1 Music, Memory, and Identity in Full Gospel Trinidad

As the scheduled time of the worship service draws closer, a small group of people begins to congregate in the sanctuary of Mt. Beulah Evangelical Baptist Church. The doors are open, inviting all those who wish to participate to join the group. The singing starts about fifteen minutes before the service begins in earnest. Yet this time is important, even crucial—a preparation for and anticipation of that which is to come. Any member of the group is welcome to lead out in song, and the entire atmosphere depends on spontaneous interaction. During this time of singing, people continue filing into the room, gradually adding their voices to those of the group and increasing both the volume and the general intensity of the activity. Immediately before the service begins, the singing comes to a close and is replaced by an invocation. A member of the congregation leads the invocation, but all join their voices in affirmation and agreement, causing the voice of the one to be lost in the collective voice of the group. The prayer straddles the time before the service and the beginning of worship, thereby stitching together nonritual and ritual time.

From the author's field notes, January 2000

Reading history against itself and delving into the ethnographic past, this chapter engages in a preparatory ritual not unlike that of the invocation I just described in a Full Gospel worship service.[1] The stitching that I explore here, however, is not between secular and sacred time, but rather between the past and the present. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, who points out that subjects "do not succeed a past; they are its contemporaries," articulates the necessity of teasing out the various ways that the past is embodied in and through the present.[2] In an important sense, this chapter parallels the function of an opening invocation, which serves not only to define the present but also the past(s) with which contemporary Trinidadian believers are sharing their present. By exploring the religious history of Trinidad, I am able to illustrate more fully the challenges with which the present Full Gospel community is faced and against which it is working toward securing its identity. By extension, this chapter also provides the context necessary for a thorough consideration of the theoretical basis for and the practical applications of the ethics of style in contemporary Trinidad. The second half of the chap-

ter introduces the performance contexts and the individual styles that
together shape the musical life of Full Gospel Trinidad.

INVOCATIONS: OF RELIGIOUS HISTORIES

The island of Trinidad played host to Europeans for the first time on July 31,
1498. That was the day that Christopher Columbus chanced upon the island
and, on seeing three hills rising high above its southeastern coast, annexed
to Spain a bit of the New World, christening it in honor of the Trinity.[3] The
island then proceeded quickly to slide into a three-hundred-year period of
colonial insignificance. Spain did relatively little to establish on Trinidad
what Antonio Benítez-Rojo has called "Columbus's machine," for it was
busy installing that machine in other, more lucrative locations.[4]

Relegation to the status of colonial afterthought did not, however, trans-
late to an escape from the colonial encounter. In fact, Trinidad's Amerindian
population was decimated during this period. Following the pattern of so
many other colonial encounters in the New World, the Arawaks and Caribs
fell victim to the ravages of newly introduced European diseases (especially
smallpox) and warfare, both with the Spanish and with each other. As Kevin
Yelvington points out, many Amerindians were also "exported as forced
labour to other Spanish possessions."[5] So brutal was the colonial encounter
in Trinidad that Bridget Brereton estimates the Amerindian population was
halved within the century following Columbus's visit, "from around
30,000–40,000 in 1498 to 15,000–20,000 in 1592."[6]

Nearly a century elapsed between Columbus's initial visit and the found-
ing of St. Joseph, Trinidad's first permanent Spanish settlement, in 1592.
What followed, of course, was the installation of the principal institution of
Spanish colonial power, the *encomienda.* The idea behind the *encomienda*
was that conquest and Christianizing constituted two sides of the same coin.
"The *encomendero* was granted a parcel of land, with the right to exact trib-
ute (usually in the form of labour, or crops, or both) from the Indians living
on the land. In return he was expected to Christianize 'his' Indians and pro-
tect them."[7] In practice, however, the first part worked very well, whereas
the "in return" part became, at most, an afterthought. Dale Bisnauth points
out the spectacular failure of the Christianizing intent of the *encomienda.*
"At best the programme of christianizing and civilizing the indigenous peo-
ples of the Caribbean achieved the most minimal results. By 1644, there
were about two hundred and fifty Christian Caribs in Trinidad out of a total
population of about four thousand."[8]

The low number of converts was attributed, at least in part, to the flight

of the Amerindians away from the *encomiendas* and into Trinidad's interior regions during the seventeenth century—a further indictment of the abuses being perpetrated by the *encomenderos.* This state of affairs precipitated the installation of the second pillar of Spanish colonialism—the *mision* or *reduccion.* In 1687 Capuchin missionaries settled in Trinidad, established a number of missions, and set to work ensuring the success of Columbus's machine. Put otherwise, the missionaries seemed always to secure more labor than they did souls.[9]

The missionaries gained control over the labor of several thousand of the remaining Amerindians by organizing them into mission villages, but the missionaries' successful monopoly on the workforce soon engendered open resentment by the settlers, as well as violent revolt by the Amerindians (the Arena Uprising of 1699), and the missions were abolished in 1708.[10] By 1713 all of the missionaries had left Trinidad, and the Amerindians in the mission villages were entrusted to the settlers. Shortly thereafter, in 1716, the *encomienda* system was also abolished.

