). Spektakula denied that they owed the
$29,000. The situation developed to the extent that with less than twenty minutes to go, Mieres had already delivered a letter to David Rudder, the first calypsonian to perform, informing him that Spektakula's licence had been revoked under the Copyright Act, and that if he performed he too would be in breach of the Act. At this point Spektakula relented.

Ever since calypso was realised as having possible commercial potential the question of copyright has been an issue. The famous case of Lord Melody's "Rum and Coca Cola" has already been mentioned (see chapter 3), and since then calypsonians have had to recognise the importance of setting down their work in writing for copyright. With calypso though, copyright is particularly vague. For example, it is a common and accepted practice for a calypsonian to use the music from another calypso in order to lyrically poke fun at the calypsonian who originally sang it. Every year at fetes numerous calypso bands sing calypsos recorded by other calypsonians. Until 1962 Trinidad and Tobago was protected by UK copyright laws, but for 23 years, until The Copyright Law of Trinidad and Tobago was passed in January 1986, the calypsonian was largely unprotected. Many still do not belong to a body that looks after copyright or royalties.

The professional calypsonian is generally a member of COTT. This organisation is responsible for about 300 local artists for whom they must determine and look after royalty payments both at home and abroad. It is therefore, vital that COTT is linked to an international body to enable its artists to have world-wide representation, and for this reason it has been working in conjunction with the Performing Rights Society (PRS), a British copyright body which has a mandate to collect royalty payments throughout the Commonwealth on behalf of international artists. The PRS represents foreign artists, and COTT acts as an agent in Trinidad for PRS. In turn PRS represents COTT abroad and collects royalties for its artists. COTT estimates that it collects approximately $1.4 million a year (see Trinidad
Guardian 12/01/92), and out of this it will take its administrative costs before dividing the rest, on a percentage basis, between local and foreign artists. The way that this should be divided has, since 1992, been the cause of a dispute which has yet to be resolved, and the PRS have also brought into serious question the amount spent on administration.

At present, the amount of royalties accruing to local artists amounts to about 30% of the total amount collected locally, with 70% going to the PRS. Lennox Straker, COTT's Chief Executive Officer, contested that this figure was nearer 40%. This resulted in the PRS sending its own investigative team to Trinidad to clarify this, and ultimately to Straker's resignation, despite support from the affiliated calypsonians. The problem that arose here is significant because it also relates back to the problem of the actual airtime that is given to local songs. Straker had been campaigning for more local music on the radio and, not surprisingly, was popular with the calypsonians. However, the PRS found that 30% was adequate, and, based on fact that the amount of local music played on the most popular local radio stations is certainly still well below 30%, this is hard to dispute.

Nearly two years after this a split finally did occur between the PRS and COTT, due to allegations by the PRS of COTT's incompetence. The PRS had long complained that COTT's operating expenditure, itself funded out of the royalties it is responsible for collecting, was too high and therefore unnecessarily reducing payments to artists. In 1992 Ottie Mieres had been appointed as COTT administrator to appease the PRS, and he broke down where the COTT revenue went as follows; 55% went on COTT operating expenditure, 31% to the PRS, and 14% to the artists (see Express 08/12/93). In other words, half of COTT's total expenditure was taken up in salaries. Mieres worked out that the average COTT employee received annually 96 times more than the average COTT member. On top of this, he claimed that there was an absence of knowledge about the business
of music within COTT, and little desire to find out (ibid). COTT is supposed to be a non profit making organisation and therefore should use as little money as possible to run its office. The budget that Mieres had presented stated that COTT would reduce the operating expenditure to at least 35% in 1993. This was accepted by both COTT and PRS, but alleged bickering amongst COTT board members prevented the business of reorganisation being carried out. After a further six month extension, granted by the PRS, they decided, in December 1993, to pull out of their liaison with COTT. This has now meant that COTT is no longer able to collect royalties on the work of foreign artists played locally, and the work of many of COTT's 300 local members will be unprotected abroad until COTT has linked with another international performing rights company. The major international earners will be afforded some degree of protection through contractual arrangements with their record labels. In particular, Eddy Grant's ICE label in Barbados which has recently signed many of the top calypsonians.

This indicates a deep rooted organisational problem that is also indicative of why calypso has struggled to maintain itself in Trinidad, and to emerge as a commercially viable musical form internationally. There was also suspicion of corruption, ironically something which calypso is itself obliged to comment on in everyday life. The concern amongst calypsonians was such that towards the end of 1992 an anonymous group calling itself CCC (Concerned Calypsonians of COTT) was temporarily formed. This group made allegations in Trinidad's most popular weekly paper "Punch" of a "cartel" operating within COTT, and demanded more accountability from COTT: "We welcome the idea of dealing with the pirates but the administrators should focus more on accountability. Calypsonians are not collecting money on foreign royalties. Contrary to popular belief, soca music is being played more in the foreign market. Where is all this money going, or who is collecting it?" (01/11/92). Nothing came to light with regards to these allegations, although, as we know, PRS felt they had to pull out of their partnership with COTT.
The CCC went on to conclude that "We need a calypsonian to represent all calypsonians and composers at senior and administrative levels" (ibid). There is already a calypsonian's union headed by the calypsonian Gypsy (Winston Peters), and llewellyn Macintosh (Short Pants) is on the board of COTT, but the way ahead is for calypsonians to take more control over their own affairs. An example of how this can work effectively was seen in 1993 when there was a distinct lack of calypso tents. As a result, a group of calypsonians got together to form their own tent known as ACT, (Arima Calypso Tent). The tent was based in Arima but would travel to remoter parts, where the larger tents would not go, and charge less admission.

The conventional calypso structure can basically be represented by a pyramid, with the point being a business man, and the base singing calypsonians. ACT however, was a fully fledged co-operative, with calypsonians as shareholders. The calypsonian behind this move was Scrunter, who was motivated by the prospect of hundreds of calypsonians being out of work, due to the lack of tents, and he also wanted a tent independent from the businessmen; "Small calypsonians have no chance where the businessman is concerned. If you don't have a hit, businessmen don't want you to sing in their tent... So there are many calypsonians outside with good songs, potential and nobody to guide them... Its time calypsonians handle their own affairs instead of having businessmen spinning them around their fingers" (Express 28/01/95). Calypsonians in the Arima Tent were put into one of three categories with each category representing a different level of pay. The top category, A, included those who had done well in competition, category B included any calypsonian with a recognised name, and category C included all newcomers. These calypsonians received a percentage of the profits based on their category, rather than a flat salary, so that if the tent did well then so did all the calypsonians. Ideally, this is how a tent should operate, with calypsonians directly
profiting from their work. This tent was small scale, operating on a small budget, and could not realistically hope to compete with the larger established tents in Port of Spain. However, it succeeded in setting a precedent, showing, by example, how things could be done, whilst also bringing calypso to the remoter parts of Trinidad.

It seems that the commercialisation of calypso has led to the emergence of formulaic calypso known now as "jam and wine". It has also meant that the radio stations are only prepared to concentrate on calypso in its most popular form, soca. The danger is the fear this may instil in the calypsonian of experimentation. The question that emerges here is the extent to which the disc jockey has created this preference for the jam and wine calypsos through constantly playing them. However, people are still packing out the tents, the recognised home of the social commentary and of quality calypso. It is just that this type of calypso is not so prevalent in the everyday sound that textures Trinidadian daily life. The examples of "raggabinghi" on the Kisskidee label show that calypso is still capable of reinventing itself, whilst the failure of the Kisskidee Kaiso Karavan; the fact that it was neither effectively a tent nor a fete, merely highlights the duality of calypso, and the subsequent impossibility of fusing it.

The examples of advertising affecting calypso are significant, but calypso has been flirting with advertisers and sponsors since the tents first started charging for admission (see Quevedo 1983:39/40). It may also be argued that the commercial end of calypso does succeed in drawing people into calypso. This, in turn, then brings their attention to the full range of calypso. It could be seen as a kind of marker that actually helps define and make apparent what "good" calypso is. It is also clear that the organisation surrounding calypso, and the lack of adequate
facilities, have hindered its commercial success both at home and abroad. It has been stressed that the nature of calypso, with its unbreakable association with the carnival, is not essentially as take away music for private consumption in the home. K Warner opened his important study of calypso with a description of calypso that explains why this may be so; "The accent is definitely on freshness of composition, if not always on subject matter... its [the calypso's] purpose being the immediate entertainment or moral upliftment of the listener, or more correctly listeners, since enjoyment of the calypso is, by and large, a communal activity in which both the performer and the audience play well defined roles" (1982:4). Calypso is most commonly heard in public spaces, at shows and fetes as well as in bars and, most notably, in public transport (see chapter 6). It is heard less in the home, and it is this which makes its consumption quite different from other forms of popular music. Trinidad is too small to stage large events of the Kisskidee type, but it exceeds itself in the size of the carnival fetes it hosts, and it is as a live event, or as recorded sound for public consumption that it is at its most effective.
CHAPTER 6: SITES OF CONSUMPTION.

This chapter will look at two contrasting sites of consumption. The first section will describe the calypsos and format of one of the most established and successful tents, the Calypso Spektakula, taking 1993 as its point of reference. This will provide an idea of what audience experience at a calypso tent, as well as the variety and type of calypso that is heard there. The next section will look at an example of how calypso may be consumed passively by discussing the controversial issue of music on the public transport system. Here calypso will also be seen within the context of other musics that are prevalent in Trinidad.

THE CALYPSO TENT.

One of the largest and most consistent tents in recent years has been the Calypso Spektakula or Spektakula. It is based in the centre of Port of Spain and will attract people from all over Trinidad. Generally the tent will open seven or eight weeks before the carnival and will play to audiences at the tent usually four times a week, although later in the season they may entertain or be entertained by other tents in what are known as "clashes" (see chapter 9). The cost of a ticket in 1993 was $25 TT but at least one of the mid week shows would be a "ladies night" when a woman accompanied by a man could go in free. The description of the calypsos and calypsonians that performed at the Calypso Spektakula in 1993 is taken from the second week of the season and it should be noted that while the cast of calypsonians remain more or less the same throughout, the calypsos may be altered or added to, and in some cases a calypsonian may come with a completely new calypso. The show lasted about three and half hours with an interval. Most of the better known calypsonians performed in the second half so that the audience would not reach its full capacity until later in the show.

This show began with the Trinidadian National Anthem performed by the Roy Cape Kaiso All Stars who accompany all the calypsonians. After this the MC for
the night, Tommy Joseph, introduced the first calypsonian. In many ways he is the most important part of the night's entertainment. He introduces all the calypsonians whilst also telling a variety of jokes along the way. Ultimately he decides whether a calypsonian can return for an encore, although this will normally be based upon how he gauges the audience's response to the calypsonian's performance. Tommy Joseph, like most other MC's, is a stand up comedian and can be seen performing as such outside of the carnival season.

The first calypsonian, Sheldon Nugget, performed one calypso entitled "Cro Cro Cry". He was introduced as an up and coming calypsonian. His calypso was humorous about another well established calypsonian, Cro Cro, who is notorious for his outspoken social commentaries. Sheldon Nugget picked up on a reported incident that Cro Cro was seen crying after he had been placed second in the Carifesta Calypso Monarch competition in 1992. Whilst singing the calypso Sheldon Nugget, to the delight of the audience, imitated this calypsonian's distinctive dancing style and voice. This type of calypso, lampooning another calypsonian, is an important part of calypso. Calypsonians often sing about each other and also about calypso itself, as did the next calypsonian. Bianca Hull was a newcomer and the only female performer in the cast and went on to win the Calypso Queen competition that year. She performed only one calypso, "Calypso Say", which was called back for one encore. As the title suggests, it is a calypso about calypso. Calypso is personified and given its own voice and it is Bianca Hull who tells us what it says. The song essentially praises the virtues of calypso and its struggle for recognition but in the main it is a warning against commercialisation and vulgarity distorting the art form; "...Calypso say, use me with dignity."

Following this came a social commentary from an older calypsonian, Luta. This again was on a topic common to calypso, crime and punishment. The calypso was, as the title "Hang dem High" suggests, strongly in favour of capital punishment for
bandits and murderers. Capital punishment exists in Trinidad but is rarely carried out. For many Trinidadians it is one solution to the escalating problem of crime and in fact 1994 did see the first execution in Trinidad for over twenty years. This calypso received strong encouragement from the audience. Luta himself went on to win the Calypso Monarch the following year in the only dead heat there has been in the competition's history.

After this the tone was lightened with a very comical, performance oriented calypso by Smiley, one of the oldest and most established calypsonians around. The calypso, "Dem Youths", observed that most of the young today could not dance; all they were interested in was wining. He found that "the way they does dance it has no taste". According to Smiley dancing should be frontal or face to face, and he therefore felt he had to give lessons to the under 25's. At this point a woman came onto the stage and he proceeded to do a certain dance for the instruction of the under 25's, for example the waltz, before the woman then left the stage for him to sing another verse after which she would return for him to teach them another dance. This showed the calypsonian in his domain as an entertainer and relied heavily on the appeal of the personality of this veteran calypsonian. It was one of the most popular, and therefore received the most encores, four in all, and is a good example of how the tent can still maintain its appeal in Trinidad. It was distinctly live entertainment that could not have worked as recorded sound.

The next calypsonian again took calypso as its theme. Sung by Bally (Eroll Ballyantine) it was called "Jam and Wine", but rather than taking the typically negative attitude adopted by many of the social commentators it offered a seemingly more rounded and objective view. Bally recognised the need for both types of calypso and did not believe that there were too many "jam and wine" calypsos and that there were, in any case, equally as many social commentaries.
He pinpointed the problem for social commentators as being money. He summed this up singing the lines "...When I sing on Robby do you pass by Crosby." Here "Robby" is the former NAR Prime Minister who is often the object of calypso commentary and "Crosby", or Crosby's, is one of the major record stores in Trinidad. In other words there is no money in singing social commentary as it does not sell records.

Gypsy (Winsford Peters) followed, introduced by the MC as one of the best dressed calypsonians. To prove this he came on in a sequinned jacket with hair well oiled. Gypsy is a recognised social commentator and is also the acknowledged king of the extempore calypso. He was the first calypsonian to perform two calypsos as most of the established calypsonians do from now on. His first calypso "Give the Children Hope" again followed a common theme; a plea not to ruin the world for the next generation as they are our children. In 1987 Chalkdust sang the calypso, "Children World". In a similar vein he complained that "...your guns and your knives are destroying their lives. The bombs that you build teaching them how to kill. You're spoiling the world for the children." Gypsy's second calypso was also a social commentary that this time made use of one of the most popular tools in calypso, the double entendre. The title of the calypso "De Party's Over", plays on the word "party", in this case the PNM who were the ruling political party, and the Trinidadian love for partying as it shows itself at carnival time. The double entendre gives this serious calypso a redeeming wit but, unlike his calypso "The Sinking Ship" (see chapter 10), it had little impact.

Gypsy was followed by a calypsonian who, to spite his soubriquet, "Funny", sang a very serious calypso, "Afraid". AIDS is particularly prevalent in the West Indies and in 1994 took over from traffic accidents as the most common cause of death in Trinidad. It is therefore a major topic for social commentary and "Afraid" is one of a continuing set of calypsos that have taken AIDS as their subject matter,
normally warning against unprotected sex. Often the calypsonian will also moralise as to why this disease has come about. Even Sparrow (Slinger Francisco), a calypsonian renowned for his womanising antics, sang "Ah Fraid de AIDS", in 1986. He advised "...nowadays you can take no chance - When your teefing [thieving] a romance - Always be prepared - No effort should be spared." Later in the calypso however he decides that "...The question facing us is whether it is the revenge of Jehova." Funny's calypso takes a similar position to Sparrow's and was fairly unremarkable in 1994.

The next calypsonian is one of the most controversial in recent times. Watchman (Wayne Hyde), a police constable by trade, considers that he, as a calypsonian, is the "watchman" for the people and it is his duty to report to them what he sees. The first calypso he sang was "Once you're Black" and again it has a common calypso theme. It calls on all people of colour to rejoice in their blackness and respect their roots, and hits out at those who diminish them by comparing how light their skins are and who envy white people. "Once yuh black, yuh black" he says and this includes Indians and white/black mixes. His next calypso was an example of social commentary at its best. Right up to date with the news of the moment it was, as a result, unfinished at the time of this performance and had been added to his repertoire to make him the only calypsonian singing three calypsos. The calypso, "Scotland Yard", commented on the government's recent decision to bring in Scotland Yard to investigate the police force in Trinidad. Obviously Watchman was in a good position to comment on this, hence his eagerness to get this calypso out while the season was still in swing. In the calypso he attacks the Trinidadian government for this decision claiming that corruption starts at the top and that it is the Prime Minister who should be investigated. He also points to the corruption in the British police and uses the example of a man being able to get into the Queen's bedroom as a comical pointer to the incompetence existing within the British police.
Watchman's last calypso is a comical one that took another common theme in calypso commentary, the ridicule of the party calypsos. This was mainly done through lampooning the antics of calypsonians who sing this type of calypso. Like Bianca Hull's "Calypso Say", it is an example of how calypso can commentate on itself and thus generate interest in itself.

The following calypsonian was a noticeable contrast to Watchman. Colin Lucas is one of the calypsonians that would be bracketed in the "jam and wine" category and would perhaps be criticised by some of the more serious social commentators for bringing calypso into disrepute. In 1990, singing with the band Taxi, Colin Lucas was responsible for writing the extremely popular "Dollar" or "Dollar Wine" as it was better known. This calypso instructs revellers to wave single dollar bills in the air in much the same way as, for example, Preacher's Road March winning calypso in 1994, "Jump and Wave", got crowds waving their "rags" (a kind of flannel handkerchief used for wiping sweat off the face). However, in 1993, as often happens from one season to another, he was far less popular and received no calls for an encore.

The next calypsonian, Cardinal, sang "de Syncopaters", and was both political and humorous. There is a well known Trinidadian steelband named the Syncopaters and this calypso works lyrically by comparing politicians with pan players. Cardinal sings out the sound made by the steelband in onomatopoeic terms as "lie, lie, lie, lie" which is then used for all kinds of political satire. For example, he sings "PNM, NAR, UNC [the three major political parties in Trinidad], everybody playing the same melody." This calypso proved to be very popular at the tent throughout the season and is a good example of the type of calypso that most people go to the tents to hear; funny through its use of the language but also serious and lyrically complex.
Chalkdust, the eventual Calypso Monarch of that year, followed. He performed "Kaiso in Hospital" in a long white overcoat and a stethoscope around his neck. He thus could reassure the audience with the comment; "It [calypso] is not dead, it is only in hospital and I happen to be working there." Chalkdust is so called because he is a school teacher, and a great deal of emphasis is placed on his academic intelligence. He recently completed his doctorate so that he was literally a "doctor". Skinners Park is the main venue for calypso in south Trinidad and has a reputation for being particularly hard to play as the crowd are hard to please. His next calypso, "The Acid Test", is about just this. He concludes "You ain't good until South say yuh good" emphasising that a calypsonian must first be recognised as good all over Trinidad before he can look to success abroad. Surprisingly this renowned master of social commentary sang two calypsos that were very thin on social comment but again took calypso and calypsonians as their main source of comment. It was not surprising then that when it came to the finals of the Calypso Monarch competition Chalkdust came with a completely new calypso, "Misconceptions", that was very sharp with its commentary. It was undoubtedly his ability to do this that won him the crown, but again it is significant to note here that calypso can be, and often is, its own source of comment.

This point is again emphasised with the next calypso "Sing Crazy Sing", by Swallow. This refers to the annually controversial calypsonian "Crazy" (Edwin Ayoung) and is commenting on the calypso he released earlier in the season "Paul, Your Mother Come". This calypso was probably the most talked about calypso of this season and is discussed in more detail in chapter 10. Here it provides the subject matter for another calypsonian who is of the opinion that "nothing wrong with Crazy song, Your Mother Come" so "sing Crazy sing".

The next calypsonian Stalin (Leroy Calliste), has a history of singing calypso
stretching back to the 1960's. He sang "Too Much Blackman" and "Somebody Gotta do Something". The latter was a general commentary both on the state of the world and of Trinidad with the title being used as a kind of imploring refrain. "Too Much Blackman" is another plea, this time to black men to stop killing black men. "Too many black people killing black people" Stalin informed the audience taking on his role of the responsible calypsonian.

At this stage of the evening all the calypsonians coming on are well established and the next calypsonian Duke (Kelvin Pope) has the distinction of being the only calypsonian to have won the Calypso Monarch four times in succession. He is also remarkably capable of singing both serious social commentary and more light hearted party calypsos which has been one of the reasons for his continued success. This could be seen in the two calypsos he sang at Spektakula, "Better Role Models" and "De Survey Say". The former is the serious one which is in the same vein as Gypsy's "Give the Children Hope" and Chalkdust's "Children World" mentioned above. Duke warns that there are "So few [role models] for your children to aspire to" and that bandits and criminals have become the role models for many children. For this, he blames the media who do not portray them as the "dogs" they really are. The next calypso is essentially humorous as the survey in question is one that found that sexual infidelity existed in the majority of relationships between men and women. Few more details are given than this but Duke uses it to involve the audience by asking all those who are sure of their partner's fidelity to raise their hands. From there he questions their certainty and points to the survey as reason for doubt. Sex, or sexual allusion, underlies the popular success of many calypsos, and the theme of the "outside" woman or man is one often used in calypso, usually in a style that is humorous or amusing. In 1982, for example, Penguin won the Road March with "Deputy", a term used in Trinidad for a "mistress" or an affair that is "outside" the central relationship. In 1994 Crazy was popular with his calypso "For Curiosity" where he too would ask
people in the audience or at fetes to raise their hands if they were with an "outside" person.

David Rudder came on next to sing "Ministry of Rhythm" and "Dust in dey Face". The former paid tribute to Trinidad as a musical nation and is the title track for his album of that year, but it was "Dust in dey Face" which was particularly well received in 1993. This calypso fell into the category of those calypsos written specifically for pan. "Dust in dey Face" was written specifically for the steelband Exodus who had won panorama in controversial fashion the previous year using the David Rudder calypso "Savannah Party". The calypso is about the controversy caused by this historic first ever win by Exodus and the "dust" it threw in the faces of the other more established steelbands. Although this calypso may have been written with Exodus in mind it was also the choice of many other steelbands. It was also a very popular party calypso often to be heard at carnival fetes. This is indicative of the broad appeal of this calypsonian who is one of the very few calypsonians to have won both the Road March and the Calypso Monarch in the same year.

Super Blue (Austin Lyons) is generally recognised as the Road March king of recent times and he therefore was given the honour of closing the show to ensure that it went off with a "bang". Super Blue is recognised by his distinctive blue clothing and head scarf. Like David Rudder, he also sang a calypso written for pan entitled "Birthday Party" which took as its theme "the birth of Madam Carnival". Out of all the present calypsonians Super Blue is probably the one who is most closely associated with carnival in Trinidad. He is always late with the release of his Road March calypso, and the country, with the help of its media, will build itself up to its inevitable release. 1993 was no exception which meant that for the opening weeks of the tent Super Blue did not perform his eventual Road March winning calypso "Bacchanal Time", but after its release this calypso fittingly closed the show sending the audience home in the mood for carnival. In the
calypso he refers to Trinidadians as "carnival children" and begins it by singing "today is carnival" to get the audience, who have hitherto remained seated, to stand up and "free up". The song has the constant refrain "is it time to go home?" with a definite "no" coming from the backing singers. Like many road march calypsos, it emphasises the ability to party for long periods of time. The calypso is designed to provide stamina for the carnivalites to party solidly for the forty eight hours of carnival. Almost immediately he jumps off the stage (the only calypsonian to do so) and integrates with the audience thus breaking down the audience/performer barrier as much as possible, as it should be over carnival. The calypsonian then sings the instructions "jump up, jump up, jump up" over and over again which is again indicative of a road march calypso.

The Calypso Spektakula for 1993 was one of the biggest shows that year, not just in terms of the number of calypsonians used, but because it presented many of the best known calypsonians in Trinidad. Other smaller tents outside of Port of Spain were more localised presenting lesser known calypsonians. In 1993 there was a distinct lack of tents with several of the previously established tents failing to open, thus allowing Spektakula to scoop even more top name calypsonians. This was not the case in 1994 which saw the return of the other tents and the one off introduction of another major calypso tent taking the name of the "Kiskidee Kaiso Karavan" (see chapter 5). For these purposes Spektakula offers a good cross-section of some of the most listened to calypsonians that year, and the above calypsos take in a good many of the numerous characteristics and themes that can come into calypso. However, it is by no means comprehensive, and is not alone a fair representation of calypso. Jam and wine calypsos, as would be expected, are largely under represented.

The tent really only embodies one aspect of the dualism, the other being predominant at the fêtes where dancing and partying, as opposed to sitting and
listening, are the norm. The above account gives an idea of the nature and range of the many themes to be found in calypso, yet it still essentially consists of observations made by the researcher. The main informants outlined in chapter 2 would be unlikely to attend a tent, preferring, if possible, to go to a fete. Some comments made by the male informants during a casual lime indicate why this may be so. The following is an extract from such a scene.

Bongo, upon seeing one of the wealthier respected members of the neighbourhood walking up the street pointed out to the lime:

Bongo: Ah see he going to Kitchy's place [the Calypso Revue Tent] wid his lady friend las night and it not even lady night.

Doctor: Why he go care if it have lady night? He have plenty money yuh know.

He cah easy pay for she and heself.

Bongo: Dat true enough. Meh, ah cyah even pay for mehself.

Madman: Come now Bongo. How come yuh always at dem fetes den?

Bongo: How long yuh know meh? Yuh know ah ent paying to go in dere. Yuh tink Bongo paying to go to a single fete? Ah might still go to de tents too yuh know, but only if ah nah paying. De trouble is it not so easy for meh to storm [get in without paying] a tent.

Doctor: But yuh know people wuking at de Revue and at Spektakula.

Madman: Yeh, sure he know people dere but why he wan to go anyway? He cyah wine dere, he cyah really drink and he definitely cyah smok no weed dere, and de only woman yuh meeting is de one yuh teking wid yuh.

Bongo: Yuh right dere but yuh know yuh still young. If ah going to a tent ah nah going for dose reasons anyway.

Doctor: Dat true. Yuh going to de tent to learn. Dem kaisoniansm hav someting to teach yuh. Yuh going to listen. Yuh know we shud really go more often.
Despite this, these three informants did not attend a single tent that season although, due to their pitch by the carnival stage, they were able to attend the Calypso Monarch final. They would also watch Calypso Showcase on television which would preview many of those calypsonians inclined towards social commentary. The reasons for this non-attendance seem to represent the difference between a fete and a tent; the inability to dance, drink, smoke and meet women. To Madman, and perhaps also to the others, the tent does not offer enough excitement, it is seen more as a learning experience. Apart from this, there is the problem of money, although there is little difference in price between a tent and a fete. Finally there is also the perception of class. The man seen walking up the street is deemed to be relatively wealthy and respectable and attending a tent would match this image.

Whilst people of all ages, class and race, including many tourists, do come and listen to calypso in a tent, the most common listener will be over thirty, of African ancestry and in employment. The roots of calypso are ultimately African and the vast majority of calypsonians are of African ancestry. This is not to say though that Indo-Trinidadians do not generally listen to calypso but their attendance in the tents is clearly proportionally less.

The tent is generally considered a more refined place than a fete to listen to calypso although both are completely different with completely different functions. Some of those who would go to a tent would not consider going to a fete to listen to calypso. The fete is where people go to "get on bad" which may involve plenty of dancing or wining as well as the consumption of much alcohol. The hours of the fete are also different, usually from about 11pm to 4am, extending to 6am as it gets nearer to carnival. By 1am the tents have closed. The tents, to apply Wilson's terminology (1973), keep "respectable" hours conducive to those who have to do regular work and in this sense they represent respectable entertainment. To see a
fete right through to its conclusion itself requires stamina, even without having to work the next day. In keeping with the terminology of the dualism outlined by Wilson, a "reputation" may be won by someone who can lime at a fete, preferably after "storming" in, and then drinking and dancing right through to the end with no thought for the next day.

MAXI TAXIS, AND TAPE AND RADIO CULTURE.

Calypso as recorded sound for private consumption needs to be mentioned, if only to point out the noticeable lack of it. In well over 90% of the households visited (38 in all) there were no record or tape collections to speak of. Even in those that had record players, like the main informant household described in chapter 2, there were no records bar the odd collection of Christmas carols or a few very scratched and old copies of calypsos up to fifteen years old. Pre-recorded cassettes were also hard to find in the home, although those that owned cars would almost certainly own cassettes for playing in the car.

Music and transport are an inseparable combination in Trinidad, both in cars and taxis, and in the maxi taxi or "maxis". However, while cassettes are probably the most popular method of music consumption in Trinidad there is a major problem with record piracy (examined in chap 5). Compact Discs (CD’s) are available in Trinidad and some calypsonians, like David Rudder, even bring out their songs on CD, but in Trinidad itself there is a limited market for the sale of CD’s. During carnival the most popular calypsos are played so excessively on the radio and on tapes in the maxis, as well as at fetes, that there is little need to buy them. Calypso that is heard in the home is generally from the radio and if it is not then it is from a pirate tape. Very few of the homes visited had the capacity to play records, and of the few that did there was little in the way of calypso music and nothing that was contemporary to the present carnival, the exceptions being those houses that contained aspiring or practising disc jockeys. By the time carnival is over all
calypsos are not only out of date but most people have also tired of them.

