STEVE COTEUS

"TROUBLE NEVER SETS LIKE RAIN": PROVERB (IN)DIRECTION IN MICHAEL THELWELL'S *THE HARDER THEY COME*

Abstract: In 1980 Jamaican American author Michael Thelwell novelized Perry Henzell's film, *The Harder They Come*. Both film and novel have been highly regarded for their significance in postcolonial discourse and realistic depictions of Jamaican society. One of Thelwell's significant additions was an abundance of proverbs. Every discernable proverb was extracted from Thelwell's novel and verified by reputable proverb collections, then organized into table format. Building on knowledge from University of Vermont courses in international proverbs and postcolonial studies, research for this essay covered Jamaican history, proverb-oriented and otherwise, reggae music, and all critical works concerning *The Harder They Come*. This essay examines the functionality of proverbs within *The Harder They Come*. The primary goal of the paper is to show how the proverbs of that text are more complexly meaningful than simply establishing local color. The very structures, origins, and contexts of many of these proverbs evince a powerful ambivalence between tradition and modernity, making the Jamaican postcolonial struggle inherent in colloquial speech.

Keywords: Film, Jamaican, Jimmy Cliff, liminality, literature, Michael Thelwell, novelization, Perry Henzell, postcolonial, proverb, reggae

If Perry Henzell's 1972 film, *The Harder They Come,* was a success (and Michael Thelwell would say it was), then Thelwell's 1980 novelization of the film was a milestone in postcolonial discourse. At a time in Jamaica when corruption prevailed, the gap between rich and poor was widening, and the nation was trying desperately to form an identity amidst British colonial remnants, American influence, and its people's West African roots, Perry Henzell made a film that truly embodied the heart of Jamaica's lower class. To use Thelwell's distinction, it was not a film about Jamaica, but rather a Jamaican film—the first of its kind to succeed as a gripping reflection of reality ("Film to Novel" 136). In

this visionary, if bold, endeavor Henzell shot the film on location in the slums of Kingston, using a cast of Jamaican civilians (aside from Jimmy Cliff) who spoke in their everyday Creole. We may see just how ambitious this film was if we consider that in the 60s and 70s Jamaican marquees were stuffed with Hollywood titles, all featuring American white actors in American narratives, and that blaxploitation films, which undercut and mocked black culture, were virtually the only popular films featuring black actors anywhere. While the quality of acting, special effects, editing, etc. was unimpressive, the realist aesthetic to which Henzell stayed true seemed to resonate with all the vital frequencies of Kingston's lower class majority. In fact, that realism was so on point that Thelwell, a native Jamaican himself, initially turned down an offer to novelize *The Harder They Come* because he feared that a novel would undermine and trivialize Henzell's careful work. Indeed, without the powers of true image and dialect or the triumphant seduction of Jimmy Cliff's reggae performances, crafting a distinct yet complementary novel based on the film could hardly have been an elementary feat. Of course, Thelwell stepped up and accomplished just that, weaving a novel that could easily have preceded the film. I sincerely believe, as Thelwell had hoped, that Rhygin (protagonist of Thelwell's novel and legendary hero of Jamaican revolution against colonial power) himself would have thoroughly enjoyed reading *The Harder They Come* (Thelwell, "Film to Novel" 147).

The most important quality which Henzell and Thelwell share is their devotion to Jamaican realism. Thelwell harkened back to his Jamaican upbringing in order to construct the characters and dialogue of his novel, which, according to Edgar W. Schneider and Christian Wagner, are astonishingly linguistically and historically accurate based on the archetypal roles of main characters (Schneider and Wagner 45). On the topic of Jamaican dialect, Thelwell wrote to me, "…proverbs are a natural part of colloquial idiom and discourse in Jamaica. Before I even knew what a proverb was I was accustomed to the ones intended to discipline children…we heard them everyday" ("Re:"). Thus, it is only apt that a proverb appears on average every four pages in Thelwell's novel. Interestingly enough, Henzell's film contains not one Jamaican proverb, as far as I could tell, aside from those in Jimmy Cliff's song lyrics. This is not to discredit Henzell's work, but only to

credit Thelwell's—the two craftsmen wielded different tools, and I will not speculate on the reasons for their differences, for the focus of my paper is the novel. I will argue that proverbs are not only essential components of Thelwell's Jamaican realism, but also that when fully understood and examined closely, some proverbs hold rich, underlying ironies and in a few cases act as leitmotifs for the novel as a whole.

To Jamaicans, both past and present, proverbs are not just clever, collectible statements to add to one's wit, they are essential vocabulary; mortar in the very foundation of Jamaican common vernacular. Children are acquainted with proverbs as they learn how to prepare breadfruit or learn proper manners. Importantly, these sayings have always belonged to the lower class majority, whose language is Creole. As Jamaican proverb scholar G. Llewellyn Watson writes in the Introduction to his 1991 book, *Jamaican Sayings*, "The Sayings are best understood as 'folk' culture, the language of the unlettered, as opposed to the linguistic mode of the 'educated'" (5). While in some respects Jamaican proverbs are much like the traditional proverbs of other cultures—metaphoric and rhythmic, as well as diversely didactic and telling of the culture from whence they came—they are at least somewhat distinguished by their localization in the so called "folk" vernacular. Moreover, the traditional Jamaican proverbs have survived almost entirely in oral culture, traveling from generation to generation, spanning the history and breadth of the Black diaspora since the West African slave trade first populated Jamaica and other European colonies centuries ago (Watson 6). Thus, both the language and character of Jamaican proverbs indicate the blend of West African dialects and cultures (i.e., Fanti, Igbo) with English, flavored by history and locale unique to the island of Jamaica. For example, one Jamaican proverb seen in *The Harder They Come* is "When puss no have cheese 'im nyam pear" (368). The lexicon is mostly English—interspersed with "puss", the Creole speaker's preferred form of "cat", and "nyam", a West African-derived form of "eat"—formed with a syntax more familiar to West African dialects than to standard English. While American or British English speakers might be able to understand the gist of this particular saying because of the familiar reference to a cat's well known favorite food, other common Jamaican sayings, such as "If nanny goat diden know how 'im batti hole stay 'im shoulden did swallow

pear seed," would likely be lost entirely on those unfamiliar with Creole (THTC 339—Note: THTC signifies the novel, *The Harder They Come*). Jamaican proverbs are rife with anthropomorphized animals, including but not limited to cats, dogs, goats, cows, birds, horses, monkeys, cockroaches, and flies. The reason that animals dominate Jamaican proverbs is not simply that many Jamaicans farm and own livestock, which may be a contributing factor, but more crucially that "deep in the value system…of Jamaicans…is the belief that the beasts of the field and the birds of the air hold important clues to the mysteries of the universe…" (Watson 17). Other prominent figures and allusions include ideas taken from West African traditions, such as the feared obeah (a kind of witchcraft or sorcery) and folklore figure anansi (a spider known for his cunning), as well as from Christianity (Watson 3).

