

ABSTRACT

The Literary Response to the Black Power
Ideology of the Seventies

Sylvia Rose-Ann Walker

In looking at the literary response to the Black Power ideology of the seventies, this paper focuses specifically on the poetry of Lasana Kwesi (Winston Daniel), as contained in his only two publications - GIVING BACK TO MY PEOPLE(1973) and poems of rebellion(1975) - and pursues a critique of the sensibility that emerges.

The paper is developed according to a recognised method of intellectual inquiry, that of proceeding from the general to the particular, and is divided into three parts as follows:

- Part One provides the essential background information on Black Power in Trinidad and Tobago - what it was all about, what caused it, how it affected the society and the people. The political and social conditions from which the poetry emanated are emphasised because their effect on what has been written is a close and vital one.

- Part Two examines the two works of Lasana Kwesi as the expression of the truth and reality of what was described in Part One. The discussion operates within the frame of reference so clearly articulated by Kwesi himself in his "letter to the people"-language, sincerity, image - and locates the works within the body of writing that emanated at that time and within the indigenous poetic tradition as a whole.

- Part Three draws conclusions about the literary response to the Black Power ideology of the seventies as I have articulated it, specifically its major features and what direction, if any, it may be moving in.

It is hoped that the analysis provided will add to and enhance the body of critical discourse on local writing.