The most common way that calypso is heard is undoubtedly through the radio. The radio is free and requires no effort. Even the poorest homes own a radio but even for those that do not, or for those that do not usually listen to calypso, the sound of the radio is so prominent in public places that it is virtually unavoidable. The most significant area is probably on the most commonly used form of public transport, the maxis, and since the use of tape playing equipment was outlawed in maxis in 1994 the radio has become an even more prominent medium for bringing new music to public attention. The maxi is clearly a key area where music can be heard, bringing the general public into contact with music in a situation where they have little other choice than to listen. It is for this reason that the chapter will now focus on this.

These vehicles come in two sizes holding between twelve and fifteen, or between twenty five and thirty. The maxis, like taxis, are privately owned but run along set routes. Their fares are also controlled by the state, making them affordable. Unlike the virtually obsolete state run buses, a passenger may alight or depart anywhere along the route, making them extremely practical.

Music on public transport systems has long been a source of debate not just in Trinidad but throughout the Caribbean. In both Jamaica and Barbados it has now been outlawed completely and there is considerable pressure for Trinidad to follow. Already the law has been modified to control sound levels but this law has proved too difficult to enforce. More recently the playing of both tapes and videos were also prohibited. A very small percentage of maxis had actually gone to the extent of installing video recorders for the pleasure of the passenger which is perhaps also indicative of the overwhelming competition there is for passengers and the money that can be made out of a maxi taxi. However, at present, music
can still be played on the radio and, despite the law governing the volume of sound, it is not hard to find a maxi playing loud music. The significant point about music on a public transport system, which is perhaps also why it is the cause of so much complaint from some people, is that it has, to some extent, the potential to bring people into contact with music which they otherwise may not hear. This may be because they do not want to hear it but it may also be because they do not have the inclination to go out of their way to find it.

The maxi taxi system is almost a subculture of its own, at least among the younger generation, some of whom, to the dismay of their teachers, can be seen waiting for a particular maxi that plays its music loudly enough and to their taste to take them to school. This has been blamed for lateness amongst schoolchildren and some teachers have even tried to blame the cult of the musical maxi taxi for corrupting children and leading them into crime. A release made in 1994 by the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA), when the government were attempting to ban all music on maxis, stated that the music the children were exposed to in the maxis negatively affected their attitude both generally and towards their school work. The statement also suggested that: "This is compounded by the obscene lyrics of songs that debase women and debases many of the moral values that our youth need to learn and practice as they prepare for their role as adults and children, ready to make a positive contribution to the society on which they depend", (see Trinidad Express 20/01/94). Suffice to say the TTUTA supported a total ban on music in maxi taxis.

The Trinidad Guardian's environmental writer Anne Hilton has also consistently spoken out about alleged noise pollution in Trinidad. Of maxi taxis she wrote: "Constant high decibel delays language development causing education and social problems.... Maxis are not the only source of noise pollution in TT but they are the most serious, year-round threat to the mental and physical health of the young
in this nation", (02/02/94). In an earlier article (it is noticeable that her tendency is to attack noise pollution annually around carnival time) she even goes as far as to link loud music with stress and hence premature death. Quoting a local doctor, she states: "It has also been known that noise which creates stress would also make you more susceptible to infections. People don't know this, but in fact stress suppresses your immune system," (10/02/93). The extent to which the latter article posits the ramifications of calypso seems to be so extreme as to be almost laughable. However, it does highlight the extent of some peoples feelings towards what is a characteristic of Trinidad, especially over carnival; that music is played freely and openly for enjoyment and without fear. Carnival especially is a time when loud musical sound, rather than being something aggressive or an irritant, is in fact a gift. The informant Jericho, himself a pan player, whilst reading a letter of complaint printed in one of the national newspapers along these lines, made a comment to the rest of the lime voicing similar sentiments: "Wah it is wid dese people? Dey cyah be from Trinidad yuh know. At carnival time too. Dese sounds nah dere to mek people vex. Music is ah present from de Lord to we. Ah play meh music as a present to yuh all and ah vex if yuh vexed wid meh for giving it to yuh so leh yuh hush yuh moud so we all cah hear de music." It is not just calypso that is under fire here but also Jamaican dub music, which is commonly played on the maxis all year round. The anti music lobby is ironically very outspoken and, as can be seen from above, their complaints fall into two categories, the first concerning the volume of the music and the second its "corrupting" content.

Complaints about music are probably the most consistent and common objectives of letters published in the press in Trinidad. Below is an example of one sent in to the Trinidad Guardian by an Indo-Trinidadian supporter of the UNC:-

I just want the government to know that, this time, I am fully behind them in the Maxi Taxi Bill which they are bringing to the House of Parliament.
I know that my member of Parliament has already stated that the UNC will not back the Bill and that they want Maxis to be allowed to have radios. I say no, no, no!

Before long, and as soon as the police are out of sight,
it will be up with the volume once again, with the most obscene music corrupting the minds and hearts of our sons and daughters. (22/01/94)

It was the Indian UNC party that prevented the government from bringing about a total ban on music in maxis, but this supporter felt strongly enough to go against his party on this issue. Despite the vociferous opposition to music in maxis in the press and in parliament, there is what many Trinidadians call, even more ironically, a "silent majority" who would rather have the music. When questioned a common response would be "music... yeh it meks travelling sweet." This type of argument accords well with certain ideas expressed in the introduction concerning the experience of music and time at live musical events by, amongst others, J Blacking (1976) and Ruth Stone (1982). The concept is that music is experienced in "multiple dimensions of time" (Stone 1982:9); those involved in a musical experience are subject to a different sense of time. Blacking argues that the loss of actual time can result in life experienced temporarily at a greater intensity so that we may "appreciate the quality rather than the length of time spent doing something" (1976:52). These arguments are based on music experienced as a live event and may seem to be a long way removed from maxi taxi music but they do have some application here to understanding the popularity of music on the transport system. A common response in favour of keeping music on the maxis was that "it mek de journey go fas."

It is difficult to gauge exactly what the general consensus is concerning the music, as many people are so apt to change depending on their recent experiences. For example, someone who has just finished work, has a headache, and then gets into a
maxi taxi playing loud music that is not to their taste will inevitably feel the system is working against them. If the music is to their taste however, then it could even make them forget all about their headache. For instance, on two separate occasions when the daughter described in the informant household arrived at the house, she voiced views concerning the music played on the maxi taxi on her way there. One time her comment was: "Yuh know ah feeling so nice when ah get off dat maxi. De driver playing one set of sweet music, Madonna, Michael Bolton, Michael Jackson. And now it jus screaming kids. Ah feel ah shud jus ah stayed right dere on de maxi." Another time her feelings were quite the opposite. Upon entering the house she stated in all seriousness that: "Yuh know for once ah glad to hear de sound of crying children. After dat awful dub music de driver playing it music to meh ears. Ah feel dey really shud ban dese drivers from playing music. It nah fair to de passenger who paying he wages."

The choice of what music is played in any one maxi is invariably at the discretion of the driver, unless he is playing the radio, in which case it is then his decision as to what radio station is played. The choice of playing no music is rarely exercised; less than 5% of maxis surveyed by the researcher were playing nothing (see below). If the driver has chosen to play a tape then it means that he then has the ability to impose a very specific type of music on the passengers, which is perhaps a good argument for the present law that only allows radios to be played. As many maxi drivers admit, the music being played will often be used as a kind of carrot to attract a certain type of passenger. This is especially the case around the times when children are either going to or from school. Certain maxis, usually the larger ones, are given names like "Cool Runnings", which are displayed in the front windscreen so that they can be identified. These maxis will be known for having good sound systems and for playing certain music. The feeling amongst maxi drivers is that school children generally like to hear dub music or else a mixture of Western popular music, and so they play it to attract the children. Dub music is
good for business.

Up until the change in the law preventing tape-playing equipment in a maxi, it was more common for a maxi to be playing recorded music than the radio. Many maxis would play specialist DJ tapes which would mostly include the latest dub tunes mixed together on a tape that could be purchased from a record store. Along the busy east/west corridor route between Port of Spain and Arima one of the most common type of tapes heard would be those made by the record store based on that route known as ETC (Ear Traffic Control). Every now and then throughout the tape a jingle would be mixed in saying the letters ETC. These tapes would come out every two weeks were that store’s most consistent sellers.

During the carnival months of 1993 and 1994 I made extensive surveys on the type of music being played in the maxi taxis and the form in which it was being played, either tape or radio, as well as questioning passengers about how they felt about the music. These months were chosen as they represent the time when people would most expect to hear calypso music, and the impact that other outside music is having in Trinidad could be weighed up against this. A note of the type of music being played was made at the time of entry onto the maxi. From 185 journeys made between these months, dub music could be heard playing on 52 (28.1%) of them, soca on 88 (47.6%), American pop music on 32 (17.3%), cricket or sports coverage playing on 6 (3%), with only 7 (3.7%) maxis having no sound at all. What can be seen from these figures already is that while soca is in season it is the music that is being played the most, although considering that it will be virtually unheard for the other 9 months of the year, it is perhaps still not as high as could be expected. This point is further highlighted by a survey of 71 maxi taxis taken over the six weeks immediately after the 1994 carnival. At this point dub takes over for the rest of the year as the most popular music on maxis. As the figures show, 32 (45%) were playing dub, 23 (32.4%) American pop, 10 (7.1%) were
playing nothing, and only 2 (2.8%) could be heard playing soca. It should also be noted that calypso has been referred to as soca here as virtually all calypso that is heard on the maxis is of the soca/road march variety. There is also an increase in the number of maxis playing nothing which is probably representative of the dying down in excitement after carnival.

Of the 178 maxis that had sound 111 (60%) of these were playing tapes and 67 (36.2%) were playing the radio. This becomes particularly significant in the light of the new Maxi Taxi Bill that prevents the playing of tapes, although it is unlikely that this law can be effectively enforced. As the Trinidad Mirror (24/02/95) reported with a headline; "Maxis hiding tape decks in dashboards... Many maxis continue to entertain schoolchildren with loud, suggestive music and outwit searches by police and traffic officers..." The above figure also takes on more significance when we compare the figures for the type of music that is being played on tapes with the type of music being played on the radio. Of the 111 tape playing maxis 45 (40.5%) were playing dub music, 58 (52.3%) soca, with only 8 (7.2%) playing American pop music. Whereas, of the 67 radio playing maxis 30 (44.8%) were playing soca, but only 7 (10.4%) were playing dub, compared to 24 (35.8%) playing American pop music. When calypso is not in season, and now that tapes can no longer be played in maxis, it is quite clear that American pop music will be by far the most commonly heard music in maxis, due mainly to the preference of most radio stations towards this type of music, but also as it is the stations that play this music that are the most popular and so they are what the drivers will tune in to. The banning of tape equipment in maxis will mean that the general public will have much less contact with dub music. This may please many older Trinidadians although, as we have seen, maxi drivers are adept at cheating the law and dub tapes will undoubtedly still be played. However, as the figures show, this does not mean that soca will benefit, in fact it too will be heard less, and the Trinidadian public will have even more exposure to American pop music.
The preponderance of American popular music on the major Trinidadian radio stations has been seen as an example of United States cultural imperialism (Lashley 1989). The argument is that the overwhelmingly disproportionate amount of American and Western programming in many developing countries may serve only to pull them back into a dependent status. As far as the Caribbean is concerned, Wilson (1973) points to its increasing reliance on foreign programs as pulling it into an overpowering global communication network that is opening it up to external values. Thus, it is argued; "the Caribbean peoples have to watch and actively resist... because in the final analysis national cultural identities would be undermined and displaced" (Lashley 1989:4). The Trinidadian novelist V S Naipaul (1967) has also expressed a negative attitude to his country's exposure to American influences turning them into a nation of "Mimic Men". Trinidad is portrayed as nothing other than the passive recipient of Americanisation. This is also how it appears when it comes to radio and the presentation of music in Trinidad. Another Trinidadian, Keith Shepherd, responsible for the "Front Line" column in the Trinidad Sunday Mirror explains:

Come Ash Wednesday morning, they [the calypsonians] will have to deal with the "soca switch off" when the same stations - the "part-time lovers" Black Stalin warned about - return to the music to match their phoney American and Jamaican accents. Then, as cool as ever, the born Trinis at 96.1 and 98.9 FM [the two most popular stations in Trinidad] will return to pushing alternate, foreign lifestyles down the ears and minds of TrinT's next generation.

(19/02/95).

This argument clearly ignores the tendency for a culture to display itself through its own unique appropriation of outside cultural influences. Daniel Miller (1987) has argued that consumption, as much as production, can be something through which we create and objectify ourselves, in the expressionist tradition. In a later paper
Miller (1992) takes the example of the American soap opera "The Young and the Restless", which is still massively popular in Trinidad, to show how something foreign in origin can be a medium through which the host culture can manifest itself in a highly specific manner that is unmistakably its own. He points out that one of the most common comments on the program was its relevance to contemporary conditions in Trinidad (1992:169) and finds that there is in fact a sense "in which the imported program has the potential to articulate that aspect of the 'local' which the locally produced cannot incorporate, given its continuous eye on the external judgemental gaze" (1992:177).

In her paper "American Radio Music and the Trinidadian Youth: A Study of Cultural Imperialism", Lynette Lashley (1989) asks if there is a preference for American radio music over dub, calypso and East Indian music amongst the Trinidadian youth. Lashley found from her survey that American popular music constituted more than 60% of the music programmed for the then two major radio stations NBS 610 and Radio 95 FM. She states; "Around school vacation time, more American popular music was played on 95 FM to accommodate the overwhelming requests from the youth." Today the two major radio stations may have changed but the preference for American popular music remains. The recent introduction of a state run radio station, Radio Tempo, which only plays local music has, to some extent, been a success. But it cannot compete with the larger stations who deny requests to play local music with the retort "listen to Radio Tempo." However, these figures clearly do not take into account the seasonal nature of calypso. As can be seen above from the survey of radio music played on maxis, during the calypso season soca will still be played on more maxis than any other music.

The real loser appears to have been dub music which, considering its popularity, has received a disproportional (low) amount of airtime. The reason for this,
according to Radio 610 music programmers, was ironically due to complaints made by calypsonians who felt that they should have the airtime as calypso is Trinidadian and dub is not. However, even supposing that these same calypsonians did not also complain about the amount of American popular music on the radio, this does not account for the majority of the time when calypso is not in season. From Lashley's survey of 4 Trinidadian schools dub music came out on top for the category "Amount of Music to be played more on the Radio", with 53% indicating that they would like to hear more dub, and more than half of these stating they would like to hear a lot more dub than they do. However, when it came to evaluating their taste for American music less than 1% actually expressed a dislike for it, with 65% indicating a strong attachment to it.

Most Trinidadians enjoy soca music as part of a carnival culture and this affects the way it is consumed because it must tie in with the carnival season and is largely dependent on a carnival atmosphere. Why do the radio stations have such a strong preference for American pop music even when calypso is in season? Dub is at least part of a Caribbean culture, although we have seen that certain Trinidadians do feel threatened by it in a way that they do not by American pop music. Given this, are the radio stations ultimately responsible for perpetuating American cultural imperialism as far as music is concerned? There is little doubt that American popular music has had an impact, at least on the Trinidadian youth, and it is popular, but does this really matter and does it necessarily mean that Trinidadians are losing their own sense of themselves? There is very little in the way of live performances by American artists in Trinidad, with many of the largest attractions being dub artists like Buju Banton or Barrington Levy who have played to packed Trinidadian audiences. Otherwise, most live musical shows are by calypsonians at carnival time when, despite the glut of them at this time, they are generally very well attended. The electronic media clearly has its effect but the American musical culture it presents is obviously largely removed from its original context and
therefore open to be interpreted by the Trinidadian in a Trinidadian way. It is, in any case, at fetes and in the tents that Trinidadians are enjoying themselves and celebrating their culture.

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The duality within calypso is highlighted by this analysis of these two sites of consumption. The tent is a traditional site of consumption where calypso music is performed live with an emphasis on social commentary. The maxi taxi is a relatively new site of consumption that is contested and that emphasises new music which, as far as calypso is concerned, is of the road march or soca variety. In this sense, the maxi culture is at the "cutting edge" of calypso, so to speak. The problem is that this is not to everybody's taste but nearly everybody must travel on them.

The history of calypso, as of the steelbands, is one of rebellion, something to be kept under control by the powers that be, but it is now in a situation where it is upheld by its society as something to be proud of. Similarly, calypso is by its nature subversive and questioning, but now it is the "decent" people who sit and listen to it in the tents, and feel threatened and insulted by it in the maxis. In a sense, the sting has been taken out of its political and social commentary and it is now trying to find it again in its other half, the side embodied by the Road March, carnival revelry and the fetes.
CHAPTER 7: WOMEN IN CALYPSO.

This chapter will cover the subject of women in calypso by approaching it from two angles. The first will examine women as subject matter in calypso; how they have been portrayed by male calypsonians in the twentieth century. The second will then concentrate on the rise of the female calypsonian and examine the issues that have concerned them. It will also look at the present day attitudes towards the female calypsonian. By drawing these together it will show the female contribution to calypso and the position she now holds in calypso.

CALYPSOS ABOUT WOMEN.

Calypso has often made a woman, or women in general, its object of comment, or else it has also popularly chosen male/female conflict as its theme. Sex, or matters relating to it, have over the last three or four decades constituted the core of calypso music (eg Elder 1968, Rohlehr 1970, Warner 1982). Rohlehr notes that: "The calypso... is of prime importance to anyone who seeks to study some of the attitudes of the West Indian male towards women" (1970:89). In a survey of 311 calypsos from the period 1969 to 1979 conducted by William Aho (1984) it was found that 26% (82) of these calypsos could be described as "negative to women" (1984:146/7). To put this in context, an analysis of the Jamaican media by Senior (1991:42) highlights that "the one consistent role model which is presented is one heavily based on physical beauty and body image... thus beauty as an image is consistently promoted over 'brains'." This is also apparent in the Trinidadian media, and particularly the "weeklies" (weekly papers) which tend to fill a high content of their pages with images of scantily clad women. Beauty contests are common too, especially within companies. For example, each bank will have its own beauty queen. One of the first things the informant Froggy organised for the company promoting Fenjal was a beauty pageant to find a "Miss Fenjal". The winner was then employed by the company at all its functions to wear a sash with the title "Miss Fenjal". Normally her role would be to be photographed alongside a
high ranking member of the company, usually while they were presenting prizes or cheques.

Merle Hodge notes that within the Caribbean "the childless woman is an abomination, a pitiable creature" (1977:11). This aspect is less reflected in calypso, but there are plenty of calypsos taking the theme of the woman as a kind of "trickster", usually trying to trick a man into believing that she is pregnant with his child so that he will have to pay its maintenance. Senior gives some explanation as to how this image may have come about and is perpetuated: "Caribbean economies do not provide the infrastructure to support female independence and hardship is often the lot of poor women especially, who end up with families to support. This leads to a further vicious cycle of 1) dependency relationships with men; 2) a distortion of male/female relationships since there is for the woman a strong economic motive for seeking and maintaining such relationships. Such behaviour on the part of the woman breeds male distrust and reinforces the image of woman as 'trickster', 'schemer', 'manipulator'. Women, on the other hand, will argue that if they are scheming and manipulative they are forced to be so in order to extract from irresponsible males the economic assistance they need for their children" (1991:181). The mother of the main family of informants, in talking to her only living daughter, would often remind her how lucky she was to still have the father of her child living and supporting her. One such conversation went as follows:

Daughter: He still does geh meh vex yuh know. Las night ah only watching de time till he back and den he come home ten o'clock only stinking ah rum.

Mother: Doh geh so vex. He mus have a drink sum times yuh know. Dat man nah so bad. It only right he has a drink every now and den. Mos girls dese days lucky if dey even see de father of deir child.
Daughter: Ah know dat but we need dat money for de electric. We already los de telephone.

Mother: Yuh lucky to ever have dat phone. Yuh ever see meh wid a telephone?

He still providing food and luking after de child. When Jericho [her first child] born ah never see de father. He tell meh de boy not from he, as if ah nah know who de father was. And now luk at Jericho. He only hiding from he daughter as if he doh know she.

One of the best known post war calypsos has been Sparrow's "Jean and Dinah" (1956). The Jean and Dinah of the song are both prostitutes, and the calypso rejoices that the American forces are no longer in Trinidad as they had received all the attention from the women. Their superior spending power had made it impossible for most Trinidadian men to compete with them. The second verse is the most revealing of the resentment that this had caused:

- Things so bad is to hear them cry
- Not a sailor in town, the night clubs dry
- Only West Indians like me or you
- Going to get a drink or two
- Since we have things back in control
- Ah seeking revenge with me heart and soul
- And as we spread the news around
- Is to see how them cave men floating in town.

Warner sums up the effect of the American presence as "... disastrous for the indigenous male ego" (1982:95) and finds that it, "coupled with the devastating psychological emasculation inherent in the crown colony system has played a very large part in the obsession of the Trinidad male, hence the calypsonian mirroring this attitude, with proving his manhood by either talking himself up or putting the female down" (1982:95).
There are numerous examples of calypsos that may be deemed denigrating to women that include attacks on ugly women, the sexual loyalty of women, prostitution, boasts about sexual conquests, and word plays on the female genitalia. Lord Shorty sang "16 Commandments" which set out, in mock biblical terms, the rules a woman in a relationship must follow, and highlights the sexual inequality between the Caribbean man and woman:

- Thou shalt have no other man but me
- Thou must never ask me for no money
- If thou see me with a nex' girl talking
- Try and understand
- Pass me straight like you ain't know me
- Let me have my woman.

Rohlehr, referring to calypsos from the thirties, found that these "reflect the asperities of a culture of survivalism in which the shrewd self-centredness in the quest for food is, perhaps, the most basic ingredient in a human relationship" (1990:275). The result is uncertainty within relationships, a distortion of love whereby the provider is all powerful over the dependent. This is responsible for what I have termed the "give to get" attitude of male/female relations that is reflected in later post war calypsos. In order to receive love or sex, the male must first be able to provide for the female. When asked why he did not have a regular girlfriend the informant Doctor, described in chapter 2, replied; "Yuh see it only recently dat ah get regular wuk. Yuh mus have regular wuk to have regular woman. It simple, no money, no honey". His elder brother Froggy, however, seemed to have a regular woman, and a regular supply of women. But, although in reality he had some money, he was constantly concerned with maintaining the image of being far wealthier than he was, and could often be heard explaining to an unsuspecting woman that he could only see her on a certain night as he had
some fictitious business in Miami, or some other location, the next day.

Sparrow is undoubtedly the most popular post war calypsonian and the respect he commanded as a "ladies man" and a "rude boy" contributed greatly to this. In two other calypsos, "Nothing for Nothing" and "No Money No Love", he hits on this fundamental nerve of social exchange in West Indian sexual politics. The first represents the politics of "give to get" from a male position:

Everytime ah come to take you out you making excuse
And every Saturday you want a dress and a new pair of shoes
Not another cent you wouldn't get until you hand up
I'm a big big man and dis thing must stop.

The male is frustrated with the female for not keeping her part of the unspoken arrangement, that is, that he spends money on her and she returns his generosity with sex. The second calypso shows when this goes wrong for the woman:

We can't live without money
We can't make love on hungry belly
Johnny, you'll be the only one I'm dreaming of
You're my turtle dove, but no money no love.

This time the woman threatens to deny the man sex unless he starts to provide her with the money she needs to live on.

Money was the most common concern of the women in the house of the main group of informants (see chapter 2). The matriarch was in almost daily battle with the sons that lived with her, for money to run the house. One time, in response to a situation being examined on the American television talk show hosted by Oprah Winfrey, where the woman had taken over from the man in being the principle money earner for the family after he had lost his job, she turned to her daughter and said: "Yuh cyah leh dat happen to yuh, yuh know. De man mus provide. If he nah providing he cyah expec wah coming to he [ie sex] and if he still nah
providing he mus go. Mek no mistake." Such an attitude, equating money with sex, is not uncommon, but the daughter's response equally put this into perspective: "Well if dat de case den soon it have no more people lef in Trinidad."

In another calypso by Sparrow this "give to get" policy is completely turned on its head so that it is totally weighted in the male's favour. In the calypso "Sell the Pussy", Sparrow, making a play on the well known slang term for the vagina, advocates through double entendre that, as he is out of work, the only thing for it is to prostitute his girlfriend. In the chorus of the song he sings:

Sell the pussy and bring all the cash to me,
I love you baby but I can't remain hungry,
This starvation it could finish just like that,
But you got to sell the pussy, sell the pussy cat.

It seems the woman is not only to be treated as a sex object but sold as one too, and she must also financially support the man.

In the 1990's Sparrow still retains his popularity singing similar calypsos, and significantly found himself in a picong (a running war of words between two calypsonians, see chapter 9 for complete analysis of this) with Lord Shorty (now Ras Shorty I) who sang the "16 Commandments", mentioned above. Shorty took objection to Sparrow's popular 1992 calypso "Both of Dem" about a dilemma the singer had about two sisters who were attracted to him. The advice he was given, as the title suggests, was to "take both of dem". Shorty wrote a calypso for 1993 entitled "Dat Aint Good Enough" which claimed that Sparrow was irresponsible to put his name to a calypso that advocated this, and that he was old enough to know better. Sparrow's reply was to up the number of women from two to more in his calypso "The More The Merrier". The attitudes to women, and male relations with them, as represented in this picong, sparked off a significant outburst from one of the older male informants, Ras, that indicates the reality behind much of the sexual
boasting spoken by Trinidadian men that has found its way into calypso. One member of the lime had claimed "...yuh see, meh and Sparrow, we know how it is. We no satisfied wid jus one. Lik de man say [singing] 'de more de merrier'".

In answer to this Ras, who was usually quiet, got up and pointed at the man: "...yuh see yuh, ah hear yuh saying yuh been wid dis woman, yuh lik dat woman, de nex one she lik yuh but yuh nah sure if yuh go see she a nex time. De ting is dat in all dis time ah cyah remember seeing yuh wid any woman. Lik de res of we, yuh poor and yuh lucky if yuh ged a luk jus once. Men lik Sparrow, dey have plenty money and so dey have plenty woman. Dose men have so much woman dey keep dem away from we. Yuh all only talking pussy and ah tink dat jus because yuh nah getting any."

Shorty's calypso response to Sparrow, "Dat Aint Good Enough", is indicative of how far some male calypsonians have adjusted their views concerning women, especially when we consider that he was responsible for the "16 Commandments". However, this calypso was little heard in Trinidad, although it was widely reported, whereas Sparrow's "The More The Merrier" helped earn him a second place in the Monarch competition.

While calypsos that many find derogatory to women are still very much in evidence today, there are many more female calypsonians, and many women who are also not afraid to speak out against this. The well known and outspoken Indian politician Hulsie Bhaggan referred to calypso as "violence against women", claiming that "women are being denigrated and projected as physical bodies which must be dominated and used" (see Express 22/02/94). Other similar complaints may commonly be found in the letters pages of any of the daily newspapers. One such letter describes how many women view the carnival season. "The annual build-up of the denigration of women has started. The calypsos (as a war cry) have continued to lambaste our mothers, wives and daughters of this land and rape them
of the dignity they rightly deserve” (see Express 24/01/94). This can be similarly compared with a letter to the Trinidad Guardian from the Women’s League in 1950 which begins;

We join with countless other to women to protest the slander of our women who have devoted their valuable time and energy in constructive community activities, women who have been an inspiration to others to go into public life. That those women who have championed the cause of the people have been singled out by calypsonians is indeed ironic. Isn’t it enough that women must defy tradition and custom for the doubtful privilege of facing the humiliation and irritations of public life in Trinidad? Must we make it harder for them?

(Trinidad Guardian 16/02/50)

Rohlehr has developed the most comprehensive theory as to why this trait has continued in calypso. He bases his theory of "ego retrieval", on J Elder’s assertion that "many calypsos were male rationalisations of felt inadequacies, or served as therapy via wish fulfilment" (see Rohlehr 1990:275). Rohlehr states simply that the inability of the male to assume his ideal role of provider led to a feeling of shame which was, where possible, concealed and denied (1990:275/6). Rodman too points to the inability of the male to provide as leading to the feeling that he was "unable to command the respect of his wife and children" (1971:80). The woman, therefore, whether she intends it or not, is the witness and therefore the definer of this acutely felt inadequacy. This has resulted in a resentment of the female which has manifested itself in calypso. Through calypso the male attempts to retrieve his ego through the reduction of the female.

This may be seen in other analogous aspects of Caribbean society, for example, the nature of female employment. According to figures published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (see Antrobus 1986:33) "Caribbean countries are among those having high female activity rates [i.e. employment of any sort]... In the
age range 25-44, the female activity rate for the Caribbean is actually higher than the world figure of 48%." However, this only shows that women work, and effectively further emphasises their oppressed position in society when we see the nature of their work and why they are given it to do. Yelvington, in his ethnography of a Trinidadian factory, states that its owner "preferred to hire women for factory jobs because women are more appropriate for tedious and repetitive tasks due to their 'natural' talent and patience with household tasks such as sewing and cooking" (1995:27). Antrobus (1986:33) shows that approximately 70% of this employment is "in low paid, low skilled, marginal jobs in domestic and other services" and that the majority of the rest are in 'traditional' jobs like teaching, nursing, secretarial or services, so that they are, in other words "performing stereotyped jobs" (ibid).