The decades following the withdrawal of the missionaries and the abolishment of the *encomienda* system found Trinidad thoroughly impoverished and lacking a viable economy. Trinidad was simply too far removed from the vital trading routes to warrant visits by Spanish trading vessels, and it was not until the 1770s that Spain, responding to the challenges posed by British colonialism and the currents of continental politics, began to make significant attempts at developing the island's economy. By 1776 it was apparent that Trinidad lacked the labor base for a profitable economy, and the decision was made to install the refined version of Columbus's machine—the plantation—on the island. Yelvington traces this development as follows:

> Responding in the eighteenth century to an increasingly aggressive British imperialism . . . the Spanish attempted to transform Trinidad into a profitable agricultural slave colony by opening up the island to Catholic foreigners from friendly nations. The *Cedula de Población* in 1783 was directed at French planters in the French islands formally ceded to Britain and those resident in the French Antilles as well. The former were suffering from severe political and social discrimination at the hands of British administrators, the latter from exhausted soils and plagues of insects. These planters were given grants of land and other inducements, receiving an amount of land commensurate with the number of slaves they brought with them: the more slaves the more land. Free coloureds received half the amount of land as whites.[11]

The influx of the French planters and their slaves and of free black planters and artisans quickly transformed Trinidad into an active plantation

economy. The island now exported cocoa, coffee, cotton, and sugar in suffi-cient quantities to make it a viable stop along the trading routes.[12] The advent of the French Revolution in 1789 and the beginning of the revolu-tion in Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) during 1791 provided additional polit-ical and economic impetus for French planters to immigrate to Trinidad, and the result of this influx was a decided shift from Spanish to French creole culture. As John Cowley points out, "With virtually all of the early slave population having been born in the French islands, black culture . . . re-flected this African-French-Caribbean bias, including the establishment of patois (Caribbean French Creole) as a lingua franca."[13] The religious culture of Trinidad was changing as well, for the rapidly increasing number of slaves and free blacks upon whose shoulders the economy was being built brought with them their West African spiritual heritages.[14]

Meanwhile, it did not take long for Spain to get caught in the intrigues of continental politics. France forced Spain into the uncomfortable position of declaring war on Britain in 1796, and the British promptly rose to the chal-lenge, capturing Trinidad and its emerging economy in 1797. By 1802 Trinidad had been formally ceded to Britain, and the gradual Anglicization of the island began.[15] Trinidad's move into Great Britain's political sphere nat-urally brought about the installation of the Church of England and would eventually lead to the arrival of a wide range of Protestant denominations.

The influx of Protestant missionary activity in the nineteenth century did not, however, emanate solely from England. In fact, new denominations and their corresponding congregations were, more often than not, intro-duced and then pastored by intra-Caribbean, Canadian-, or United States–based missionaries. The Anglican Church, which consecrated its National Cathedral in Port of Spain in 1823, soon found itself sharing Trinidad's souls with a wide range of other denominations. The Missionary Society of Grey-friars Secession Church, Glasgow, established the first Presbyterian church in Trinidad in 1836. In 1868 the Canadian Presbyterian Church sent mis-sionaries to evangelize the growing East Indian community, and the Mora-vian Church, which had established a missionary presence in Tobago as early as 1787, established missionary activities in Trinidad in 1890 as an extension of its work in Barbados.[16]

None of these denominations, however, predate the Baptist presence in Trinidad and Tobago. Yelvington notes that "divergent groups of free blacks came to populate Trinidad during slavery and afterwards. These included former American slaves, slaves freed from foreign slave ships by the Royal Navy, and immigrants from other Caribbean islands."[17] One of these groups consisted of 781 former slaves who had fought alongside the British during

the War of 1812. In return for their services, they had been promised free-dom and relocation. The British, honoring their promise and fulfilling one of their own needs in the process, settled the former soldiers in Trinidad between May of 1815 and August of 1816.[18] The first two groups were set-tled in the North, while the remaining six groups were allotted land in the uncultivated and sparsely populated southern interior of the island, where they were formed into six separate Company Villages.[19]

These former soldiers brought the Baptist faith to Trinidad. The northern settlers incorporated African as well as Catholic elements into their worship and eventually came to be known as Spiritual Baptists (or "Wayside" or "Shouter" Baptists). Teacher Hazel Ann Gibbs-DePeza has remarked, "The Spiritual Baptist Faith . . . can justly be described as the attempt of the Negro to establish bench marks for freedom, to fashion out of the religious ele-ments in the community, something more fitting to the needs of the people, a worship more realistic."[20] The southern settlers, however, evolved a form of worship closer to continental Baptist thought in doctrine, if not in practice.

