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Between Jazz and Blues

The Artist's Endeavours Towards the Reconsideration of The African American Experience

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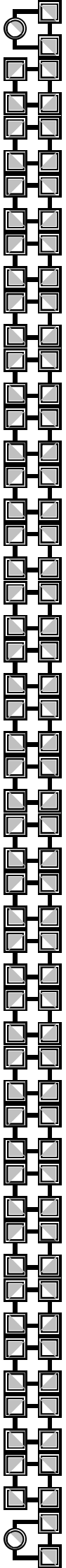
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Dedication

To Tata Roza, may Allah have mercy on you.



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To my friends, Houssam, Foudhil, Sifou, Amine and Nina I can't praise you enough guys! Seriously! You have been here through it all. Thanks for bearing with me and my constant mood switch lately.

Finally, and most of all ... to me.

Abstract

When slaves were forced to leave their homes to move to North America against their will to live and die in servitude, they managed to bring their rich culture. Culture is a vital human resource for resisting oppression. This included music. The story of black music is also the tale of the enduring social struggles of American history. Among the most powerful resources that sustained African Americans through difficulty was blues and jazz music. Blues and jazz have been a powerful medium through which African Americans have used their expressive voices to position themselves as people seeking freedom and true equality in society. Their evolving social reality has interfaced through the popular use of culture across time with those of other groups including the Eurocentric white ruling class creating shared states of heightened and transformative awareness. African American resistance to constant attempts by white commerce to appropriate and commodify their rich, increasingly popular music and culture, beginning with the rise of White Dixieland music, continues to this day through their improvisation of ever new and vibrant waves of musical expression.

Keywords: African American, racism, Blues, Jazz, Music, culture, identity.

Lorsque les esclaves ont été forcés de quitter leur foyer à fin d'être installés en Amérique du Nord contre leur volonté, pour vivre et mourir dans la servitude, ils ont réussi à apporter leur riche culture. La culture est une ressource humaine vitale pour résister à l'oppression. Cela comprenait la musique. L'histoire de la musique noire est aussi l'histoire des luttes sociales persistantes de l'histoire américaine. Parmi les ressources les plus puissantes qui ont soutenu les Afro-Américains à travers les difficultés figuraient le blues et le jazz. Le blues et le jazz ont été un moyen puissant par lequel les Afro-Américains ont utilisé leurs voix expressives pour se positionner en tant que personnes en quête de liberté et de véritable égalité dans la société. Leur réalité sociale en évolution s'est interfacée à travers l'utilisation populaire de la culture à travers le temps avec celles d'autres groupes, y compris la classe dirigeante blanche eurocentrique, créant des états partagés de conscience accrue et transformatrice. La résistance des Afro-Américains aux tentatives constantes du commerce blanc de s'approprier et de marchandiser leur

musique et leur culture riches et de plus en plus populaires, à commencer par la montée de la musique White Dixieland, se poursuit à ce jour à travers leur improvisation de vagues d'expression musicale toujours nouvelles et vibrantes.

Mots-clés : Afro-américain, racisme, Blues, Jazz, Musique, culture, identité

عندما أُجبر العبيد على ترك منازلهم للانتقال إلى أمريكا الشمالية ضد إرادتهم للعيش والموت في العبودية ، تمكنوا من جلب ثقافتهم الغنية. الثقافة هي مورد بشري حيوي لمقاومة الاضطهاد. وشمل ذلك الموسيقى. قصة الموسيقى السوداء هي أيضًا حكاية النضالات الاجتماعية المستمرة في التاريخ الأمريكي. من بين أقوى الموارد التي دعمت الأمريكيين الأفارقة من خلال الصعوبات كانت موسيقى البلوز والجاز. كانت موسيقى البلوز والجاز وسيطًا قويًا استخدم من خلاله الأمريكيون من أصل أفريقي أصواتهم التعبيرية لتقديم أنفسهم كأشخاص يسعون إلى الحرية والمساواة الحقيقية في المجتمع. لقد تفاعل واقعهم الاجتماعي المتطور من خلال الاستخدام الشائع للثقافة عبر الزمن مع تلك المجموعات الأخرى بما في ذلك الطبقة الحاكمة البيضاء الأوروبية ، مما خلق حالات مشتركة من الوعي المتزايد والتحويل. تستمر مقاومة الأمريكيين من أصل أفريقي للمحاولات المستمرة من قبل التجارة البيضاء White لتخصيص وتسليع موسيقاهم وثقافتهم الغنية ذات الشعبية المتزايدة ، بدءًا من ظهور موسيقى ، حتى يومنا هذا من خلال ارتجالهم لموجات جديدة وناضجة بالحياة من التعبير Dixieland الموسيقي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أمريكي من أصل أفريقي ، عنصرية ، بلوز ، جاز ، موسيقى ، ثقافة ، هوية