Another example of male ego retrieval may be also found in the male liming activity of verbally embarrassing passing women (see chapter 2 for further descriptions of this). In fact this activity is often "calypso like" in its performance in front of the lime. Hodge (1974:117) comments on this: "Young men at a loose end (usually unemployed - the devaluation of black manhood is perpetuated in economic frustration) will position themselves on a culvert, at a street corner, on a pavement, and vie with each other in the ingenuity of their comments to embarrass women going by. The embarrassment of women is part of the national ethos."

In the 1990's there are still many complaints about how women are depicted in calypso but they have developed in slightly different directions. The lyrical content of the party calypso is often to do with winning rather than being harshly lyrical against the female. This has meant that the woman has been represented as a potential partner for the male who is "feeling to wine on something". These calypsos may still be offensive to women in their failure to see them as anything other than the object of sexual desire, but it should also be recognised that sex is a
key part of how people enjoy Trinidad Carnival. This is not to say that people everywhere are having sex, but that carnival is a "sexy" event, and it trades on this; we only need to look at the popularity of the "Donkey" dance (see chapter 10) in 1993 to see this. One of the most controversial calypsos from that year was from an Indian calypsonian, Drupatee, who sang "Careless Driver", a calypso that made a word play on the word "nanny" and "nani", the latter being an Indian slang word for vagina. The fact that this calypso is by a woman is not meant as an argument that it is fine to sing calypsos that are derogatory to women, but rather that sex is a carnival subject and, as more and more female calypsonians come into calypso, they too will sing about it.

One of the most common road march themes involving women is the calypso about a sexually attractive woman wining or "jumping up" in a carnival band, both to the delight and frustration of the calypsonian. Crazy, in 1980, sang two entitled "Doh Try That", about a girl he picks up at a fete, and "Young Man", which is significant because of the reaction the "young man" gets when he tries to pull a woman out of the band she is dancing in, and then touch her. The woman is "vexed" and replies;

Music in the place, leave meh alone
Leh me go and shake meh waist.

The woman here is represented as being only interested in dancing and is irritated by male sexual advances. Indeed, wining, with its overt sexual appeal, is arguably where the woman is able to "hit back" and gain her freedom, by herself becoming sexually aggressive or even intimidating. The male can seem surplus to her requirements when it comes to enjoying the carnival (see chapter 3, and Miller 1991 MAN 26 2). In 1989, Tambu won the Road March with "Free Up", a calypso which also concentrates on a woman intent on partying. This time she has arrived at the airport and is so desperate to go to a fete that she jumps straight into a taxi, orders the driver to "mash yuh gas", and then runs out of the car and into
the fete without paying. As a result the police try to arrest her but; "Then suddenly
the police start to wine". The infection is such that it even reaches the police, the
bastions of order. Here the woman is not the object of desirous male eyes and
remains unmolested, but is still the inspiration for carnival fun.

One of the reasons for this concentration on the "carnival woman" is perhaps the
disproportionately high amount of women that play mas. Unless it is mud mas on
J'ouvert morning when the carnival begins, many male Trinidadians consider
playing mas to be a "woman ting" or else for tourists. This trend was expressed by
the calypsonian Terror who, in 1982, sang the calypso "Mostly Women Playing
Mas":

Mostly women playing mas today
Love to have their body on display.

Mas is now a woman's festival
...And is man have to pay every cent for the costume in
which they play.

And if a band has 5,000 members 4,000 is woman
And Ash Wednesday the bandleader man, his profit is half a
million.

This calypso expresses some disenchantment with the larger bands who have, in
recent years, been consistently criticised for overpricing their costumes, of which,
so the argument goes, there are very little of anyway. The idea is that women
"love to have their body on display" and the carnival affords them the excuse for
this. In Port of Spain one day one of the main informants, Froggy, was pointing
out to his elder brother, Whitey, various women that he found attractive, all of
whom seemed to be dressed in a manner that would suggest they had "respectable"

jobs. After a while, Whitey's reply to this was: "Yuh see dem smart uppity lukiing
women in de banks and de jewellery stores? It is dey who come carnival, will be
wining deir waist and showing deir ting. Yuh jus wait till den." Carnival is the
time for many women to "free up", many of whom may, at other times, be
particularly conscious of their behaviour. This is clearly something that many men
take notice of, and is a source of enjoyment for them but, as the informant later
conceded: "Dem women may luk sexy and ting but dey mosly only interested in
wining yuh know. If yuh lucky yuh may get to dance wid dem, but yuh wud have
to be a very lucky man if yuh going home wid dem." Nevertheless, the female
playing mas is one of the most prevalent carnival sights and remains one of the
most popular calypso topics.

**FEMALE CALYPSONIANS.**
The female calypsonian is not a new phenomenon. Information on female
calysonians for the period covering the 1880's is not readily available but female
stickfighters did exist, as Mitto Sampson's calypso legends attests (see Rohlehr
1990:54). Elder also noted in his Ph.D thesis (1966) that "the women who were an
inseparable element of all stickfighting bands did contribute to the singing, and
during the intervals between stickfights would sing their 'carisos': lewdly erotic
songs accompanied by obscene dancing." However, there has still been a distinct
lack of female calypsonians, and this has perhaps been a result of "sex
stereotyping" working against them. Kate Young, writing about "The Social
Relations of Gender" in the Caribbean argues that: "One mechanism by which
gender identity interacts with wider structuring of society is that of sex
stereotyping: in all societies it is 'known' that women are better at X than men,
and indeed these stereotypes often, but not invariably, stick closely to the supposed
natural characteristics of men and women which are social characteristics acquired
through the gendering process" (1988:107). There may have been female
calysonians and even female stickfighters but these would always have been
breaking away from the pressure of the sex stereotype, and therefore, at least a little unusual.

In the twentieth century the female calypsonian, until recently, has had comparatively little recognition, and even now it could be argued that she still has a long way to go. The mother of the main family of informants once remarked while they were watching a female calypsonian perform her song for the semi finals of the Calypso Monarch on television that: "... it have no female calypsonians apart from Rose, she de only one who can compete wid men." Significantly though, the two grandchildren did not even know who Rose was, but could name several lesser known female calypsonians of the day. The youngest son of about twenty one, Madman, was of the belief that: "Yuh mus have women calypsonians to keep de balance. Yuh cyah have only men singing aboud tings as den yuh nah getting de complete picture, but ah still say dat de women have a lot of ketching up before dey as good as de men." Clearly the stereotype has yet to have been completely broken and its existence perhaps also is still affecting some female calypsonians, as well as those that listen to them.

One of the first women to achieve any sort of prominence in the field of the modern calypso was Lady Iere, who sang "Ice Cream Block", and achieved popularity in the 1950's with "Love Me or Leave Me". The latter stood as a slogan for the oppressed Caribbean woman:

Dey got to love me or leave me
And live wit' Miss Dorothy
The times is too hard
For me to keep a man who is bad.

After Lady Iere, two other women achieved a measure of success in the 1960's, Calypso Princess and Calypso Rose. The latter was destined to become one of the
most prominent calypsonians of the 1970’s, man or woman, attaining a rare Road March and Calypso Monarch double in 1978. Calypso Rose (Linda McArthur Sandy Lewis) still remains the only women to have ever won either of these competitions.

Calypso Princess came to prominence in 1969 but was also still known as the wife of another calypsonian, Blackie. Ironically, in this year, she sang "I Want a Good Husband", significant here because it shows what a female calypsonian’s idea of a good husband is. She does not ask for a faithful working husband but, in much the same way that a male calypsonian will praise up the physical attributes of a woman, Princess lists the physical attributes she wants in a man;

   Your weight must be 200 with broad shoulders
   Your back must be broad with good figure
   You got to be dark and handsome
   Your body in good condition.

However, this is countered by the common knowledge that her husband was small and short, and so she ends;

   He does give me plenty money
   So ah have to mumaguy [trick or fool] Blackie
   And he short and small
   So when he squeeze me ah play ah bawl - oh gosh.

Although this calypso is clearly light-hearted and in jest, it does show the female working the "give to get" routine to her advantage. It is noticeable though that there is no attempt to tackle the problems of gender relations, particularly by singing out against male oppression. The female calypsonian, at this point, did not address these issues, but rather took a similar position to the male calypsonian, taking pleasure in expressing sexual prowess. This is also true of Calypso Rose. Below is a verse from her popular 1971 calypso "Sweet Brown Sugar";

   A Yankee Sailor
From off a boat
Ah sell him some sugar
Well that en't no joke
He grinding his teeth
He say me sugar sweet
The boat leave the shore
Still they Yankee begging for more.

At a time when real sugar is supposed to be scarce Rose uses it, in typical calypso fashion, as a sexual double entendre. If you come to her "I have sugar selling". The female calypsonian, at this time, sang calypso in much the same way as the male. She challenged the existing order first and foremost by her presence as a woman singing calypso, rather than by the content of her calypsos. The outspoken female calypsonian did not really happen until the influx of female calypsonians in the late seventies and early eighties.

Rose has come now to be known as the "mother" of calypso and "is to female calypsonians what Sparrow is to calypso in general" (Ottley 1992:2). In 1991 Marvellous Marva sang a tribute to Rose entitled "The Woman of Calypso" which underlines this, but which also acknowledges the difficulties that the female calypsonian has had to overcome;

    Like it was shameful
    If a woman sing calypso
    Ah talking bout many years gone by
    or probable disgraceful
    if she even climb on a stage, good
    Lord and just make a try
    But now we have Twiggy, Sandra
    De Tigress, Lady B and Denyse Plummer
    Women who are capable
Lady Wonder and Francine, Little Natasha
You can't forget Easlyn, Marvellous Marva
Tell me who is responsible, I say
Calypso Rose, Calypso Rose.

In an interview conducted by Rudolph Ottley (1992:1ff), Rose tells of how other calypsonians responded to her;

Well the male calypsonians and I speaking about from that time to now, they all respected me, I became an attraction to them. I was an attraction in their calypso tent and anybody had me there. They could make money because there's a woman singing in that tent and "...we wanna go and see that woman". (see Ottley, 1992:7)

Rose used her novelty as a woman calypsonian to her advantage, but this hides the reality of the prevailing attitude towards the female calypsonian which she was so influential in changing. Jazzy Pantin, a long established local tent manager, gives a slightly different view on how the female calypsonian was accepted in society; "... around 1963 an individual wouldn't be too particular to talk at the corner of Queen and Frederick Street [two major streets in Port of Spain] with Calypso Rose because she was a calypsonian; a woman who sang calypso. However, at the same time that person would be proud to be seen talking with Sparrow... It was not looked upon as decent if you were seen talking with Rose or visiting her home or even if Rose visited you the neighbours would have looked down on you" (Ottley, 1992:173).

Calypso Rose paved the way for the later influx of female calypsonians, but her success alone cannot explain this and the subsequent acceptance of the female calypsonian. Leon Noel, a major tent manager, cites the advance in the recording business in Trinidad as something that helped women into calypso as it meant they
no longer had to depend fully on the tents to be heard (Ottley, 1992:174). There is, however, still a noticeable scarcity of women singing in the tents, which would indicate that there is still some way to go before they are considered on a par with the men. Trinidad seems to have accepted women calypsonians, they are no longer novelty attractions used to pull in a crowd in the way that Rose describes above, but it also seems that many still do not accept that women are as capable calypsonians as men. In 1993 Calypso Spektakula had only one female performer, Bianca Hull (see chap 6), and she turned out to be the Calypso Queen for that year.

Today it is not at all unusual for a calypsonian to sing a calypso written by someone else. However, the distinct lack of female calypsonians who write their own calypsos is a hindrance. This has meant that, more often than not, they are singing calypsos, often about women's issues, that have been written by men. Kitchener, when interviewed for the Trinidad Guardian, openly and bluntly despaired of what he considered to be the lack of quality female calypso writers stating "...it would be good if women would learn to compose their own songs, but 99% of them are taking songs from male composers and that's bad... I just can't see. They have no idea about putting words and music together. It seems as if calypso is for men" (03/02/93). There are female calypsonians who do write their own material; Calypso Rose; Singing Francine; Lady B; Easlyn Orr; and Tigress; to name a few, but the majority do not. This includes the most successful practising calypsonian in female competition, Denyse Plummer. Although the public generally do not seem to hold this against a calypsonian it is difficult to talk of a female calypsonian's point of view or philosophy if they are performing calypsos that are written by men.

Leon Noel points to a lack of dedication and argues that for women "calypso is just a passing fancy.... [they] have other ways of making money. So they are not confined to calypso to say well look this is my livelihood, I've got to stick with it"
(Ottley 1992:175). Frank Martineau, the Spektakula tent manager, is probably nearer the truth with his stated belief that the public has still yet to fully accept the idea of the female calypsonian:

To me the public have not really wholeheartedly accepted women in calypso. There is certain proof of that. Likewhen NWAC stages the Queen show, it is not always supported as it is supposed to be supported... People have to realise that tradition is a very, very hard thing to lick and traditionally it was mainly men in calypso. (ibid).

The tent managers themselves come in for some criticism from female calypsonians, and it is their attitude that has been arguably one of the main obstacles for aspiring female calypsonians. Female calypsonians complain that they have been discriminated against and even sexually harassed by both tent promoters and their male counterparts. In 1994, it was reported in the weekly paper "Bomb" that "Yes, Women in calypso are sexually harassed" (12/01/94), with the calypsonian Abbi Blackman backing this up. Another calypsonian, Marvellous Marva, has found that women "... are not treated equally at all", and argues that "it is because they fraid we women that's why they treat us so." According to her a known male calypsonian who has been "... singing stupidity for two years is being paid more than Marva who came out this year and singing a good song and people like it" (see Ottley 1992:147/8). Marva takes these accusations of discrimination further, accusing tent management and the M.C's of deliberately playing down a positive reaction from the audience:

When you go on stage and you now get hot, you have to come off, if you get one encore, two encores, you get the third one, they hardly want to bring you back on because of the fact that you are a woman and they can't do them men that at all so I think we are not being treated equally (see Ottley 1992:148).

It is difficult to gauge the extent of this discrimination and the effect it is now
having on the progress of female calypsonians. That the tent managers do not acknowledge the problem is probably the biggest obstacle:

... we have been criticised you know, but not many major criticisms... We have nothing against the women and I said before I hope we could have couple more women in our tent sometime in the future. (see Ottley 1992:179).

This statement by Frank Martineau, who is by no means alone among those in tent management who adopt this attitude, holds that the Spektakula tent does not have anything against the women, but also acknowledges that the tent has a lack of women performers. From this it can only be concluded that he, like Kitchener above, is of the belief that the women are still not essentially good enough. Can this be the case? A female writer for the Daily Express, Debbie Jacob, after having attended the 1993 Calypso Queen Competition, outlined what she thought was wrong with women's calypso:

In a long night of overdramatic, oversung, overwritten preachy songs, many of the women failed to make an impact on the often restless audience. It's clear that women's calypsos need a facelift. The songs need life. They need feeling. They need more interesting melodies. They need more interesting arrangements around the melodies and they need much better preparation. (13/02/93).

One of the main male informants, Bongo, seemed to voice the feelings of the lime when a discussion was underway about the group of female calypsonians known as the United Sisters. Initially the talk had been humorous, concerning the size and looks of the group; the United Sisters being four relatively large women: "Yuh know dey big ladies, ah give yuh dat, but dey know how to geh on. Yuh doh often see dat wid dese women, dey too busy only being serious, it as if dey forget aboud carnival. It have Drupatee and Rose, but mosly dey too boring. No, yuh mus respec de United Sisters, dey cah be serious but dey also know how to enjoy deyselves."
Despite this, there are a number of well respected female calypsonians who can be cited as examples to show that this is not the whole picture, but the problems they still face, both in the business from agents and management, and from the public who have still not fully accepted them, has meant that only the very dedicated have been able to emerge.

We will now look at some of the present female calypsonians, and their calypsos, that have attained recognition and respect. Two of these, Denyse Plummer and Drupatee Ramgoonai, will be feature in the next chapter on ethnicity and will not be discussed here, however, they are both of prime importance in the development of women's calypso, as well as in dispelling the myth that calypso can only be performed by Afro-Caribbeans. Denyse Plummer not least because she has won the Calypso Queen a record four times in succession. Drupatee has not been so successful in competition but she has achieved a popularity at fetes that suggests that she will soon be a serious Road March contender.

Singing Francine, after Calypso Rose, is one of those responsible for laying the foundations for women's calypso. Her history in calypso stretches almost as far back as Rose's but she has never achieved the type of success in competition that Rose did, although in 1975 she was awarded the Medal of Merit by the government of Trinidad and Tobago for her outstanding contribution to calypso. In the 1970's she wrote her most notable calypsos "Debbie", "Runaway" and "A Call to Woman", the latter being a plea for more women to involve themselves with calypso. "Runaway" is the calypso she has become known for and is one that she was still performing sixteen years later when she was invited to perform it at the 1994 Dimanche Gras show. Perhaps its most striking aspect is the direct way that it addresses the problem of male brutality in the home. The solution is offered simply in the title, and is explained in the chorus:

  Child does runaway

  195
Fowl does runaway
Woman cat does runaway when you treating them bad
Cow does runaway
Dog does runaway
What happen to you
Woman you could runaway too.

Abbi Blackman, the daughter of Lord Shorty mentioned above, is very much part of the new wave of female calypsonians. In 1979, at the age of fourteen, she became the youngest ever winner of a senior national calypso crown in Trinidad and Tobago. She is also among those female calypsonians who write most of their own songs, although she does this in collaboration with her father. She wrote the calypso she won the crown with in 1979. Entitled "I'm Young and Moving On", it deals with female independence from the male, self awareness and ultimately, self assertiveness.

The female position in society was, and still is, a common theme in women's calypsos. Two other examples are "Hostage", by Lady B, and "Woman Rising", by Easlyn Orr. Lady B is one of four major female calypsonians who have since joined together to form the above mentioned United Sisters. Individually these women use calypso to address serious issues. "Hostage" (1991), in true calypso style, plays on a recent event in Trinidad's history when the NAR government were temporarily overthrown and held hostage by the Muslimeen group led by Abu Bakr. It uses this event also to comment upon other kinds of "hostages" to society, such as the poor and the jobless. The third verse asks questions of the average woman in society:

Woman - ah you hostage to that ole wedding band
With a husband who invent his own private hostage plan
So innocently you said I do
From that day all freedom cut from you
Is licks [beating] now and then
Ah band of children
and no money to support them.
You would like to runaway .
but for the children's stake you does stay
You used to look so well
Now this man have you in hell
Is bruises and child mark too
ah next man won't watch at you
You lose your feminine glow
So there is no place you could go
Well sister what's wrong with you
You become a hostage too.

Although many of the calypsos that comment on the lot of women in society tend
to concentrate on their oppressed state "Woman Rising" is in fact a remarkably
positive calypso:

Chorus
So when I see Mrs Barrow
She is a governor as you know
Let's say we women rising
And when I see them calypsonian
I see bout half is women
Let's say we women rising
Well is doctor, is lawyer, manager, is teacher
We women rising...

Singing Sandra (Sandra De Vignes) is also a member of the United Sisters, and is
probably the leading female calypsonian at present. Although Denyse Plummer has been the most prolific winner of the Calypso Queen competition, she has never been successful in competing with men and, unlike Sandra, she does not write her own calypsos. In 1992 she became the first calypsonian to be crowned the Caribbean Carifesta Calypso Monarch, a competition that attracts all the major calypsonians. One of her best known calypsos, "Dignity", again addresses the position and exploitation of women in Caribbean society, and while it does not have the optimism, or perhaps naiveté, of "Women Rising", it keeps faith in female pride:

You want to help to mind your family
you want to help your man financially
But nowadays is really very hard
to get a job as ah girl in Trinidad
You looking out to find something to do
You meet a boss man who promise to help you
But when the man lay down the condition
is nothing else but humiliation
They want to see you whole anatomy
They want to see whey yuh doctor never see
They want to do whey your husband never do
still you ain't know if the scamps will hire you
well it is all this humiliation
to get a job these days as a woman
Brother they go keep their money
I go keep my honey
and die with my dignity

The last example of the new wave of female calypsonians is Lady Wonder (Diane Hendrickson-Jones) and, in particular, her calypso, "Calypso Pledge 1990".
Although Lady Wonder does not write her own calypsos, she is from a family immersed in calypso, her aunt being the aforementioned "Calypso Princess", her father the veteran "Allrounder", and both her mother and sister are calypso writers who provide her with her material. She has been a professional calypsonian since 1976 but it is this more recent calypso that is of significance here. Below is an excerpt from "Calypso Pledge 1990", the first verse and chorus:

Centuries have passed and it still is such an artform
Culturally it stands out on de platform
Atilla De Hun, Executor, Roaring Lion and Growling Tiger
They know why I love so
This ting called calypso.

Is true kaiso I am ah proud woman
To relate to you as a kaisonian
Is true kaiso Trinbago understand
Is supreme on de cultural bandwagon
Oh my calypso once had a degrading name
Now have international fame, I want you to know
I will never stop singing calypso
Oh oh oh oh I will never stop singing calypso.

Many calypsos are about calypso, either reinforcing or criticising an aspect of it and, as such, this calypso alone is nothing exceptional. Its significance here lies in the fact that it is a calypso of this type that is both sung and written by women. It shows that (some) women are confident enough to consider themselves as part of the calypso scene, and have enough confidence in other calypsonians to respect this. This was further highlighted in 1993 when Bianca Hull won the Calypso Queen competition with "Calypso Say" (see chapter 6), where she actually sang on behalf of "calypso", as if it were a person, commenting on the way it should be
used and the state it was in from ill use by irresponsible calypsonians. The integration of women into calypso can perhaps only be truly completed when they too have among them certain calypsonians that can be deemed irresponsible or controversial. As one female informant, the daughter from my main family of informants, stated in the same family discussion mentioned earlier about women singing in the Calypso Monarch semi finals: "Ah like de women because ah is ah woman and ah like to see women do well, but ah find mos a dem are jus too dam serious. Is only Drupatee who is nah lik dis and she is ah Indian."

Senior concludes her work on women's lives in the Caribbean: "Women at all levels still allow themselves to be exploited because of their social conditioning, which prevents them from acknowledging their true worth or that their labour is a commodity which has value in the market-place" (1991:192).

Calypso may be a product of this "conditioning" but it is also representative of it. Elma Reyes, a Trinidadian journalist concludes her study of women in calypso; "Traditionally, calypso has been a medium of social protest. It is time that women too use it to protest the negative image of themselves in calypso" (1986:121).

Until Singing Francine's "Runaway" in 1979, women had not utilised calypso as a vehicle for expressing issues relevant to women. The few female calypsonians there were had generally adhered to the sexual machismo employed by the male calypsonians, the only difference being that they were women. There was therefore no dualism operating between male and female calypsonians as they were singing about the same things, in the same manner. However, the calypsos sung by men that take women as their subject, as examined in the first half of the chapter, do highlight Caribbean dualism and how it expresses itself in terms of gender. Rohlehr's understanding of this as "ego retrieval" on the part of the male also emphasises the colonial roots of dualism generally. Today though, in terms of the
calypsonians themselves, female calypsonians, like the men, generally divide themselves into those that sing "kaiso" or social commentary, and those that specialise in the party or road march calypso. In this way calypso is itself dualistic and often forces its musical dualism on its performers.

Given the history of calypso as a virtually exclusive male practice, it is remarkable that there are today even a handful of female calypsonians who can be considered as serious competitors to the men in major competition. Chapter 6 highlights the high proportion of radio air time that is given to American singers of popular music. This has meant that Trinidad has become increasingly familiar with female singers which undoubtedly has had an impact on female calypsonians and the way they are received, and will continue to do so. At present, Trinidadian women do at least have a voice in the female calypsonian, and from it the female position is now being presented, but only when the female calypsonian has been fully accepted as such can their messages be fully observed.
CHAPTER 8: ETHNICITY AND CALYPSO.

This chapter will cover those aspects of calypso pertaining to ethnicity. It will look primarily at the Indo-Trinidadian population and will examine how they have been treated as subject matter in calypso, and how they have reacted to this, before going on to look at some of those Indo-Trinidadians who have, as calypsonians, achieved some popularity from calypso. It will also consider the implications calypso has as a national symbol of Trinidad for this section of its population. Finally it will highlight the significance of the East Indian contribution to calypso and assess the position that he/she has achieved in calypso.

ETHNICITY AND ITS APPLICATION TO TRINIDAD.

Two academics, Kevin Yelvington and Thomas Eriksen, have both arrived at definitions of ethnicity through extensive fieldwork in Trinidad. With Eriksen, much of his data has also come from Mauritius, an island with a similar ethnic make up to Trinidad. He takes the meaning of ethnicity to be "the systematic and enduring social reproduction of basic classificatory differences between categories of people who perceive each other as being culturally discrete" (Eriksen, 1992:3). Eriksen (1992:123) also notes though that; "What matters is whether differences are commonly agreed upon as being socially relevant, not whether or not they exist 'objectively'." Yelvington presents a definition of ethnicity which he elicits through an ethnography of a factory workplace from the shop floor to the head offices. He sees ethnicity as a "particular 'involuntary' social identity seen in relation to a socially constructed ultimate ancestral link between an individual and a named group, which has presumed to have shared ancestors and a common culture" (1995:24). Ethnicity, or the ethnic character of a group, may then be "involuntary", defined outside the group by another group.

The examples that follow, from calypsos by mainly Afro-Caribbean calypsonians,
display how a social identity may be imposed on a set of people, in this case Indo-
Trinidadians. Yelvington talks of how "The process of ethnic identity formation
involves 'sensing' likeness and differences and attaching meaning - and thus value
- to those identities" (1993:10). If the calypsonian is the perceptual antenna of
his/her society then calypso can be the cultural objectification of the "sensed"
perceptions of ethnicity.

The ethnic make up of Trinidad is diverse. The Indian population is now on a par
with the African, and for the first time since its independence Trinidad has had, in
1995, an Indian Prime Minister. This was something that many, even in the final
period of research in 1994, considered unlikely and difficult to imagine. The
informant Ras, in conversation with a young member of the Indian UNC party,
commented to him "... ah old but ah never see a Indian Prime Minister and ah feel
yuh go dead before yuh see one. It nah dat ah wud nah lik it, ah jus cyah imagine
it, but den yuh never know, stranger tings happen. Exodus win Panorama and none
of we see dat coming."

Since their introduction as an indentured labour force in 1838, the relationship of
the Indian with those of African origin, while never being violent has also never
been easy. Samaroo remarks that: "Ever since he was brought to the Caribbean in
1838 the East Indian was regarded as an interloper by the African population, as
one who had come to depress wages in the colonies" (1987:46). M Ramesar (1976)
states figures for known inter racial mixing (ie as revealed by the census); "Indian
Creoles, or persons with one Indian parent was 1.47 per 100 Indians of unmixed
descent in the year 1911; 1.87 in 1921 and 4.29 in 1946." This alone indicates that
the process of mixing has been long and slow, but there is more to it than this, as
Samaroo points out, the Indian did not conform to what had become a
predominantly Eurocentric society, and the inevitable cost of this was his
alienation, whether self imposed, or imposed by a suspicious society upon him
The Indians, on their arrival effectively replaced the Africans at the bottom of Trinidadian society. Vertovec explains the nature of the Indo-Trinidadian's subsequent development as "an evolving discourse between... each overall historical context in which they have found themselves, the natural process of reproducing culture - of drawing upon the internalized symbols, dispositions, relationships, conceptual orders, etc. and enacting these in behaviour or manifesting these in material form - has wrought transformations of many kinds", but significantly they "have at all times been active agents in their own social and cultural development" (Vertovec 1992:xii). This is significant when considering ethnicity in relation to the Indo-Trinidadian, and his/her inevitable fusion into Trinidadian culture. It is also of particular importance when considering him/her in relation to calypso, which is considered by both African and Indian to have been initiated and originally developed by Afro-Trinidadians.

THE PORTRAYAL OF THE INDIAN IN CALYPSO.

The turn of the century marked the beginning of Indian migration from the country into Port of Spain and its suburbs. By the 1930's their existence was still peripheral to the calypsonian's world but they are still recognised in some calypsos, as were the Chinese, and small islanders who had migrated to Trinidad in search of work. The attitudes range from mockery to celebration. The latter is particularly evidenced in Atilla's 1939 calypso "Dookanii" which, in typical calypso style, pays homage to the Indian woman:

She was exotic, kind and loving too
All her charms I could never describe to you
When she smiled her face lit up rapturously
Radiating joy, life and vitality.
The "exotic" Indian appears still very much an unknown outsider, although in this case a charming and desirable one. By the 1950's though the Indian was no longer just a part of an isolated unit, a strange, peripheral presence, but a noticeable part of society. Since the beginning of the century the Indians had started a gradual move out of their countryside isolation to settle in the towns, and in the capital, Port of Spain, and its suburbs. This is reflected in many calypsos, most of which tend to portray the Indian as an intruder rather than a fully integrated member of a harmonious society. Some significant "race" calypsos of this time are Terror's "Civilised Indians" (1950), Eisenhower's "Creolised Indians" (1955) Fighter's "Indian Wedding" (or "Dhalpuorie") (1957) and Indian Party (1958), and Killer's "Indian People Adopting Creole Names" (1950/51).