Practice would soon be at issue, for the London-based Baptist Missionary Society began work in Trinidad during 1843. Upon initiating contact with the Company Villages in 1845, the missionaries succeeded in creating a great deal of tension by ordering the local Baptists to submit themselves to Lon-don Baptist authority in matters of doctrine and practice. What followed was a classic case of what Dick Hebdige has called the "struggle for possession of the sign."[21] Some of the Trinidadian Baptists agreed with the missionaries and joined themselves to the London Baptists. Others, however, vehemently opposed this course of action and were consequently, and in a wonderfully presumptuous claim to authority, branded "disobedients" by the missionar-ies. Unfazed, these "disobedients" promptly reasserted their autonomy, referring to themselves as "independents" from that day forward.[22]

These three Baptist groups (Spiritual, London, and Independent) con-tinue to thrive in contemporary Trinidad, and several of these incorporate numerous variations on a theme (amounting to some fourteen legally rec-ognized denominations within the larger Baptist umbrella).[23] The Baptist Union of Trinidad and Tobago (London Baptists) continues to be distinct from the Independent Baptists, but these denominations, however divided they may be over certain doctrinal, historical, or ecclesiastical issues, are united in their desire to remain separate from and unrelated to the Spiritual Baptists, whose beliefs and practices they consider syncretic to a fault.[24] The nineteenth century, then, saw the arrival of the Anglican Church, of various Presbyterians and Baptists, and of the Moravian Church.

The sociocultural and religious geography of Trinidad was, however, only

beginning to take shape. In a pattern that repeated itself across the Caribbean, Trinidad's plantation economy became entirely dependent on cheap labor once it was set in motion. The abolition of the British slave trade (1807), the first and second Amelioration Orders (1824, 1831), the prohibition on the importation of slaves from other colonies (1825), the emancipation of slaves (1834), and the apprenticeship years (1834–38), nevertheless, all signaled the gradual decommissioning of the current incarnation of Columbus's machine. By the 1840s many Trinidadian elites were facing the very real possibility of financial ruin and began to prevail upon the British government to sanction the importation of labor from India. Sanction was granted in 1844, and a second wave of exploitation and human tragedy—what Tinker has called a "new system of slavery"—was initiated in Trinidad.[25]

This new middle passage was in full swing by 1845 when the ship *Fatel Rozack* arrived in Port of Spain and was not brought to an end until 1917. All told, more than 144,000 people endured that "journey of seven seas," and the resulting East Indian community has since grown to comprise approximately 41 percent of Trinidad's current population.[26] Hindu and Muslim religious beliefs and practices were added to the growing number of religious systems in Trinidad, and the government's Population and Housing Census of 2000 states that approximately 28 percent of the population claims Hindu or Muslim faith.[27] Immigrants from China, Lebanon, Germany, and Portugal also made the journey to Trinidad during the nineteenth century, and by the beginning of the twentieth century, the cultural and ethnic dimensions of Trinidad were rather well defined and in place.[28]

The twentieth century, however, saw new patterns and nuances emerge, for New York, London, Toronto, and other locations throughout Europe and North America increasingly became destinations for Trinidadians seeking economic and educational opportunities. Importantly, the diaspora has become a source of exchange between the local and the global—a fertile ground upon which to imagine pasts, presents, and futures. These social and cultural movements and the geographies that they weave will figure heavily in the chapters that follow, not least because many contemporary religious trends are intimately bound up in the relationship between Trinidad and the growing Caribbean diaspora.[29]

Political independence from Great Britain was fought for during the middle decades of the century and won in full on August 31, 1962. But independence came with competing claims to authority and power, and the cultural politics of the post-independence years have engendered the black power movement of the 1970s, the attempted coup by the Muslimeen in 1990, and the rise to political power of the formerly disenfranchised East Indian com-

munity during the 1990s.[30] Meanwhile, political dependence on the United States continued to grow.[31] Not surprisingly, the religious life of evangelical believers also became increasingly oriented toward trends, ideas, and sounds from North America during this time. The role of North America has, in fact, become so significant that it arguably functions as the spiritual center of contemporary Full Gospel Trinidad. Pentecostalists in particular, whether of independent, Church of God, or Open Bible Standard affiliation, have been missionizing in Trinidad ever since the early years of the twentieth century, and they continue to attract large numbers of converts each year. A great majority of these missionary efforts have been fostered by intra-Caribbean initiatives or organizations based in Canada and the United States, and a brief sketch of some of the denominations that began work in Trinidad during the twentieth century illustrates these trends quite well.