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General Introduction

While hundreds of minorities across the world, especially in vulnerable and precarious settings, lack proper social connections with their peers and suffer from deep isolation, some ethnic communities, deeply affected by the course of globalization and history, attempted to regain their voice and identity, but more simply, their right to equality. As Musicians Without Borders emphasize, “To heal, people need connection and community.” and music is one of the solutions to it. Building connections and giving hope to the most in need are among the ways in which music has helped vulnerable communities regain confidence and build belonging. Artistic expression and empowerment help advance human rights not only by enabling minorities to claim their rights and traditions, but also by encouraging individuals and communities to hold governments accountable for change. As a result, music and social connectedness are deeply related. Scholars have, however, come to debate the universality of music and its cross-cultural aspect in society. Music is probably not a universal language indeed, but it is a universal practice in one form or another. For some, music will help express grievances and sorrow; as blues was the language of the segregated African American. For others, it will help create a sense of belonging, or voice an identity claim, as jazz did for the underrepresented group. In all cases, music is understood as a tool for social cohesion, but more specifically, for justice. For example, early 20th century jazz and blues artists demonstrate how communities used music as a political tool to give voice to grievances and identities. These genres helped the young, urban, working-class African-American community bear the racial discrimination and social and economic deprivation that they encountered.

Beginning with an interest in sociocultural studies and a love for art and precisely music, I combined these topics to further investigate the relationship between music and the human being through the case of jazz and blues music with the African American Diaspora in the United States. By exploring the development of these two musical genres and the African American experience from the days of slavery and their contribution to one another, I have conducted a correlational study aiming to explore the sociocultural and musicological links between the African American community and popular music.

In doing so I aim to provide an account of the cultural value, resonances, and development of identity through the blues and jazz genres in popular music culture in order to look critically and challenge stereotypes associated with them. Thus, I am going to raise the following questions:

1. To what extent of cruelty was the history of African Americans in the United States?

2. What is blues and jazz in relation to African American popular music?
3. How did the African Americans shape their identity through blues and jazz?

To answer these questions, I have conducted a historical approach for a better understanding of the events and experiences of the African Americans from slavery to social inclusion. And to permit the investigation of the extent of links between blues and jazz, their cultural past, and the African Americans, I felt the obligation to distinctively conceptualize these forms of artistic manifestation with a brief mention of other black popular music genres that contributed in their emergence. And finally, I have linked both with an analytical approach of how did African American developed their sense of self through blues and jazz using a psychoanalytical cotext.

I have divided my work into three chapters:

The first chapter will start with tracing back the origins of African Americans, their lives during slavery, the racial segregation they faced after the abolition of slavery and how they were brutally abused by the whites. In addition, the chapter will look at the political and cultural initiatives taken by blacks to gain equal rights.

The second chapter will give a general background of early African American music, before studying blues in terms of its origins and characteristics. Secondly it will overview jazz from a geographical and chronological perspective and finally it will illustrate how these forms of art expressed the African American struggle.

Last chapter will start by identifying cultural identity. Following that, it will give a background of the development of African American cultural identity through different periods of history. Then it will demonstrate how blues and jazz served as collective act aiming for freedom. Finally, it will point at the struggles of Jazzwomen in a white-centric society and a male-centric artistic field.



**CHAPTER-I. The African American
Experience from Objects
to Subjects**

I.1. Introduction

In 1619, a Dutch ship carried the first twenty Africans to the territory of Jamestown, Virginia, a British colony in America. The trip was called the “Trans-Atlantic slave trade” and it was the starting point of the dark history of American slavery. Since then, and for the next two centuries, the henceforth called “African Americans” will witness some very challenging and unpleasing circumstances and will live all kinds of discrimination, brutal segregation, inequality and most of all dismantling of identity.

This chapter will provide a historical overview of slavery in America and will demonstrate how African Americans revolted against the inhumanity of the white supremacy. Their political and cultural struggles, to build their identity. A brief narration of the rough patch towards becoming subjects instead of objects, by giving an insight to the African American language, music, cinema, fashion, literature that became a part of massive protests and movements. Led by African American activists, with the mediation of the Harlem Renaissance that’s considered a big shift in the American culture.