The cultural diffusion manifested in these proverbs is certainly complex, but traceable to some extent. Western interest in African proverbs dates back to the 19th century, as Roger Abrahams details in a pair of articles in *Proverbium*, "On Proverb Collecting and Proverb Collections" and "British West Indian Proverbs and Proverb Collections," published in 1967 and 1968, respectively (see also Daniel et al.). Without the admirable work of African (and Jamaican) proverb collectors, such as Richard Burton, Izett Anderson, Frank Cundall, and Martha Beckwith, I would have no foundation upon which to write this proverb-oriented analysis.

The proverbs of *The Harder They Come* are an eclectic bunch; products of the unique mixed influences of postcolonial Jamaican culture, yet far from a messy heap of West African, Biblical, and American proverbs. Generally, they function in relation to one or both of the parallel narratives of Thelwell's novel: first, the story of Ivanhoe Martin (Rhygin), an ambitious, musically adept boy who moves from his subsistence rural life in the Jamaican countryside, where he has been raised by his conservative grandmother, to the unforgiving streets of Kingston to follow his dream of being a "star-bwai" musician. This first, surface narrative is a tragedy in which the cause of Ivan's ultimate death is the friction between his zealous ambition and the corrupt, capitalistic government of Jamaica. The second, allegorical dimension of *The Harder They Come* is the rise and fall of postcolonial Jamaica, much of which is synecdochically represented by Ivan. Proverbs are offered as advice and instruction to Ivan, both from his grandmother

(Biblical and traditional mother-to-child Jamaican proverbs) and from streetwise or other acquaintances in Kingston (wide array of Jamaican proverbs), but often ironically foreshadow Ivan's (and Jamaica's) demise. A few repeated proverbs, which function both didactically and allegorically, can be seen as overarching themes of the novel. Most importantly, these few thematic proverbs are crucial in exalting Rhygin to a mythical revolutionary figure, whose status as such empowers the civilians of Jamaica with an invulnerable force.

"Bird who flies too fast flies past his nest"

I will begin my discussion of proverb function in the context of *The Harder They Come* by discussing some of the proverbs that inform (or are informed by) the surface narrative. Disregarding the revolutionary/postcolonial reading of the novel, the narrative is essentially an extended fable or parable. The lesson can be summed up in the collective wisdom of proverbial cautions and advice given to Ivan. Moreover, the tragic end is in fact foreshadowed again and again, throughout the entire novel, via proverbial wisdom. Only seven pages in, the novel's first proverb, "if you born to hang you can't drown," the subject of which is Ivan, suggests fatality in Ivan's strong spirit (19). In other words, his strong will and rambunctiousness predetermine the fact that Ivan will have to be killed in order to die; nothing short of that will put him in his grave. Our hopes (for Ivan to avert his tragic end) rise and fall with Miss 'Mando's (Ivan's grandmother's) intuitions about Ivan. At rare points, like when Miss 'Mando proverbially reassures herself that Ivan will eventually get on the right path: "No, him spirit really strong…But him is not a bad pickney [child]…She felt like the mother pig who, when asked by her pickney why her mouth was so long, merely grunted and said, 'Aai mi pickney, you young but you wi' learn'," we are hopeful about Ivan's future (19). But, to our uneasiness, Miss 'Mando is nearly always pessimistic about Ivan's future. As Ivan's modern ambition (to be a "star-bwai" musician) grows, it clashes more fiercely with Miss 'Mando's conservative grandmotherly concerns, fueling her angst. Finally, days before her death, in the culmination of her frustration and desperation to save Ivan from what she envisions as a path of inevitable demise, Thelwell describes

Miss 'Mando as a sort of short-circuiting, proverb-generating machine:

> Nowadays when she spoke it was mostly to herself. To the accompaniment of heavy sighs, she would give voice to dark mutterings, usually from her large store of proverbs about the foolishness, selfishness, obstinacy, and inevitable ruin of children. "Hmm, chicken merry, hawk near," or "Pickney ears hard; him skin better tough," "Who can't hear will feel," "Hard-ears-pickney kill him Mummah," or "Pickney *nyam* Mummah, Mummah no *nyam* pickney." (69)

She dedicates her last spurts of energy to helping her grandson the best way she knows how: proverbial wisdom. Ivan's blatant refusal to heed her words ("I going to great. Then see if she don't glad…") marks an important transition in the narrative: Ivan has now completely embodied the essence of rhygin ("Raging, strong but foolish too, overconfident") and there is no turning back (THTC 69; 20).

Since Ivan decides to move to Kingston, against his grandmother's ardent wishes, Maas' Nattie, Miss 'Mando's closest friend, assumes the role of father and advises the fourteen-year-old Ivan from his knowledge of city life. Aware of his "rhygin" nature, Nattie reminds the boy that "coward man keep sound bone," and, for good measure, that "a fly that no tek advice will follow dead man mouth into grave" (111; 110). To be sure, these are not merely passing words. Maas' Nattie dictates his proverbial and metaphorical advice with such conviction, such passion, that Ivan is brought to tears (110). Still, this effort does nothing more for Ivan than foreshadow his demise. His bones will not be sound; he will be like the fly in the grave.

The event that immediately follows Maas' Nattie's cautions, Ivan's bus ride to Kingston, is an important transition in the narrative. It is both a shocking experience and one that prefaces the wild ride Ivan will soon have in Kingston. If Ivan's explicit unheeding of his grandmother's dying dissuasions marks the emotional transition into the next stage of his life, the bus ride symbolizes his physical transition. This most intensely harrowing trip, which leaves passengers praying for their lives, is followed by a chilling view of folks dressed in rags poring over mountainous

garbage heaps in Kingston's slums (THTC 121). In the middle of all of that, the reckless bus driver delivers a wholly American, briefcase-and-coffee-cup proverb, straight from the heart of Western city slickers: "Time is money, so unu [you all] bettah hol' on good…" (115). Before that moment, Ivan has only heard American proverbs from Maas' Nattie, the only person in his village privileged enough to have traveled and learned of such things. The significance is that Ivan is entering a world where everyone, even the common bus driver, lives in a capitalistic mindset. Any reader who has ever been to a city knows well before Ivan does in what type of no-holds-barred, individualistic society he will soon be immersed.

Within the first few hours of Ivan's arrival in Kingston he is already duped into losing nearly all his money and luggage, crediting Miss 'Mando's proverbial warnings. A concise fable could have ended right there with a moral lesson to the tune of listen to the advice of your elders and make sure your dreams are humble enough so that following them doesn't put you in over your head. Of course, Thelwell's fable of Rhygin is much more grandiose. Rhygin and, consequently, the reader are consoled by proverbial shouts from sympathetic citizens: "Take heart, young bwai, everyt'ing is fe de bes'," "Cho, t'ief nevah prosper, ya hear" (131). Ironically, Rhygin himself, desperate for sustenance, turns to thieving not soon after, and is caught by the would-be victim, a woman selling mangos. With a touch of empathy, she gives him the mango and reminds him, "…because a man sleep ina fowl-nest, it doan mean say fowl-nes' is 'im bed" (176). She feels sorry for Ivan, sensing right away that he is a naïve country boy, so she advises him to go home because he does not belong in the city. Instead of being awakened by that fact, and remembering the lesson he should have learned when he first had his money stolen, he seems to be driven to prove his city survival skills.