Killer's calypso is particularly significant; ironically now reflecting and criticising the voluntary acculturation of the Indian, in this instance by taking Creole names; something which was enforced on the African slave immigrant:

Long ago was Sumintra, Ramnalawia
Bullbasi an Oosankilia
But now is Emily, Jean and Dinah
And Doris and Dorothy

...And you should see them in the market, they ain't making joke
Pushing down nigger people to buy their pork
And you should see them in Port of Spain
They wouldn't watch if you call a Creole name.

Eisenhower's "Creolised Indian" is probably the most ironic. He uses food to show how the Indian has adopted Creole ways:

Is no more pumpkin, talkarrie, bhajee or mango chutney
They now eating stew beef, pork and salad side dish
Today it is with cuisine that the Indian influence, with the abundance of roti, curry and channah, is most in evidence in Trinidadian life. While such food was rarely cooked in the home of the informant Afro-Caribbean family, it was commonly imported ready made into the home, usually in the form of roti from the local roti shop. It was also often eaten as a snack outside the house by its male members, usually in a form known as "doubles", a cheap dish sold by roadside vendors consisting of channah, with optional chulah sauce, served in a flour pancake. After eating such dishes in the home, the comment from the sons would often be "... ah goh find mehself a Indian wife to cuk for meh", to which the mother would reply, "dat chupidness yuh know. Yuh feel de Indian go leh yuh tek he woman. De Indian mek dey money from de black man weakness for he food."

Fighter's (Shurland Williams) 1957 calypso "Indian Wedding" is a fictional account of what happens to an Afro-Creole trickster who masquerades as a Hindu and sings Hindu melodies at Hindu receptions in order that he may delight in the Indian foods on offer. One phagwa night he is actually mistaken for a real Hindu and manages to enter the gathering where he is offered an Indian girl in marriage. His disguise then slips and he is severely beaten. This calypso appears not only to mock the Indian, but also represent an unconscious desire to be accepted by him, although the calypsonian makes it clear that the primary motive is to get at the food. Indeed the calypso came to be known by an alternative name, "Dhalpourie". When faced with the possibility of death at the hands of these angry Indians the protagonist can only say; "...well if allyuh kill me, I would like to bury by dat tray o'dhalpourie." It particularly noticeable that in many calypsos from the 1920's through to the 1960's the uninvited intrusion of an African into the Indian world met with violent opposition.

The Indian can attempt to integrate or to uphold his own culture but it seems
he/she receives criticism either way. Rohlehr explains the roots of this predicament using a similar explanation to his theory of ego retrieval (see chapter 7) which explains the glut of calypsos derogatory to women as stemming from the male Afro-Trinidadian's insecurity of his position within society: "What is interesting here is how the mockery of the 'Other' reveals one's self contempt and the fragility of one's self image. While Killer notes the loss of name, taboos and customs among Indians caught up in the bewildering process of rapid urbanisation, he can still use the insulting marker of African defacement, 'nigger people', to refer to his own people" (1990:499). It may also be argued though, that the Indian, as a newcomer (at least to urbanisation), is treated as other newcomers may traditionally be treated by calypso. For example, the calypsonian's treatment of small island immigrants, most notably in Invader's "Small Island, Go Back Where you Really Come From" (1943). As newcomers they were competition, and the calypso may act as a kind of leveller or "rite of passage". However, as one of Trinidad's most astute social commentators, Watchman, was still singing in 1989 in his calypso of that name, "Race eh Done Yet".

Since independence the tendency has been largely for political loyalty to divide itself according to ethnicity. Gosine notes the consequences of this, and how it comes about; "In a country like Trinidad the polarization of ethnic interests within the political arena makes it difficult for one group to accept any degree of control by the other. This is because the politicians tend to use their own ethnic group as a power base to achieve and maintain their political positions" (1986:214). Vertovec (1992:123) too points to "The intensification of ethnic rivalry" brought about by the Indian PDP/DLP parties versus the PNM. In the 1958 Federal Elections when the Indian DLP won 6 out of the 10 seats, Eric Williams claimed the PNM's defeat was due to "race, pure and unadulterated" (PNM Weekly 21/04/58) and he also referred to the Indians as a "reçalcitrant and hostile minority prostituting the name of India for their own ends" (ibid). Politics has always been central to the African
fear of the Indian and the main fear is that an Indian government will rule Trinidad. Ryan claims "non-Indians considered the prospect of a Hindu controlled government intolerable" (1972:21) although non-Hindu Indians probably felt this way too.

This fear of Indian political take-over naturally manifested itself in calypso, as can be seen in another of Killer's calypsos, "Indian Politicians":

- We going to all have the privilege
- Trinidadians to speak the Indian language
- Population are growing so rapidly
- Election time they win already
- And as soon as they vote an Indian government
- Well the flag of India flying here

The extent of this fear of Indian political control becomes more apparent when we consider that this calypso was written in 1950. Even before Trinidad’s own independence has been rubber stamped the African is considering the possibility of an Indian take-over. The confused nature of the relations between the two ethnic groups is further highlighted by the fact that less than a year later the same calypsonian is criticising Indians for trying to be "Trinidadian" in his above mentioned calypso "Indian People Adopting Creole Names".

The necessity for unity between Indian and African later also became an important theme in calypso. A year before the independence Dougla (C Ali) made this as clear as it ever could be with his calypso "Split me in Two" (1961). A "dougla" is a term used to describe a person of mixed Indian and African descent, so Dougla, by his very existence, represented the necessity for harmony and understanding between the two races: Hear what happen to me recently

- Ah going down Jogie Road walking peacefully
- Some Indians and Negroes rioting
Poor me didn't know not a single thing
But as ah enter in Odit Trace
Ah Indian man cuff me straight in meh face
Ah run by the Negroes to get rescue
'Look ah coolie' and they start beating me too.

This calypso makes a mockery of any single minded adherence to one set of racial values by putting the position of the dougla, who inevitably will become more and more prevalent as time goes by.

The Indian woman did not escape the calypsonian and is still a major theme in calypso. We have already seen the exotic charm that some of the earlier calypsonians attached to her in Atilla's "Dookanii", and this sense of the "exotic", or something that is different or unusual, has continued right through calypso to the present day when the sight of an Indian woman in town may be just as expected as any other. Today there can still be many complications in a "Mississippi Massalla" (a sexual alliance between an Indian and an African) as was highlighted by the Trinidadian soap opera "No Boundaries" during the 1994 carnival season.

Sparrow sang a trilogy of calypsos from 1982-84 entitled "Marajhin", "Marajhin Sister" and "Marajhin Cousin". Marajhin is portrayed as being ideally beautiful, but Sparrow runs up against strong objections from her Indian parents, even though he claims he is ready to "work the land and give all the paisa." The idea of the Indian man having to work extremely hard so that his wife may live comfortably is another stereotype of the Indian that is also perpetuated in calypso. Ten years later, in 1992, Crazy sang a calypso entitled "Ahwoh Beti-Oh Baby" ("Beti" being a somewhat patronising Creole call to an Indian woman) in which he too is trying to entice an Indian woman: "... I will promise to provide every earthly thing you need. And your every command I will heed... I shall definitely work my fingers to the bone to make sure you have a lovely home."
The Indian woman is now an equal, not to the African man, but to the African woman. Someone whose hand must be sought and whose love must be won, but this acceptance has meant that she too is now open to the same derogatory remarks that the African jamnette types receive at the hands of the calypsonians. For example, Blueboy's "Sutti" acts no differently to his "Rebecca". However, the problems of mixing the races are still there, and are still therefore subject matter for the calypsonian. Ebony spelt this out in 1991 with his calypso "Shanti":

They don't want African mix with Indian
They against douglarisation [to make a child with an Indian and an African parent]
They say all the African just want to do
Is exploit the sweet Indian woman...
They want to put politics in we love affair
For our happiness they don't care
Ah doh mind that they fighting they racial war
What they involving you and me for?

Many of the calypsos concerning race have the express intention of promoting harmony and "Trinidadianness", and celebrate the fact that Trinidadians, unlike the people of other nations, can live harmoniously. The national anthem states; "Here every creed and race find an equal place." This is further emphasised by it being sung twice. Also the motto of the carnival, if it can be said to have such a thing, is "all of we is one". The latter point was once put to Bongo (one of my main informants described in chapter 2) by a local Indian storekeeper from his neighbourhood who resorted to using this "saying" as a tactic to secure himself a free beer from Bongo's carnival booth. Bongo's reply to this was; "All o we is one but business is still business." Eventually Bongo relented, but not before he could remind the Indian; "Ah hope all o we is still one when ah come to check yuh after
Despite such cynicism, carnival is supposed to be a time when all differences are forgotten and there are many calypsos to remind Trinidadians of this. Trinidad's chief social commentator, Chalkdust, embodied the spirit of this in his calypso from 1989 "Carnival is the Answer" which goes as far as to advocate carnival as the solution for world peace:

My Trinidad and Tobago
Can teach the world true peace you know
Cause when we start feting, playing pan and singing
We forget race, colour or skin.
But sister, folks in Lebanon,
Will fight to their death
Till Muslims and Christians live to wail and fete
Jews and Arabians causing destruction
Cause Syrians, Libyans, ain't have steelbands.
Only when this world embrace carnival
True love will enfold from every mortal
The world can learn from our carnival...

In 1984 Chalkdust sang "Ram the Magician", a calypso which is significant because it praises a prominent Indo-Trinidian. This title refers to the immensely successful Indian businessman Ram Kirpalani, and uses his success to criticise the ruling PNM party. The PNM relies for the majority of its support on those that would consider themselves as Afro-Trinidadians (see Ryan 1991:113-144). Chalkdust, an Afro-Trinidian, points out in the calypso the various successes that Kirpalani has had in relation to the failures of the government and constantly finishes with the refrain "... if you can't run the country then call in Kirpalani." It is an extreme measure called on more for its effect but, nevertheless, the calypso
still remains an ode to a an Indian business man by an Afro-Trinidadian calypsonian.

In the same vein, the following year a calypso entitled "Reincarnation" won the Junior Monarch. This points out that the Indians appear to be running every business. The Afro-Trinidadian calypsonian wishes; "If I have to be born again I want to come back an Indian." Here the transition is complete, the East Indian has gone from being an object of mockery and fun to one of envy. However, as Trotman explains: "Yet it is not an admiration of anything intrinsically Indian, that is, a love/respect for Indian culture, but rather an envious admiration of their material progress" (1991:398). "Ram the Magician" though is different, not that it celebrates Indian culture, but that it recognises the achievements of an Indian man. That he is Indian does not bother Chalkdust, it is only worthy of comment as a fact of history but irrelevant to his success. That he is successful is all that matters.

CALYPSO AND RACIAL CONTROVERSY.

Nationalism, its relation to race, and the bias that it can breed, both perceived and actual, is a theme that most of the major social commentators have touched upon. Perhaps the most outspoken calypsonian for singing on these issues has been Cro Cro (Weston Rawlins). There is a taboo element to racial issues that even extends to calypsonians. When it was once tentatively suggested to the informant Froggy, by an Indian NAR member after an NAR meeting, that Cro Cro, one of Froggy's favourite calypsonians, seemed to be unusually preoccupied with racial issues, his reply was; "... hush yuh mout, ah doh mind yuh say dese tings but a nex man will lick off yuh head." It was as if, just by saying that Cro Cro sang about racial issues Cro Cro himself was therefore a racialist. This was not what the Indian was saying, although certainly Cro Cro's frankness about race has given him a certain notoriety in Trinidad. A theme that has run through some of his calypsos, and would seem to hold a certain amount of weight, is that the politics and the
politicians of Trinidad only enhance racial tension rather than ease it. This is clearly expressed in "Happy Anniversary" (1987):

They had they PNM nigger
And they had they DLP coolie
Is them who instil that racialism in we
For 25 years them politicians give we tears.

It is documented extensively that institutional politics in Trinidad "is largely organised along ethnic lines" (Eriksen 1992:35; see also Oxaal 1968, Ryan 1972, Vertovec 1992). Ryan has also published data that provides "abundant and indisputable evidence that ethnicity is the most important determinant of political preference in Trinidad" (1991:118), but, as Eriksen points out; "Whenever arguments based on ethnicity are invoked by a politician, other politicians publicly react in a hostile way. Likewise it is also considered rude to accuse politicians of following ethnic strategies" (1992:34). This perhaps also explains Froggy's reaction to the Indian NAR member. It also follows that Cro Cro be considered the rudest of all calypsonians, although he is certainly not the only one to have accused politicians of this.

Eriksen, however, is not satisfied with this argument: "Ethnicity not only plays an important part in non-political social fields... it is more fundamental outside the realm of institutional politics" (1992:36). He argues that; "The same set of rules are subscribed to by all involved in routine politics, and there is a wide consensus over values and modes of discourse. In other words, cultural differences are in themselves unimportant in these contexts; their importance lies in the creation of options for politicians and parties to draw upon such differences in their quest for popularity and power... and the cultural differences influencing ethnic relations must therefore lie outside the realm of institutional politics" (ibid). Cro Cro then is speaking very strongly when he blames politicians for instilling "that racialism in
we", but in one of his calypsos from the following year, "3 Bo' Rat", we see him expressing the same idea this time he using the term "amplify", and this perhaps reaches the heart of the matter when, in true "bold face" calypso style he actually names names:

The politicians wouldn't do like me
They amplify racialism politically
Robbie feel that he wish Panday could dead
Panday feel "I should be Prime Minister instead".

Here he is referring to ANR Robinson, "Robbie", the then Prime Minister and leader of the NAR party, and Basdeo Panday, who had joined his essentially Indian DLP party in an alliance with Robinson to defeat the essentially African PNM party. However, shortly after the NAR were elected an unbreechable rift developed between the two, leading to Panday breaking away to form another Indian party, the UNC, and the NAR to face certain defeat. A party that should have drawn the races together effectively left them further apart. In this respect Cro Cro's comments were well observed.

1988 also saw Cro Cro win the Calypso Monarch and it was his other calypso, "Corruption in the Common Entrance", that was the cause of so much outrage. The only other calypso to have caused this sort of outrage between the two major races of Trinidad was Stalin's "Caribbean Unity" in 1979. This, like Cro Cro's "Corruption in the Common Entrance", also helped him achieve the Calypso Monarch that year, a fact that in both cases added to the outrage as it seemed to serve as official validation of the correctness of these calypsonians. Together these are two different examples of how calypso can highlight any underlying tension in this most multi-racial of societies.

Stalin's calypso, as the title suggests, was meant as a call for unity in the Caribbean following the failure and confusion caused by the attempts at unification
through one federation, Caricom and then Carifta. However, there can be no guarantee that a text is going to receive the interpretation intended by its author, or, even if it is, that it will be interpreted as having only this meaning by the public: "The text, of course, may offer the subject specific positions of intelligibility, it may operate to prefer certain readings above others; what it cannot do is guarantee them - that must always be an empirical question" (Morley, 1995:305). The controversy arose out of the calypso’s chorus:-

Dem is one race - De Caribbean man  
From de same place - De Caribbean man  
That make the same trip - De Caribbean man  
On the same ship - De Caribbean man  
So we must push one common intention.

The Indian community were upset by this as it appeared to ignore them as part of its call. It could not even be argued that this was an oversight by the calypsonian; when Stalin later appeared on a television interview he actually confirmed that it really was confined to men of African descent (The Panorama News Programme 01/03/79). Significantly the Caribbean woman was also represented as having to wait before she could follow. The offence that was caused then, was not so much the result of a direct attack by the calypsonian on the Indian population, but was more through the calypsonian’s insensitivity evidenced by his failure to recognise the large percentage of Indo-Trinidadians as fellow "Caribbean men" and fellow Trinidadians who should unite. The outrage it caused was more by what it did not say than what it did.

The Trinidad Express even printed their opinion, finding Stalin "not guilty" by taking the view that, although in Trinidad and Tobago those of African origin may only represent some 41% of the population, looking at the Caribbean as a whole, those of African origin were in a very large majority. This did not mean that all
those of other origins should be disregarded, but the Express were praising Stalin for attempting to break down the petty island rivalries, especially what may be termed the "big island -small island complex" (the tendency for larger islands to look down on those from smaller islands), which the paper described as "one of the biggest barriers to Caricom becoming a vibrant entity" (06/03/79).

Eriksen makes the point that "the bulk of Indo-Trinidadians emphatically refused to join forces with the blacks during the Black Power uprisings of the early 70's [which] could be indicative of their collective identity" (1992:132), this despite the fact that the leaders of the movement claimed that Indians, as non whites, are therefore black, and that most Indo-Trinidadians are at least as dark skinned as many of the leaders of the U.S. civil rights movement. Vertovec (1992:135) argues further that this movement actually led to a reassertion amongst rural Indians of many ethnic values, as a form of opposition to the African community's growing atavism. This may have been a factor in determining how Stalin, a calypsonian with passionate feelings about the Black Power Movement, looked at the Indo-Trinidadian; as someone who did not want to be included.

There is though a further implication invested in this calypso that plays on the insecurity the Indo-Trinidadian may feel as a small minority when the Caribbean is considered as a whole, which is what the calypso forces the listener to do. This was hinted at in the line taken by the Express. Ramesh Deosoran, himself an Indo-Trinidadian journalist, in his essay "The Caribbean Man" (1987), points out that "...Caribbean unity among those of African descent in the region could threaten the numerical strength of the Indians in Trinidad. At the same time Afro-Trinidadians may have a vested psychological interest in lifting the frame of reference beyond Trinidad, because in so doing, a challenge by Indo-Trinidadians for a greater share in political power in Trinidad becomes either reduced or irrelevant to Afro-Trinidadians" (1987:96/97).
Calypso, like other forms of popular music, can have far reaching effects within society, taking on meanings and being employed in certain situations that were never considered by the calypso's creator or performer at its outset. This is particularly the subject of chapter 10, but this calypso is also a good example of this. Finally, the calypso found its way into an address given by the Prime Minister, Dr Eric Williams, to his PNM party. Williams, himself a reputed historian, had decided to present them with an historical account of how each ethnic group had come to be in Trinidad while punctuating each account with the words; "Dem too is one race... from de same place... dat make de same trip... on de same ship" (see Warner 1982:85). This calypso had had such an impact, involving six out of the seven national newspapers, and taking up an estimated 660 column inches in its discussion (see Deosoran 1987:81) that even the Prime Minister felt it necessary to make an interpretation. It stands as an example of the power that calypso can have, but it also indicates how meaning may be added after a text has been taken on by the public. Here, the Prime Minister, in particular, attributing a different and perhaps grander view than originally implied by the calypsonian.

Unlike "Caribbean Unity", Cro Cro's calypso makes overt distinctions between the way the Afro-Trinidadian and the Indo-Trinidadian are treated within the society. The calypso alleges that racial and class bias exists in the selection for the Common Entrance. The comment the Trinidad Guardian made on the calypso puts this into perspective:

No calypso has called so many names of individuals and made such grievous charges of racial discrimination or done as much to provoke racial antagonism in the country. (3/3/88)

The reason for the outrage was not the corruption itself but that the calypso cites a number of Indians who were said to have benefited from it, and implies that there
is a bias in the system that is in favour of the Indian:

 Corruption is ah constant annoyance
 Going on too long in Common Entrance
 You doh have to be intelligent, that is ah lie
 Your father must pull good string with complexion high
 Your child could be bright like bulb from Laventille [an area associated with poor Afro-Caribbeans]
 Forget Holy Name Convent and Bishop Anstey
 Because they have to pick Baldeo, Boodoo, Krishna, Maharaj,
 Because Arjoon and Raj father have a big garage...

Much of the offence came from a skit designed to be performed as a prelude to the calypso. This made use of name stereotypes for people of certain races to show that the Afro-Trinidadian was treated unfairly by the system:

Teacher: (to first child) Come darling, we have an easy sum for you. 3+3?
 What is 3+3?
First Child: 9
Teacher: 3+3 is 9?. What is your name?
First Child: Fernandes.
Teacher: Such a nice child. Sit in the class. A very bright girl. And now we have another little darling. Come darling we have an easy sum for you. 4+1?
Teacher: 4 and 1 is 6? What is your name?
Second Child: Maharaj.
Teacher: What a nice name. Sit in the class please. And now we have another child. Come. 7 take away 2.
Third Child: 5
Teacher: 7 take away 2 is 5? What is your name?
Third child: Rex.
Teacher: Rex, I don't think we have any more space. You mind sitting on the floor in the corner there? And now another girl. What's your name?

Fourth Child: Smith.

Teacher: Smith. Her name is Smith? I don't think we have any more room. You can sit on the floor by....(pointing to Rex).

Anglicized names like "Smith" and "Rex" are to be associated with children of African descent which would, in any case, have been visualised in the enactment of the skit. The calypso drew responses from a wide range of areas. The Calypsonian's Association took the line that it "attempted to highlight the advantage of one class [my italics] over another" (see Guardian 29/2/88). This point could be argued as not all the names used, like "Fernandes", who is presumably Portuguese, are obviously Indian. However, all those who are discriminated against are obviously of African origin, even if they are poor. The Calypsonian's Association though are clearly behind Cro Cro. The then Minister of Education, Clive Pantin, defended the Common Entrance as "a foolproof scheme" (see Evening News 8/3/88 p3), but the fact that it forced a response, particularly from the Minister of Education, is a further indication of the impact that calypso can have in Trinidad.

These examples from calypso provide an insight to the various complications that can arise within a racially mixed society. Race is a major and sensitive issue in Trinidad and so continues to be so in calypso.

INDIAN AND OTHER NON AFRO-CARIBBEAN CALYPSONIANS.

There are, as yet, relatively few Indian, or non Afro-Caribbean, calypsonians. Unlike female calypsonians who were also, until relatively recently, a rarity in calypso but who have steadily increased in numbers over the last twenty years, the Indian calypsonian is still very much a minority. Warner puts this down to "the
feeling that calypso is the exclusive province of the black section of the population", a feeling which he feels has arisen from the belief that calypso came from Africa, though probably not as a carbon copy of some African original (1993:275). However, there are still a number of examples from which to draw upon and these will make up this part of the chapter.

This section is mainly concerned with the Indo-Trinidadian, due to the high percentage of them in Trinidad, but there are a few examples of calypsonians who have some ancestry that is neither African or Indian. Most notably, these are Denyse Plummer, who will be discussed later, and the Mighty Trini, who may be described as Syrian. From a prominent Syrian family, he made the finals of the 1994 Calypso Monarch. He is especially unusual as the Syrians make up barely a single per cent of the population. This has perhaps meant that there is little in the way of felt or expressed racial pressure from this group, and this is shown just in the soubriquet the "Mighty Trini", which celebrates his "Trinidadianess", and is also a reminder that he is Trinidadian and therefore entitled to sing calypso.

The names taken by Indian calypsonians have, in the past, reflected the attitude of one man doing his thing in another man's terrain. With names like Shah, Rajah and Hindu Prince, the Indian calypsonian appeared very conscious of being an Indian amongst Africans. Dougla, who has already been mentioned, was the first noted calypsonian of obvious Indian ancestry. Hindu Prince, in 1970, was a full Indo-Trinidadian and, in the same way that Dougla's soubriquet made a point of the Indian in him, he too took a name that could indicate nothing other than that he was an Indian calypsonian. However, when we look at his 1971 calypso "Goodbye to India", he ignores his Indian roots to celebrate Trinidad and Trinidadian culture. He describes Trinidad as an "earthly paradise" and claims that "...the things you could do over here... in a next country they will kill you dead." He reminds Indo-Trinidadians of things that they enjoy in Trinidad like "bush rum and weed to
make your head bad", liming, whe whe, and whappie, that may not be found in India. In 1980 another Indian calypsonian, Shah, sang a calypso entitled "Who am I?". This again was a very self affirming, positive calypso about being Trinidadian:

This is my own, yes my own native land
You have asked me who I am
And I'll say to any man
"East Indian, West Indian, Trinidadian."

These calypsos point to the Indian beginning to positively assimilate himself into "Trinidadian" society. The desire appears to be there for the Indian to be recognised as Trinidadian, but it is not until very recently, with the advent of the more party oriented Indian calypsonians like Rikki Jai, Drupatee and Sharlene Boodram, that Indian calypsonians have begun to be accepted as a less conspicuous aspect of the carnival celebrations. Opinions are divided, often even within the same person, about their ability. For example, the informant Froggy, himself a member of the once racially mixed NAR party, in an argument at the local NAR headquarters with an Indian member who had still remained loyal to the NAR, would claim "... ah nah racial yuh know, but Indians cyah sing calypso and dey cyah dance to it. Its in de blood yuh know. Dey have no history of de calypso so how dey go sing it. Dey only be copying we or else dey singing one set of chupidness." Later though, he would be ecstatically waving tickets that he had for the launch of Rikki Jai's new album and would be wining to his hit of that year "Wine on a Bumsee". When asked about this he could see no contradiction but took the line that "some Indians mus mek good calypsonians."

In 1989 Rikki Jai became known as a calypsonian with "Sumintra". The calypso is about how he tries to court an Indian girl by buying her some Indian style records. The response he receives is "...stop Rikki stop", the Indian girl would actually rather hear soca as she reminds him:
Boy ah a Trinbagonian [ie from Trinidad and Tobago]
Ah like soca action
Keep your Mohammed and Rhafee
And bring Scrunter and Bally.

This calypso again indicates that the calypsonian is still conscious of being an Indian calypsonian by the way that he almost has to denounce Indian music to prove his loyalty to calypso. This though was his first major calypso and significantly the it was written by an Afro-Trinidadian, Gregory Ballantyne.

1993 however, saw Rikki Jai have another major success with a party calypso that was played on all the radio stations and at all the big fetes. This calypso, "Wine on a Bumsee", is significant, not necessarily because it is an outstanding calypso, but because it is a typical "wine and jam" calypso which is the staple of any carnival which is sung by an Indo-Trinidadian. Its success at fetes showed that an Indian calypsonian could be accepted singing about the same things that any road march style calypsonian would sing about; wining, women and partying. Rikki Jai even managed to court controversy with the cover to his album of the same name which originally featured him baring the "bumsee" of a model. He was later forced to withdraw it and substitute it with a rather tamer cover featuring him sitting between two fully clothed models. To this the informant Madman decided "... dat original cover show Rikki a true calypsonian, yuh know. Yuh mus be controversial if yuh want to be a calypsonian."

1993 represented a breakthrough for Indian calypsonians as it was also a successful year for another one, this time a woman, Drupatee Ramgoonai-Persad, who sang "Careless Driver". Drupatee, as she is known, is also a calypsonian of the road march variety, and came to the fore in 1987. Her entrance into calypso caused some upset in the Indian community, especially amongst those who believed that an Indian woman should not be involved with calypso. This was made worse as she
had already established herself as a top Indian singer. The Trinidad Express commented that "no Indian woman has any right to sing calypso" and referred to her as "a thorn among East Indian women" (07/02/88 p10).

In 1988 she sang "Mr Bissessar", a calypso about how an old Indian man, Mr Bissessar, is inspired to play the tassa drums, a type of drum normally associated with Indian music, by hearing soca music. This calypso led to an explosion of interest in the blending of soca with Indian music, and resulted in the development of "chutney singing", the term by which "genuine" Indian soca is being called (see Warner 1993:288). It also went on to inspire one of Trinidad's most popular calypsonians, Crazy, who the following year sang "Nani Wine", one of the few calypsos that has, in terms of its radio life, outlived the carnival it was born in. In the calypso Crazy actually makes reference to Drupatee and the use of the tassa in calypso:

Drupatee and she nanin
In soca tassa city
Advantage in the village
Ah soca tassa rampage.

"Mr Bissessar", with its Indian tassa rhythms, was soca with an Indian twist. It marked a positive influence from the Indian population on the sound of calypso. Drupatee pointed this out the following year (1989) in her calypso "Hotter than a Chula":

Indian soca ah ha sounding sweeter
Hotter than a chula, rhythm from Africa and India
Blend together is a perfect mixture oh oh oh oh
All we doing is adding new flavour.
...for its the symbol of how much we come of age
Its a brand new stage.
The popularity of "Careless Driver" in 1993, and the subsequent controversy that surrounded it, showed that Drupatee was both consistent and had been accepted as a calypsonian. It successfully employed the age old tool of the calypsonian, the sexual double entendre. It played on the Indo-Trinidadian word "Nanee" used for grandmother, and the Trinidadian slang word for vagina, "nani", as used in Crazy's "Nani Wine". Ostensibly the song was about the "careless" driver of a maxi taxi who "licked" down the calypsonian's grandmother. In Trinidad, to give someone "licks" would mean to give them a beating, and to "lick" someone down would be to knock them down; so with the play also on the word "lick", the refrain for "Careless Driver" ran; "the man lick down meh nanee" or "nani" depending on which way you looked at it. This double entendre amused many people but also managed to provoke a show of outrage. Outrage and notoriety of this sort is something that a successful calypsonian must expect, and that Drupatee could now court this type of fame through her music, rather than her gender or race (although these were still issues), highlights that she has achieved a measure of acceptance as a calypsonian and that Indian females are ready to be calypsonians.