I.2. The Origins of African Americans

Also referred to as people of colors, black Americans or Negros, the ethnic group of the African-Americans are living in the United States, from a partial or total ancestry from Africa; the majority of them are descendants from slaves brought to the new world mainly from Africa including Senegambia (the coast between present day Senegal and Gambia) the Upper Guinea Coast, the Gold Coast Ghana, eastern Nigeria and Cameroun, west-central Africa (Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon). They were forced to leave their home land, culture and families and they were brought to the new world against their will to become slaves in the 13 colonies for the white Europeans.¹

According to the US Census Bureau’s last statistics, and as we enter the new decade of 2020s, the blacks or African Americans represent 13.4% of the total population of the United States of America which makes them the second largest minority group after the Hispanics or Latinos.²

¹ Walter C Rucker, *The River Flows on: Black Resistance, Culture, and Identity Formation in Early America (Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World)*, Louisiana State University Press, 2006, 157.1

² United States Population 2018
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219> Population estimates, July 1, 2019, (V2019)

I.3. The Emergence of Slavery in The New World

In 1492, the Italian adventurer, Christopher Columbus, “discovered” the new world. Soon after, Europe was tempted by the potentials that land had to offer, so they emerged, settled and built a nation there. As they started practicing agriculture, they were in a need of a better workforce to explore the natural resources of the land. They used the Native Americans to work in fields and mines but it failed since most of the red Indians were dying from European diseases or escaped, which wasn’t complicated due to their knowledge of the terrain.

Therefore, the European had to find another source of labor to do the hard work. And the Africans were the perfect choice since they had a better eminence against diseases, and are used to the tropical climate; in addition, they had agriculture experience.³ And that was the beginning of slavery in the United States. Slaves were mainly used in the production of tobacco, crops and cotton. The demand of the enslaved extremely increased throughout the 17th and the 18th centuries with the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 as well as the growing demand for the product in Europe. The slave trade became hence a major part of the economy of four continents, employing thousands of people and involving millions of dollars. By using African slave labor on plantations, Europeans made large profits that they could never have made from small settler farms.

I.4. The Living Conditions of Slaves

With the industrial revolution and other economic factors, slavery became the path to follow, and Africans appeared to offer a solution to every problem. Bringing them from Africa would cut them off their origins and habits, making them vulnerable to capture if they were to escape, due to the lack of knowledge of their environment, combined with the color of their skin. Furthermore, the military superiority of Europeans combined to the thirst for profits from native Africans increased the number of men, women, and children taken away from Africa. Slavery eased the plantation owners’ decision-making regarding labor since slaves could be forced to work longer and harder than servants or free workers. From an economic perspective, the absence of salary to be paid generated benefits as slaves – after their purchase, which was relatively cheap at first – could be taken care of as animals, that is to say housing and food.

The working conditions of slaves was a complete torture, there were two kinds of slaves, *the field Negros*, or the slaves who worked in fields. Those were the masse; they were beaten from morning to night, living in a state of shake. That

³ Steven Mintz, *African American Voices*, 14

said, they were forced to work more than 14 hours a day, from sunrise to sundown, where they picked cotton, sugar, rice, and tobacco. The second kind is called *the house Negro*s; for house slaves, things were somehow better than the one of fields' workers, they did the domestic work where they took care of the master house and his family by babysitting, cooking and cleaning but this was not easy as it seems since they did this all day long with no rest.⁴

Slavery became legal in the colonies. The first one to legalize it was Massachusetts in 1641, soon followed by other colonies such as Virginia who, through the voting of a fugitive slave law, declared it legal in 1661⁵. As a consequence, a spectacular growth of slaves in the colonies had emerged. This increasing number of slaves began to raise concern among the White population. These concerns turned into fear when stories about rebellions and murders toward slave owners were reported⁶. To face this situation, slave codes were created, which would reduce, if not erase, liberty or humanity for slaves. Each colony had its own code, but all of them were similar and aiming for one objective, the dehumanization of slaves. The first slave code was introduced by the state of Virginia in 1694⁷. The main objective of these codes was to reduce slaves into properties instead of human beings, putting them into a permanent state of servitude. Under these codes, slaves could not leave plantations without the approval of their masters. For those convicted of crimes, the punishment could go from corporal punishment to executions.⁸ These codes could be added to the teaching of Christianity, the destruction of their personality, along with the systematic breaking of family ties and communal identity, all of which would make life on the American soil difficult, unfair, and hopeless.

African Americans were stripped of their rights and freedom, they were beaten to death for the silliest reasons, and sometimes they were beaten just for being black. Separated from their families, working continually, they were given different names. Although, there was no possible way to minimize these horrors, that is till the dawn of the Emancipation Proclamation.

⁴Deborah Gray White, *Let My People Go: African Americans 1804-1860*, (New York [u.a.], Oxford Univ. Press, 1996), 27-28.

⁵ John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 54.

⁶*Ibid.*, 54.

⁷*Ibid.*, 55.

⁸ John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 56.

1.5. The Abolition of Slavery

The struggles of African Americans against slavery, under the savage living conditions and bad treatments imposed upon them by the white supremacy, obliged them to revolt against the dehumanization and protest for their rights and freedom. By different means, they rebelled and formed resistance groups against slave masters. Most of these efforts failed in giving an instant result, yet they contributed in the emergence of abolitionist movements across America.