By the sheer multitude and one-sidedness of previous proverbial advice (nearly all advice points Ivan away from the city, back to his stable country life), we get the impression that the only way Ivan will survive is if he sucks up his pride and returns home. Of course, this is his tragic flaw. So tragic, in fact, that Rhygin eventually manages to achieve stardom, albeit in a manner of perverse infamy, before Babylon (the police of Jamaica's Western, capitalistic, corrupt government) brings him down.

Merely halfway through the narrative, the dramatic irony amassed by proverb after proverb is sufficient to make the reader throw down the book and shout at Ivan, "Stop what you're doing before it's too late!" By the time Rhygin's chief antagonist, government liaison Jose, begins to criticize Rhygin proverbially, thereby foreshadowing Rhygin's downfall, it is just adding insult to injury. The pithiest, most painfully obvious of Jose's proverbs about Rhygin is, "bird whe' fly too fas' always fly pas' him nes'" (327). Jose comments on the uneasiness created by the friction between the recent marked increase in Rhygin's cockiness and rejection of authority and the stability of hierarchy in the ganja (marijuana) trade in which he and Rhygin participate:

> Times was always hard, but de herb was always a comfort. Business was good. The traders made a good living. Babylon was no trouble. There was space for everybody. "But all de same," Jose mused, "dem say bird whe' fly too fas' always fly pas' him nes'." (327)

As if to reassure his conviction about Rhygin, Jose alludes to this proverb again ("Well, 'im way pass 'im nest dis time.") twelve pages later (339). This proverb, while certainly supplemented by other thematically similar proverbs, is sufficiently pointed to be a leitmotif of the didactic surface narrative. It is the keenest, if the bluntest, admonition for Ivan.

The chronological trend for admonitory proverbs directed at Ivan is that they become increasingly unambiguous and direct, thus increasing dramatic irony exponentially. For example, a proverb like "bird whe' fly too fas' always fly pas' him nes'" is objectively more to the point than earlier warnings such as, "because a man sleep ina fowl-nest, it doan mean say fowl-nes' is 'im bed" (327; 176). The latter merely suggests that the streets of Kingston are no place for a country boy like Ivan, whereas the former directly, albeit metaphorically, implies the boy's downfall. Flourishing dramatic irony is also due in part to the cumulative amassment of like-minded proverbial wisdom (which the reader realizes Ivan should heed, but Ivan either ignores or is blind to), as well as to the ever-narrowing plot, which yields growing inevitability and imminence of Ivan's death.

"The harder they come, the harder they fall"

Proverb functionality within the allegorical dimension of *The Harder They Come* is vital to the cohesiveness of that postcolonial reading. In this section I will focus on two proverbs: nearly the only two Ivan says in the entire novel, discounting recollections of other characters' words. Both proverbs are song lyrics credited to Ivan (in fact, Jimmy Cliff's lyrics), and interestingly enough, both are modern American proverbs. The most important component of proverbial function in this dimension of the novel is the delicate, yet powerful, push-pull between the conservative admonitions Ivan receives (and does not forget—he often recalls the advice of Maas' Nattie and others, even though he pays it no heed) and his modern ambition, which is so poignantly captured in the reggae music that pours from his heart. Ivan is a liminal character, caught between the forces of tradition and modernity, just as Jamaica was, or still is, struggling with that postcolonial ambivalence.

Reggae music, the voice of Jamaica's oppressed lower class, is importantly Ivan's chosen medium. Coincidentally, Jimmy Cliff's reggae songs "The Harder They Come" and "You Can Get It If You Really Want" were prominent in Henzell's film because Island Records, Cliff's record label, funded a portion of the movie in exchange for a unique opportunity to advertise its prodigy (Thelwell, "Film to Novel" 142). Regardless, Ivan's medium being reggae sets up poignant, ironic criticism of Western values, while implicitly expressing a feeling of ambivalence toward those values. Furthermore, reggae music is analogous to the highly oral and rhythmic traditional modes of communication of many West African cultures, from which Jamaican proverbs evolved (Prahlad xviii). As Marc Caplan writes in his article about the importance of legend in *The Harder They Come,* "…legend travels through an informal network of communication that trespasses and thereby links ostensibly distinct historical, political, and economic domains" (155). Thus, reggae aptly becomes instrumental in turning Rhygin into a local hero with legendary status.

Cliff's (Rhygin's) proverbial lyric "The harder they come, the harder they fall" is not surprisingly the most dynamic and poignant proverb in both the film and novel (THTC 249). Unlike the numerous proverbs originating from West Africa, no doubt hundreds of years old, this proverb's earliest record is from 1900 in

the United States (Mieder, "Proverbs: A Handbook" 103). Its message is modern too—an embodiment of the rags-to-riches American dream mentality. The proverb's most salient irony is of course that Rhygin comes the hardest and falls the hardest. The juxtaposition of a capitalistic-value-based proverb with its skin of reggae music, which, as reggae proverb scholar Sw. Anand Prahlad describes, as a genre "embodies an utter refusal to surrender to the rat race, to Western ideology," evinces a tension between the lyrics and the mode of their expression (xviii). This friction, considered in the context of Ivan's tragic death, implies a bitter cynicism toward the (impossible) existence of a rags-to-riches story in postcolonial Jamaica. As if to maximize that cynicism, Ivan is characterized as the epitome of the proper candidate for a rags-to-riches success story. For a poor white kid in the United States with Ivan's grit and unwavering, lofty ambition, success would be expected. Yet, we know that Ivan will fail to achieve the American dream by the proverbial warnings he receives early on, so Thelwell is effectively telling us that how and why Ivan fails, and the implications of that failure, are of far greater importance than the fact that he fails. Accordingly, Caplan explains that Rhygin (and the protagonist of *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*) "don't really die, they diffuse throughout their island homelands—this is their single, ultimate triumph over the (neo)colonial authorities which have put them to death" (161). Indeed, it is not the plot, but the character—the very character of legendary hero—that transcends Thelwell's story and attaches to our hearts. It would undercut Ivan to label him a martyr, for his aspirations were genuinely naïve, his fall was truly tragic, and the novel's critique of the American dream draws strength from those factors. Ivan's tragic flaw, greedy determination, is also the primary flaw of the American dream—when you are never happy with what you have you will never be happy.

The flaw of the proverbial warning offered by Rhygin, expressed as irony, has a second, subtler dimension: the means by which it is distributed. Unlike every other proverb in *The Harder They Come* (not including Rhygin's other song lyric proverb, which I will subsequently discuss), this one is processed and projected through a component of the very system its words are rebelling against, namely, the brutal, corrupt economy symbolized by Mr. Hilton (whose proverbial importance I will return to later).

Moreover, Jamaica's postcolonial struggle is manifested in the way that Ivan must work within the rules of the corrupt system in order to distribute his message of rebellion to the people. Hilton himself explains, "I mek hits. Not the public, not the DJ's. *I* make hits, O.K.?" (284). Legend is propagated from Ivan's words, but necessarily through the speaker-systems of modernity, and through the rules of the corrupt system that is akin to the colonizer.