In 1912 Rev. Batson brought the African Methodist Episcopal Church to Trinidad, organizing a congregation in St. James. Robert and Elizabeth Jamieson, independent missionaries from Canada, began working in Trinidad in 1923, setting the stage for the eventual affiliation of several independent churches with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) in 1926. By 1935 there was enough regional support to inaugurate the Trinidad Bible School, an institution that later became the West Indies School of Theology (1947). Within little more than a decade, this regional movement had grown large enough to separate from the PAOC, and 1958 saw the creation of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies (PAWI). But PAOC's formative role in the life of PAWI remains quite palpable even today, for the great majority of PAWI churches are pastored by graduates of the West Indies School of Theology.[32]

Mattie McCaullie, of the Church of God in Christ, arrived in Trinidad in 1927, and the beginnings of Church of God (CG, Cleveland) missionizing there date to the 1940s. These efforts came to fruition under the leadership of Edward D. Hasmatali, who chose to affiliate his independent congregations to that denomination in 1956. It was during 1955, moreover, that Open Bible Standard missionaries from the United States arrived in Trinidad and witnessed amazing growth. In fact, within less than two decades, the Trinidadian Open Bible Standard Church became independent (1972). Today, the Open Bible Standard Church is arguably the nation's largest Pentecostalist denomination (in terms of both membership and number of congregations). The Church of Christ was started through a local radio program hosted by Bob Brown, who hailed from St. Vincent. The effectiveness of these programs eventually led devoted listeners to invite Brown to lead the first gospel meeting of the Church of Christ in Trinidad in 1971.[33]

Trinidadian churches continue to benefit from funds, radio programs, cable television shows (e.g., on the Trinity Broadcasting Network), and other material assistance from their brothers and sisters in North America. North American assistance in the region has often been read in a decidedly negative light and has generated no small amount of aggravation and concern among those groups who are losing members to the Pentecostal churches.[34] The influx of North American financial and material assistance is, moreover, generally understood as a deliberate commodification of faith—as a means of gaining advantage and then capitalizing on the lack of resources available to the competing faiths. A typical example of this point of view is found in an editorial published in the e-zine *Hot Calaloo:*

> All over Trinidad a battle is underway. It is a battle for souls and is being waged by the US-based fundamentalist Pentecostal Church. . . . Although many converts are at the expense of traditional Christian churches, two-thirds come from T&T's Hindu Asian community. . . . Hindu religious leaders are upset and accuse the Pentecostals of conducting an aggressive disinformation campaign against their religion and spreading intolerance. . . . The Pentecostals even advertise for converts on TV. Hindu leaders accuse Pentecostals of using the American dollar to buy souls. They vow to fight back to retain their members, but they don't seem to stand a chance.[35]

Since Pentecostalists were listed as a combined group with 84,066 members in the government's 1990 Population and Housing Census, it was widely believed that the 2000 census would confirm Pentecostalism as the most rapidly growing religion in Trinidad. In fact, many believed that Pentecostalism would replace Anglicanism as the third-largest faith in Trinidad (behind Roman Catholicism and Hinduism). One of the difficulties in coming to an accurate figure of Pentecostalist adherents, however, is that many of the churches are independent, having been founded by individual apostles who do not claim affiliation with any larger organization. This is reflected in the 2000 census data, which actually shows a decrease in the number of self-identified Pentecostalists (from 84,066 to 76,327). Between 1990 and 2000 the number of individuals who self-identified with the religious category of "other," however, increased dramatically (from 98,936 to 120,666). It is, in any event, very difficult to ascertain the degree of growth in Pentecostal congregations, but the likelihood that the 2000 census category accurately reflects membership trends among these congregations is not high.[36] Natasha Coker, religion reporter for the *Trinidad Express,* sums up the statistical challenges as follows: "The exact number of these churches is difficult to ascertain. This is because the highest growth rate is occurring

among the 'independent Pentecostal churches' as opposed to more established entities like the Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies (PAWI) and the Open Bible Standard Churches. Only a fraction of these independent churches are registered with the Association of Independent Ministers (AIM)—a group of independent Full Gospel ministers."[37]

Pentecostalists generally emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer and within the church to a greater extent than do other Protestant denominations. The gifts of the Holy Spirit—manifested through speaking in tongues, healing, and visions—are all considered signs of an empowered Christian life. Another hallmark of Pentecostalism is expressed well in a saying that Harvey Cox relays as follows: "The man with an experience is never at the mercy of the man with a doctrine."[38] Pentecostalism thus values the experience of God above doctrines or creeds, and Cox gets at this by suggesting that Pentecostalism is perhaps best understood not as "a church or even a single religion at all, but a "mood."[39] These attitudes toward the primacy of experience and the work of the Holy Spirit notwithstanding, Pentecostalists find themselves aligned with evangelical Protestants in many respects and consider themselves part of a larger community of believers—the global church.