The Abolition Movement ideas turned out to be increasingly prominent and accepted in the North which supported the abolition of slaves unlike the South that was against it. This contributed to regional conflicts between North and South leading up to the Civil War. During the Civil War (1861-1865), President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) established the “Emancipation Proclamation” on the first of January, 1863; a document that gave freedom for all slaves, in which he declared that “all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, henceforward, and forever free”⁹. Despite that the contributions of Abraham Lincoln towards slavery abolition, his document of emancipation did not free all slaves immediately but made it a matter of priority. On December 6, 1865, the Congress added the 13th Amendment to the American Constitution to eradicate slavery for good.¹⁰

1.6. The Post-Abolition Era

After the abolition of slavery in 1863, and the civil war and the emergence of Freedmen’s Bureau¹¹, life did not get better for freed slaves. Whites were against the idea of being equal with the African Americans. They initiated some protocols to restrict the freedom of the African American, including the black codes and Jim Crow laws. Discrimination laws were not the only challenge that the blacks faced, the white also formed a supremacy group called the Ku Klux Klan to attack the freed slaves soon after the white adopted police brutality as new means for oppressing blacks.

⁹ 1862 Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/lincoln-issues-emancipation-proclamation/> (Accessed Mai 5, 2018).

¹⁰ Abolitionist Movement, History Net, <http://www.historynet.com/abolitionist-movement/> (accessed April 16,2018).

¹¹ The Freedmen’s Bureau also recognized as the Bureau of Refugees was a government organization set up on March 3 1865, to help freed slaves get education, job, HealthCare, and homes. 12 Linda, Alchin. Black Codes, American-historama.org, <http://www.americanhistorama.org/1866-1881-reconstruction-era/black-codes.htm/> (accessed April 17, 2018).

I.6.1. The Black Codes

The black codes were a series of laws passed by the legislatures of the Southern states of America like Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, between 1865 and 1866 during the presidency of Andrew Johnson (1808- 1875). They included laws of segregation, regulation, owning property and criminal punishment.¹² Each state in America had its own laws and some laws were common, among these states. The freedmen could not assemble without the presence of a white person that means when a free black American wanted to meet in any place even in churches there must be a white person among them.

Another law defined “Race by blood”; where the presence of any amount of black blood made one black i.e., any African American or African American by blood must obey the rules of the Black Codes.

Another law segregated public facilities, where blacks were widely prohibited from entering hotels, restaurants, parks, and they were excluded from other public spaces. Reading and writing also were not allowed for free blacks. Freedmen were assumed to be agricultural workers and their duties and hours were tightly regulated. And the violators of these laws were subjected to whipping or branding, and every person infringed these laws got punished.¹³

Even the Southerners did their best to keep freedom far from the African Americans. That said, the Black Codes lasted about two years and ended after the 14th and 15th amendments were added by the Congress.

I.6.2. Jim Crow Laws

The origin of the name “Jim Crow” goes back to the 1800s, when a white actor named Thomas Dartmouth “Daddy” Rice mocked the African Americans by playing the role of an old black man by blackening his face using burnt cork and dressed up in tattered cloth and started singing and dancing in a foolish way to an old African song called “jump, Jim crow”. His act soon became known among the whites who started using the term “Jim Crow” to insult the blacks, soon after the Jim Crow laws spread.¹⁴

¹² Linda, Alchin. Black Codes, American-historama.org, <http://www.americanhistorama.org/1866-1881-reconstruction-era/black-codes.htm/> (accessed April 17, 2013).

¹³ Robin D. G. Kelley, Earl Lewis, *To Make Our World Anew: Volume I: A History of African Americans to 1880* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000), 218

¹⁴ Leslie V. Tischauer, *Jim Crow Laws*, (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2012), 1-2.

The Jim Crow Laws were a series of segregation laws and customs that were practiced mostly in Southern America between the end of the Reconstruction Era¹⁵ and the mid-1950s; they were set to enforce the racial segregation and required the separation of the whites from the blacks in public places such as schools, restaurants, buses, and waiting rooms, and it was completely forbidden for the blacks to go to beaches, swimming pools, parks and nearly all hospitals.¹⁶

I.6.3. The Knight of The Ku Klux Klan

After the end of the Civil War, Slavery was officially abolished and many freedmen got the same right as the white people, this triggered outrage among the white Southerners strongly believed in the white supremacy. Therefore, when the African Americans' efforts to abolish slavery and get same rights as the whites seemed to be effective, they created the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). The KKK was founded in Pulaski, Tennessee in December 1865, by six Civil War Veterans including Nathan Bedford Forrest, Richard R. Reed, and John B. Kennedy. Who started the white supremacy group and called it the Ku Klux Klan.¹⁷

The first Klansman started wearing masks and went in night rides to scare citizens by pretending to be the ghosts of dead Confederate soldiers, soon after, the group grew in members, and soon spread to almost every Southern state. The activities of the new members went beyond scaring people mostly African Americans; they started using violence against them.¹⁸ The KKK soon became the African Americans' new nightmare, and started treating the safety of the blacks outside and even inside their home. They used also different types of violence against the blacks, such as beating, whipping and torture; and worst of it was lynching, after that, they hanged the dead body in the town as a message for the others. Furthermore, the Klansmen used to burn and bomb the black churches and properties.