Rhygin's other proverb, "You can get it if you really want, but you must try, try an' try," informs Jamaica's postcolonial ambivalence (280). The form in context actually seems to be conflating two modern American proverbs: "You get what you try for" and "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again" (Mieder, "Dictionary of American" 250; "Proverbs: A Handbook" 105). Like "The harder (bigger) they come, the harder they fall," this proverb expresses the characteristic gusto of American ambition. Ivan, who idolizes the most materialistic of American values, fervently adheres to these lyrics. In fact, this proverb seems to be a form of self-encouragement for him. With Rhygin's heroic status among the oppressed community and his lyrics blaring through speakers throughout Kingston, the encouragement Rhygin draws from this proverb is extrapolated, while the prospect of achieving whatever one's heart desires remains impossible for virtually all of those oppressed people. If we imagine thousands of hungry, desperate Jamaicans drawing faith from these words, truly believing that if they try hard enough they can achieve anything, the tragic irony of the proverb's naïveté becomes painfully apparent.

The naïve simplicity of Ivan's message (in this proverb) in itself seems to highlight the most pivotal questions of postcolonial liminality: what should we want for ourselves, for our people, and for our children? What should we be trying to get?

Connecting and Comparing Character-Specific Proverbial Speech

Having now discussed the function of proverbs in developing important ironies and major themes of *The Harder They Come*, there still remain proverbs whose functions are most prudently explained with respect to minor themes and through comparing the various ideologies of characters. The remainder of my essay is

dedicated to developing those nuances of proverbial function, beginning with the thread of spiritual faith, particularly Christianity.

Religion

Miss 'Mando is a woman of strong faith, put simply. After the opening pages of the novel it becomes apparent that Miss 'Mando holds strongly to the ideals of Jamaican rural tradition: "A stranger might see there only an undifferentiated mass of lush tropical jungle. But to Miss 'Mando it was nothing of the kind—it was home and history, community and human industry, sweat, toil, and joy" (15). Because she chooses her last (spoken) words to be Jamaican proverbs, she thereby demonstrates her faith in their wisdom. On the other hand, her dying thoughts are not spoken, but manifested in what she holds in her hand even after she has passed away: a page from the New Testament, which states yet another admonition for Ivan. This detail may suggest that her greatest faith was actually in Christianity. Miss 'Mando constantly advises Ivan from the Bible, though only one time proverbially: "Betake dy footsteps from dy neighbor's door, lest he tire of dee" (31; see Proverbs 25, 17). The seeming discord between her dedication to both Jamaican rural tradition and Christianity (the latter being symbolic of the colonizing power), though commonplace in colonized nations, plants a seed for the religious social commentary that will ensue in the narrative.

Christianity does not surface again until Ivan meets his mother, Miss Daisy, in Kingston. Though she is in a state of complete destitute in spite of being a longtime, devoted member of Preacher Ramsey's Tabernacle, she recommends that Ivan seek help from the Preacher. We are left wondering why this Preacher character (synecdochically Christianity) was not able to help Miss Daisy; why she is starving and alone, yet still sends her son on presumably the same path. In contrast to Miss 'Mando, Miss Daisy is a clear-cut urbanite (embodying whatever level of modernity is inherent to that lifestyle), though probably as devout a Christian as her mother. Christianity thereby becomes a control variable for comparing mother and daughter, tradition and modernity.

Preacher is the most stable place for Christianity in the novel. Christianity, because it evokes both conservative and Western values, is in some sense intrinsically inharmonious in a (post)colonial nation. Yet, he transcends that discordance as he

promotes black, urban community hand in hand with conservative Christian teachings. Accordingly, his Biblical proverbial speech is only matched in quantity by one other character (Ras Pedro, whom I will soon discuss). Importantly, Preacher's set of proverbs, Biblical and otherwise, are all highly conservative in their wisdom. For example, "God do not slumber, nor do he sleep" invokes God's watchful eye; "Obedience is better than sacrifice" straightforwardly commands subservience, both to God and one's elders (219; 235). Like all of the characters in the book, Preacher adheres strictly to the values he proverbially promotes. He is actually so uncompromising in his conservatism that he condemns Ivan to jail, where he is brutishly whipped nearly to death (the sentence is technically for assault with a deadly weapon, but Preacher's animosity toward Ivan had been progressively building in response to Ivan's free-spiritedness and modern ambition such that the assault against Longah is merely a spark for the powder keg). Moreover, Preacher is the first and most direct vehicle via whom Rhygin collides with colonial power because, according to Caribbean postcolonial literature scholars Keith Booker and Dubravka Juraga, the lashing Rhygin receives is historically in line with the way the British punished their colonized peoples, even though such brutish sentences were centuries out of practice in the mother country (82-83).

In stark contrast to Preacher by interpretation of Christianity stands Ras Pedro, a Biblically well-versed Rastafarian character whose proverbs chiefly advise peace and acceptance. For instance, the Biblical "A wise man fearet' and departet' from angah; but de heart of de fool *rageth*" (Proverbs 14, 16) is a level-headed caution to Rhygin; "Who de lord lovet'…he chastiset'…and scourget'…" (Proverbs 3, 12) is Pedro's turn-the-other-cheek response to being tortured for information regarding Rhygin's whereabouts (306; 386). Ras Pedro eschews the rigid conservatism of the Bible's wisdom championed by Preacher, and instead applies the Holy Book's pacifism to his brand of Rastafarianism: nonviolent resistance. Rastafarianism, which is at heart the language of resistance of Jamaica's oppressed lower class (hand in hand with reggae music), can be interpreted variously, as evidenced by the disparity between Ras Pedro's Rastafarianism and that of the angry mob who battles police earlier in the narrative. Thus, Pedro is not a simple symbol of Rastafarianism, but rather a highly crafted

persona, one of several perspectives that oppose Rhygin's general course of action.

Ras Pedro's proverb cautions to Ivan should also be considered vis-à-vis the advice given to Ivan by other characters. As I previously detailed, the admonitions of other characters foreshadow Ivan's demise because of the way they accumulate without any immediate corresponding escalation in the plot (Ivan's initial ups and downs in Kingston are relatively minor) and because of their increasingly unambiguous nature. Conversely, the wisdom of Pedro's advisory proverbs generally seems understated and temperate, albeit sincere; it is too little too late. His wisdom does not chiefly serve to foreshadow, it is merely soothing relief from the rapidly escalating plot tension. For instance, the gentle spirituality of "Sometimes you worse enemy live inside you" does not warn Ivan of imminent failure or tell him not to follow his dreams, it only suggests that he consider his own faults. The proverb might have been judicious some 150 pages earlier, when Ivan was just starting out in the city and may still have been slightly impressionable and open to the right kind of advice from the right person, but not at all when it appears after Rhygin has purchased two guns and is already planning to subvert Jose's control over the ganja trade. Any foreshadowing accomplished by Ras Pedro's proverbial advice is strictly of short-term events, not of Rhygin's culminant failure. The Biblical proverbial epitaph "*He dat increaset' knowledge, increaset' sorrow*" (Ecclesiastes 1, 18), which precedes the chapter where Rhygin returns to the country only to find, to his dismay, that it has been exploited and commercialized, exemplifies such inconsequential foreshadowing (311). Similarly, when Rhygin considers buying guns for protection, Pedro's benign caution to him is "Wisdom is bettah dan weapons an' war…" (310; see Bible: Ecclesiastes 9, 18). The proverb is more a philosophical statement—Ras Pedro suggesting the merits of his own personal disposition—than a harsh warning. At most, it foreshadows Ivan buying the guns, but it has none of the poignancy of Midnight Cowboy's conviction when Rhygin finally does buy the guns from him: "Dese is you fuchah [future]" (326).