NEGOTIATIONS

Of Protestant Communities

Steven Bruce points out that one of the consequences of the Reformation "was not a Christian church strengthened because it had been purified but a large number of competing perspectives and institutions."[40] As such, boundaries are fluid, more tenuously defined, and often blurred within the Protestant community. It should be clear from the preceding pages that Trinidad's complex religious geography finds Full Gospel believers quite keen to maintain clear distinctions between themselves and other religious groups. One means by which boundaries are maintained (policed) in Trinidad is by recourse to the local Full Gospel association. The logic governing the Full Gospel associations works politically to ensure that religious orthodoxy of a certain, member-defined shape is maintained. Pentecostalists, whether affiliated or independent, and Baptists, for example, do not generally consider Presbyterians and Anglicans to be faithful in teaching the full gospel. In fact, they are in many ways equated with the Catholic Church, whose excesses and failures are widely believed to have contributed to what my friend Pastor Roddie Taylor refers to as "a carnival and fete-crazy culture."[41]

By the same token, Spiritual Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians are considered too far removed from the teachings of the full gospel to warrant membership in the association. Caught between laxity on the one hand and syncretism or heterodoxy on the other, the Full Gospel association works to reify and buttress the doctrinal positions of its members. The Full Gospel association also fulfills another function: it opens lines of communication between the pastors of its member churches, ensuring that pastors refrain from competing for believers who are already worshiping at other member churches, a practice that is derisively referred to as "sheep stealing." In other words, the association ensures that competition for human capital does not occur at the expense of any member churches. The rapid growth of the Pentecostal churches is, thereby, politically deflected away from the relatively few non-Pentecostalist churches that gain membership in the association.

Churches that gain membership in the Full Gospel associations throughout Trinidad, then, constitute a community that actively excludes Catholic, Anglican, and Presbyterian churches on the one hand and groups like the Spiritual Baptists on the other. While significant differences in practice and even doctrine exist among Trinidadian Full Gospel churches, these are not considered substantive enough to preclude fellowship. This is the case primarily because they do agree on several key doctrinal points considered essential for fellowship, including salvation by faith alone, the dual nature of Christ (fully divine and fully human), and the three-in-one nature of the Trinity. Full Gospel associations, furthermore, regularly plan joint events and work to model unity in spite of the inherent competition engendered by Protestantism.

Of Music and Worship

The service proper begins with more singing, this time led from the pulpit, as the few latecomers find their seats. This portion of the service can be led by an individual or, alternatively, by a worship team consisting of several members. These leaders fulfill a particularly important role in facilitating the singing of the congregation, for it is the worship leaders that create the proper atmosphere for the rest of the service, setting the tone and mood for the congregation. Between lines of song, they will exhort the congregation to sing "loudly," "with energy," "to the Lord," "with thanksgiving," and so forth. The congregation is expected to respond to this encouragement, and this dynamic relationship creates a sense of community, commonality, and unity. The singing can last anywhere from ten to twenty or thirty minutes and usually consists of up-tempo, energetic songs.

Several genres of gospel music are actively performed in contemporary Trinidad, and I should like, briefly, to outline their sounds and styles. I begin by drawing attention to those styles that find congregational and solo expression during regular worship services and then move beyond church services to discuss styles that are performed on the concert circuit but rarely find expression in Sunday worship services. In so doing, I hope to illustrate the geography upon which much of the discourse surrounding gospel musics plays out.