The bloody organization committed many massacres in history; for example, on Sept. 15, 1963 a bomb that caused the death of four black girls in Birmingham, and in June 21, 1964, the white knight murdered one black man and two civil right workers in Philadelphia, Mississippi¹⁹. The Ku Klux Klan is one of

¹⁵ The Reconstruction era: refers to the efforts made by the United States between the period 1865 and 1877 to reform the political, legal, and economic systems in the states that had break away from the Union and help the South become part of the union again.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁷ Ann Heinrichs, *The Ku Klux Klan* (Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2003), 8-9.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*,

¹⁹ Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism, Southern Poverty Law Center, <https://www.splcenter.org/20110228/ku-klux-klan-history-racism/> (accessed: April 17, 2018)

America's most seasoned and dreaded gangs driven by the fantasy of a world with just a single race. They have been for more than 130 years, and go on in America's society nowadays.

I.7. African American Fight for Freedom

From the first days of slavery, the whites eradicated the African's culture, language, behavior and rights. Basically, creating an object with no identity. After the abolition of slavery, African Americans led a revolution against the whites, both politically and culturally, to gain their rights and to be included in the American Society by building their own identity.

I.7.1. Political Movements

African Americans organized two famous political movements that helped them reach equality to some extent. The first movement was called the Civil Right movement, it was Black America's voice and used peaceful protesting to gain equality, and the second one was The Black Panther Party which believed that what was taken by force can only be restored by force.

I.7.1.1. The civil right movement

The whites treated the slaves as "inferior" and that led the blacks to form organizations to achieve their goals, such as the "National Association for the Advanced Colored People" (NAACP) in 1909, the "Congress Of Racial Equality" (CORE) in 1942, and, "Student Christian leadership Conference" (SCLC) in 1957, then the "Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee" (SNCC) in 1960. This radical modification in African American's life called The Civil Right Movement.²⁰

The Civil Right Movement rose almost, one hundred years after the Civil War nearly in the 1950s and 1960s. It was the period when African American's consciousness rose and began the fight for equality. However, the main causes that led to the emergence of this movement were a series of events. Among them, Linda's brown matters a black girl who wanted to attend white school instead of black ones where there is a better opportunity, it was known by "brown vs. board of education 1954" in the same year the supreme court eliminated public school segregation. The other one was the "Montgomery bus boycotts 1955", because of the arrestment of Rosa Parks, a black tailor who rejected to give her seat to a white individual. As a reply to this, racial rule African Americans and their allies began the Montgomery bus boycott and refused to use it. This campaign ended

²⁰ Jill Karson, *The Civil Right Movement*, (Farmington Hills, MI:Greenhaven Press,2005),19- 128.

after a year and 20 days until the segregation on buses made illegal on December 21, 1956.

Most importantly was that the movement that resulted in the passage of two laws, The Civil Right Act 1964 and the Voting Act in 1965; the former provides full equality for the Blacks in public services as the latter gave them the political rights – the right to vote – in order to shape a full American democracy as Dr King claimed in his speech “And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges” from these words, to keep tranquility in America, Blacks should be on the same foot with Whites – equal rights and duties. For Just a week after the assassination of Martin Luther King in April 1968, the congress passed the Fair Housing Act 1968 which prohibits private citizens from refusing to sell or rent housing to any person because of race and color.

1.7.1.2. The Black Panther Party

During the Civil Right Movement, African Americans saw that Martin Luther King, JR nonviolence strategies were not effective enough in getting their rights. Therefore, a group of black activists believed in different measures of revolt and decided to create an organization that uses violence to gain freedom; it was the BPP.

The Black Panther Party of self-defense as it was originally called was founded in the late October of 1966 by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale in Oakland, California who adopted Malcolm X philosophy of self-defense. Its main purpose was to protect the black community from police brutality. It started spreading in the United States after a member of the BPP decided to publish a newspaper called “The Black Panther” that advertized the movement, and led to the integration of a huge number of members to the organization. To achieve their goals, the group adopted “the Ten Point Plan”, a document that addressed the major issues faced by black community: land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace.²¹

The Black Panther Party members were involved in many political activities using both violent and non-violent methods. The Party briefly merged with student non-violent coordinating committee (SNCC), also in 1967, they created a protest in front of California state capital against the state’s attempt to outlaw

²¹Duncan, Garrett Albert. “Black Panther Party.”
britannica.com<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-Panther-Party> /accessed April 19, 2018)

carrying the loaded weapon in public. But the BPP didn't always use peaceful ways to bring awareness to their cause, the party members were involved informing armed patrols that monitoring the police actions in black neighborhoods that usually end up with deadly shootouts. Furthermore, they stated a number of popular community social programs that included: breakfast programs, clothing distribution, medical care service, Grocery Giveaways and others.²²

Most of African Americans did not support the BPP violence ways and most of its leaders were arrested and that resulted in its collapse by the early 1970s but it made its impact in the black history as the government consider as J. Edgar Hoover stated, "the Black Panther Party, without question, represents the greatest threat to internal security of the country"(1969).