A Proverb Battle and the Man Who Stands Above It All

I have not tried to imply that there is some crux in plot escalation after which ironies and foreshadowing are automatically ren-

dered inconsequential. The case is much to the contrary. Jose and Maas' Ray, with their abundant Jamaican/West African proverbs, effectively curse (condemn to his grave) Rhygin, even when Rhygin appears to have the upper hand on his adversaries. Jose warns Ivan jeeringly, "You know dem say, 'when man know say 'im chairback weak 'im no lean back!'" (333). As if to emphasize the conviction of Jose's taunting proverb, it is juxtaposed against Ras Pedro's temperate "Sometimes you worse enemy live inside you," which appears on the very next page. Perhaps at his bluntest, Jose says, "If nanny goat diden know how 'im batti hole [anus] stay 'im shoulden did swallow pear seed," crudely implying that Rhygin bit off more than he could chew, so to speak. Even after Rhygin has been shot and is hiding in a cave, virtually defenseless, Maas' Ray appeals by way of proverb to his commissioner's concern that Rhygin is still at large: "is not the same day chicken eat cockroach that 'im get fat" (366). Though Maas' Ray is noticeably nervous and inarticulate when speaking to his superior, this proverb, which is his conclusive statement, comes off with an air of smug self-pride, accompanied by a snicker. He has seemingly found exactly what he wanted to say, and will henceforth see to it that his prophecy is fulfilled. However, in the escalating action Rhygin and his allies are not without retaliatory proverb force. In fact, a climax of proverb war parallels the climax of plot action. For one, "The Harder They Come" and "You Can Get It If You Really Want" are heard (indicated in the text by indented italicized lyrics) with increasing frequency as Rhygin's battle against Babylon becomes more intense. Additionally, the civilians of Kingston become allies of Rhygin, committing crimes in his name and confusing police, rallying with the strength of his proverbial lyrics. Thus, Ivan's determination is constantly reiterated and his proverbs echo with increasing volume. When Jose is so desperate to find Rhygin that he asks Bogart, Ivan's best friend, where to find him, Bogart laughs and stings Jose proverbially: "Trousers too big fe Horse: Dawg say 'give me yah, I wi' wear it'" (361). This jeer mirrors Jose's earlier attack on Rhygin, in which he compares Rhygin to a goat who swallowed too large a seed.

Positioned outside of all this tension and chaos is Mr. Hilton, the manifestation of capitalism. Playing to a (perverse) strength of Jamaica's corrupt "free market" economy, Hilton capitalizes on the growing attention surrounding Rhygin's escapades by making

his record a radio hit, then sitting back and reaping the profits. Hilton explains, with smug satisfaction, his superior position: "…why buy cow if milk free" (241). Dislikable nature aside, Hilton is a key intermediary between Rhygin, Babylon, the public, and the Western/colonizing force that looms over the whole conflict. He has the respect of people at every level of society. Lower class citizens either live vicariously through him or at least respect his power enough to not steal from him, Babylon come to him for help in finding Rhygin, and Rhygin himself, the symbol of revolution, only resists Hilton for less than a month before submitting to his rules (regarding producing a record) (THTC 244; 369; 284). Even when Maas' Ray tries to exert some power over Hilton and ban Rhygin's record from the radio, the move is seen as desperate and clearly disadvantageous to catching Rhygin, as it causes the public to loot and riot, shrouding Rhygin in the ensuing chaos and confusion (THTC 371). The ban actually demonstrates the extent of Hilton's control. He may live by exploiting, but he is the voice of soundest reason in the novel. His capitalistic power is made infallible by the wisdom of a simple American proverb: "…business is business…" (THTC 282).

It would be naïve, and indeed wrong, to attempt to contrive a moral out of the revolutionary/postcolonial dimension of this novel. One thing is certain though: in the struggle for power in postcolonial nations, tradition and modernity are inextricably linked. Such is what makes *The Harder They Come* a timeless story. I argue that Michael Thelwell, Perry Henzell, and Jimmy Cliff are themselves liminal characters, caught in the push-pull between tradition and modernity in the ongoing, international postcolonial story.

In Thelwell's case, if by nothing else, his seamless yet effectively frictional weaving of eclectic modern and traditional proverbs in his writing evinces my conviction. The proverbs of *The Harder They Come* are as diverse and complex in functionality as they are in origin. Whether analyzing from the perspective of religion, music, fable, legend, or postcolonial discourse, proverbs weigh in. Proverbs are markers of the past, indicators of the present, and clues to the future. In Jamaica, where "proverbs are a central element of the colloquial discourse," they may well exist day to day and year to year as perpetually updated archives of social history, untainted by conscious intent (Thelwell, "Re:"). Just

ask Michael Thelwell how naturally the hundreds of instances of proverbs from around the world flowed into his Jamaican-novel writing. He'll tell you, "No research" (Thelwell, "Re:").

Proverb Index

All proverbs from *The Harder They Come* (©1980 Grove Press), listed by order in which they appear

Proverb Text from THTC, page	**Speaker**	**Verified Proverb Form**	**Found in (author, page, #)**
"if you born to heng, you can't drown" p. 19	Villageperson	Varied: Man bawn fe jown cyan heng. (A man who is born to drown cannot die by hanging)	Morris-Brown, p. 181, #463; Mieder, p. 278, #7
"She felt like the mother pig who, when asked by her pickney why her mouth was so long, merely grunted and said, 'Aai mi pickney, you young but you wi' learn.'" p. 19	Narrator: Miss Mando	"Pig say: 'Mammy, wha' mek your mout' long so?' — 'No min', me pickney, You a grow you wi' see.'"	Beckwith, p. 96, #699; Anderson & Cundall, p. 68, #716; Watson, p. 95, #307
"Coward man keep sound bones" p. 26	Narrator: Dudus	"Coward man keep sound bone."	Beckwith, p. 29, #135; Anderson & Cundall, p. 33, #244; Morris-Brown, p. 20, #12
"Old age is a bad thing, it worse dan obeah." p. 29	Miss Ida	Varied: "Bad luk wuss dan obeah"	Morris-Brown, p. 108, #251
"Betake dy footsteps from dy neighbor's door, lest he tire of dee." p. 31	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "Go not unto your neighbor's place too often lest he tire of you."	Mieder, p. 427, #11; Bible: Proverbs 25, 17
"Tek care what you going to see don't blin' you." p. 31	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "Interest blinds some people, enlightens others."	Mieder, p. 333, #3
"Whatever you looking for will soon fin' you." p. 32	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	"Seek and you shall find."	Mieder, p. 530, #1(a)