There is one notable calypsonian who is also ethnically unorthodox, but is not of Indian extraction. Denyse Plummer is probably, at present, the best known and most successful female calypsonian. She is unusual due to her white skin. Keith Warner (1993) refers to her first performance in the semi finals of the Calypso Monarch Competition when she was pelted with rolls of toilet paper and orange skins by a traditionally unruly crowd in San Fernando. He attempts to explain why the Trinidadian public found it so hard to receive her: "Plummer had performed well, delivering her songs with commendable art and gusto. Her only problem that day, for some still unexplained reason, was the fact that she was seen as intruding in a domain that was the reserve of those of another race, of another ethnic group. She was a white woman venturing into what is virtually a black man's territory,
and she did not fit" (1993:275). She is Trinidadian, the product of a white father and a black mother but, despite this, she appears to be almost completely white and has often been referred to in a somewhat derogatory manner as "the white girl". Nevertheless she won the Calypso Queen competition for four consecutive years between 1988 and 1991. She describes herself and the difficulties she encountered along the way:

I was not the normal calypsonian, let's face it. I was a pop singer in the eyes of the people. I was not a black person. I was a woman... a stranger to them ...so all these things they had to initiate me properly before they could accept me into their world, of their culture that they think the world of and nobody can really blame them.

(see Ottley "Women In Calypso" 1992:85)

Performance is a big part of her technique and out of all the calypsonians Denyse Plummer probably incorporates the carnival concept of mas the most effectively into her act. She is always brightly and elaborately dressed using the theme of the calypso to influence her dress, making her calypso very much a live event. For example, she would sing her calypso "Woman is Boss" in her own unique version of boxing gear. Her association with the pan, and her tendency for performing in mas style costumes means that she embodies all aspects of carnival in her performance and this has been integral to her success in convincing the Trinidadian public that someone of white ancestry can sing calypso.

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We can see from early calypsos about Indians how the attitude shifts from one of comical curiosity, and a scorn based on a sense of threat (something that can still be detected today in calypsos like "Corruption in the Common Entrance"), through to the eventual acceptance of the Indian in daily urban life which is reflected in the
emergence and success of several Indian calypsonians. It says something more about the nature of calypso that the measure of this acceptance has been the controversy that some of these calypsonians have been able to court (with their calypsos rather than their ethnicity).

Despite these significant exceptions there are still a noticeable lack of non Afro-Trinidadian calypsonians. The probable reasons for this have been put down to the Indo-Trinidadian desire to maintain his/her own separate culture combined with the fact that calypso essentially has its roots in Africa and was developed by Afro-Trinidadians. Vertovec maintains that: "Regardless of such transformations in their patterns of life, rural Indians have steadfastly maintained a distinct sense of identity and cultural practice" (1992:159). The origins of calypso though are African but it is symbolic of Trinididan culture.

Race will always be a sensitive issue in Trinidad due to the delicate numerical balance between the two main races, and their respective histories as originally displaced populations. From this displacement both races have struggled to maintain their original cultures but, as time has passed, they have inevitably created their own unique blend. However, "... there seems to be a serious "communication gap" existing between the two groups ...[which] is unfortunately institutionalised by the political process" (Deosoran, 1987:105), something itself which calypsonians have pointed out. Deosoran points to the media and the education system as key areas in breaking this down (1987:105), but calypso can also play its part. The problem is the lack of Indian calypsonians due to the inescapable fact that while calypso is something that is associated with Trinidad it has essentially grown from its African population. It appears to be this that both Indo-Trinidadians and Afro-Trinidadians must overcome for a fuller integration to occur. In an all Afro-Trinidadian lime the informant Jericho pointed out to the rest that: "Ah have no problem wid de Indian singing kaiso. It he who have dat
problem. He problem dat he nah invent de ting and he vex when he become de subjek of kaiso. But it kaiso duty to sing about everyting it have in Trinidad."

Perhaps now that there is an essentially Indian government in power in the UNC, this will spur Indo-Trinidadian calypsonians into action in the same way that the PNM emboldened many black calypsonians in the period 1956 to 1986. It is only now that non Africans are beginning to make any sort of impact in calypso. It will then be indicative of the racial harmony that truly exists in Trinidad when, in ten years time we can both hear the extent of the Indian influence on calypso and count up the number of successful Indian calypsonians.
CHAPTER 9: CALYPSO AS COMPETITION.

"...some people say calypsos shouldn’t be judged and this and that and all sorts of nonsense. Ah mean, let’s face it, it has been there, we born into competition, take that away from us, we going to relax too much, we are competition."

"Singing Francine" (see Ottley 1992:38).

This chapter will look at the part that competition plays in calypso and how it can influence and shape the way that the public perceive and understand calypso. It will show that competition is the essence of calypso whether it be in the form of the big organised competitions such as the Dimanche Gras, or whether it is a more personalised rivalry between two calypsonians. From this it will then show how competition actually furthers calypso as entertainment and both defines and structures the way people view the calypsonian.

COMPETITION, CARNIVAL AND TOURISM.

Competitions run throughout Trinidad over the carnival period and are part of the carnival experience. The steelbands, the Carnival Kings and Carnival Queens, as well as the calypsonians, are all competing and being judged throughout the season, and the road march calypsos, and mas bands in all categories of size, are competing on the two days of the carnival itself. Indeed Miller, in his book on capitalism in Trinidad, has a whole section on the pervasiveness of competition in the Trinidadian way of life (1997:312/319). If anything can be said to structure the carnival it is competition.

K Malm and R Wallis cite Trinidad Carnival as an example of how traditional culture can be adapted to make it easier to cash in on tourist money (1986:185/186). The 1950's saw the rerouting of the carnival parade so that it passed through the stands in the Savannah race course in order that the tourists could be charged an entrance fee, as they were for all the other competitions in
pan, mas and calypso. In 1971 Kitchener lamented the effects of the commercialisation of the carnival in his calypso "Play Mas" which made a plea for a return to the old days when "... We had no special route. Band use to travel all about. But now that's all over is a one way march to the Savannah."

More recently, J Stewart (1986) particularly has been critical of the state of the present day carnival. With the corresponding media coverage, he argues competition has perhaps become too serious, imposing itself on the carnival in a way that is restrictive and not in the "spirit" of carnival. He recognises that both the calypso and the steelbands presented themselves as a nucleus for a cultural movement that could substantiate and mirror the political movement for national independence. Local culture was conceptualised as a commodity and the subsequent development of the tourist industry also bolstered the national cultural identity. The downside of this, he argues, is the subsequent loss of authenticity and the disintegration of the carnival experience (1986:306/7). He points out that in 1983 a staggering 516 prizes were officially awarded, and that the staged performance of competitions takes up most of the time, energy and attention given to carnival, and voices the belief that "... it is time to return carnival to the streets" (ibid).

This however, can only be relevant to the actual two day event of carnival and ignores it as a season. The time running up to it, about eight to twelve weeks, is the time of staged events, be they competitions climaxing in the Dimanche Gras and Panorama over the two days immediately prior to carnival, or any number of fetes or tent shows that will go on throughout the season. These competitions and events will also dominate many conversations, and some of them, particularly Panorama, were looked forward to by the informants with greater anticipation than the carnival itself. Doctor, one of the main informants described in chapter 2, was especially a great fan of the pan and always made sure to have a recording of the
Panorama final. On one occasion, when the talk of the lime turned to speculation about the 1994 final, he explained his love of this competition: "Ah feel de All Stars (a steelband) hav a good chance dis year. Dey beating de best pan so far but de judges still sticking wid Despers (Desperados, another steelband). It always Despers or Renegades wid dem but dis year it shud be different. Dey nah de best. It interesting cos of dat. It goh be real close dis year. It goh be hot in de Savannah. It up to de arrangers to come wid someting different to surprise de judges. Dat is de way. Yuh mus come wid a new arrangement every time. Always new and better. It nah easy. But ah glad to see dat final cos of dat. It tense but it feel lik carnival in de stands. Ah go drink meh beer, ah may hav a little smoke and ah jump up to de pan. Ah fine wid dat yuh know. Dat de mos important part for meh."

The staged events build up to the two days of the carnival when the streets are finally given over to the people. These events are what make a carnival season, as opposed to just a carnival. However, the problems Stewart argues for the carnival proper can be related to competition. These are to do with the mas competitions to decide the best bands and particularly the congestion caused by the bands as they queue up to cross the stage (particularly in the Savannah), to be judged. The Queens Park Savannah stage has only a limited capacity which can lead to frustration for the players as the bands begin to pile up at the end of the stage waiting to go on. A single band with 3,500 members, divided into several sections, can take more than an hour to cross the stage, and during this wait in the hot sun the performers must remain fresh in their costumes and somehow contain their carnival impulse to play mas. Stewart's point here is that competition is stifling the essential spontaneity of carnival (1986:308ff). However, this congestion only occurs in the day, and only in the Port of Spain Savannah; whereas the carnival runs a full 48 hours, and is held all over Trinidad. One of the main informants Froggy, in conversation to some Jamaican tourists, took it upon himself to advise
them: "If yuh play mas in Port Of Spain den yuh know wat it is yuh getting. One set of big big queue. If yuh doh like dat dere is plenty other places to go. Meh, if ah wud play mas ah wud do it in de soud, in San Fernando where it have less tourists."

Competition has undoubtedly become increasingly seriousness and this too Stewart argues has adversely affected the joy of the carnival. As an example of this he points to a proposed official threat that contestants seen to have "substandard" costumes may actually be disqualified (1986:307). However, this is more to do with the nature of the costumes being too lewd or vulgar, which is not only an annual source of complaint, but is something that can be traced back right through the history of the carnival. In 1838, the earliest carnival report with detail of participation by black masqueraders complains of vulgarity in the form of near nudity, this time in relation to Christianity and, what was termed, "the outrageous desecration of the Sabbath" (see Cowley 1996:30). More recently, for example, "vulgarity" did become an issue in the 1993 carnival when it was announced that the mas judges were to penalise any bands whose members were guilty of "bedroom" wining. A one time chief judge, Rita Fraser, speaking at the launch of the Downtown Carnival Celebrations organised by the Downtown Carnival Committee (DCC) warned that; "Masqueraders should not display their bedroom antics in public... the judges are interested only in what masqueraders are wearing, not doing" (see Sunday Express 31/01/93). The DCC later disassociated itself from these comments taking the line that wining is itself part of carnival (see Express 02/02/93).

The prevalence of competition throughout the carnival season means that words like "disqualification" and "judges" may be used, but this is unlikely to affect crowd behaviour any more than the Sabbath did in 1838. The informant, Bongo, in a situation where one of his younger brothers, Madman, had lost what looked like
a potential carnival girlfriend to another carnivalite, expressed to him the "spirit" of carnival: "At carnival, if yuh feeling to geh on bad, den yuh goh geh on bad. Dere eh nobody goh tell yuh wat to do. If yuh feeling to go wid dis girl den yuh go wid she. If yuh feel to go wid ah nex one den dat is wah yuh mus do. De ting is, yuh mus remember dat she also tinking lik dat."

Despite any perceived problems, competition is definitely a part of carnival, and the emphasis it now places on staged competitions was arguably inevitable. 1911 is the earliest that a carnival song competition can be confirmed in Port of Spain (see Cowley 1996:179). Here a cup was awarded for the most original song on a local topic to a band named "Peep of Day". However, prizes for the best dressed bands, "fancy bands", or bands dressed in a certain style, were being awarded long before this (see Cowley 1996:151). The nature even of the stickfighting bands that these came to replace was still essentially competitive, if violent.

PICONG AND THE MEDIA.
The rest of this chapter will examine competitive aspects of calypso that are not organised, but are manifestations of its inherent competitiveness. In any given calypso season there will often be several ongoing arguments between two rival calypsonians which are usually conducted in the press. These disputes will generally arise out of one calypsonian objecting to either the lyrical content of another calypsonian's calypso, or to a certain calypsonian being placed above him/her in competition. Any real animosity that exists between the calypsonians involved will be intensified in the media, and may in part, or even completely, be contrived by it. The media will show interest in any grievances a calypsonian may have about a fellow calypsonian in an attempt to recreate the traditional picong or "calypso wars" of days gone by.
The calypsonian has always been in competition with his contemporaries regardless of any organised competition. Picong is a good example of how natural competition develops within calypso and it is in keeping with the roots of the calypsonian in the nineteenth century where, as the chantwell or lead singer of a calinda band, he traded insults with a chantwell from an opposing band of stickfighters in anticipation of the actual battle. Warner-Lewis (see Rohlehr 1990:17) argues that picong itself was derived from the secularisation of melodies from certain religious chants, most importantly the Shango Religion prominent in the enslaved African Yoruba community. She describes it as a mode of "provocation" that is evident in many Yoruba songs. Quevedo (1983:27) describes picong as "...the weapon of war or friendly rivalry in song between kaisonians. Reminiscent of the days of slavery, it perpetuated the custom of barbed wit, biting satire, and ridicule directed at one another, and of self praise on the one hand and attacks on one's confreres on the other." Originating in the latter part of the nineteenth century (see Cowley, 1996:175), picong battles were improvised struggles for verbal mastery between calypsonians that had largely replaced the traditional rivalry and violent confrontation of the streetbands. Picong would be used to describe a running feud, or even just competition, between calypsonians that manifests itself in improvised lyrics that would either provoke or criticise. Cowley (1996:137) describes them as "duels in song in the manner of verbal contests... [where] singers would improvise stanzas in glorification of themselves and disparagement of their 'rivals'." The word itself would appear to have derived from the French piquant, stinging or insulting (Warner 1982:22) and it essentially established the traditional competitive essence of calypso.

This tradition of trading verbal insults continued into the establishment of the tents where it evolved into the "calypso war". E Hill (see Warner 1982:14) describes how this worked: "... a competitor in these duels usually rendered his complete composition at one go, which was followed by a suitable rebuttal in his opponents
song." The calypsonian Lord Beginner describes a calypso war from first hand:
"There were about six calypsonians in a tent. We used to sing many songs in a
night. Then at the end we had a 'war', a battle of words, when all the calypsonians
would come on stage and give each other fatigue" (see Sunday Express 25/02/79),
"fatigue" being the name given to the tirade of insults and criticism aimed at an
individual. The "wars" that take place today are either in the form of the
formalised tent clashes, or are recorded calypsos responding to each other, or are
verbal battles conducted via reporters in the media. An example from a picong
battle from the first half of the century gives some idea of how it worked. Below is
an excerpt from a taunt made by Lord Executor to Atilla The Hun about his poor
education:

I admire your ambition, you'd like to sing
But you'll never be a kaiso king
To reach such a height without blemish or spot
You must study Shakespeare, Byron, Milton and Scott.
But I'm afraid I'm casting pearls before swine
For you'll never inculcate such thoughts divine
You really got a good intention, but poor education.

(see Rohlehr, 1990:61)

Today the nearest thing to this type of improvised picong can only be found in the
extempore competition. This competition is held annually just prior to the carnival
but it is only the two finalists who actually duel against each other using
completely improvised words in song form. Other than this, improvised picong is
rarely seen, however it has certainly not been forgotten.

The tent clashes that are promoted so vigorously today attempt to capture the
rivalry that is the essence of picong and any form of rivalry existing between
calypsonians is now described as picong. Calypsonians may either sing calypsos
that include criticisms or provocations aimed at certain other calypsonians or they may simply talk out publicly against another calypsonian. As we shall see, the media and the promoters are keen to continue the tradition as any form of picong makes for great news and only serves to arouse the public's interest.

The following are examples to show how picong is worked in the modern day. The first is a picong from the 1992/93 season between two of the most controversial calypsonians; Sugar Aloes (Michael Osouna) and Cro Cro (Winston Rawlins). This allegedly began at the end of the previous season after Sparrow had been awarded the Calypso Monarch. Sugar Aloes, who was placed third, believed this was an injustice as he thought that he should have won the competition. At the start of the next season Cro Cro performed a calypso that was a parody of a calypso Sugar Aloes had performed the previous season entitled "I Love Being Me". This calypso was itself a reply to Sugar Aloes' own critics who had implied that his sound was too similar to another calypsonian, Baron (Winsford Divine), but Cro Cro, whilst retaining the original melody and mimicking Sugar Aloes' style, completely altered the lyrics to form a cutting criticism of Aloes' reaction to the results of the 1992 Calypso Monarch. Cro Cro himself had been placed second in this competition, and many believed he should have won and not Sparrow, he therefore reminded Sugar Aloes that "to reach Sparrow you first have to pass through Cro Cro". Sugar Aloes quickly composed a reply entitled "Kaiso Confusion" in which he tells of Cro Cro's unseemly reaction to the results of the Carifesta Monarch competition. This competition was held out of season after the 1992 Calypso Monarch and Cro Cro had again found himself placed second, this time after Singing Sandra. Apparently his anger got the better of him and he freely vented it on Singing Sandra, her co-singer from another band Lady B, and any Singing Sandra fan that happened to be around. Whether this was true or not was beyond the researcher's investigative powers but this matters little in any case because, as the Trinidad
Express (16/12/92) commented: "Frankly, I don't believe that story but it makes for great 'picong'."

The point is that any hint of picong will draw in audiences and needs little substantiation. Significantly this alleged incident also provided the inspiration for another calypso in 1993 when the calypsonian Sheldon Nugget performed a calypso at the Spektakula tent entitled "Cro Cro Cry" (see chapter 6) in which, to the delight of the audiences, he humorously mimicked Cro Cro's distinctive dance movements and voice while mocking how upset Cro Cro was at losing the Carifesta Monarch. This example particularly shows how calypso can be self perpetuating. Calypsonians are themselves news, and their actions are themselves an important source from which other calypsonians can draw upon for subject matter.

The picong between Cro Cro and Sugar Aloes was also given considerable media attention which lent it another dimension. The Trinidad Guardian (16/12/92) ran the headline "Kaiso war brewing - Battle lines are drawn and the protagonists are armed and ready." The article then began; "There is going to be a 'war' in calypso come 1993. Battle lines are drawn and the protagonists are fully armed and ready for combat..." As with the tent clash where boxing terminology is appropriated as a descriptive source for the presentation of calypso (see below), another combative phenomenon, this time "war", has been used to evoke an image of calypso that is fiercely competitive and potentially explosive. The headline from the other daily national newspaper on the same topic shows similar tendencies: "A rage of picong in calypso for 1993." This article (Trinidad Express 16/12/92) then began; "Judging from the opening salvos, Saturday night at the Queen's Park Savannah 1993 is going to be a feisty calypso year. It begins with Cro Cro and Sugar Aloes at daggers drawn." Noticeably these reports are from very early on in the calypso season when everybody is still trying to establish what the main themes and points
of interest are going to be for that season. The fact that the picong between Cro Cro and Sugar Aloes never really emerged as a significant part of the 1993 season is reflective of this, but the way it was presented by the media illustrates how the media pick up on, and present picong.

This also serves as a point of comparison with the presentation of tent "clashes" and boxing matches illustrated in the next section.

A second example of a similar nature can also be taken from the 1993 season. The United Sisters, a group of four female calypso singers (see chapter 7), objected to the lyrics of a calypso sung by another female calypsonian, Denyse Plummer. Due to the male dominated history of calypso it is difficult to find examples of an all female picong and, strictly speaking, this example is not a fully developed picong as the insults have as yet been one sided. The calypso to which the United Sisters objected was called "Higher Heights" and was not a directly provocative calypso but was instead a boasting calypso, a common type of calypso whereby the calypsonian merely boasts about their skill as a calypsonian and the triumphs they either have had or believe they are capable of. In this calypso Denyse Plummer claims that she is responsible for taking calypso to "Higher Heights". Singing Sandra of the United Sisters complained; "I have a big problem with Denyse's claim to fame... She is boasting in her calypso that she has won eight crowns in four years... But I won the Carifesta Calypso Crown... So Miss Denyse will have to get eight on top of eight on top of eight to beat me, because she cannot at any time beat men like Cro Cro."

What is particularly apparent here though, is the weight that Sandra attaches to beating men in competition, something which she clearly feels makes her a superior calypsonian.

Another of the United Sisters, Sister Tigress, actually performed a calypso entitled "Denyse", in the Calypso Monarch semi-finals as a reply to "Higher Heights". Significantly though, neither this calypso nor, more importantly, the one sung by
Denyse Plummer, were composed by the singers but were both composed by men. Singing Sandra was again quoted (see Sunday Mirror 14/02/93) pronouncing that: "Denyse does not care about the art [calypso] at all. She is only in it for the money." The crux of the matter would seem to be that the United Sisters, as dedicated calypsonians, doubted Denyse Plummer's sincerity as a calypsonian. Why this should be is hard to say as she is certainly one of the longest serving female calypsonians. However, as the Sunday Punch (21/03/93) later pointed out, Denyse Plummer, while not being completely white, is of a light or "red" complexion and it may be a sign that her opponents find it difficult to take a calypsonian of her complexion as seriously as the rest of the other predominantly black calypsonians. This would indicate that there is a feeling amongst some Trinidadians, both black and Indian, that calypso is really a black thing and should remain so (for more on this see chapter 8). The point here though is that it is not essential for calypsonians to actually compose picong type calypsos at each other in order for a picong to exist as the media will feed off the words each calypsonian is prepared to say about the other. In effect, the modern day picong can be largely conducted in the press and, up to a point, by the press.

SPARROW, KITCHENER AND SPORTING PICONG.

Kitchener and Sparrow, as the two most respected calypsonians, are consistently quoted in the press, usually concerning their opinions about some calypso matter, but when Sparrow decided to temporarily enter back into competition there was a certain amount of verbal rivalry between the two promoted in the media. Kitchener, at 71, was not to be enticed back into competition as he believed he had nothing more to prove. This still did not prevent public taunts from Sparrow for Kitchener to return, and inevitably there was an air of expectation throughout Trinidad as to whether he would respond. Kitchener though was content to be among those who openly criticised the selection of the judges for the final. Sparrow, as defending champion in 1993, qualified for the finals automatically, but
after the other ten finalists had been determined Kitchener was of the opinion that these were "tailor-made to give away the crown to Sparrow." Sparrow's response ran as a headline in the Trinidad Express (17/02/93); "Why didn't Kitch enter the race?" He was then quoted at length using the type of image laden language that Trinidadians have come to expect from a calypsonian of his stature: "Why these fellas like to attack me like this? It's true that people don't pelt mango tree with green mango. But, let Kitchie put his life at stake. Don't stay from far and pelt. Let him climb, let mih break one of those branches with him on it, and let him fall bip-bip, biprico."

Here again we see the importance that is attached to competition in Trinidad. Sparrow is pointing out that by entering into competition he is putting an otherwise unshakeable reputation as one of the greatest calypsonians, at risk. Naturally there are financial rewards but these were surely outweighed by the loss of pride Sparrow suffered when, to his surprise (as well as Kitchener's), the judges, as unpredictable as ever, placed him second. Sparrow refused to collect his prize in protest.

That Trinidad recognises two calypsonians as being a cut above the rest, itself leads to inevitable argument, either between the calypsonians themselves or amongst the public, as to who is best. It is also typical of the calypso tradition that there should be rivalry at all levels; even at the top there have to be two calypsonians. The balance however was slightly upset when in 1992 Sparrow became "Doctor" Sparrow, after he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of the West Indies for his contribution to West Indian culture. Both calypsonians had already received honorary degrees and, by 1993, after more than 50 years as a calypsonian, there was mounting pressure from the public for Kitchener to receive a doctorate too. It is unlikely that this would have happened if Sparrow had not been given one but the fact that he had meant, to many people,
that he had been recognised by Trinidad as being a better calypsonian than Kitchener, something that many disputed.

This matter was the subject of discussion many times in the local informant liming spots. Perhaps the most outspoken was Jericho who, as a pan player, felt particularly close to Kitchener whose calypsos have consistently been popular with the steelbands: "Ah feel it nah right to disrespect Kitchener so. He de boss of de steelbands and he de boss when it come to calypso. Sparrow may hav won more dan he but Kitchy more popular wid de steelbands, and it is dem dat know wat is wat. Longtime de Road March decided by de steelbands and if dat still de case today Kitchener winning dat every year yuh know. And when it come to service to calypso, well yuh know Kitch put in more years. Yuh cyah really say dat one is better dan de odder." Many other arguments were also put forward by Jericho and other local informants in the Sparrow versus Kitchener debate which are relevant particularly because they show the pervasiveness of calypso in the everyday life and thought of the Trinidadian. Whether it were Sparrow or Kitchener the people were serious and cared about it.

The following extract is also typical of many letters that have appeared in all the newspapers:

While we wait for Lord Kitchener to receive even more official recognition for his rich contribution to the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, the people of this talented island can show appreciation in a very simple and dramatic way.

(Trinidad Guardian 11/02/93)

The method that this letter writer suggests is to begin a tradition similar to that of singing "Auld Lang Syne" at the end of every year, but, in this case, Kitchener's calypso, "Carnival is Over", would be played by every DJ at midnight on the last
day of carnival. The national radio station, Radio Tempo, also decided to have a
day of honour for Kitchener whereby they played only his calypsos for 24 hours.

Perhaps the most extreme tribute came when the bank (NCB) ran full page
advertisements reading as printed letters of nearly 1,500 words in honour of
Kitchener. The following extract is taken from the end of the letter:

Kitch, boy, whoever name you Grandmaster was inspired dat day.
Everything there is to know about calypso, you know. As Ali is to boxing,
Sobers to Cricket, Pele to football, Carl Lewis to sprinting, you is to kaiso.
You have mastered this kaiso ting and made it all your own. Who
first call you Grandmaster, Kitch? Who cares?

De whole country calling you dat now and ah spend all dis time trying to tell
you how much we love and honour you. Ah know, ah know. But, go easy on
yuh pardner, nuh. All right, all right. I know you could say all I say on dis
page in two verse and a chorus. But there is only one of you, Kitch, God
Knows, there's only one of you. Love again, and God bless, yuh hear?

This advertisement/tribute, which was appearing around January and February of
1993, has two points of significance. The first is the sporting analogy as, in the
first paragraph no less than four sportsmen from four different sports are
mentioned. Calypso or kaiso is used here as if it is a fifth sport. Sport is obviously
competitive and is often used as an analogy for a calypso scenario as people often
do think of calypso in sporting terms. The second point concerns the language that
the writer has used which, despite its inconsistency, is a genuine attempt to write in
a conversational style that is typical of the average Trinidadian. This example
furthers the idea of the calypsonian as the champion of the common man.
If calypsonians are seen in sporting terms then it follows that they can be bad sportsmen too. An excerpt taken from a letter printed in a national newspaper illustrates this. The letter was printed with the headline: "Poor sportsmanship by calypsonians." It continued: "...my heartiest boos to the recent Dimanche Gras show. I was particularly disappointed with Sparrow. I always held him to be King, but no more" (Trinidad Guardian 02/03/93). Sparrow, was defending the Calypso Monarch in 1993 and was clearly so disappointed (or perhaps insulted) at being placed second that he refused to pick up his prize, reminiscent perhaps of certain top athletes preferring to disown their silver medals. This similarly seemed to be the case when Kitchener later refused to collect his Chaconia Medal, an award to Trinidadians for services to their country in a particular field, because he felt it an insult that he had not also been awarded the honorary doctorate mentioned above that had gone only to his counterpart, Sparrow, some years earlier.

TENT CLASHES AND SPORTING ANALOGIES.

The competitiveness within calypso is what allows it to be comfortably likened to a sport. It is also seasonal like a sport, and successful calypsonians are awarded prize money or other material prizes, as well as certain titles and honours. Certain calypsonians attached to any of the existing tents for that season will also be formed into teams under the name of their tent, to compete in "clashes" against other tents in front of a paying audience. Today, these clashes, which occur usually towards the end of the season, are not judged and are essentially attempts to provide an extra interest to bring the paying public back to the tents; or to entice those that have not yet made it by affording them the opportunity to see the major calypsonians from two or three tents on the same billing.

In 1993, due to a decline in the number of tents, one of the main tents, Spektakula, came up with a new idea that further played on the sporting theme. Its promoter, Frank Martineau, gave the go ahead for an "in house clash" that was presented as a
calypso cricket match. The named captains were two of the more senior calypsonians, David Rudder and Duke, and the contest was billed as "Rudder's 11 versus Duke's 11". In the prematch hype Rudder furthered the cricketing analogy by jesting that Duke's team could not play "fast bowling". Duke replied that that was fine as the game was to be played on a spinner's wicket (see Express 04/02/93). The local informant, Madman, himself a keen and serious footballer, was involved in a conversation with some of his fellow players about football at his local liming spot, when one of the locals interjected asking if anyone had heard Sparrow's latest calypso which had been on the television show "Calypso Showcase" the previous night. This irritated one of the football players who complained that it was not calypso they were talking about but sport. Madman the commented that: "Yuh know mos people tink dat it only have tree sports in Trinidad, cricket, basketball and football, but ah wud say dere is a fourt big sport in Trinidad and dat is music. It mus be. Pan and calypso bod hav one set o f big competition and everybody arguing over who won dis and who won dat. Like de whole country going crazy." Apart from the fact that calypso is as competitive as any sport, it also excites the same passion in the people.