I.7.2. African American Cultural Rebellion against White America

When Africans first arrived in America as slaves, they brought over their own culture and traditions, but that didn't last long, with the constant attempts of the whites to destroy anything that relate them back to Africa. During the Civil Rights era, African Americans developed a brand-new culture that reflected their African background and displayed a touch of modernity from the culture in which their children are born into, through the invention of new genres of music, dances and colorful clothes. This revolution was the result of the recognizable cultural and political movement: "Harlem Renaissance."

I.7.2.1. The Harlem Renaissance

Black people had lived in the United States for many decades, and had already produced several art forms such as music, poetry and novels. However, they had never done much with such confidence and enthusiasm as they did during the Harlem Renaissance era (1920). Centered on Harlem, many Black New Yorkers blossomed and practiced their arts proudly and never felt more recognized as they were during that period²³ (1930) where there was a huge cultural explosion that had a major impact on American culture.

Overall Harlem neighborhood has no specific geographical boundaries; it is located in the northern part of New York City. Manhattan precinct,²⁴Harlem was

²²Shirley, Williams. "Black Panther Party." marxists.org.<https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/black-panthers/> (accessed April 20, 2018)

²³ Eisenberg, Bernard. "Kelly Miller": The Negro Leader as a marginal man. *Journal of Negro history*. July 1960, pp. 182-196

²⁴ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Harlem." britannica.com.<https://www.britannica.com/place/Harlem-New-York> / (accessed April 21, 2018)

the destination of many blacks fleeing the south from Jim Crow laws searching for better opportunities and life in the North. It was the area that has contributed significantly to the blowing of African American history in America particularly in politics, arts, culture, and music.²⁵ However Harlem Renaissance or “the New Negro Movement” is considered to be a turning point in the life of black community, this era was characterized by the detonation of Negro creativity where many writers and actors appeared and wrote on such themes as absorption, isolation, and unity, a productive poets as Claude McKay, Wallace Thurman, Langston Hughes, and authors like Zora Neale Hurston.

Besides literary works music was a dominant aspect in Harlem renaissance movements in which this period knew the birth of blues and jazz which were most celebrated kinds of music at that time,²⁶ and from the prolific trumpeters and jazz singers Daniel Louis Armstrong and other musicians; a type of music that attracted not only the black but the white as well.²⁷The Harlem Renaissance was an important motive for blacks, it helped them to gain a place within American culture and society; it made an occasion for them to express themselves artistically and build an identity for the black community.²⁸

The famous writer W.E.B. Du Bois²⁹ debated about this point and wrote about the twenties and how the Negroes juxtaposed the love and the hate of America. He gave the example tackled in Claude McKay³⁰'s poem when he said:

“Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,
And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth,
Stealing my breath of life, I will confess
I love this cultured hell that tests my youth!”
Claude McKay: America

I.7.2.2. African American Vernacular English

It's highly noticeable that many African Americans dialect with a form of English that is different from Standard English, that language is called African

²⁵Tom, Sara, St. James encyclopedia of popular culture (Detroit, St. James Press, 1999) 105.

²⁶The Harlem Renaissance.” ushistory.org. <http://www.ushistory.org/us/46e.asp> / (accessed 28, 2018)

²⁷ Tom, Sara, St. James encyclopedia of popular culture (Detroit, St. James Press, 1999) 115.

²⁸ Cary D, Paul, Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance (Rutledge, 1 edition, 2004) 88.

²⁹William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (February 23, 1868 – August 27, 1963) was an American sociologist, socialist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author, writer and editor

³⁰ Festus Claudius "Claude" McKay (September 15, 1889– May 22, 1948) was a Jamaican writer and poet, who was a seminal figure in the Harlem Renaissance.

American Vernacular English (AAVE) also called “Black Vernacular English”, “Negro Dialect”, “Ghetto talk” or “Ebonics”.³¹

There are two dominant assumptions on the origin of African American Vernacular English, the dialect hypothesis that suggests that during slavery, slaves start learning English slowly and mostly incorrect and that resulted in a bad English full of mistakes that has been passed down through generations.

The second assumption is the Creole hypothesis that claims that African slaves primarily learned Pidgin³² English before leaving Africa and after they arrived to the new world, the African slaves needed a language to communicate with their masters and other slaves from other western African parts and that led to the birth of Creole language a combination of Standard English and a mix of African languages.³³

Ebonics is spoken by millions of Americans throughout the United States; not only black people use the dialect but also nonblack. In fact, nonblack people use Ebonics to seem delightful and “cool”. Although it is not taught in schools, AAVE is still used in general conversation, movies, music and even books. For black Americans it is not just a dialect or a language, it is part of their cultural identity.

