

## ABSTRACT

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### **“PON DI GULLYSIDE”: FROM RODNEY TO MAVADO**

This paper explores Walter Rodney’s philosophy of groundings with the contemporary role of “the gully” as it is represented and reflected in the popular dancehall music narratives of dancehall artiste, David “Mavado” Brooks, the Gully God.

The continued maintenance of divisive social, political and economic hierarchies is highlighted in Mavado’s lyrical treatises and underscores his consistent references to the gully as his source of energy. In this regard, I argue that the gully is a philosophical space that can be simultaneously physical and ideological. Walter Rodney’s and David ‘Mavado’ Brook’s “gullyside” groundings locate this as a space that provides a legitimate and legitimizing space for individuals who are denied socio-political and ideological legitimacy in the formal spheres of existence in Jamaica. Rodney’s efforts to include the marginalized beings from Kingston’s dingles, and gullies in his philosophical and educational bounty in the 1960s holds validity forty years later as Mavado’s dancehall cries on behalf of the children of Jamaica’s gullysides plaintively reminds us of their quest for status and personhood within Jamaica’s tense socio-political landscape.