One of the largest clashes in 1993 was publicised as the "clash of the giants", and was to last for six hours. This clash was between the Spektakula tent, and the Calypso Revue. In a clash such as this there are no eventual outright winners, although the audience may decide on the merits of an individual's performance by encouraging him/her to return for as many encores as the MC deems necessary. Clashes of this kind generally entail three or four calypsonians from one tent performing, one after the other, one or two of their calypsos from that year. They will then be followed by three or four calypsonians from the opposing tent who will do the same. This will continue until all the selected calypsonians from both tents have performed. There is little in the way of lyrical spontaneity involved in these clashes so it is not as though the calypsonians are involved in a war of words
with each other. In fact, their performances have little or no variation from the performances they would give at a normal night in their own tent. Therefore, although competitiveness is introduced through the way that the show is marketed or hyped, there are no results announced at the end of the show and there is little to compete for other than the personal satisfaction of giving a good performance.

A headline that appeared in the weekly paper (Weekend Heat 06/02/93) covering the so called "clash of the giants" read: "Showdown At Sundown. Clash Of The Giants Was Like A Boxing Contest" (Weekend Heat 06/02/93). This type of reporting is quite typical of the way calypso is covered, especially by many of the weekly newspapers, and it is important to look at this as it is perhaps indicative of, and at least influential in, the way that calypso is understood by the public. The article extends the analogy through the continued use of boxing terminology:

> It was like a boxing match being fought at one of those expensive Las Vegas hotels in the USA.

The first bell sounded almost an hour late, but when referee Tommy Joseph signalled the pugilists to begin the first round, Spektakula came out like a raging bull ready to fight until the finish... It was a credit to Spektakula that, even though the first round stretched on agonisingly for a remarkable 40 minutes, they never took a water break and seemed more charged and energised each time a new fighter jumped into the ring.

Mike Tyson was not around, but blood and excitement flowed nonetheless... Had I been the referee, I would have promptly called in the ring doctor to closely examine the Revue bruises and stopped the fight at 9.40pm.

(Weekend Heat 06/02/93)

The article implies that the show was more like a titanic battle between two fiercely opposed teams than a showcase of the best calypsonians from each tent.
Admittedly most of the weekly newspapers are unashamedly sensationalist in their reporting in general, but calypso both invites and thrives on this. However, again what is noticeable here is the way that sport has been tied in with calypso. The boxing comparison used here is another example of how calypso is often thought about in sporting terms, but it also serves to provide the illusion of an added competitiveness to an event that, in this case, is not strictly about competition. However, by presenting an event as having a competitive edge to it seems to lend it a greater appeal, which also can be easily enhanced by the media and is pleasing for the promoters.

To see how this works actually in sport I wish to use an example from a boxing match between two British Super Middle Weights. The idea that the boxers really do hate each other holds far more appeal for the general public and today it is almost standard procedure for any two opponents to "bad mouth" each other before they fight. In recent times this has been seen in Britain with the coverage of the second fight between Chris Eubank and Nigel Benn. The fight was billed as "Judgement Day", and, for the British television company that paid for the rights to televise it, it was, at £1.5 million, the largest fee paid by the network for a single sporting event. Great pains had been taken throughout the build up to the fight to emphasize that genuine hatred did exist between the two boxers. Prior to the fight the Daily Mirror (one of the most popular tabloid papers in Britain, also prone to sensationalist reporting) stated in bold type that: "Nigel Benn would consider just about anything that might give him an extra edge against Chris Eubank, the man for whom he has an all consuming dislike" (Daily Mirror 08/10/93). Quotations similar to this could be taken from any of the tabloid newspapers around this time, and are not uncommon in the hype surrounding any boxing match. After the fight, the Sunday Times, a more reputable broad sheet paper, summed up the appeal this fight had had for the public: "What Eubank and Benn brought to the table, and what attracted the public, was a previous encounter
which had been breathtakingly exciting and violent, and a grudge carefully nurtured by all parties over three years" (10/10/93). In a sense, a picong had existed between these two boxers that had been conducted in public, for the public, and was to be settled in the ring, although, as it happened, it was not resolved as the fight ended in a draw.

COMPETITION AND PUBLIC REACTION.

Competition is essential to the way many people enjoy and think about calypso. The main talking points usually concern either; the structuring of the competitions and the way they should be marked; decisions made by the judges in placing the competing calypsonians; remembering calypso trivia such as where a certain calypsonian was placed in a certain year; or in attempting to predict where that calypsonian will be placed in a future competition. Prior to Dimanche Gras, there is always plenty of speculation as to who the new Calypso Monarch will be, and the results inevitably provoke heated argument. One of my main informants, Whitey, in a heated discussion about the controversial Sparrow victory in the 1992 Calypso Monarch, still had something to say more than 22 years on about the result of the 1970 Calypso Monarch in relation to this: "Long time before de final dey cah tell yuh who getting dat Crown. After Duke won four times it known long time before dat he go lose de nex one, but he was robbed dat year as he came wid calypsos much better dan Sparrow. Dere always been corruption in de wat dat competition decided yuh know. Dat was in 1970 and now in 1992 Sparrow still hav dem judges in he pocket. It plain for all to see."

It is a common conception amongst Trinidadians that the judges have often decided in advance who is going to win the Calypso Monarch. An argument put forward for this by several informants was that "... we mus have good representation", meaning that the judges were under pressure to pick a diplomatic calypsonian who would be a good ambassador for Trinidad. Roaring Lion (Raphael De Leon), one
of the oldest calypsonians alive, hinted at this when he suggested that: "After the judges decide who is King and who isn’t, there should be an additional panel to study their conclusions... Judges make decisions on who they know rather than a singer’s true worth. The result is that certain people are elevated while good ones are left out" (see TnT Mirror 14/02/92). There is little solid evidence to suggest that this is true, especially as Cro Cro, one of the most controversial of all calypsonians, has won the crown twice in recent history. This, though, is also not to say that it is not true, or that there is no corruption amongst the judges; all that is important here is the public’s perception of calypso.

One of the most controversial judging decisions from the period of research was in 1992 which, in some people’s eyes, went a long way towards backing up the statements made by Roaring Lion. In order to fully appreciate this it is necessary to fill in some of the background first. We have already mentioned the situation between the calypsonians Sparrow (Slinger Francisco) and Kitchener (Aldwyn Roberts), and that year it was Sparrow who decided that, after seventeen years, he would again compete for the Calypso Monarch. It is often the case that once a calypsonian achieves a measure of success or reaches a certain age, that he/she will retire from competition. This may be to give way for other calypsonians or because they feel they have nothing left to prove. Kitchener, when asked why he would not follow Sparrow’s return to competition stated; "A Grandmaster is already a Grand Master, he doesn’t need anymore titles" (see Trinidad Guardian 10/01/93). This again could perhaps be seen as part of the ongoing picong between the two.

A few others, such as Shadow (Winston Baily), have refused to enter because they feel that the judges are incapable of appreciating their music. Kitchener and Sparrow are the most successful calypsonians in competition. Until 1992, both had abstained from competition but had consistently brought out new material each year which they would perform in the tents and at fetes. Sparrow alleged that he
would return to competition this once because he felt that calypso "... was losing its traditional art form and there was a need for some of the older calypsonians to take part in the competition" (ibid). Most calypsonians relished the opportunity of competing with the greatest calypsonian but were also wary that his reputation might unfairly influence the judges. When Sparrow was eventually placed first in the 1992 Calypso Monarch he became the first calypsonian to have won the title in five consecutive decades, but many still felt that Sparrow should not have even entered the competition or, having done so, that there were other calypsonians who had deserved it more. After the result was announced it inevitably sparked off allegations that the event was fixed, both from the public and from other calypsonians. Sparrow himself felt compelled to make a statement justifying his victory to the public. The headline that ran in the TnT Mirror read: "Uproar over Sparrow." Sparrow's claimed: "I won fair and square" (TnT Mirror 06/03/92). The subsequent decision made by the judges to award him first prize only fuelled an already heated debate in which each Trinidadian felt qualified to give an opinion and usually did. Some of these, mainly voiced in the local liming spot described in chapter 2, were taken down by the researcher. The following are a representative sample:

De reason Sparrow won was because it was Sparrow. Everybody knew Sparrow was winning dat crown. If dey didn't give it to he it wuld bring he down as he is supposed to be de calypso king of de world.

Ah nah see anything to put Sparrow dere at all, at all. Cro Cro or Stalin won dat ting but because Sparrow is de known Calypso King of de world dey mus give it to he. How cah Cro Cro beat de king of the world? He cyah do dat. Dey wud not leh dat happen.

He won only because he is de King of Calypso. You cud see de people were
against Sparrow winning.

Sparrow deserve to win because his songs were universal. Not jus about tings only Trinidadians are understanding.

Sparrow is too professional for de other calypsonians. He is a world performer yuh know. He taught dem young boys a lesson in calypso. Dey cyah beat de old man. Ah glad he return. Calypso need he to mek it better.

These represent a good cross section of the views concerning Sparrow's triumph in the Calypso Monarch. However, it would seem that half the argument was not so much whether he should have won, but whether he should ever have entered in the first place. Although success in competition is important to a calypsonian, many calypsonians, after they have achieved a measure of success in competition, will often retire from it, as had Sparrow and such other well-respected calypsonians as David Rudder, Kitchener and Duke. The idea behind this is the belief that they have already proved themselves through competition and should allow up and coming calypsonians a chance. Success in competition serves as a bench mark against which a calypsonian must prove him/herself. After this there is no need. If they do not retire then they also run the risk of failing to live up to expectations. Sparrow, despite announcing that he would only enter the Monarch competition for that one year, did decide to defend his crown in 1993. This time he claimed it was for commercial reasons arising from the wider international audience the competition was to receive, although, as he failed to win this time, this could equally have been a reason for him abstaining.

It is significant though, that while most Trinidadians would quite freely express opinions about whether or not a calypsonian should have won, less than one in ten, from a survey taken by the researcher of one hundred members of the audience at
the Spektakula tent, actually knew what the criteria were that the judges used for marking calypsonians in competition. What it takes to win the Calypso Monarch competition is itself often the subject of calypsos. In 1973 Chalkdust claimed, in his calypso "Juba Doobai", that he had been robbed by the calypso judges the previous year because he sang "serious songs with big big philosophy." Chalkdust believed that the judges unfairly favoured songs about "wine women and song... about your neighbour's wife...[or] your own sex life." Chalkdust has himself won the crown enough times to know that this is not necessarily true, but the results of this competition will often find their way into calypsos sung the following year, even those sung by calypsonians who had no part in it. In 1976 Crazy (then Calypso Crazy) sang "Satan Coming For Calypso Judges" in which his main complaint was that in 1975 "Calypso Rose win by far but they give the Crown to Kitchener." The fact that Calypso Rose went on that year to win the Crown could be used either as an argument for or against this, but it would seem to the researcher that, while there is a set criteria for judging calypsos in this competition, other factors, such as the calypsonian's status and personality, as well as the subject matter of the calypso, if it is controversial or not, will, to a varying degree, play a part in the judges' decision. Kitchener stated that one of his reasons for quitting competition was because "I smelled a rat... I know that when you win once you not sure to win a second time no matter what song you have... I said I was not going back because it would hurt me to know I win or I come second and they call my name fifth or sixth. I couldn't take that" (Guardian 3/2/93).

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The introduction of the Soca Monarch competition in 1993 (see chapter 3) has, it seems, somewhat clarified what type of calypsos are required to win the Calypso Monarch. It has meant that there are now two distinct Monarch competitions which not only headline the duality that exists within calypso but also clear up the
confusion it has caused. Since 1993, the Calypso Monarch has gone to those calypsonians with a bias for social commentary, and the Soca Monarch clearly attracts those calypsonians who have road march style calypsos.

It is apparent that competition permeates both calypso and carnival at all levels and is fundamental to its expression; from the chantwells leading their respective calinda bands into stickfighting combat, through to the purely verbal picong, to today's official competitions culminating in the highly organised Dimanche Gras. While picong may still emanate from the calypsonian it has largely moved out of his/her hands to be conducted and even improvised by the media. The media equation of calypso with sport is based on the essential "sportiness" of calypso and serves to make it even more entertaining. The Trinidad carnival may be summed up as a competition centred celebration of entertainment performance. Calypso is similar to sport in that it is competitive but it departs from sport in that it is essential that it should also be entertaining.

Success in competition is vital to the calypsonian to establish his/her reputation, and in some cases, most notably Shadow and Crazy, it can also be the very lack of success in competition that defines their reputation and builds their popularity. For example, to take Shadow, it is commonly believed by many that Shadow is one of the most talented calypsonians in Trinidad but his lack of success in the Monarch competition is legendary. This may be because his brand of calypso is not understood, or at least not acceptable to the judges, and for this reason he has often refrained from entering the competition even though he has never won it. In 1971 the popular story is that after the judges failed to give him the Monarch the outrage amongst the Trinidadian people was such that the only way to appease it was for the bands to play his calypso "de Bassman" over carnival and ensure that he at least won the Road March.
Conversely, Sparrow's greatness as a calypsonian is enhanced by the fact that he is the only calypsonian to have ever won the Monarch in five different decades, and likewise, Duke will always be remembered as the only calypsonian to have won it on four consecutive occasions. The competition itself is important to the people, most of whom will take an active interest in the results of at least the major competitions. The results will inevitably become talking points about which most people will have their own opinions, as has been seen with the number of differing opinions concerning Sparrow's 1992 Calypso Monarch victory. The competitions and their results will, in some way, become reference points from which people will remember a carnival. Aside from this, whilst it may have been thought that carnival is a time for disorder, it is actually structured by competition. The various stages of the various competitions form the backbone of the carnival agenda, not just with calypso but with the pan and the mas. Admittedly there has been an explosion of competition in recent years and we have looked at Stewart's argument that this has stifled the carnival and, to some extent, it has. This though, has more to do with the commercialisation of the carnival than anything else. Calypso itself has become more commercialised, as we have seen with the "jam and wine" phenomenon examined in chapters 3 and 4, but competition, even commercialised competition, has provided calypso with another dimension other than the purely commercial. The effect of tourism has been to enhance or highlight competition, but this has only been possible because competition itself is an authentic part of the carnival, and is essential to both the understanding of it, and the way it functions.
CHAPTER 10: CALYPSO'S CONSEQUENCES.

This chapter will show, using Trinidadian calypso music as its primary source of example, the part that popular music can and does play in a society, and how it can form the context for social processes against which everyday life is played out. Its concern is with the more far reaching effects of music consumption. The concern is not with how music is created but with what may happen to it after it has been conceived, performed, packaged and released for the general public to buy or hear. That is, how a calypso can embed itself in the public consciousness and, for a while, actually become part of public consciousness and, as such, exert an influence over social processes. The examples presented will attempt to, in some way, make tangible the social power a music can have.

CALYPSO AND POLITICS.

In the 1940's, Albert Gomes, a major politician of the time who was later to unsuccessfully contest Eric Williams for the position of Prime Minister, described calypso as; "... the most effective political weapon in Trinidad... The fact that the tents are so sedulously supervised by the police reveals the extent to which the calypso singers influence political thought" (see Warner 1982:61). At that time, police were sent to listen to calypsonians performing in the tents with a pen and paper to record the content of their calypsos as a check for subversive lyrics.

The strength that popular music can have in politics is not to be underestimated. Waterman (1990:89/90) describes how in the Lagos elections of 1950 and the Western Region elections of 1951: "Yoruba politicians sought to mobilize local support through the manipulation of traditional symbols of authority. Musical performance... was one of the expressive systems harnessed by the Yoruba political elite. Musicians... were hired by political parties to perform at outdoor rallies fund-raisers... Juju musicians composed songs supporting the candidates and
groups that patronized them and songs attacking their patron's enemies... The collection of the Lagos State Broadcasting Service, today includes dozens of discs from the 1950's and 1960's marked NTBB (Not To Be Broadcast)." Similarly, in Trinidad, politicians clearly feared the potential power of the calypsonian to speak to the masses, as they still do today. The mother of the main group of informants once observed, after a news item alleging that a government minister had been involved in an extra-marital affair, that: "Ministers mus be very careful wid deir sexual relations at dis time [ie at carnival]. Yuh cyah escape de calypsonians yuh know. If yuh up to someting dey sure to smell it and den wat? Yuh de laughing stock of de tents for de nex two monts." Of course, today it is just as difficult to escape the journalists but, as the mother points out, it is unlikely that their wit will be as scathing, and it will not last as long.

The belief the public can have in a calypsonian is perhaps best shown by a common "saying" that originated in the 1950's concerning the calypsonian Sparrow; "if Sparrow say so, is so." This can still be heard even today and, while it may have become part of the playful boasting of the calypsonian and his routine, it also suggests the authority and influence that a calypsonian can have. The authority credited to certain calypsonians was also in evidence on many occasions during the local limes, particularly when the talk was of politics. To take one example, one of the most controversial political decisions over the 1993 carnival season was that taken by the PNM government to bring in Scotland Yard to investigate corruption in the Trinidadian police force. One of the most respected calypsonians for singing social commentary, Watchman, who was also in the police force, had, as a result, penned a last minute calypso in response to this. It was aptly titled "Scotland Yard" (see chapter 6 for an analysis of this calypso). The talk of the lime was about the ethics of this investigation and the consequences it could have. The distrust these locals had for the police was such that the general feeling was: "... ah feel dere is plenty dey goh fine. Dey mus geh outside people
to luk at dis. How cah we trus we police to do dis ting demselves. Dey nah goh say 'yes, we corrupt.' Leh dese English do it for we, den we tek it from dere. Ah feel dere plenty dey go fine, and ah glad when dey fine it." However, one of my main informants, Bongo as described in chapter 2, had recently heard the calypso by Watchman and his response was based on his understanding of it: "Yuh know ah de first to want to ketch out de police but ah hear de Watchman on de radio and he a police ah cah trus. He say dat it hav jus as much corruption in de English police so why we goh trus dem. We know too dat de government corrupt so wah it is dat dey goh do anyway? Yuh cyah trus we own police or we government, or de Scotland Yard. Who we goh trus? Ah say we trus de calypsonian. Leh dem investigate. Ah goh believe dem more dan de politicians, dat for sure."

This chapter is ultimately concerned with contemporary calypso and will return to use more recent examples of how it can work in society but, so as to put these in perspective, a few notable examples from its post war past, as well as from another Caribbean island, will be cited first.

Probably the most famous relationship between calypsonian and politician is that between Sparrow and Eric Williams. In the late 1950's and early 1960's Trinidad and Tobago was emerging as an independent nation and required the confidence of its people. In 1958 Sparrow won the Road March with a calypso about tax entitled "Pay As You Earn". This itself is unusual in that a calypso that was essentially a political commentary should gain enough popularity to win the Road March, but he also sang another tune that year entitled "You Can't Get Away From The Tax". Both calypsos were a reaction to new tax laws introduced by Eric Williams. However, far from criticizing the government, these calypsos endorsed them; making the point that the taxes still compared favourably with foreign tax rates. Sparrow had consistently supported the PNM and for the 1961 elections he advised the people to vote PNM with his calypso "Wear Your Balisier On Election Day",
the balisier being a plant taken by the PNM as their emblem. The people also sensed, in the words of Rohlehr (1990:527): "an implicit [and explicit] link between Sparrow and the PNM." The PNM won the elections and were not to lose power until 1985, but in 1965 Sparrow sang a calypso "Get To Hell Out'a Here". This was taken directly as a quote from Williams. The minister for external affairs, Dr. Solomon, had been accused by a corporal in the police force of personally setting his step son free from jail and, as a result, had resigned his post. Williams however, wanted him reinstated and these words were reputedly his reply to anyone who disagreed. As a result, the Eric Williams character in Sparrow's calypso is made to say these words as a refrain. The effect is that, although Williams may come across as a strong leader, he is reduced to the level of a "badjohn" by using such harsh, hooligan-like, words. It is significant that after this calypso Sparrow's commentaries became rather more social than political.

Gordon Rohlehr, in his article "Calypso and Politics" (see Trinidad Guardian 15/02/92), goes as far as to suggest that given the role of the calypsonians in the years of the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), the party did not have a chance, no matter what positive contribution it made or could have made. The power of the calypsonian may extend from portraying public opinion, to the actual legitimisation or deligitimisation of political leaders. The NAR party had little support from the calypsonians and were unable to remain in power for more than one term. However, if any calypso in recent times has had its effect on political processes it is probably "The Sinking Ship" in 1986, by Gypsy. The informant, Froggy, himself a passionate and active NAR supporter, but also a keen follower of calypso, went as far as to say that: "if Gypsy not singing dat song, de NAR not getting in de fus place yuh know." The brief coming to power of the NAR was a significant event in Trinidad's post independence history as they were the first party ever to have beaten the PNM in a general election. The calypso clarified the people's disillusion with the PNM. By using the metaphor of a sinking ship, Gypsy
created a powerful image of their failings:

This is an SOS from the Trinidad,
Location 7 miles off the coast of Venezuela
The Trinidad is a luxury liner
Sailing in the Caribbean Sea
With an old captain named Eric Williams
For years sailed smooth and free
But suddenly Eric Williams passed away
The ship hit rock bottom
That day someone turned the bridge over
To a captain named Chambers.

Chorus.
Captain the ship is sinking
Captain the seas are rough
We gas tank almost empty
No electricity, we oil pressure reading low.
Shall we abandon ship or shall we stay on it
Or perish slow, we don't know, we don't know.
Captain you tell me what to do.

The NAR party had promised open government and ran their campaign using the slogan "one love", in reference to the ethnic boundaries the party felt it had overcome. The analogy of a sinking ship provided a dissatisfied nation with an image they could identify with. Gypsy later claimed in his 1988 calypso "Respect for the Calypsonian" that; "I could write a song to make government strong. I could write a song to bring government down". Stalin, one of the foremost social commentators, describes his perception of the calypsonian's role as "...the people's watchdog/ Elected for life", and concludes "So I must be on yuh back" ("No Ease
Up" 1990). He feels that it is the calypsonian's duty to be "on the backs" of the politicians.

More recently, the calypsonian Bally emphasised the need for impartiality in calypsos for more practical purposes:

Politicians in this country
Me ent telling them who is my party
Cause if they doh get my vote
They might want to cut my throat
Like poor Sugar Aloes who feel hurt.

Sugar Aloes is another prominent social commentator in the calypso arena who is one of the most outspoken calypsonians and a self confessed supporter of the PNM. In the last verse Bally, six years on, refers back to Gypsy's calypso and the effects it had for him:

When Gypsy tell the world the ship sinking
Robinson [the NAR leader] hug he up like he darling
Put a medal round he neck
Send him to Skinner Park fete
Poor Gypsy ent ketch he self yet.

Bally finds that "The Sinking Ship" has also had far reaching effects for Gypsy who, having been openly serenaded by the NAR, must now suffer the consequences of being associated with an effectively redundant political party. His conclusion comes in the chorus:

Tell all ah dem ah bad
Tell them keep dey party card
I voting Tobago and Trinidad.

("Who I Voting For" E Ballantyne 1992)

Despite this, it is apparent that while most calypsonians inclined towards social
commentary may criticise the PNM from time to time, they have done so with the belief that the power base of that party is unshakeable. Many of them would undoubtedly be uncomfortable with the thought of any other government taking over, especially one made up primarily of Indo-Trinidadians. In fact it has been more and more noticeable in recent years that many of the more prominent social commentators have neglected their right, or even their "duty", to attack the government. This was recently pointed out in the well known, and rather aptly named weekly column "Snake in the Balisier", which significantly derived its name from the calypso by The Mighty Shadow and itself stands as an example of the far reaching effects of a calypso. The column, addressing itself to the Prime Minister, Patrick Manning, asked: "Patrick, what magic spell you have on them? ...Kaiso men 'fraid you in 95" (Bomb 03/03/95). The column highlighted the fact that while the NAR were in power many calypsonians were constantly hitting out at the senior members of the party, but with the reinstated PNM there was instead "a plethora of acidic tunes swiping at people who have little or no say in the affairs of State." This may be because most calypsonians, if pressed, would give their vote to the PNM. Indeed, one of my main informants, Madman, once expressed a disillusion with calypso based on this when asked if he would be visiting any of the tents that year: "Wah is de point. Dey all PNM anyway, except Gypsy and he one man alone. Wah cah he do now de NAR gone?"

The calypsonian undoubtedly will have a political allegiance but this does not mean though, that he/she cannot criticise. The writer of "The Snake in the Balisier" therefore probably gets nearer to the heart of the matter when he hints at Patrick Manning having "... friends who are influential in the NCC" who appoint the calypso judges. This would perhaps account for the low positioning in 1995 of those calypsonians like Luta, the defending champion, who dared to sing against the government. As we have seen in chapter 9; rigging, corruption, and political interference in calypso competitions are commonly complained about by
calypsonians and listeners alike, usually to explain a lower than expected placing by the judges. The fear of political interference in the judging of calypso competitions may alone be enough to deter some calypsonians although there are also many that are known to be above this and will not be silenced. Others however, may be guilty of restraining themselves through fear of damaging the party that ultimately has their support.

Despite Gypsy's "Sinking Ship", it is hard to talk of anything as extreme as a calypsonian bringing down a government or changing the course of elections in Trinidad. However, examples from other Caribbean islands where calypso is also an important form of musical expression, illustrate how this can happen. The development of the Trinidad type carnival in several eastern Caribbean countries has stimulated and provided a context for the emergence of local calypso forms. Frank Manning (1986), takes a smaller island community, where the causes and effects of events are highlighted and more easily traceable, and presents an excellent example of the effect calypso can have. He finds (1986:169) that in St. Vincent calypso played a major part in shaping the outcome of a startling electoral upset in 1984, but, while it may be thought that a direct social commentary would be most effective, in fact it was a more party oriented calypso relying on a comical double entendre that won the day.

The calypsonian Becket sang a calypso for that year called "Horn for Them". This was adopted by the minority New Democratic Party (NDP) as their slogan for the elections. The strength of the calypso, as is so often the case, lay in its use of double entendre. To "Horn" someone is to have sexual relations with someone who is not your usual sexual partner; to make a cuckold of someone. The leader of the NDP party was James Mitchell, but a man called John Horn was a NDP candidate contesting a seat against the ruling Labour Party deputy leader, Hudson Tannis. Lyrics from the calypso went: "Horn for them; Horn for the Sheriff and the
Deputy. Horn won his seat beating a man who, as Deputy, was expected to win comfortably by his party. The NDP also won the election convincingly, taking nine out of a possible thirteen seats. Previously the Labour party had held ten out of the thirteen seats. This alone though cannot be regarded as so unusual; what was unusual was the record 89% turnout from the electorate (ibid). Those who would not usually vote were clearly inspired to do so at this election. The calypso had relied on humour for its popularity, and this may account for its effect, especially as the same calypsonian also had two other calypsos around this time entitled "Opression", and "Love is the Answer". These were far more serious in nature but also far less effective.

In Barbados the celebrated calypsonian, the Mighty Gabby, has been engaged in lively controversy with its Prime Minister, Tom Adams, since 1987, and has emerged as the de facto leader of the popular opposition to the incumbent government. Calypso has yet to sway the outcome of an election in Barbados but its overall role in partisan politics is greater than in St. Vincent (Manning, 1986:177). Gabby has his tent at the ruling Democratic Labour Party Head Quarters but he has so far refused to stand as a political candidate (unlike the Trinidadian calypsonian Atilla the Hun Raymond Quevedo who became a M.P. in the 1950's) since he believes that he has more power as a calypsonian. Manning concludes from his study of these islands that: "Genres like calypso shape politics to their form and style, inject themselves in myriad ways into the political arena, and at times decisively affect the direction and outcome of political processes" (1986:177). The influence of calypso on political processes is apparent here not because it directly changes events but by the way it provides a context for them and, by offering its own discourse with them, helps clarify public opinion.

CALYPSO AND ADVERTISING.

I shall now demonstrate how calypso's influence can often extend to a more
general commercial and social afterlife. One of the most significant mediums through which calypso is utilised, and in turn has been utilised by calypsonians, is advertising. In the past, many calypsonians have written calypso-like jingles for the express purpose of selling them to certain companies or small businesses. Tents, like the steelbands, were often sponsored with the sponsors donating the prize money. Often companies would hold their own competitions supplying prize money for the calypsonian who could sing the best jingle about their product. One of the most famous and successful calypsos in Trinidad, "Jean and Dinah" was originally composed as a commercial jingle. Sparrow had written the calypso in the hope of selling it to Salvatori's but as they were not interested he set new lyrics to the melody (see Rohlehr 1990:448). In more recent times, Sparrow sang "Stag, The Recession Fighter", a calypso written as a promotion for Stag beer.