"Hungry better dan sickness." p. 35	Miss 'Mando	"Hunger is better than sickness."	Used in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*
"'…reaping,' as the Bible said, 'where they had not sown.'" p. 36	Narrator	"You reap what you sow."	Mieder, p. 555, #1(k)
"The devil an' 'im wife fighting over fishhead!" (sunshower)	Ivan	Varied: "When the sun is shining during a shower, the devil and his wife are fighting."	Kuusi, p. 119
"'fraid can kill you" p. 42	Narrator: Ivan	Varied: "Fear kills more than illness."	Mieder, p. 203, #13
"Tek care of the land and you wi' nevah hungry." p. 45	Ivan remembering Maas' Nattie's saying	Varied: "At the workingman's house, hunger looks in, but dares not enter."	Mieder, p. 318, #1
"Man can't work without a little heat ina 'him belly." p. 46	Maas' Nattie	Varied: "'Empty bag cyaa stan' up.' meaning: 'A hungry man cannot work.'"	"Jamaican Proverbs" (Jamaican-tips.com)
"Strong man never wrong. Weak man can't vex." p. 53	Miss 'Mando	Varied: "Poor man can never vex."	Beckwith, p. 96, #705
"Whin-the-gawin-gits-taff-the-taff-gits-gawin" p. 59	Maas' Nattie-got it from traveling in Alabama	"When the going gets tough, the tough get going."	Speake, p. 135
"Winnas-nevah-quit-an-quitahs-nevah-win" p. 59	Maas' Nattie-got it from traveling in Alabama	"A winner never quits, and a quitter never wins."	Mieder, p. 658, #1
"When corn time come all bird fat." p. 65	Mirriam		No verification
"Dem think say man a go pen up yah 'pon mountainside like goat-kid all 'im life?"	Ivan	Probable allusion to: "Goat feed wha' him tie."	Beckwith, p. 52, #336
"Hmm, chicken merry, hawk near." p. 69	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "When fowl merry, hawk ketch him chicken."	Beckwith, p. 118, # 889; Anderson & Cundall, p. 56,

			#564; Watson, p. 40, #44; Morris-Brown, p. 19, #9
"Pickney ears hard; him skin better tough" p. 69	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "You no yearry a you aise, you wi' yearry a you 'kin." (If you do not hear with your ears, you will hear with your skin)	Anderson & Cundall, p. 66, #694
"Who can't hear will feel" p. 69	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "You no yearry a you aise, you wi' yearry a you 'kin."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 66, #694
"Hard-ears pickney kill him Mummah" p. 69	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	Varied: "Hard-ears pickney go a market two times."	Beckwith, p. 57, #374; Watson, p. 109, #2
"Pickney nyam Mummah, Mummah no nyam pickney" p. 69	Miss 'Mando (to Ivan)	"If you kill pickney gi' momma, momma won't eat; but if you kill momma gi' pickney, pickney wi' eat." ("Pickney will nyam ma, but ma no nyam pickney")	Beckwith, p. 95, #698; Anderson & Cundall, p. 93, #1045; Morris-Brown, p. 134, #321
"It was a lesson to Izaak and his father for their reckless ambition, for flying, like the bird in the story, 'past their nest.'" p. 80	Narrator	"Bud fly too fas' pass him nes'."	Beckwith, p. 20, #65; Anderson & Cundall, p. 18, #60; Watson, p. 11, #i; Morris-Brown, p. 137, #332
"…For behold your young men will dream dreams and your young men shall see visions…where dere is no vision the people perish…" p. 97	Miss 'Mando's spirit spoken through Mad Izaac (to Ivan)	"Where there is no vision, the people perish."	Mieder, p. 634, #2
"'Y'know,' he began musingly, 'dem say 'a fly that no tek advice will follow	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	Varied: "A greedy mek fly follow coffin go a hole"	Beckwith, p. 13, #8; Anderson & Cundall,

dead man mouth into grave, huh'?'" p. 110			p. 58, #530; Watson, p. 75, #212; Morris-Brown, p. 144, #348
"You no see t'ief yet. Wait, you see! Dem *love* fe work dem brain fe get what is not fe dem, to reap where dey have not sown." p. 110	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	"You reap what you sow."	Mieder, p. 555, #1(k)
"Is so life go—strong man nevah wrong an' weak man can't vex." p. 111	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	Varied: "Poor man can never vex."	Beckwith, p. 96, #705; Watson, p. 234, #132
"Dem say 'coward man keep sound bone.'" p. 111	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	"Coward man keep sound bone."	Beckwith, p. 29, #135; Anderson & Cundall, p. 33, #244; Morris-Brown, p. 20, #12
"Old age worse dan obeah fe true." p. 111	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	Varied: "Bad luk wuss dan obeah"	Morris-Brown, p. 108, #251
"You live long enough, everyt'ing wi' happen to you." p. 112	Maas' Nattie (to Ivan)	Varied: "De longer yu liv, de more yu larn."	Watson, p. 249, #76
"Time is money, so unu bettah hol' on good." p. 115	Coolie Man	"Time is money."	Mieder, p. 599, #77
"You can' trus' nobody, y'know." p. 129	Boy on street (to Ivan)	Varied: "You should never trust a man, but if you do, never trust the same one twice."	Mieder, p. 614, #11
"The boy seemed retarded—fool-fool—at least was acting that way, 'playing fool to ketch wise,' as Maas' Nattie would say." p. 129	Narrator: Ivan	"Faam fool to ketch wize." ("Pretend to be a fool to catch the wise.")	Morris-Brown, p. 88, #197
"Tek heart, young bwai, everyt'ing is fe de bes'." p. 131	Sympathetic person on street	"Everything happens for the best."	Mieder, p. 48, #1
"Cho, t'ief nevah prosper, y'hear." p. 131	Sympathetic person on street	"Thieves never prosper."	Mieder, p. 93, #2

"*Aaiie*, but is true wha' dem say, 'to poor is sin an' to black is crime.'" p. 135	Narrator: Daisy Martin		No verification
[indented lyrics] "*You cannot go to Zion/Wid a carnal mind*." p. 154	Jose (to Ivan)	"You cannot go to Zion with a carnal mind."	Song: "Carnal Mind" Artist: Yabby You, 2006
"…dem say 'because a man sleep ina fowl-nest, it doan mean say fowl-nes' is 'im bed.'" p. 176	Market woman (to Ivan)	"Man sleep in fowl' nes', but fowl nes' no him bed."	Beckwith, p. 82, #583; Anderson & Cundall, p. 80, #874; Watson, p. 131, #97
"But still and all, tell the truth and shame the devil…" p. 181	Narrator: Preacher	"Tell the truth and shame the devil."	Mieder, p. 615, #23
"…like those the Bible warned about, those dressed in the skins of lambs, but who inwardly were ravening wolves…" p. 186	Narrator: Preacher	"Outwardly a lamb, inwardly a wolf."	Mieder, p. 359, #2
"This was not really, as some suggested, that 'two bulls can't rule in the same pen,'…" p. 187	Narrator	Varied:"Two bull can't 'tan' a one pen."	Beckwith, p. 112, #839; Anderson & Cundall, p. 24, #145; Watson, p. 40, #41
"But as they said, 'after a t'ing happen every tom-fool did ben know.'" p. 191	Narrator		No verification
"Hindsight required no genius…" p. 191	Narrator	Varied: "Hindsight is better than foresight."	Mieder, p. 301
"…it was only something Bogart used to like to say because it sounded good: 'Live fast, die young, have a good-looking corpse.'" p. 202	Ivan remembering Bogart's words		No verification
"…danced to an orchestra of drums chanting, '*You cannot go to Zion with a carnal mind*.'" p. 207	Narrator	"You cannot go to Zion with a carnal mind."	Song: "Carnal Mind" Artist: Yabby You, 2006