1.7.2.3. African American Fashion

During the period of slavery, the African Americans were forced to wear a certain form of dress by their owners, the basic clothing for slave was loose fitting clothes made of coarse wool or as was call “Negro Cloth”, the men fields hands generally dress up in shirts, breeches or trousers and for the female, shifts, petticoat and jacket.³⁴ After slavery, the Black starts developing their own clothing style, to identify them as African American people.

Through the Harlem Renaissance, The African Americans start having well-paid jobs for both men and women and that led to a clothing change. Black men

³¹ Taylor, Jones. “What is AAVE?” languagejones.com.

<http://www.languagejones.com/blog1/2014/6/8/what-is-aaave/> / (accessed April 30, 2018).

³² A pidgin /ˈpɪdʒɪn/, or pidgin language, is a grammatically simplified means of communication that develops between two or more groups that do not have a language in common: typically, its vocabulary and grammar are limited and often drawn from several languages.

³³ Larry D Purnell, *Transcultural health care*, (Philadelphia:F.A.Davis,2013),93.

³⁴ *History of American Fashion*. shmoop.com. <https://www.shmoop.com/history-americanfashion/race.html> / (accessed March 20, 2018).

started wearing Zoot suit which consists of the long oversize jacket and baggy pant and added hats made off feather, long pocket watches and handkerchief to complete the look. For the women, it was the period where they show their glamour and elegant by dressing in cocktail and flapper dresses with rhinestones with long silk gloves and pearls also, they added high heels shoes and fur coat.³⁵

I.7.2.4. African American Cinema

From the beginning of the film's industry in the late 1890s, African Americans were portrayed as Donald Bogle declared "Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks".³⁶ In other words, they were completely excluded from playing any role in movies. Instead, white actors would blackface themselves to portray a black character, as in the controversial movie "the birth of a nation" (1915).³⁷

Years after, when the black finally got a chance to be part of the film industry, they were given the role of the villain or a character that gives a negative stereotype of the African American men and women such as the actor StephanFetchit who played the roles of lazy, slow-witted, and coon characters. Also, the black female actress Hattie McDaniel, who played the character of "Mammy" in the famous movie "Gone with the Wind" (1940). Even though McDaniel was the first black female to ever win or be nominated for the prestigious award Oscar for the same role, she has received negative feedback from her African American compatriots, who found her character offensive to black womanhood.³⁸

Following McDaniel's racist performance, The African Americans formed their own film production companies; Starting with Emmet J. Scott's Norman Studios in 1915, followed by George and Noble Johnson's Lincoln Motion Picture Company in 1916 and soon after the African Americans started leaving their touch in the film industry.³⁹

³⁵ Fashion of the Harlem Renaissance", YouTube video, 1:59, February 29, 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMmjFB6l3MU>.

³⁶ Thomas Cripps, *Slow Fade to Black: The Negro in American film*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993),9.

³⁷ You young, Lee. "A History of Black face in Movies: From Birth of a Nation to White Chicks" [huffingtonpost.com.https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/01/history-of-blackface_n_4175051.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/01/history-of-blackface_n_4175051.html) / (accessed March 24, 2018).

³⁸ Padgett, Kenneth. "History of Black Face". [black-face.com. http://black-face.com/](http://black-face.com/) (accessed March 13, 2018)

³⁹Keller, Lenn. "Black American Cinema:1915 – 1982". [lennkeller.com. http://www.lennkeller.com/blackfilm.html](http://www.lennkeller.com/blackfilm.html) / (accessed May 5, 2018). 23

I.7.2.5. Literature

African American literature dates to the early 17th century. The early black writers were slaves, as the poet “Phillis Wheatley”, a slave girl who wrote *Poems on Various Subjects*, published it in 1773.⁴⁰ There are many other slave narratives written to portray the personal life of slaves, their suffering, and their struggle for freedom with the white owners. However, their literature concentrates on the topics of slavery and the fight for independence such as the work of Frederick Douglass a slave who left the south heading to the north searching for liberty which was revealed in his autobiography “*My Bondage and My Freedom*” (1855). After the abolition of slavery, African American authors carried on writings with the purpose of denouncing the White’s crimes and narrating the struggles of the black community in America. As we can find in the works of W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and others.