Generally today this process has been reversed; the calypso is first written as a song in its own right, and then may be taken up by a business in order to help sell their product. The lyrics may be slightly altered, or even totally changed, so that they bear some relevance to the product. In Western markets it is now commonplace for big businesses to use excerpts from popular songs in a similar way to help advertise their products, often even using lyrical catch phrases from the songs. The singers themselves are also used as part of the promotion; for example, Michael Jackson by Pepsi Cola. For the 1993 calypso season one particular calypso achieved a great deal of air play both on the radio and the television, not so much because it was popular with listeners or disc jockeys, in fact it was rarely played at fetes and had relatively little chart success, but because it was used as the music for a telephone commercial. The calypso was entitled "Call Me" and was performed Scrunter. For the television commercial Scrunter actually appeared singing the song. Lyrically the calypso had been tampered with but its original theme was what had appealed to the telephone company. The calypso had, as part of its music, a superimposed sound of a ringing telephone, and
was about a man's plea to a woman to "call him" at any time. The idea behind the advertisements was essentially to get everybody to pay their telephone bills on time. To do this TSTT (Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago) tried to point out, through the reworded calypso, the benefits of having a phone; with a sharp reminder from the calypsonian at the end to "pay your telephone bill". The newspaper advertisement (figure 7) features Scrunter and was used in the daily and weekly newspapers.

The advertisement's caption "pay before you play" refers to playing mas at carnival. Playing mas is often very expensive, especially if it is with one of the larger bands. The advertisement implies that it is therefore a good idea to pay the phone bill before you spend all your money on a costume or whatever other "calls" there may be on your finances. This will lead to your keeping your phone connected and a more enjoyable time at the carnival, free from the worry of unpaid bills. Doubtless it will also lead to a more prosperous telephone company. It is an annual concern of such state controlled industries as TSTT that the carnival will drain the financial resources of certain people leaving them without the necessary funds to pay their bills, and so such campaigns are not uncommon. This concern was also mirrored in the mother of my main informant family who would often remind any one of her sons involved in contributing to the running of the house: "Carnival ent ment for yuh to be having fun yuh know. Is a time for we to be meking money. We have bills to pay. Dey doh pay deyselves while yuh playing chupidness going to dis fete and dat fete. We all mus liv after carnival yuh know. It no good yuh having all dis fun now, playing de jackass and com de end of carnival we hav no roof over we cos all de rent dun gon spent on rum and woman. Yuh spose to be selling rum nah drinking it."

Calypso was also used in 1993 by T&TEC (figure 8), the suppliers of the nation's electricity, again to encourage the
public to pay their bills. T&TEC, like TSTT, is a state controlled industry. While there was no calypso that lent itself as readily to T&TEC’s purposes as "Call Me" did to TSTT’s, theirs was still an easy decision. The calypso craze for that year was a dance called "The Donkey". This phenomenon will be examined a little later but, suffice to say, there were several calypsos written that year about this dance which consistently excited the crowds. One of these calypsos, by Ronnie McIntosh and his band Massive Chandelier, was called "Whoa Donkey", and the other, by the United Sisters, was called simply "Donkey". The lyrics of the former used the constant refrain "Whoa Donkey", and this became, for the carnival season, a kind of catch phrase used by the media and the public alike. Generally it was used in a friendly manner as a way of telling someone to "calm down", or "steady on", especially if they were partying.

As can be seen from the copy of the advertisement (figure 8), the phrase was quickly picked up by T&TEC who otherwise ran a very similar campaign to TSTT. They also use the carnival as a deadline for payment. The onset of the carnival is a reason for prompt payment lest you "get carried away in the frenzy of carnival" and, either forget to pay, or, worse still, that you spend too much and then find that you cannot pay. The advertisement, or reminder, could be found in all the national newspapers, usually occupying a full page. However, the music from the calypso itself was not used; the campaign relying completely on the phrase inspired by the song, and a rather literal pictorial interpretation that makes no allusions to the dance that the song is about. The use of the phrase though could hardly have failed to signify to any Trinidadian both the song and the dance from which it came, but it also embodies the new meanings for which the phrase had come to be used.

In 1993 Crazy again provided the most talked about calypso that was, despite being
AVOID DISCONNECTION

“PAY BEFORE YUH PLAY”

TSTT customers with the following Area codes:

632 633 637 638 652
653 656 659 674 675
676

will be disconnected for non-payment of bills
due 15th January, 1993...
unless the amount due is paid by:

- 16th FEBRUARY, 1993 (Last day
  bank accounts TSTT bill payments,
  CSR)
- 16th FEBRUARY, 1993 (Also at
  TSTT Payment Centers)
  - #1 Frederick Street, Port of Spain
  - #1 Frederick Street, Port of Spain
  - #14, Lower King, San Fernando
  - #1, Queen Street, San Fernando
  - #12, Queen Street, San Fernando
  - Caroline Building, Scarborough, Tobago

Failure to pay by these dates will result in disconnection.
TSTT cannot guarantee non-disconnection of bills
paid by the due dates.
Payment with VISA card accepted at TSTT
Payment Centers.

Telecommunications Services
of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

WHOOA DONKEY!

Don't get carried away in the frenzy
of Carnival — Remember to
Pay your Electricity Bill

Before the Carnival

Don't forget to remember
to pay your light bill

Figure 7

Figure 8
banned by most radio stations, used in many different advertisements. The calypso is entitled "Paul, Yuh Mudder Come", which is also its refrain. The calypso is about the arrival of "Paul's" mother in Trinidad from America, but it also worked on a phonetic double entendre; substitute "Paul, yuh mudder come" for "haul, yuh mudder cunt". Despite the controversy, or in spite of it, this calypso was one of the most commonly used calypsos by advertisers (figure 9). Other popular calypsos to be found in advertisements in 1993 were Super Blue's "Bacchanal Time" (figures 10 and 11), and Shadow's "Swing de Ting" (figure 12).

Figures 9 and 11 are advertisements for public parties, or fetes, where an entry fee is required. Calypso is generally used to promote fetes at carnival time as it is calypso music that is played at them. Advertisements for fetes are often to be heard on the radio and many people listen in order to find out what is on.

Figure 13 uses the title of Sparrow's calypso "The More the Merrier" to promote a shopping mall or plaza. The plaza is using carnival entertainment which includes live calypso music, in order to attract more people. The play on Sparrow's calypso is returned to at the bottom of the advertisement; "More Variety! More Bargains!". Figures 10 and 12 use the straightforward method of employing words from well known contemporary calypsos for the promotion of company products. Figure 10 is an advertisement for MacFoods who use Super Blue's "Bacchanal Time". This tune was extremely popular and eventually turned out to be the Road March winner, although at the time of these advertisements nobody could know for sure what calypso would win. The advertisement for Queensway (figure 12) plays on Shadow's "Swing de Ting", adjusting it to "Swing de prices down".

Carnival is often used as a time for sales. Some other advertisements which
**The CARIB CAR PARK**
Friday February 12, 1993
9:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

**MUSIC BY**
Blue Ventures & Sound Revolution
DJs Chinese Laundry & Johnny Q

**TICKETS**
ADVANCED RATES $2.50

---

**QUEENSWAY SAN FERNANO NOW OPEN**

**SALE**
AT ALL QUEENSWAY STORES

- RAMIE LINEN $7.95
- 60° COTTONS $7.95

---

**Figure 10**

**RACCHANAL TIME**

---

**Figure 11**

**THE CARIB CAR PARK**

**More Carnival Shopping!**
More Variety! More Bargains!
More Parking! More Security!

The shopping plaza that will fascinate you...
illustrate the extent to which some companies may go in their use of the carnival as a sales promotion are: "Every man wants the perfect partner for Carnival - Gator Shoes"; or "o.b. Tampons are so secure I don't have to worry about accidents when I play mas - Johnson & Johnson"; or "Don't be Donkey this Carnival. Shop at Detour... Dress like a man not a Donkey". These advertisements all appeared in the national newspapers over the 1993 Carnival season.

The most comprehensive example found of calypso use in a printed advertisement is quoted in full below:

RID YOU DONKEY

to Carnival City 93

Ishmael M Khan

Where there are big bargains on the latest Carnival clothes, shoes and accessories to JUMP UP AND GET ON BAD in.

And just so that you can SWING DE TING you get a free quality printed T-shirt.

Visit Ishmael M Khan's and join BACCHANAL LIME.

Here Ishmael M Khan has made humorous use of four of the most popular calypsos from 1993. The last one has been slightly altered from "Bacchanal Time" to "Bacchanal Lime".

Calypso is also often used in advertisements as an incentive for people to buy certain products. For example, the company Sharp used the offer of two free calypso LP's as an incentive to buy one of their products. Singer used a similar offer of two free tickets for one of the largest calypso tents, Calypso Revue, with the purchase of any bed or mattress.
REACTIONS TO CALYPSO.

This section will look at some contemporary examples of how certain calypsos have affected social processes or have been the centre of a new social phenomenon. The first example is taken from 1992 but arose from a comment made in 1989 by a calypsonian associated with serious social commentary. The second is from 1993 and arose from a party or road march type calypso.

On the 8th January 1992 the weather vane that sat on the peak of the Red House in Port of Spain, Trinidad's government head quarters, was removed and replaced by a white dove. The old weather vane was commonly believed to be in the shape of a dragon but was actually a sea serpent. This appeared to be the culmination of a comment made in 1989 by Sugar Aloes (Michael Osouna). At this time the NAR government were in power and this calypsonian was, and still is, a self confessed supporter of the PNM. Sugar Aloes had cause to refer to this "dragon" as an evil omen that was harming the country. The fact that it had been on top of the Red House since 1907 and therefore survived through many PNM governments seemed to have escaped him. However, an article printed in one of Trinidad's foremost national newspapers explains how this oversight came about and is worth quoting at length:

Then, after years of neglect and exposure to the elements, and of being tarnished by polluting agents, the high-placed weather vane became more conspicuous as a result of the Red House renovations. The acquired patina was carefully removed and the whole body repainted in gleaming white.

Now in a more noticeable new colour, the dragon, which incidentally was not a dragon, got a new image. In 1989 a calypsonian, bereft of other ideas called attention to the dragon, labelling it an evil omen. Although false, that stigma struck a responsive chord in the superstitious breasts of many in the country.
The calypsonian, seemingly ignorant of the fact that the repainted weather vane had been in place since 1907, treated it as a newly installed device and associated it with several tragic events in the country.

The innocent dragon, which had never done anything to anyone, now gained a whole army of enemies. Many who before did not even deign to glance heavenwards at its elevated roost, now threw hateful stares in its direction.

(Sunday Guardian 12/01/92)

This article was written just after the dragon had been removed in 1992; nearly three years after the calypsonian’s original comment when the NAR were in power. At the time of the elections in 1991 Sugar Aloes had had cause to make a reference to the dragon again, this time in a calypso entitled "My Decision", which delivers a damming indictment on the NAR period of government:

...It really look like the dragon breathing fire on this nation.

But tell him [A Robinson, leader of NAR] from me,

If he don't want this nation to hit rock bottom,

Take down the dragon and try to put back the clock.

That might work.

The PNM went on to win this election. The question then remained as to whether they would yield to those members of the public that had been stirred up by the calypsonian, and remove the offending dragon. In the event, it was removed under cover of the night and made front page headlines. Three days later it was replaced by a dove with an olive branch in its beak. Figure 14 shows the headline that appeared the following Monday.

The minister for Public Works, Colin Imbert, was reported as saying that the reason for the removal of the dragon had nothing to do with "hocus pocus" or
superstition. His reasoning was that the serpent was not properly designed to function as a wind vane and therefore had been replaced by a "... more aerodynamically suited object. The old wind vane did not have a [steel] bearing so it couldn't function properly" (see Trinidad Guardian 13/01/92). In reality though, the PNM had acted on the advice of a calypsonian and, some would say, pandered to the superstitious whims of the population, needlessly defacing one of the national monuments of Trinidad and Tobago. One of the main informants, Froggy, as a supporter of the NAR, would often use this as an example of the PNM's "chupidness", when trying to convert potential voters, but he was also quick to point out that: "Ah know ah in politics but de politicians nah really de mos powerful people it have in Trinidad yuh know. Fus, we all know, it have de drug lords, but after dat de calypsonians and de obeahmen [obeah is a Trinidadian form of magic] have plenty power. Everybody running from dem. Dey mek big big men scared. Meh ah nah afraid of obeah, but if ah a politician ah know ah mus be careful of de calypsonian. If he calling meh name ah know ah in real trouble. De calypsonian hav real power yuh know, jus ax Robbie [ANR Robinson, the leader of the NAR]. He know he hav Gypsy to tank."

The combination of calypso and superstition had proved too much. The removal of something as minor as a weathervane was an event that had been transformed into headline news, and the disputes over it continued. Its removal provoked a continual influx of letters to both national daily newspapers. The letters page of the January 12th edition of the Sunday Guardian was completely given over to complaints about the dragon affair. An extract from one letter reads; "we allowed ourselves to be misguided by a calypsonian who was looking for anything with which to incite displeasure with a government he obviously hated... We showed our immaturity by believing his mis information and building on it to the point of blaming all of our misfortune on a simple OBJECT."
Gerry Besson, a Trinidadian historian, described its removal as the sign of an insecure government (Sunday Guardian 12/01/1993). He also pointed out that it had an irreplaceable aesthetic value as part of a deliberate overall plan by the architect to match it with the mermaids and mermen which adorn the fountain in Woodford Square opposite the Red House. Therefore, for some, to remove it was akin almost to vandalism. It naturally begs the question; why did the PNM have the serpent replaced if not to appease superstitions aroused by a calypsonian? Either way, what would otherwise have been an event of minor importance that would probably not even have been noticed by public and media alike, became an issue for almost two years that eventually finished as headline news.

The dragon that was not a dragon even ended up in use as an adjective, temporarily entering into the Trinidadian dialect. As such, it came back to haunt the PNM when, scarcely a week after its removal, the government announced its budget. Figure 15 is a copy of the headline that appeared in the Trinidad Guardian. The dragon finally completed its entrance into mainstream popular culture when, like the many examples above, it had become well enough known to then be used for advertising purposes. Figure 16 is an example of this.

Out of most carnival seasons there will arise something that makes that particular carnival in some way different, and there will be a certain amount of expectation and speculation throughout Trinidad as to what this will be. The 1993 season was no exception and was host to a quite unusual trend known as "Donkeymania". This trend has already been mentioned in relation to the T&TEC electricity advertisements. Donkeymania chiefly revolved around the two calypsos, "Whoa Donkey" by Ronnie McIntosh, out of which came the donkey dance, and "Donkey" by the "United Sisters", a group of four, usually solo, female calypsonians.
The fact that there were two calypsos based around the same topic added to the carnival by providing some additional competition. Competition is very much part of carnival and, apart from the official competitions, the media will play up any personal differences that may exist between calypsonians to try and create some sort of picong (see chapter 9). The two "donkey" calypsos were often billed together as a "donkey derby", and it was for the crowd to determine which was the better calypso or "ride". At the time, there was some dispute as to whose was the original "donkey", not between the United Sisters and Ronnie McIntosh, McIntosh's clearly being first, but between McIntosh and a calypsonian from the US Virgin Islands, Mighty Pat, who had sung a calypso the previous year about a runaway donkey belonging to someone named Jenny. From this calypso McIntosh derived his chant "Whoa Donkey", which he was already using in 1992, before developing it into a full calypso for 1993. To capitalise on this, Mighty Pat was flown over by the largest of the calypso fete venues, the Spectrum (previously known as Soca Village), to compete in a three way clash. The fact that calypsos have been written about donkeys since the 1930's did not seem to affect the dispute.

Wherever the donkey calypsos originated, Ronnie McIntosh was certainly responsible for bringing "donkeymania" to Trinidad in 1993. However, the popularity of these calypsos was seen by many as an example of the decline of calypso and, as usual, there were plenty of complaints about there being too many "wine and jam" calypsos with poor lyrics. To many who felt that they appreciated good calypso the donkey calypsos were nothing but "chupidness", and they could not understand the mass appeal. Raymond Ramcharitar, one of the most respected columnists for the Sunday Guardian, asked: "...what is the fascination with the damned donkey? ... Ronnie McIntosh's version does not stop anywhere short of a slapstick Neanderthal war cry. He yells "Whoa Donkey" and everybody starts screaming and working themselves into a frenzy" (Sunday
Dove replaces dragon

Imbert: ‘Hocus pocus’ not an issue

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**Dragon Budget**

Higher taxes and prices for gas, alcohol

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Guardian Magazine 24/01/93). This is an attitude common to many who have little interest in those tunes that are generally in competition for the Road March. The complaints are often aimed at either the general poor quality or banality of the lyrics, or at their smuttiness (see chapters 3 & 4). What often is not appreciated is that the road march or party calypsos serve a different function to the social commentary calypsos which are judged primarily on their lyrics. But lyrics are both necessary and important for party calypsos too. The appeal of Ronnie McIntosh's calypso can be found in the very lyrics that were derided for their lack of meaning. If listened to, it will be realised that the words of Ronnie McIntosh's "Whoa Donkey" are nothing other than a set of instructions for a new dance; the "Donkey Dance". Many successful carnival calypsos issue sets of physical instructions for the people, the most simple from 1993 coming from the that year's Road March winner "Bacchanal Time" which gave the command "jump up, jump up, jump up, jump up" etc, to which so many willingly obliged. Others included "Wine on a Bumsee" or "Jump up and Get on Bad". However McIntosh's calypso takes the party reveller through a precise set of instructions for a new dance, an alternative to the now traditional wining that dominates carnival: "... Put toes together and knees apart. Put two fists together out in front...and yuh calling whoa donkey." This is the first part of a dance that is in three stages. The second part involves a man placing a woman on his shoulders, and the third, described by McIntosh as the "back-to-front donkey", is when the man turns around so that his face is between the legs of the woman writhing on his shoulders, making the dance end up as a kind of mimicked act of airborne oral sex.

Sex content and a good dance beat are nearly always the primary appeal of road march or fete calypsos. This calypso also had considerable novelty value but more importantly it encouraged interaction between the sexes through dance. It therefore is crucial to the enjoyment of it that it be heard at a fete where such interaction can take place. Like so many carnival tunes, it has much less effect outside of the live
performance and therefore must live and die with carnival.

The popularity of the donkey, or "donkeymania", as the press liked to call it, led to a now notorious fete at the Cruise Ship Complex, also billed as the "donkey derby". The United Sisters and Ronnie McIntosh were billed together for the first time that year and, at a venue that had a capacity of 5,000, more than 12,000 showed up. The Express reported that: "As McIntosh started his version of the song, the crowd started to move in the direction of the band and threw down some of Chandelier's [his band] speaker boxes. People who were attempting to get inside the venue outside the Wrightson Road compound broke down a gate and a fence. Hundreds of bottles were thrown by people in the compound. Several people were hurt and had to be treated for cuts at the Port of Spain General Hospital" (18/01/93). As an eye witness to the event, it can be added to this that the crowd only began to get out of control once Ronnie McIntosh had told them to "take any new donkey"; in other words, that everyone should find themselves a different partner. One of the main informants, Doctor as described in chapter 2, was also present. He described what happened to his brothers: "It lik everyone go mad. Dey all tink, well okay now ah cah geh hold of dis ting [woman] ah been watching de whole time buh cyah hav cos ah wid my own ting. Or if yuh had nutting it was de time to grab hold of someting. De people on de outside, tinking dey missing out den become more desperate to come in. Dis only mek tings worse wid de crowd."

This episode again highlights the strong sexual element in the fete type calypso and the appeal this has for the fetes goer. After Doctor had finished the telling of his experience of the fete, his elder brother Jericho replied: "Dat is calypso for yuh. It mus be sexy. Fetes are aboud being sexy and de music mus be sexy. Dat is wah de people expec at dese fetes. Sometimes dough, [laughing] it may geh too sexy for it own good and dis is wah cah happen."
Like the dragon of the previous years, the donkey found its way into the local vocabulary. The phrase "whoa donkey" could have been used in a number of varying situations, but usually it inferred that someone should "calm down", "steady on", or "don't get too excited". A headline for an article in the Trinidad Guardian (03/02/93) reporting a parliamentary motion brought by the opposition to debate corruption and the government's inability to handle it, appeared as "Nobody can resist the donkey". This referred to the bad behaviour of the politicians present, and the farce that the debate turned into. What had originally begun as a chant at a fete, had developed into a set of popular calypsos, a dance, an addition to local Trinidadian dialect, a method of persuading people to pay their bills, and finally a term used to describe the behaviour of politicians.

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This chapter has traced the various impacts made by calypsos that are quite different in nature from one another. The "Donkey" and the "Sinking Ship", for example, underline the duality that exists within calypso between, in simple terms, the serious social commentary exemplified in the Calypso Monarch competition, and the fun party calypsos exemplified in the Road March and Soca Monarch competitions. It has been shown that political and social commentary in calypso can influence social processes, while the more popular "catchy" calypsos can find another life in advertising. However, it has also been shown that these latter calypsos can have a quite significant political impact, most notably shown by the calypso "Horn Dem", from St Vincent.

Despite the obvious polar categories that may be assigned to calypso then, it would be a mistake to focus on either one in isolation, or to assume the impact a calypso may have based on how it may be categorised within calypso. Carnival includes them all and gives the music its own power while, at the same time, the music
helps to shape and define each carnival. A Cohen (1982:34) refers to carnival as a "contested event", that is: "precariously poised between the affirmation and validation of the established order and its rejection" (ibid). This provides some understanding as to the essence of carnival and therefore calypso. Carnival works by remaining ambiguous so that, although there are given categories such as social commentary and wine and jam, or Calypso Monarch and Road March, there is always the opportunity to exploit the areas between these by such devices as the double entendre. These are capable of drawing high matters like politics, for example, down to the people, but are also capable of making entertainment an activity with political and social consequence.
CONCLUSION.

The thesis develops two theories that are not directly concerned with music consumption but are necessary in order to understand the context in which the consumption of calypso took place. The Caribbean tendency towards dualism has been clearly shown to operate within calypso and is particularly significant in Trinidad, which has been shown by Miller (1994) to manifest itself most noticeably in ethnicity. The dualism in calypso though, due mainly to the high percentage of calypsonians from one ethnic division, cannot be said to be itself an ethnic one. In fact calypso has tended to be the expression of one side of the ethnic division. However, while calypso is itself dualistic, it also highlights other ways in which dualism shows itself in the Caribbean, most notably in gender. The dual nature of calypso itself is examined in the third and fourth chapters.

The second theoretical concern is with carnival theories. Carnival has an obvious bearing upon calypso as it forms the context within which calypso is generally performed, and therefore is influential in both how it is produced and how it is received. The remainder of the introduction then presents the theoretical context within which the study of a music system and its consumption may be located.

Chapter 2 is entirely given over to the history of Trinidad and a descriptive ethnography. Much of the research was achieved through lone participant observation, and this chapter provides the context in which this was conducted. It therefore serves as the methodology. The idea behind it is to provide the ideas put forward in the thesis with an element of objectivity achieved through stating the position within which the inevitably subjective researcher was operating. Following from this, it goes on to introduce the informants who are to be quoted throughout the thesis to illustrate various points.

Chapter 3 is also contextual in that it provides the history of calypso music and
describes the major components and competitions that make up the carnival season. It also deals with what is the most immediate consequence of music, dance or, in this case, wining. The type of calypso associated with this type of dancing emerged as one side of calypso's dual nature, and also as the more popular aspect of calypso. However, this is not to say that social commentary or kaiso is in decline. There are as many calypsos of this latter variety being produced, performed, and even pressed into vinyl, but they receive much less radio play and consequently do not appear to be as prevalent. This leads to questions to do with the tools of music consumption concerning the power of the radio, and where it can be heard, which are picked up again in chapters 5 and 6. To lead into chapter 3, chapter 2 highlights the dualism of calypso (which also refers back to the introduction), its complexity and the difficulty in defining it. Before touching the topic of consumption, the nature of the music must first be understood.

The dual nature of calypso music appears to be highlighted by the various competitions, most notably the Road March and the Calypso Monarch. Chapters 3 and 4 provide the background to this before competition is picked up in more detail in chapter 9. The fourth chapter though deals with the major lyrical themes that are in calypso as a way of tangibly representing its duality. Calypso, with all its aspects has, almost become a meaningless word and would perhaps be better referred to as "Carnival music" if it were not so keen to also have a life outside of the carnival season. Indeed, Cowley (1997:236) refers to it as precisely this, but points out that this variety of styles existed even before the use of the word became widespread: "From the first viable reports in the nineteenth century, Carnival music retained a variety of styles; from the gentile to the disruptive. The songs of black creoles included commentaries, panegyrics and protestations (sometimes ribald or insulting). There were also the pugilistic and self reflective songs of the stickfighting bands. All these components came together at the turn of the century under the collective name of 'calipso'. As the century progressed, calypsonians
upheld this broad base of styles in their carnival tent performances and, from the late 1920's, via the gramophone record - a continuity sustained by the colonial environment in which musicians performed" (ibid). What was to be called calypso was many faceted even before it received its name. What we see from its history and the examination of it in the present day is its inherent dualism and the difficulty in defining it. It is continually reinventing itself through cultural appropriation and syncretic modes which is what keeps it going.

The chapter then moves towards the topic of consumption, and a fuller understanding of calypso by examining attitudes to present day calypso and the way that this duality has been received. The difficulty seems to lie in the inability of some who sing serious calypso to accept the other aspect of its duality, for example Chalkdust (Hollis Liverpool) who sings that "kaiso sick in de hospital", or the many letter writers in the newspapers complaining of poor or vulgar lyrics. Either they refuse to acknowledge the other side of this coin or they are unwilling to accept its new modes.

In chapter 5 the emphasis is shifted from calypso and its consumption to the workings of the "calypso industry" and the problems of commercialising a traditional music. Rather than showing the effects of calypso or how it is consumed, it examines how consumption has affected the way calypso is produced. To cite two prime examples. The first is the tendency towards formulaic calypsos like "De Cow" which are supposed to follow proven formulas for making popular calypsos, and therefore, money. The danger with this is it leads to the death of innovation and therefore makes it difficult for calypso to reinvent itself. The second example is the alarming reality of advertisers/promoters buying airtime. This raises a question that strikes at the heart of calypso as, bearing in mind the influence of the radio, can competitions like the Road March still be considered "the peoples choice"? This in turn begs the wider question of the influence of the
radio/media on the people. In this case, the importance of the radio would seem to be indicated by the fact that in all three carnivals over the research period, those calypsos that had the most airplay were also the calypsos that contested the Road March. The argument the disc jockeys would make is that they were responding to what the people wanted, however, as Manuel points out "...audiences cannot resignify music they have not heard" (1993:8).

This chapter also highlights an unusual aspect of calypso. One would think that given the prevalence of calypso over carnival, and the consuming nature of carnival in Trinidad, that calypso would sell, but in fact calypso is not for buying, but is an event. Its consumption therefore is unusual within contemporary music genres. Also, due to the prevalence of soca or jam and wine calypsos on the radio, one would think that social commentary calypsos would die out, but in fact there are probably equal amounts of both. This again is due to the fact that calypso is dependent on performance and competition, as much as record sales and radio. There is a sense of calypso as tradition and as long as the tents are still full every year then social commentary will survive, but calypso has also become aware of itself as a marketable product which has furthered its duality, this time between "popular", "modern" or marketable calypso, and traditional calypso.

The following chapter on "Sites of Consumption" shows how this dualism is embodied in the primary locations where calypso is played, namely the tents and the fetes. It therefore expands on the point made in chapter 5 about the consumption of calypso being linked particularly to events rather than as a recorded sound that is bought. The descriptions of the calypsos played in the tent give a cross-section of the themes prevalent in calypso but perhaps the main difference we see from the two sites is the way that calypso is listened to, and what the public expect from each event. At the tent the public are seated, listen attentively, rarely drink alcohol and are finished by about midnight, whereas at the
fete the music is played loudly, is danced to, and the atmosphere is one of partying, with the fete finishing anywhere between 4am and 6am. This is an instance of how the duality within calypso may extend itself into the way it is consumed. Further than this though we also see how the inherent dualism of a Caribbean society works on calypso when we consider the attitudes to these two types of calypso event. In the classic Wilson (1973) dualism it is apparent that the tent is "respectable" where even party music is listened to in a "civilised" manner, and it finishes in time for working people to get enough sleep for the next day. The fete has no regard for the next day and is a place where reputations may be won through drinking, wining with different partners, and generally being able to party for as long as possible.

By taking the example of the public transport system as an area of consumption the chapter then furthers the idea of "free" consumption, of a music that is not bought in a recorded form but is both prevalent and available for public consumption. The problem this leads to though is that the space, in this case the maxi taxi, becomes contested, as other musics may come in. This chapter then takes this as an opportunity to look at how calypso is related to other musics in Trinidad during the period, the carnival season, when it is at its most popular. Despite the preponderance of calypso events, music from America is particularly popular, but it is surprisingly not this that is the cause for concern amongst many Trinidadians; rather it is Jamaican dub music. It is claimed by some Trinidadians that this music is a bad influence on the youth, who are its main consumers, while American popular music, which is inoffensive but often bland, is not considered to be a threat. What appears to have happened here is that calypso music, itself founded in rebellion, has now reached the point where it is upheld as a national symbol. While never being conservative, it is nonetheless, now listened to by the middle class and the middle aged. It is then, perhaps not surprising that the youth have chosen an outside style of music as their music of rebellion.
The next two chapters, 7 and 8, dealing with women in calypso, and ethnicity in calypso, are in many ways quite similar in that they deal with marginalised groups. The structure of both is to firstly look at calypsos that have these as their subject matter so as to establish calypso’s attitude to them, and then to look at calypsos by women, or in the case of ethnicity, by Indo-Trinidadian calypsonians. Also both gender and ethnicity have been put forward as significant manifestations of dualism in the Caribbean (see Wilson 1973, Miller 1994).

