



## References

- Groggia, F. 2008. 'L'enigma Niemen', *Pl.It. Rassegna italiana di argomenti polacchi*, 2, pp. 369–81
- Kasperski, J. 2020. 'Rozwój polskiej rockologii', *Załącznik Kulturoznawczy*, 7, pp. 273–99
- Masi, L. 2016. 'Poetry in progressive rock: the case of Czesław Niemen', in *Prog Rock in Europe: Overview of a Persistent Music Style*, ed. P. Gonin (Dijon, Éditions universitaires de Dijon), pp. 11–19

***Rude Citizenship: Jamaican Popular Music, Copyright, and the Reverberations of Colonial Power.* By Larisa Kingston Mann. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2022. 242 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4696-6724-9  
doi:10.1017/S0261143023000284**

One of the key threads that runs through Larisa Kingston Mann's *Rude Citizenship: Jamaican Popular Music, Copyright, and the Reverberations of Colonial Power* is the idea of the original. Beginning with the opening vignette, in which a Jamaican producer, Skatta, criticises a singer for using a backing track he had created himself rather than an 'original' one, saying, 'I wish he use a more original riddim [...] one more established riddim that been tested' (p. 1), it is clear that this is a model of musical creativity that treats reuse as normative, departs from legal notions of originality, and is distinctively Jamaican. As Mann explains, "'Original' signals a collective recognition, a collective relationship to a shared worldview, and – given the root word, "origin" – a shared history and cultural origin among the listening and performing community (p. 2). In this context, the word "original" directly contradicts the legal definition, or more accurately, it translates the concept into local parlance.' The concept of the original thus crystallises much of the important work *Rude Citizenship* does: understanding Jamaican practices of music-making on their own terms; emphasising how, in this context, creativity is understood as relational; and working through the legal tensions that result. The book is of interest to scholars approaching music through cultural studies of law, contextually-specific conceptualisations of creativity, or 20th and 21st century Jamaica. These are the key touchstones of the book's examinations of structures, street dances and songs.

The book's first chapter provides a thorough history of music creation in Jamaica, starting before independence and encompassing genres from mento, ska and rocksteady to reggae, dub and dancehall. Structures are key here, as Mann discusses the uneven institutionalisation of radio, recording studios and street-based sound systems across this historical span. She also attends to the affordances of changing technologies, considering how the advent of multitrack recording allowed the separation of a recording into a vocal and a backing track that could then circulate on its own as a 'riddim' and form the basis of new songs, as well as the role of CDs as an easily (re)produced format in facilitating contemporary informal musical circulation. The third key structure conditioning Jamaican music is, of course, the law, which both under British rule and after independence has been 'a poor fit for practices in Jamaica' that are 'collective, collaborative, and iterative (revisiting and reusing the same musical elements repeatedly over time), as in any primarily oral tradition' (p. 40). As a result, the law devalues the music of poor Black creators both for how it is created and by whom. These musical traditions are in direct conflict with 'a legal system that recognises rights and claims only if they conform to practices and communities defined without respect for local methods

of creative engagement' (p. 84), such that joining the systems of licensing in use in the UK and the US is both unavailable, and would generally be harmful, to these creators. The chapter is incredibly rich with knowledge, at times to its detriment as it becomes difficult to follow the multiple threads, but it thoroughly sets the scene for the more specific studies of practices that follow.

The second chapter immerses the reader in the distinctively Jamaican practice of the street dance. Its strengths include its significant ethnographic components, including raw extracts from field notes in which Mann shows her initial impressions to provide accountability. She shows that street dances are spaces in which social norms are the central question – and conflict. Street dances refuse the demands of propriety of middle- and upper-class Jamaican society that frown on the culture of poor Black Jamaicans, but substitute their own, equally strongly held, value system. The street dance – which Mann terms an 'exilic space' – is both disreputable and a reputational economy for dancers, DJs, and the music being played. The clash of value systems is clear, as, in addition to violating noise ordinances, 'the street dance sonically occupies space, disregards copyright's definitions of appropriate musical engagement, and requires bodily interjections and interactions' (p. 124). This chapter is also quite dense and layered with the multiple forms of power at work in the street dance, yet lively with vividly described examples.

Finally, Chapter 3 examines the songs themselves, considering how Jamaican songs characteristically reuse existing musical parts. At a fundamental level, this kind of musical creation rests on the concept of the riddim as an endlessly reusable backing track to build new songs; 'riddim traditions emphasize the way Jamaican popular music relies on shared knowledge as a foundation for creativity' (p. 155). In addition, there is a rich tradition of answer tunes that generatively use existing music and lyrics in a musical conversation. Mann offers specific readings of how songs are in dialogue with each other, illuminating the specific contours of how music gets made and how this operates in an entire alternative system of acceptability, in which legal ownership, licensing and royalties are rarely, if ever, mentioned – at the same time that there are strong feelings about what the participants in this system owe to each other both reputationally and financially. This is the most clearly structured chapter, introducing a helpful taxonomy of these forms of reuse.

Ultimately, Mann shows that these distinctively Jamaican practices of musical creativity have 'a relationship to law that is not really in its shadow but instead seems to be in a place where copyright law casts very little shadow' (p. 132). This, fundamentally, is the meaning of the book's title: rude citizenship means 'making claims on Jamaica rooted in community-based cultural norms of social engagement, centering Blackness and practices associated with Blackness that directs authority and resources to those most exploited by colonial power' (p. 177). It's a kind of belonging that fits badly with Eurocentric notions of law and creativity, but one that has generated 'Jamaica's fantastically high productivity of music' (p. 65), and this fundamental tension over value – both cultural and financial – is essential to understanding Jamaican music.

Mel Stanfill 

University of Central Florida  
[mel.stanfill@ucf.edu](mailto:mel.stanfill@ucf.edu)