The musical staples of Full Gospel worship services in Trinidad consist of hymns and choruses. Depending on the denomination, these can include Wesleyan and Dr. Watts hymns sung in long-meter (lined out) style, revival hymns from the turn of the nineteenth century, hymns found in standard hymnals such as "Holy, Holy, Holy," or a combination of all three.[42] The choruses are often drawn from a body of Trinidadian songs known as Baptist choruses, but many choruses, like "As the Deer" or "Lord I Lift Your Name on High," are being incorporated from North American praise and worship traditions.[43] These choruses, many of which are published by North American companies like Maranatha! and Vineyard, have grown out of the pioneering work in the 1970s of musicians such as Bill and Gloria Gaither and Andre Crouch, who wrote choruses such as "Let's Just Praise the Lord" and "Jesus Is the Answer," respectively. African American spirituals are also sung on occasion, and their introduction to Trinidadian worship life has been traced to the Company Villages.[44]

In general, Pentecostal congregations tend to sing a combination of North American choruses and revival hymns, choosing not to sing long-meter hymns and only a select few, if any, Baptist choruses.[45] Baptists, however, tend to sing a bit of each of the styles during the course of any given service, although long meter is rapidly falling out of use. North American choruses are the most popular replacement for the long-meter hymns in Baptist services, a fact that is often a source of conflict between the older and younger generations within a given congregation.

This rich conflux of musics inevitably creates struggles for musical space within the churches, and the decisions that dictate which songs will be sung (and from which repertory) actively construct and reflect meaning and identity. In a very literal sense Full Gospel congregations throughout Trinidad *are* what they sing. The songs a congregation sings at the beginning of the worship service remind the worshipers of who they are, and the songs that they do not sing raise important questions about who they might be. These questions are partially addressed in almost every service. It is significant, moreover, that the range of hymns available to believers has been incorpo-

rated into Full Gospel identity by way of other places—and in the case of most Pentecostal congregations, virtually all of the music they sing is originally nonlocal in one way or another. And yet the repertory of songs claimed by the Trinidadian Baptists (the Baptist choruses) yields insights into the types of structures and meanings that are held most dear. I will return to both of these issues in chapter 3 but turn now to a brief introduction of North American gospel, gospelypso, gospel dancehall, and jamoo, styles which are generally performed at gospel concerts as opposed to church services. That said, however, North American gospel music serves as a bridge between worship services and concert halls because, unlike the other musical styles available to Full Gospel believers, it often (and more easily) finds a home in both the concert and the worship service.

> Once the initial time of singing runs its course, the pastor or one of the deacons may offer a few announcements, a word of greeting, or both. Testimonies are also often encouraged at this time. These activities are often followed by what is commonly referred to as "special music." Special music consists of a solo or group performance during which the congregation does not generally participate. It is, in effect, a moment during the service when the congregants move from an active, participatory role to a relatively inactive and passive position. Often the congregation will be exhorted to pay special attention to the lyrics or message embodied in the song in an effort to stave off a lull in concentration or interest. Of particular interest here is that the selection of the musical number is often an individual's choice. As such, this moment during the service provides a very interesting window onto the relationship between individual and community identity.

No more open-ended or potentially transformative moment exists in the musical life of a Trinidadian congregation than that of special music. An individual is, within limits, encouraged to choose a musical number that powerfully speaks to her and subsequently to share it with the congregation. In this moment, the members of the congregation are confronted with change—change that is often occurring even as their sister or brother performs. The styles that I discuss in the coming pages are not congregational per se. They are, rather, predicated on the presence of a solo lead singer and, with the exception of some of the refrains, not easily adaptable to congregational singing. On those occasions when they are included, they enter worship services as special music. And yet the styles I discuss in the following pages are, with few exceptions, considered incompatible or inappropriate for use during worship services—they exceed the "within limits" caveat and are, as such, relegated to the concert circuit and generally excluded from services.

This split along the limit line is, not surprisingly, often the root cause of heated debate and conflict within individual congregations and among Full Gospel believers in general, for legitimacy, validity, and significance are largely confirmed through the inclusion of a given style in church services—through their fitness for use during corporate worship. The chapters that follow are intimately bound up in interrogating the limits imposed on musical style, in considering the implications associated with the contexts within which a given style is performed, and in analyzing the discourses that develop around these limits and implications. The question of limits (and of performance context) is instructive not least because one style in particular—North American gospel music—has enjoyed far greater acceptance within worship services than have the others.

NORTH AMERICAN GOSPEL MUSIC

African American gospel artists such as Andre Crouch, Helen Baylor, Yolanda Adams, Kirk Franklin, Donnie McCurklin, Fred Hammond, Hezekiah Walker, Trinity 5:7, and Mary Mary have, since the 1960s, exerted a great deal of influence on Full Gospel believers in Trinidad. These artists perform across a wide variety of styles, including straight gospel blues in the style popularized by Thomas A. Dorsey, hip-hop, rhythm and blues, and urban dance. Today, it is not uncommon to hear a song from any of these artists performed during the special music portion of a worship service (although the songs chosen are almost invariably the slower ballads). Often performed to recorded accompaniment tracks (tapes and compact discs for any number of songs are sold by the artists' record companies), these songs are generally accepted and welcomed as an edifying and spiritually significant element in the service. The same songs also have a life outside of worship services, as they are frequently performed at concerts throughout the country. This dual functionality is unique among the other popular gospel musics circulating in Trinidad and raises questions related to cultural intimacy and the negotiation of proximity, issues to which I will return in chapters 3 and 4.[46] Trinidadian artists, furthermore, emulate the style of these North American musicians, writing their own songs and producing their own recordings.