What we see comparing gender with ethnicity is that, since the prevalent calypsonians are still largely Afro-Caribbean males, it is in gender where the breakthrough has been made most effectively. There have however, always been female calypsonians even if they have been vastly outnumbered by the men. What is significant is the change in content of their calypsos. From 1979 and Francine's "Runaway" onwards, women began to make effective use of calypso as a voice to speak out against male oppression, and this brought about a wave of female calypsonians that has carried on to the present day. The way that female calypsonians have been received since then, both within the music business and by the public, was the subject of much discussion and it seems there are still problems that both have regarding them as equal to the men. This is perhaps indicative of the society and of a gender related dualism which, as the chapter shows, is reflected in the content of those calypsos sung by women and those sung by men about women. The majority of calypsos sung by women are serious in nature, and are most commonly about the position she holds in society, whereas the male calypsonian most commonly portrays the woman as a sexually desirable object. The fact that there are now so many female calypsonians makes this quite apparent but in turn would also indicate that the gender division is about to be at least partly redressed. Ironically the likely effect this should have on calypso would be a decline in the number of calypsos about female oppression, and an increase especially in the
number of party calypsos by women.
The case of ethnicity in calypso brought about several key issues. The first is related to nationalism and national identity and this is particularly in relation to the Indo-Trinidadian. The second is related to a dualism exemplified by ethnicity. Many of the earlier calypsos examined, which would have been sung almost entirely by Afro-Caribbeans, after initially displaying a somewhat naive comical curiosity, then appeared to be motivated by a sense of threat or a feeling of insecurity. This is not surprising given the history of the island and the delicate balance of its ethnic make up. Rohlehr's theory of ego retrieval used in the previous chapter to explain the psychology behind the poor treatment of women in many calypsos could, in many ways, be applied here too. It seems that at the time of Trinidad's independence, and in the period leading up to it, calypso particularly displays the Afro-Caribbean fear that having lived under white rule for so long they may now have to live under Indian rule. In fact this has happened in 1996, unfortunately after the period of research.

It is hard to find out exactly what the Indian point of view to race relations may have been due to the lack of Indian calypsonians, especially at this time. However, although earlier, the Indo-Trinidadian reaction to the Black Power movement may be a good indicator. The analysis of this in chapter 8 shows how the Indo-Trinidadian refused to be associated with this movement. Vertovec, commenting on how this period affected Hindus states: "The 1970's began with organisational turmoil for the Hindu community in Trinidad. The Black Power movement, though supported by many radical Indian students, had alarmed rural Hindus and contributed to a feeling of persecution" (1992:124). The Indo-Trinidadian already felt persecuted and the policy was one of isolation and development of their own parallel culture. The subsequent extensive Indian migration out of the country has brought about more integrated cultural development shown by the incipient trend for soca chutney, and the steady rise in the number of Indian calypsonians.
What emerges from this chapter is that calypso, like the steelband and carnival, has been held up as the dominant cultural symbol of Trinidad, but has essentially always been a form of Afro-Caribbean expression. This is why the Indo-Trinidadian calypsonian has been slow to emerge, especially when compared to the emergence of the female calypsonian. In the past, the Afro-Trinidadian has arguably had in calypso a strong cultural weapon with which to fend off Indo-Trinidadian influence. Now that independence has been long achieved, and calypso well established as a Trinidadian thing and not just an African one, the Indo-Trinidadian has begun to take it on as part of his/her own cultural expression, just as the Afro-Trinidadian has taking certain traditions such as Diwali that clearly originated in India but are now also state festivals alongside carnival. What is beginning to happen is that each is lending its own influence to the other so that we now have, for example, "soca chutney", a blend of Indo-Trinidadian style chutney music with the latest strain of calypso. The lack of Indo-Trinidadian calypsonians still does suggest the strength of the ethnic and cultural divide, but the content of the present calypsos, which no longer concentrate on the idea of the Indian as a comical or undesirable outsider, indicate that Indian calypsonians may not be a novelty for so much longer. Again, what happens under the present Indian government and how the calypsonians respond to it, and how that government again responds to them, will be important in determining this.

The idea that competition is inherent in calypso is the subject of Chapter 9, a return to something that was initially evident in chapters 3 and 4 where it was made apparent that competition was essential to an understanding of the carnival generally. Although carnival is something one would think would operate with the minimum of structure it is very much structured by competition, and in this chapter we see how calypso itself is based on, and motivated by, competition.
The chapter concentrates on calypso in the present day, and looks at how tourism and the treatment of the media have influenced it. In particular, the argument put forward by J Stewart (1986) that the essence and authenticity of the carnival has been defeated by the state pandering to tourism, is examined. This he sees manifested in the over concentration on competition. This is countered in the chapter by showing how competition has always been integral to both calypso and carnival, and that they have simply increased with the rise of tourist attendance. Stewart also only concentrates his argument around the carnival in the capital Port of Spain which clearly is where tourism is centred, but carnival is something that goes on all over Trinidad and Tobago, and still competition, especially in the form of the mas bands, is central to even the tiniest village carnival. It appears that the effect of tourism is to highlight the major points of carnival, which in Trinidad are the various competitions. In turn, the increase in calypso competitions, particularly the addition of the Soca Monarch, has served to highlight the inherent dualism that exists within calypso between party or jam and wine calypso, and serious or social commentary calypso. In terms of the competitions, these two types are best headed by the Soca Monarch or Road March, and the Calypso Monarch.

Chapter 9 also looks at how calypso is presented in the media, and how media affects calypso, which is again related to competition and sporting analogies. The tradition of picong it seems has been largely taken out of the calypsonian's hands and improvised by the media. If there is a genuine picong between calypsonians then that too will be conducted in the press to the delight of the public. It can be seen that it is this competitive aspect to calypso that the media present to the public, and that by equating it with sport the media make more of it. It is often through the competitions that calypso is consumed either as an event that is attended, or later as a point of contention to be discussed in the media or in the lime. Around carnival time the talk will be about who is, and who is not going to compete; or who is likely to win, and then whether or not they deserved to win,
and should the competitions be structured differently the next year. The point about competition though is that it exists as added entertainment, and calypso must still, above all else, be entertaining.

The final chapter deals with some tangible effects that calypso has had within society. The ability it has to stay in the mind is particularly highlighted by the way it is utilised by the media/advertising and the example of the dragon/serpent which resurfaced some three years after its initial exposure. What is shown is its ability to become part of the public consciousness and actually have a bearing on social processes.

Each aspect of the dual nature of calypso is shown to do this. The party or jam and wine calypsos are the ones that tend to be utilised in advertising, usually as part of a slogan. The history of calypso's influence upon advertising is something that is documented in the chapter. The power of calypso as social commentary in political circles is also highlighted, most recently with the example of Gypsy's "Sinking Ship", but even in politics, an area where it would be expected that social commentary would have the most consequence, we find that it is a more light hearted calypso, Becket's "Horn Dem", that has probably had the most tangible political effect. Although this example is taken from Manning (1986), and is outside the area of research, it is used precisely for this reason. It is because we are dealing with a considerably smaller island that we are able to find in St Vincent, an example where a calypso has clearly been the major cause for a significant change in the course of events. The irony is that the calypso is essentially of the party variety and, as is the nature of this type of calypso, derives its power from its use of the sexual double entendre. Calypso is often a reaction to something, a commentary, and as such may be thought to have little influence, but this chapter shows the significance of reactions caused in turn by calypso.

Calypso may be a subject of media attention but it is itself media-like and,
therefore, has influence, not just in the way it presents or commentates but, in the first place, in what it chooses to commentate on. Abrahams, commenting on adolescent rhyming and joking practices in Tobago and Nevis (1983:75), makes the point that "... such jokes can be looked to as indications of where adolescents see constraint asserting itself socially. But it does not mean that these jokes focus on all, or even on the most important, of these problems." Similarly the calypsonian does have the power to bring certain issues to the fore but essentially society, and often the media, present them to him/her, and what he/she selects to comment upon will naturally be subjective but with the constraints of calypso in mind. The subject matter must be entertaining and intelligible to both the calypsonian and the audience he/she hopes are listening.

The calypsonian is a liminal or liminoid figure, as defined by Turner (1982:52), and as such is anti structural in nature in that he/she has at his disposal the ability to represent any of the latent potential alternatives to the ones employed by a society in the present moment. In this sense, as Turner also points out, anything that can employ elements from anti structure may also be proto structural (prototype) as it becomes the source for any emerging cultural forms (ibid).

Deosoran, in his analysis of the controversy that surrounded the Black Stalin calypso "Caribbean Unity", found that apart from its social implications, as dealt with in chapter 8, a further point could be raised as to the very nature of calypso: "The other major factor in the controversy was the status of calypso itself. Is it a 'serious' art form? Is it 'merely' a lower-class attempt at social and political commentary? Should one attempt to define the artistic status or social role of the calypso at all? Or should one view calypsoes as other cultural forms, that is, calypsoes vary in status and function from one to the other?" (1987:85). In "high culture" the liminoid figure is completely free to make use of his/her social heritage in any ways he/she will, in a manner that is quite distinct from a
participant in tribal liminal rites. Liminoid phenomena are, according to Turner (1982:52), there to expose society; are critiques of the mainstream and may even be revolutionary. In this sense, the tolerance of something as outspoken as calypso is perhaps the mark of an unusually "high culture". However, calypso is often satirical in the way it critiques society and in this case it could be termed "pseudo-liminal" by Turner, and therefore a conservative genre as, while "It exposes, attacks or derides what it considers to be vices, follies.... its criterion of judgement is usually the normative structural frame of officially promulgated values" (1982:40).

The history of calypso, as of the steelbands, is one of rebellion, something to be kept under control by the powers that be, but it has now gone the full circle and is in a situation where it is upheld by its society as something to be proud of. Similarly, calypso is, by its nature, subversive and questioning, but now it is the "decent" people who sit and listen to it in the tents. In a sense, the "sting" has been taken out of its political and social commentary, and perhaps it is now trying to find it again in the other aspect of its dualism, the side embodied by the Road March, carnival revelry and the fetes.

The thesis though has been about consumption, how calypso is used, as opposed to what it is and how it came about. Its carnival context makes its consumption unusual. It is nearly always live or public, as opposed to private and in the home. But it is not something that is just listened to, it is also widely talked about, as the various quotations throughout the thesis must show, and this too is part of the enjoyment and appreciation of calypso. A fitting conclusion then is to quote what each of the major informants described in chapter 2 had to say about calypso. The quotations are in order of age and are all taken from conversations either inside the house (figure 4) or from the key local liming area (figure 1).
The Mother: Ah remember long time we nah had all dis wining. We dance face to face so yuh cah see who yuh pardner is. We still hav rude calypsonians, yuh only hav to luk at Sparrow. Even now he say "de more de merrier" but ah feel it important to see who it is yuh dancing wid. Today yuh go wid a man to a fete and yuh nah seeing he de whole night!

Jericho: Meh, ah lik to beat de pan so ah feel de bes calypso mus be de one dat is good for pan. Dat is wah ah luk for in a calypso. Today dis is a very specialised ting. Longtime all de calypsonians doing deir bes to please de pan man. Now it is at de fetes dat de calypsonian wah to be hearing he calypso. Still dat nah bad ting. Ah hav plenty fun dere too.

Whitey: Yuh feel ah go miss de Flour Mills fete? Yuh meking joke. Ah travel from Canada to come here, nah Arima. Yuh mus be mad. Ah going in dere if it kill meh. Ah doh need nah ticket. Ah going wid Bongo. Ah be in dere wining meh waist wid some nice ting while all o yuh still stood wid yuh ticket in one big set of long queue.

Ras: Ah sick of all dis chupidness. Yuh only talking aboud all dese bands all singing de same set of calypsos over and over at every fete. Yuh fine dat fun? Ah geh bored after de fus band. Leh we hav ah likkle break for some reggae.

Bongo: Meh, ah find dat competition [the Dimanche Gras Show] too boring. It lik it never goh end. But it de busiest time for meh of all de competitions, except mebe de Panorama final, and ah know at de end of it ah go hav plenty money. After it too yuh know de carnival now start. But ah wud say, if ah nah wuking ah wud never goh to dat show. Ah tink ah wud watch it on de TV den ah cud do me own ting while ah waiting for de nex calypso. Ah wud still see all de calypsos cos ah mus know who ah tink deserve to win. Dat important yuh know. Yuh mus hav
Ah doh care wah yuh say, Sparrow de bes. He now won de Monarch in five decades yuh know. De fifties, de sixties de seventies, de eighties and now de nineties. Nobody done dat. Nah Duke or Kitchener. Ah see he at Soca Village las night and he singing "Both of Dem" wid two pretty, pretty tings [women] wining wid he on de stage. Ah vex den dat ah only wining wid one so ah try ah nex one. In de end ah geh none. Sparrow say take two but he de only one who cah do dat. Dey cyah beat de old man.

Ah lik to go to plenty fetes cos dats where ah really hav de bes times. But nah jus dat, all dat wining does keep yuh fit too. Especially de legs. Dese muscles are from wining. An den if ah goh to de tent ah mek meh brain strong too. Dat calypso informative yuh know. It good for yuh legs and it good for yuh brain.

Ah telling yuh it hav a nex fete at de Flour Mills. Ah shud know ah hav de tickets right here. Ax Doctor he wuking dere. He geh meh de tickets and ah fix he up wid a nice pretty ting for he to wine on. We goh hav a real, real nice time at dis fete yuh know.

Las night he [her partner] come back from de Flour Mills fete stinking ah rum and he only meking one set ah noise. He so loud he wek up de children and den ah mus geh up to luk after dem and den de nex day he decide he nah going to wuk. He shud be teking meh to de Spektakula tent but if ah wah to see any calypso ah mus watch it on TV. Ah tink ah mus talk to de boys [her brothers] cos ah know where he geh de tickets from.

These are all examples of what people do with calypso. The mother reminisces about it. Jericho plays it or makes more music out of it showing how calypso
perpetuates itself. Whitey travels for it and makes a holiday out of it. Ras scorns it but still must acknowledge it. Bongo makes money and a living out of it, and is afraid to miss any of the main calypso competition in case it impairs his own judgement about who he thinks deserved to win. Froggy, Doctor and Madman all dance to it and boast about their knowledge of it but also see the fetes as opportunities to impress, date or meet women. Doctor also claims to learn from it with his talk about brain and leg muscles quite literally embodying its dual appeal. Finally the daughter watches calypso on television but complains about how one aspect of it, the fetes, affects her life. Again we see the dual nature of calypso, this time in conflict, as she would like to be taken to a tent, and is not happy that her partner has been out all night at a fete.

What all the informants have in common is that they all talk about calypso. They all have something to say about it, even if they do not always listen to it. In this sense, its consumption is all consuming. Admittedly there are no examples here taken from Indo-Trinidadian informants and many still feel uncomfortable with the association calypso has with Trinidadian identity. Its power though, without wishing to sentimentalise it, is precisely this. It is a tradition ingrained within the consciousness of the people of Trinidad but it is also adaptable, capable of both responding to change and forcing change.
ANNEX: CHAPTER 2. SECTION 2.

The field work was not conducted continually over one year but in fact was divided. I made three separate visits to Trinidad that together still amounted to one year. These were for the two months of February and March in 1992, the six months from November 1992 to the end of April 1993, and the four months from December 1993 to the end of March 1994. The reason for splitting the time up in this manner was because calypso music like carnival is essentially seasonal in nature. In Trinidad calypso can generally only be heard on the intervening days from Christmas until Ash Wednesday, the time also associated with carnival. By dividing the field work into three periods I could compare the calypso from three carnivals instead of just one. The disadvantage of this was that there were naturally certain months of the year that I never spent in Trinidad. These were obviously those months when calypso would be least in evidence and would have served as a striking contrast to the other carnival months but I felt this loss was justified by the fact that the alternative allowed me to draw on three times as many calypsos.

The ethnography presented in chapter 2 effectively serves as the methodology for the thesis. The majority of the data was obtained through what I would call "lone anthropologist participant observation" some details of which I will expand upon later. It is my belief that in this instance I could carry out more effective field work through concentrating upon a small group of informants. From these I could gain detailed and unforced information and would not present myself as even more of an outsider by conducting surveys and handing out questionnaires, although one occasion these were applied outside the neighbourhood. My aim was to be accepted by winning the trust of the principal family so that they were comfortable around me and would express themselves almost as easily as if I was not there, although obviously my presence must at times have influenced their actions. The advantages of this are apparent and I hope are manifest in this thesis. I took it as a sign that I
had won their trust when I began to share a room with the two youngest boys described in the ethnography and was given the responsibility of seeing them to school and talking to the teachers about their progress.

I am also aware that there are some shortcomings with this approach to field work. The most notable is that the researcher can find that he/she is restricted in the social circles that he/she can move in by the close relationship with the informants. I did find that as my family of informants were lower class Afro-Trinidadians that these were often the type of people I would meet through them. However, Indo-Trinidadians were prevalent in the neighbourhood and also within the wider extended family of my group of informants. My encounters with them provided me with a basis for my conclusions pertaining to ethnicity and calypso in chapter 8. I would also argue that as my informants made up a particularly large family consequently I was introduced to a complex network of their extended family. This allowed me the opportunity to be invited into many houses as a guest rather than as a person asking questions. My time spent at the university campus in St Augustine also allowed me to meet more affluent Trinidadians. Aside from participant observation I also acquired information from surveys. These generally were conducted in an unobtrusive manner. In my time in Trinidad I managed to visit 38 different residences and was able to determine much from these. My main interest here as far as calypso was concerned was to determine what relevant products were in these houses such as records, tapes, radios etcetera. These are the basis for my conclusion made in chapter 6 (p164ff) that calypso in Trinidad is generally consumed in public spaces or privately via the radio, rather than as music that is taken away or bought in recorded form to be played in the home. The other areas where surveys were undertaken therefore were in public areas of calypso consumption, namely at the fetes, tents and the maxi taxis. Concerning the first two, these were simple affairs ascertaining age, gender and ethnicity through verbal questioning of those attending while they were queuing up to go in. The
results of the latter two helped form the basis of some of the conclusions concerning prevalent contemporary attitudes of women and Indo-Trinidadians to calypso drawn in chapters 7 and 8. There was also one other survey of 100 people, referred to in chapter 9 (p249ff), taken over two nights from the audiences queuing outside the Spektakula tent to ascertain the knowledge that calypso audiences have about the actual criteria for judging the calypsonians in the Calypso Monarch competition. From these generalisations have been made concerning these matters as well as from utterances from the informants described in the ethnography. During the research periods I attended all the major tents each year at least once totalling 16 visits in all, and I also attended 21 fetes. I also made 256 journeys on the form of public transport known as the "maxi taxi" and took these journeys as an opportunity to survey the music types being played and the methods used to play them (ie. tape or radio), the results of which are the subject of chapter 9.

For the most part the thesis makes use of information obtained either verbally or from the attitudes of the informants described in chapter 2, or from their friends and relatives. This chapter describes the backgrounds and characters of the core group of informants so as to provide a context for quotations taken from them later in the thesis. Since these informant quotations provide much of the detail in the thesis it is also important to say a few words on how I was able to obtain them. The quotations used are as close as possible to word for word from the informant cited, although they were usually recorded some two hours later. They are taken from conversations either at which I was present and involved, or from conversations that I was in a position to overhear. The vast majority of these conversations either took place in the house shown in figures three or four (p54 & p55) or in the streets and liming areas shown in figures one and two (p52 & 53). When in conversation with the informants I rarely initiated conversation about calypso, however, the fact that they were aware of my interest in it in some cases brought such conversations about. The informants were always interested in what I
was writing and would usually introduce me into a conversation about calypso based on my factual knowledge of it, the type of knowledge that only someone who had studied a subject could have about it. This they found both impressive and amusing and I often found myself in a position where I was deciding disputes such as who won the Road March and with what calypso in a certain year. However, clearly conversation about calypso would have been prevalent regardless of my presence.

The proximity of the residence in relation to the key liming area as shown in figure one was also a major factor in the decision to concentrate my research in this area. This allowed me the added luxury of overhearing many of the street conversations. Generally however, rather than listen to these conversations out of sight I would take them as a cue to make my way down to the key liming area. Thus the position of the residence meant that I missed out on very little of the street activity that occurred in the neighbourhood during my stay.

The thesis is in many ways structured by the informants described in the ethnography. Their comments are used to illustrate various points and it was through them that I was introduced to many aspects of Trinidadian society. It is therefore necessary at this point to explain how I became involved with these informants and how they understood my position amongst them. Initially I came to Trinidad with no contacts other than the promise of a room I could let at the university campus in St Augustine. However, after several days in Trinidad I met with the informant called "Bongo", or rather he met with me. Being a white European I tended to attract a lot of attention generally because such people are viewed as being wealthy tourists. Bongo explained that: "When ah Trinidadian see dis he see money running. He ax heself if dis man goh leggo ah little of dat money." In other words, when a Trinidadian sees a tourist he sees a person who has money that he wants to spend. His aim then
becomes to befriend him and spend some of this money. It is perhaps this approach that has led to the reputation of the "tricky Trinidadian" in the Caribbean. Doubtless this was Bongo's intention too but to my mind he seemed well worth it. We had met in the Savannah and after having bought a drink Bongo announced that he had his own carnival stall for selling beer and invited me there. This is described later in the chapter, but it was here that I then met his other brothers, and of these, one in particular who they called "Froggy".

Froggy was living with his aunt on a housing estate in Arouca known as "Bon Air" and at this point he invited me to stay there. The following day I then realised that it was only his aunt who had the authority to do this and I checked this with her. We agreed a rent and she disclosed that she hoped my manners would have a positive effect on Froggy. However, I quickly realised that Froggy's attitude towards me was as someone he could use to impress people with, women or potential voters. As a member of NAR (National Alliance for Reconstruction) he would often be canvassing votes and he would invent stories about my background, usually making out that I was a fantastically wealthy business man. Needless to say this grew tiresome and prevented me from forming any kind of lasting relationships with people or even asking the type of questions I would have liked to have asked. However, this period was by no means wasted time as it allowed me to meet a great many people very quickly, many of whom, as I later found out, were already aware of this trait of Froggy's character. That the NAR is a party that draws its support from all the ethnic races of Trinidad meant that I too came into contact with them, a fact that helped me transcend the restrictions of confining myself to a family of Afro-Trinidadian informants and realise some of the points made concerning ethnicity and calypso consumption in chapter 8.

After a couple of weeks of this I returned to Bongo's carnival booth and it was from this point that I became intensely involved with the rest of the informants
described in the ethnography. I was later taken back to meet their mother and slept in the living room on the sofas shown in figure 4. The mother then suggested I shared a room with her grandchildren and we negotiated a rent. For the most part, I then stayed in this residence for the rest of the first stay and the two following this.

The decision to concentrate my research around this neighbourhood represented in figure 1, a part of the suburb of Port of Spain known as Tunapuna, was made easy not only because of the ideal location of the residence mentioned above but also because of the surprising ease with which I found myself accepted and the pleasure I derived from their company. There were several factors and two key incidents that undoubtedly helped in this, aside from the naturally friendly nature of the place itself. One of the most common pastimes for the younger men in this area, apart from the liming activities described later in the chapter, was the game of pool. This game could be played in Vino's bar, shown on figure 1, where there were two tables. From 6pm until 10pm at least, these tables would be in virtual constant use. There are many variations to the game of pool not only throughout the world but from bar to bar, but the basic skill of the game is the same. In my native England I play pool quite regularly and I have to say that this was an unlikely but key asset to my research in Trinidad. Playing pool brought me into contact with a lot of the local men (in the whole time I was there I never saw one female player on either of the tables), and the fact that I was of a reasonable standard and was a new and different player meant that everyone wanted to play me. That I was prepared to play and could play, seemed to win me respect and friends.

Three or four nights a week I would walk down to Vino's bar, usually with Doctor and Bongo who were also keen pool players, and spend about two or three hours there. As there were only two tables, not all this time would be spent playing pool.
The system would generally be "winner stays on" with a queue to play the winner of each game. This meant that there was a great deal of interaction in the pool room with the two games in progress being the centre of attention. Sport in general though would be a common topic of conversation and with English Premier League football matches and cricket commonly being shown on Trinidian television I found that I instantly had some knowledge that was of interest in this room, as it also was in the local liming areas. In fact, Trinidad's biggest cricket star, Brian Lara, and most successful football player, Dwight Yorke, were both, at the time, playing for English teams. All these, while seemingly trivial, provided me with the necessary passage of acceptance that an outsider needs into a foreign society while also being perfectly natural for me to utilise as they coincided with my own interests.

There were several incidents that also happened early on in my stay in Tunapuna that helped establish me in the neighbourhood and won me a certain amount of respect. I explained my presence in the neighbourhood as someone who was writing a book about calypso for the benefit of non Trinidadians. To the family of informants I had explained in more detail that I was studying for a Doctorate. This clearly had got around the neighbourhood but, in typical fashion, had got somewhat confused. It was to my surprise then when I was asked to visit the family living in the flat below the residence of my main family of informants on account of their newly born daughter. I quickly realised when I saw the infant, who was covered in red spots, that this family understood that I was a doctor of the medical sort. Bongo tried to explain otherwise, however, by a strange coincidence I thought I recognised the rash from one that my brother had had when he was a small child. My brother is allergic to penicillin and so I asked the mother if her child was on antibiotics. The child was not but it turned out that the mother was and she was breast-feeding the child. They would not hear that I was not a doctor and became known for a while as a doctor who was writing about calypso.
As a result of this incident I found myself a welcome guest in this family's apartment too. This was particularly valuable because this family also shared the yard with my informant family and it meant I could move easily in this area too and it eliminated any suspicions they may have had about me. However, my appearance certainly had drawn a lot of attention and naturally I had to explain my presence. This was never so clearly apparent as when, after residing for some three weeks at this residence, I was arrested. I returned one day from the university walking up the street depicted in figure 2 towards the residence to see Bongo and Doctor hurriedly walking towards me. As they passed me they told me without stopping "be careful it have police, dey axing aboud yuh." I could see nothing ahead and having nothing to hide I walked on. As I approached the cross-roads two men dressed in plain clothes approached me, explained that they were policemen and immediately attempted to search me whilst asking questions as to why I was living in this area. I refused to allow them to search me and they asked to get into the van which was also unmarked. At this point I asked to see their identification which they refused to show me explaining that I was not in England now. I refused to back down on this and the situation became quite heated and, taking place as it did at the key liming area, it attracted full attention from the neighbourhood. Eventually they relented, showed me their identification and I was then told that I was being arrested on suspicion of cocaine smuggling and gun running. I could see the shocked faces of my liming companions who had on several occasions expressed their own fears of being set up by the police in such a way but it was clearly apparent that the police just wanted to know why I was there and were prepared to go to extreme measures to find out. At this point I showed them my university card and took them into the yard to wait while I got my research permit.

This was clearly the biggest impact that my presence had on the neighbourhood. I
had provided a spectacle that was talked about for the rest of the week and would often come up in conversation or be humorously acted out by those who witnessed it for the rest of the stay. The police, it seemed, were really only interested in finding out exactly what an Englishman was doing living in a lower class neighbourhood where he clearly had no relatives and was not working and therefore, when I would not comply with them they forced my hand by trumping up charges that were outrageous in relation to the truth but perhaps not so outrageous in relation to the problems Trinidad has in these areas. What the locals clearly had enjoyed was a confrontation with the police that had ended effectively with the police backing down without an arrest. As far as I was concerned the incident officially validated my position to the locals and, most importantly, meant that I now had my own story to participate in lime conversations with.

Within the house I would usually spend between 11am and 2pm on weekdays with the women and small children when the women would be watching the soap operas while performing other household chores. This was valuable time for me as it allowed me the type of social contact with women that would otherwise have been impossible when I was outside of the house with the principal male informants. It was therefore, primarily from this time that I formed the basis for the conclusions drawn in chapter 7 concerning female attitudes to calypso and to women in calypso. The Oprah Winfrey show was also extremely popular at this time and these shows would always provide conversation. The fact that I am male often meant that I was asked how I felt on certain gender issues that these programmes raised or even just whether I found certain female characters attractive. That they also viewed me as educated seemed to prompt many other questions but these were usually pertaining to the conduct of the people involved rather than academic matters. For example, if the people involved on the Oprah Winfrey show were in a particularly heated debate the mother would ask me: "Yuh a educated man, so tell meh. Ah know he right to be vex but yuh tink he should speak to he wife so?"
The television therefore became quite important because it allowed me the chance to be involved in conversation. That the subjects were often about quite delicate matters to do with family and relationships, as are the staple of soap operas and chat shows, did not matter as the people involved were detached because they were on television. This meant that I could become involved without fear of offending and in many ways was also quite revealing of the various attitudes of the women.

That I was involved with a small group of informants has meant that I have been able to provide a detailed account of a Trinidadian family. It has also meant that I have inevitably formed friendships.
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