

Emancipate Yourself From Mental Slavery / None But Ourselves Can Free Our Minds ~Bob Marley~

Buffalo Solider' Analysis

"Buffalo Soldier," a compelling song by Bob Marley is the description of four post Civil War regiments composed of all black privates. For twenty-five years, the privates were made to battle against the Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, Apache, Ute, and Sioux Indians. The same Indians dubbed the black privates buffalo soldiers. The overall theme of the song is the irony of America's use of slaves to validate their means of annihilation of the Indians. Support for this theme is found in the use of figurative language and shift in tone.

Figurative language, the use of figures of speech, helps cultivate the song into an passionate account of American irony. Bob Marley's use of Patois, the Jamaican language, occasionally makes this song difficult to evaluate. This is why diminutive things such as irony help a reader grasp the significance of the song. Marley's lines, "And he was taken from African, brought to America, / Fighting on arrival, fighting for survival (Marley 8-9), are the most apparent utilization of irony in the entire song. It was amusingly ironic that African slaves fighting for life and survival were brought to America to battle and eliminate another minority. America was enslaving one race to annihilate another. The entire song is a metaphor for the repulsive realism of manifest destiny, the principle that every American had the right to expand west. Some manifest destiny fanatics were willing to stop at nothing to accomplish their expedition.

Bob Marley's shift in tone is most fascinating. He goes from skeptical to resentment. The line "Buffalo soldier / Dreadlock Rasta" (Marley 1) appears to validate a tone that is keener to inform the audience of a narrative; a narrative of African slaves that were captured and brought to American to fight and be triumphant in a war that was not their predicament. However, within the second stanza there is an palpable shift in tone. Bob Marley departs from storyteller to irritated Jamaican. When he says, "I mean it, when I analyze the stench - / To me it makes a lot of sense: / How the dreadlock Rasta was the Buffalo soldier" (Marley 5-7). In a sense, it is as if Bob was questioning the ideology that Americans used to enslave Africans. Bob's irritated tone would only make sense because he was the descendant of slaves who were brought from Africa to the Caribbean, stripped of their culture, and required to toil on someone else's behalf.

"Buffalo Soldier" is a truly appealing song. It enlightens the listener of the tale of a regiment / time in history that is easily forgotten. Nevertheless, who is better to tell their story than Bob Marley, the peacemaker and lover of all people.

AshCash on Blogspot

My name is Ashley. I'm 16. I go to Fort Dorchester High School and I am a junior in highschool. I'm originally from Bethpage New York but then I moved to the sunny state of South Carolina. I'm an outgoing person and I just love to have fun in general.