GOSPELYPSO

At about the same time that North American gospel music was making inroads into Trinidadian worship services, the country was also coming to grips with newfound independence (1962) and with the responsibility of constructing a post-independence identity. One of the consequences of this

atmosphere was the black power movement, which, on the heels of the civil rights movement in the United States, sent shock waves through the Trinidadian government and fostered a great deal of debate in the years around 1970.

Young believers thought that a Christian message should be brought to the nation during this formative period and sought ways to accomplish this. What they eventually seized upon was a style that they called gospelypso. The idea was that a specifically local and uniquely Trinidadian style was needed at this historical juncture. This concern was articulated in direct opposition to the growing market for nonlocal gospel music and then put into practice. The melodic and harmonic conventions of calypso, thus, became the vehicle for a Trinidadian expression of the gospel and for Trinidadian Full Gospel believers' participation in the nation.

Calypso's connection with carnival and bacchanal, however, was too strong to be overcome, and gospelypso continues to struggle for acceptance within Full Gospel circles. The nationalist drive to highlight local musical practice in the process of bringing a Christian message to the nation made gospelypso a perfect label for these younger artists' creative work. And yet the label's explicit etymological reference to calypso simply added to the controversy over using calypso as a means of conveying an evangelical message. Gospelypsonians have worked for thirty years to break this association, and they continue to pursue their goal of bringing local music to prominence within the church and the nation. Even so, and in spite of the inroads that have been made since the 1990s, it is rare indeed to hear a gospelypso sung during a worship service. The first commercially successful gospelypso was released in 1993 when Nicole Ballosingh recorded "Jump for Jesus." Since then, only Sean Daniel—who recorded "Pan in Heaven" in 1997 and "Waving Ting" in 2002 and who won the Young King Calypso Monarch Competition in 2006 with the song "True Government"—has even come close to a radio hit. With the exception of these four songs, the nation has taken little if any interest in the efforts of gospelypsonians. Gospelypso has found itself relegated to a neutralized middle ground, affecting neither the church nor the nation at large in the way intended by its pioneers.

GOSPEL DANCEHALL AND HARDCORE SOCA

A rather different scenario plays out among artists who perform gospel dancehall and hardcore soca. These artists are also primarily of Pentecostalist confessional backgrounds, and most consider their immediate task one of "kingdom reformation."[47] The musical styles they utilize find their basis

in the techniques and sonic textures of Jamaican dancehall and North American hip-hop as well as hardcore soca and rapso. The lyrics are, in much the same way as gospelypso, directed toward evangelistic and edifying purposes.

It should come as no surprise that these artists, like gospelypsonians, find themselves enveloped in a critical discourse both from inside and outside the Full Gospel community. Theirs is a different approach to this community, however, because they do not desire to participate in worship services or work toward legitimizing their style in the same way (or to the degree) that gospelypsonians do. Rather, they create for themselves alternative sacred spaces, including the gospel concerts themselves, within which they worship in the manner that they believe is fitting for contemporary Trinidadian believers. In short, they take advantage of the spaces that exist within what Norman Stolzoff has called "dancehall culture" in order to overcome what they consider a lack of true worship within the church itself.[48]

Many of these artists believe that they are anointed by God to bring about a paradigm shift in worship and that the youth of the church is called eventually to supplant current practices by their example. Sincerely believing that they have insight beyond the wisdom of the current leadership—sight that transcends the myopic vision of the church—they believe that the contemporary Full Gospel community suffers from a spiritual malady. Convinced that they themselves have found a way of addressing this malady, their lyrics are often directed against the church itself and are of a more cataclysmic and oppositional nature than the lyrics of gospelypsonians.

JAMOO

A final style is known as jamoo, or Jehovah's music. This idiosyncratic style is local in that Ras Shorty I (formerly Lord Shorty), one of the creators of soca, coined the term and performed the style until his death in July of 2000. The style is a mixture of soca, calypso, jazz, and African popular musics. In addition, Ras Shorty I consciously continued the project he began in the early 1970s with his pioneering soca compositions, for he often incorporated East Indian materials into the already eclectic sonic texture of jamoo.