[epigraph beginning chapter] "You cannot go to Zion/wid a carnal mind… – Rasta Chant" p. 218	Epigraph	"You cannot go to Zion with a carnal mind."	Song: "Carnal Mind" Artist: Yabby You, 2006
"God do not slumber nor do he sleep." p. 219	Narrator: Preacher		Bible: Psalms 121, 4
"…After all trouble never sets like rain." p. 220	Preacher (to Elsa)	"Trouble never set like rain."	Beckwith, p. 111, #833; Anderson & Cundall, p. 114, #1306; Watson, p. 222, #219
"As dem say, what go roun' come roun'." p. 230	Narrator: Bogart's story	"What goes around, comes around."	Speake, p. 134-135
"Dem say 'chicken merry, hawk near?'" p. 232	Narrator: Longah	Varied: "When fowl merry, hawk ketch him chicken."	Beckwith, p. 118, # 889; Anderson & Cundall, p. 56, #564; Watson, p. 40, #44; Morris-Brown, p. 19, #9
"Obedience is better than sacrifice." p. 235	Preacher (to Elsa)	"Obedience is better than sacrifice."	Mieder, p. 435, #1
[Chapter 11 title] "You can get it if you really want" p. 237	Chapter title	Varied: "You get what you try for."	Mieder, p. 250, #11
"Different culture-different strokes." p. 238	Narrator: Tourist guest of Mr. Hilton	Varied: "Different strokes for different folks."	Mieder, p. 569, #1
"Better to have it an' not need it than to need it an' not have it." p. 240	Mr. Hilton (to his tourist guest)	"It is better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it."	Mieder, p. 285, #3
"Only live once." p. 241	Mr. Hilton (to his tourist guest)	"We only live once."	Mieder, p. 381, #26
"I always say, why buy cow if milk free" p. 241	Mr. Hilton (to his tourist guest)	"No buy cow if yu can get free milk."	Watson, p. 44, #62; Morris-Brown, p. 102, #237

		Varied: "Who hab cow, him look fe milk."	Beckwith, p. 122, #933
"Life hard but it sweet." p. 247	Narrator: Mr. Hilton	Varied: "What is hard to bear is sweet to remember."	Mieder, p. 282, #9
"'De harder Dey Come' eh?" p. 249	Mr. Hilton (to Ivan)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"*You can get it,* nex' week, *if you really want*. Him say nex' week. *But you mus' try, try, try an' try*….Next week." p. 250	Ivan (singing to himself)	Varied: "You get what you try for."	Mieder, p. 250, #11
"Watch and Pray as the good book said." p. 253	Narrator: Preacher		Bible: Luke 21, 36
[indented lyrics] "*For the harder they come…/Is the harder they faalll*." p. 254	Ivan (singing)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
[indented lyrics] "*Because, the harder they come…*" p. 254	Ivan (singing)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"One had to look on the bright side." p. 263	Narrator: Preacher	Varied: "If you try to make some people see the bright side, they will complain that it hurts their eyes."	Mieder, p. 71
"You make your bed hard, you will lie in it." p. 264	Preacher (to Elsa)	"You spread you' bed hard, you will lie down hard."	Beckwith, p. 72, #496; Anderson & Cundall, p. 16, #32; Watson, p. 113, #19; Morris-Brown, p. 31, #45
"Dust to dust, ashes to ashes. Let the dead bury the dead." p. 265	Preacher (beginning a sermon about Elsa)	"Ashes to ashes and dust to dust."	Mieder, p. 29, #3
"Watch and pray" p. 276	Elsa (to herself)		Bible: Luke 21, 36

[indented lyrics] "*Win or lose you gotta get your share"* p. 280	Ivan (singing)		Song: "You Can Get It If You Really Want" Artist: Jimmy Cliff, 1972
[indented lyrics] "*You can get it if you really want./But you mus' try, try an' try, try-an'-try…"* p. 280	Ivan (singing)	Varied: "You get what you try for."	Mieder, p. 250, #11
[indented lyrics] "*De harder dey come…/Is de harder dey fall*" p. 281	Ivan (singing)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
[indented lyrics] "*Ohyeh, De harder dey come…/Is de harder dey fall*" p. 281	Ivan (singing)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"Hell, business is business and life hard." p. 282	Narrator: Mr. Hilton	"Business is business."	Mieder, p. 75, #5
"But…jug no bruk; milk no dash way." p. 283	Mr. Hilton (to Ivan)	Varied: "No mug no bruk, no cawfee no dash way."	Morris-Brown, p. 17, #1
[Chapter 14 title] "Whosoever Digget' a Pit" p. 286	Chapter title	Varied: "Dig a ditch fe Sammy, you fall down in da yourself."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 38, #310
"*'osoever digget' a pit/Shall fall in it"* p. 286	Epigraph	Varied: "Dig a ditch fe Sammy, you fall down in da yourself."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 38, #310
"*But the harder they come…"* p. 293	Record played in club (Ivan)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"A tune day call 'De Hardah Dey Come'…" p. 295	Jose	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"Bullfrog say 'What is joke to you, is death to me.'" p. 297	Narrator: Ivan	"Freg se, 'wat iz joke tu yu iz det tu mi'."	Morris-Brown, p. 107, #249
		Varied: "What is fun to the boy is death to the frog."	Beckwith, p. 113, #855; Anderson & Cundall, p. 61, #615; Watson, p. 81, #242

