

Sally Shaw
(University of Portsmouth)

God is a white man Representations of the fragmentation of religion and belief systems in *Babylon*, *Pressure* and *A Hole in Babylon*.

The nineteen-seventies witnessed the emergence of a second generation black community in some of Britain's cities. Whereas many first wave immigrants had chosen the Pentecostal movement as a subconscious form of retreat from the hostility and racism of white Britain, a high proportion of second generation black youths sought alternative belief systems to their parents. This growing fragmentation of religion and belief systems between two generations is an underlying factor in intergenerational conflict represented in *Babylon* (Franco Rosso, 1980, UK), *Pressure* (Horace Ove, 1975, UK) and *A Hole in Babylon* (Horace Ove, 1979). This paper will investigate the way in which Rastafarianism and the Black Power Movement underwent subtle changes when they were imported to Britain in the late sixties and early seventies and how they facilitated a unique reading and response to the pressures experienced by second generation black British youths. Whereas parents tended to seek solace in the form of a promised afterlife, their children sought out belief systems that would allow them an unequivocal space in the society in which they found themselves. Whilst both Rastafarianism and the Black Power Movement allowed for a rejection of white values, the Black Power Movement increasingly relied on direct action to achieve this goal. This is especially apparent in the BBC *Play for Today*, *A Hole in Babylon*. Arguably, *Babylon*, *Pressure* and *A Hole in Babylon* can be seen to represent a wider aspect of British social life in seventies Britain; namely a desire for youths to renegotiate and challenge existing spiritual norms.