His family band, called the Love Circle, continues to write and perform jamoo today, and several aspects of the style warrant brief mention here. First, while Ras Shorty I did convert to Protestantism, he never affiliated himself with a specific denomination, choosing instead to remain the spiritual head of his household and to study the Bible independently. This deci-

sion fostered suspicion regarding the sincerity of his conversion—a suspicion that extended to jamoo as well. Second, he continued to foster ambiguity with regard to his spirituality by referring to himself as Ras Shorty I, by characterizing his music as conscious, and by wearing togas, sandals, and dreadlocks. Rather than clearing the matter up by making a definitive statement or by formally joining a congregation, Ras Shorty I chose to remain firmly entrenched at the peripheries of both nation and church and somewhat of a mystery to both. This afforded him a unique opportunity to influence both in ways that would not otherwise have been possible. Third, until very recently, no one else even attempted to perform in this style. Jamoo, then, is a gospel music that seeks neither legitimation by the church nor praise from the nation. It is, in this sense, a voice quite other among the musics circulating in Full Gospel Trinidad, and yet it is arguably the most local of them all.

BENEDICTIONS

The sermon, which frequently follows special music, is often considered the central element in the worship service. It is the time when the pastor offers insight into the "Word of God." Based on his understanding of the congregation's needs, the pastor variously challenges, chides, and encourages the people, teaching them through explicating the scriptures. A typical sermon might last anywhere from thirty-five to ninety minutes, and the congregants generally follow along in their own Bibles. The links between music and word are very close indeed, and the style of delivery, somewhere between song and speech, links the sermon to the surrounding songs and prayers. This portion of the worship service is by no means a static one for the congregation, whose almost constant vocal affirmations and exclamations of agreement constitute yet another example of the communal aspect of the service. After a concluding few minutes of congregational singing, this time led either by the pastor or the worship leader(s), the pastor often challenges the congregants to remember their mission in the world. He may remind them that believers have the responsibility of sharing the "good news" with those who have not heard it and of living lives that reflect the impact of the gospel in their own lives. All that remains before ritual time dissolves back into nonritual time are a few announcements and a benediction. The benediction is the last pastoral action of the service, and it constitutes a blessing for the coming week. After the benediction, the congregants are dismissed, and many spend another few minutes variously talking with one another, hailing maxis [minibus taxis], or trying to get council from the pastor. The time immediately following a service is interesting in that it does not quite constitute nonritual time and is clearly no longer

a part of ritual time. Many congregants deliberately take their time in making the transition back into nonritual time, drawing out the benefits of ritual time by remaining physically within or around the building itself and spending time together as a community. Nonritual time will take over soon enough.

This chapter has considered the complex religious histories and sociocultural contexts that form the backdrop against which Full Gospel believers in Trinidad worship, work out their identities, and live out their faith. Their careful policing of Full Gospel boundaries should not, then, come as a surprise, but it does make the roles that music plays within that community very interesting indeed. Music represents both a balm and a threat to Full Gospel identity, and the following chapters explore these two sides of the community's musical life by focusing on performance and reception.

In order to situate these explorations of performance and reception, this chapter has also offered a general idea of the structure that prevails in a relatively typical service in Full Gospel Trinidad—within the normative performative context for worship. That said, individual congregations and denominational groups, of course, incorporate idiosyncratic materials and ideas into their worship services. It should also be clear that some congregations remain much more open to musical experimentation than do others. Jerma A. Jackson's meditation on the strands of "exuberance" and "restraint" within African American churches can also be kept in mind in this Trinidadian context.[49] This normative context for worship (the worship service), moreover, plays a major role in shaping the discourse surrounding the value of musical styles, such as gospel dancehall, gospelypso, and jamoo. The worship service, then, serves as a standard that has implications for the "other" contexts within which gospel music is performed. Style and context are, as such, linked not only through actual performance but also in and through Full Gospel discourse. The narrative I have incorporated throughout this chapter should, then, serve the heuristic purpose of pointing out some of the elements broadly shared among Full Gospel congregations throughout Trinidad. But the narrative is also contextually important because of the primary and legitimizing role that worship services play in the discourse about musical style within this community.

Along the way I have also offered a brief introduction to the four principal musical styles with which the remainder of this book is concerned—North American gospel music, gospelypso, dancehall, and jamoo. Each of these styles occupies a very different place in the life of the Full Gospel community, and their positions vis-à-vis the community afford me the opportunity to raise questions of identity and to answer them in part through

recourse to narratives of the past and dreams for the future. Before turning to an exploration of each of these styles, I will, in the following chapter, outline the ethics of style, the analytical model through which I interrogate the spaces and contexts of music, memory, and identity that confront the Full Gospel community in Trinidad.