"You hear dat tune 'De Harder Dey Come'?" p. 298	Jose (to Ras Pedro)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"Dey dat sowet' iniquity an' plowet' wickedness, reapet' de same…" p. 301	Ras Pedro (to Man-I, his son)	"You reap what you sow."	Mieder, p. 555, #1(k)
"…an' 'hosoever digget' a pit shall fall derein" p. 301	Ras Pedro (to Man-I)	Varied: "Dig a ditch fe Sammy, you fall down in da yourself."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 38, #310
"They dialed the DJ…and asked for 'De Harder Dey Come'…" p. 304	Narrator: referring to Ivan and Bogart	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"Ask me no question, I tell you no lie" p. 306	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)	"Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies."	Mieder, p. 29, #2
"For like a dog returneth to 'is vomit, so returnet' a fool to 'is folly" p. 306	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)		Mieder, p. 161, #16 Bible: Proverbs 26, 11
"A wise man fearet' and departet' from angah; but de heart of de fool *rageth*." p. 306	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)		Bible: Proverbs 14, 16
"Wisdom is bettah dan weapons an' war…" p. 310	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)		Bible: Ecclesiastes 9, 18
"*He dat increaset' knowledge, increaset' sorrow*. –Ras Petah" p. 311	Epigraph	Varied: "Increase your knowledge and you increase your griefs."	Mieder, p. 353, #10
"If you born to heng, you can' drown" p. 312	Ivan (to himself)	Varied: Man bawn fe jown cyan heng. (A man who is born to drown cannot die by hanging)	Morris-Brown, p. 181, #463; Mieder, p. 278, #7
"But so is life go all the same. Nothing was fe ever." p. 318	Narrator: Ivan	Varied: "Ongle salvashan lass fi ebba."	Morris-Brown, p. 152, #374
"*Ayeh—win or lose, I'm gonna get my share…what's mine*." p. 319	Ivan (to himself)		Song: "You can get it if you really want" Artist: Jimmy Cliff, 1972

"' 'E dat increaset' knowledge, increaset' sorrow.' As Ras Pedro would say." p. 323	Ivan (remembering Ras Pedro's words)	Varied: "Increase your knowledge and you increase your griefs."	Mieder, p. 353, #10
"You can not go to Zion wid a carnal min'." p. 327	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)	"You cannot go to Zion with a carnal mind."	Song: "Carnal Mind" Artist: Yabby You, 2006
"dem say bird whe' fly too fas' always fly pas' him nes'." p. 327	Jose	"Bud fly too fas' pass him nes'."	Beckwith, p. 20, #65; Anderson & Cundall, p. 18, #60; Watson, p. 11, #i; Morris-Brown, p. 137, #332
"Business as usual." p. 331	Narrator: Ivan	Business is business."	Mieder, p. 75, #5
"You know dem say, 'when man know say 'im chairback weak 'im no lean back!'" p. 333	Jose (to Ivan)	"When man know him chair-back no 'trong, him shouldn't lean back."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 84, #935
"Sometimes you worse enemy live inside you." p. 334	Ras Pedro (to Ivan)	Varied: "We carry our greatest enemies within us."	Mieder, p. 181, #34
"Reap not where dou has not sown" p. 335	Ras Pedro (remembering advice he often gave to Ivan)	"You reap what you sow."	Mieder, p. 555, #1(k)
"Firs' time fe everyt'ing" p. 337	Jose (to Ras Pedro)	"There must be a first time for everything."	Mieder, p. 597, #45
"Well, 'im way pass 'im nest dis time." p. 339	Narrator: Jose	"Bud fly too fas' pass him nes'."	Beckwith, p. 20, #65; Anderson & Cundall, p. 18, #60; Watson, p. 11, #i; Morris-Brown, p. 137, #332
"…business is business…" p. 339	Narrator: Jose	"Business is business."	Mieder, p. 75, #5

"If nanny goat diden know how 'im batti hole stay 'im shoulden did swallow pear seed…" p. 339	Narrator: Jose	Varied: "If nanny-goat know how him belly 'tan', him no swalla jackfruit seed."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 62, #634
"…you can' heng but once." p. 343	Narrator: Ivan	Varied: "A man can die but once."	Mieder, p. 396, #6
[indented lyrics] "Ah say, De harder dey come…/is de harder dey faall" p. 344	Jukebox (Ivan)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"Easy to say, hard to do" p. 346	Woman (to Ivan)	Varied: "It is easier said than done."	Mieder, p. 525, #4
"If you live long enough, every t'ing wi' happen to you" p. 347	Ivan (remembering Miss 'Mando's words)	Varied: "De longer yu liv, de more yu larn."	Watson, p. 249, #76
"You know dem say, 'cat no have cheese, him eat pear.'" p. 360	Maas' Ray (to Jose)	"If puss no hab cheese, him eat pear."	Beckwith, p. 64, #132; Anderson & Cundall, p. 98, #1114; Watson, p. 241, #136
"Trousers too big fe Horse: Dawg say 'give me yah, I wi' wear it.'" p. 361	Bogart (to Jose)	"Trousers too big fe horse, daag say 'gi' me ya'."	Beckwith, p. 111, #835; Watson, p. 62, #149
"…you can cuss dawg, but you can' say 'im teeth not white?" p. 361	Narrator: Jose (to himself)	"Cuss darg but nebber say him teet' no white."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 44, #394; Watson, p. 60, #141
"Dem say dawg shit fly like dus' dus' ina breeze blow." p. 363	Duffus		No verification
[indented lyrics] "*Ah say de hardah dey come/Is de hardah dey fall"* p. 364	Jukebox (Ivan)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7
"…the peasants say 'is not the same day chicken eat cockroach that 'im get fat.'" p. 366	Maas' Ray (on phone to Commissioner)	"A no same day fowl nyam cockroach him fat."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 60, #604
"When puss no have cheese 'im nyam pear." p. 368	Maas' Ray	"If puss no hab cheese, him eat pear."	Beckwith, p. 64, #132; Anderson & Cundall, p. 98, #1114; Watson, p. 241, #136

"Business a business" p. 379	Fudgehead	"Business is business."	Mieder, p. 75, #5
"Business a business" p. 379	Fudgehead	"Business is business."	Mieder, p. 75, #5
"…Ol' time people say, 'every fish nyam man, but is shark alone get blame.'" p. 379	Sidney	"All kind of fish eat man, only shark get blame."	Beckwith, p. 16, #26; Anderson & Cundall, p. 53, #522; Watson, p. 72, #196; Morris-Brown, p. 143, #347
"…dem say 'when tiger wan' nyam him pickeny, him say dem favor puss.'" p. 379	Sidney	"When tiger want nyam him pickney, him say him fabour puss."	Anderson & Cundall, p. 113, #1280; Watson, p. 30
"Sorry sista, rules is rules." p. 384	Ambulance driver (to Elsa)	"Rules are rules."	Whiting, p. 541, R 162
"You hear dem say hungry belly mek dog lick sore foot?" p. 386	Maas' Ray (to Ras Pedro)		No verification
"Monkey nyam red pepper?" p. 386	Maas' Ray (to Ras Pedro)	"Hunger made the monkey eat red pepper."	Mieder, p. 318, #10
"Who de lord lovet'…he chastiset'…and scourget'…" p. 386	Ras Pedro	"Whom the Lord loves He chastises."	Mieder, p. 385, #3; Bible: Proverbs 3, 12
[indented lyrics] "*because de harder dey come…/is de harder dey fall"* p. 391	Radio (Ivan)	Varied: "The bigger they come, the harder they fall."	Mieder, p. 51, #7

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Steve Coteus
Department of English
400 Old Mill
94 University Place
University of Vermont
Burlington, Vermont 05405
USA

1384 Hunter Brook Road
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598
USA
Email: scoteus@gmail.com