The Harlem Renaissance appeared as “the Negro movement” a period when the African Americans writings began to attract not only the blacks but all-American society. Then the Civil Rights movement rose in the United States and influenced black writers who inserted problems of race and segregation into their literary works such as the two famous authors of that time James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison. This period has witnessed the involvement of women into written literature as well. By the end of the 19th century black literature was considered as a genre in American literature.⁴¹

The African American writers kept surprising the world with the African American literature, they were often present in big literary ceremonies such as the “Nobel Prize”, we can mention: Octavia Butler, Toni Morrison, Richard Wright, Alex Haley, Maya Angelou, and Alice Walker.⁴²

After taking a place in American literature, their books became classics. Among these popular novels: “*Kindred*” (1979) “*Beloved*” (1987) “*The Color Purple*” (1982) “*Native Son*” (1940) “*The Souls of Black Folk*” (1903).⁴³

⁴⁰ “African-American Literature”. Questia.com.

<https://www.questia.com/library/literature/literature-of-specific-groups/african-americanliterature/african-american-literature/> / (accessed March 29, 2018).

⁴¹African American literature.

Cs.mcgill.ca.http://cs.mcgill.ca/~rwest/wikispeedia/wpcd/wp/a/African_American_literature.html / (accessed May 1,2018).

⁴²10 Black Authors Everyone Should Read”. pbs.org. <http://www.pbs.org/blackculture/explore/10-black-authors-to-read/#.WqxLJmrOXIV/>(accessed May 2, 2018). 22

⁴³ Best African American Books” goodreads.com.

https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/193.Best_African_American_Books/ / (accessed March 14, 2018).

I.7.2.6. Music

African American music or Black Music was born in the 1700s, where slaves sang traditional songs during their laborious work. These songs were brought from Africa, they used it as a tool to communicate among each other; send messages that were difficult to be understood by the white owners, and helped them overcome hard work.

In the 1800-1860s a new kind of music emerged known as Negro Spiritual music. It was mainly religious songs performed quietly in churches using hand clapping, moaning, groaning, and sometimes using musical devices such as tambourines, drums, guitars, and harmonicas. Later in the 1870s and 1880s, the arranged spiritual and the ragtime music appears, and then in the 1890s, the USA witnessed the birth of the folk gospel music that contains implicit messages and hints for slaves who look for freedom and encouraged them to escape from slavery.⁴⁴

In the nineteenth century, America witnessed the birth of two types of black music Blues and Jazz. These two genres of African American music were considered to be the Devil's Music, for their ability to reach the spiritual connection with Black Artists that used Pianos, saxophones, trumpets, guitars and banjos to indicate their displeasure and regret, mixed with lyrical themes expressing prison, discrimination, racial injustice, bad treatment they were exposed to.⁴⁵

I.8. Conclusion

African Americans faced hard conditions from the days of slavery to the Jim Crow Laws, the KKK and the police brutality of the 20th century. Some of the white Americans had troubles considering blacks as American citizens who share same rights as they do. Their behavior against African Americans shows that they couldn't even consider them humans. But through the centuries of discrimination, African Americans decided to fight back to obtain equal rights and be considered a part of a diverse American social community. They started their revolt to get their political rights and afterwards penetrated the American society with the African American culture they developed to rebel against the white supremacy, including the Harlem Renaissance Movement that brought to the world a reflection of the African roots and years of bad living conditions to form a beautiful unique image of Blacks, detailed with their own language, Fashion, Cinema,

⁴⁴Harold, "Negro Folk Music U.S.A.," (New York:Columbia University Press, 1963)35-36 Shepack Nick, "History of African American Music in 10 Minutes," YouTube video, 9:59, May 1, 201,https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mbk8jy_bVNo

⁴⁵ Harold, Negro Folk Music USA, (New York, dover publication, 1992)127-128

Literature and music in which the African American reported to the world and wrote the history of all forms of racism, inequality and discrimination, and expressed how they felt about all of that especially in Jazz and Blues Music.



**CHAPTER-II. African American ethnic
music and blues and jazz
as a reflection of
Africanity**

II.1. Introduction

When slaves were brought to America in 1600's, they were completely stripped of their possessions. And one of the few things they managed to salvage from their culture was music. Black Music was essential to the African American experience in the United States since the early days of slavery. For them, it was not just a form of entertainment but also served as a form of expressing hope and protesting against poverty, racism and racial discrimination and segregation, served by the white supremacy. Blacks have always found comfort and a sense of peace in their music. And to this day, it remains a means by which the anger, grief, compassion and desire for change of African Americans is transformed into positive energy.

*“Where words fail, music speaks,” says the poet
Hans Christian Andersen.*

In order to understand the social effects of black music in general, and Blues and jazz in particular, there must be an understanding of how this music came into existence. This chapter will be divided into three parts. The first part will provide a brief account of the main African American musical forms that led to the birth of the blues and jazz. The second part will be devoted exclusively to Blues music, its origins and characteristics. The last part will conduct a geographical and chronological study of the history of jazz and how it represents the black experience.

II.2. The Development of Black Music

The encounter of the Western and African civilizations birthed black music; it was the result of a cultural shock between two civilizations; then it was fed by solitude, racism and injustices. For four centuries and until the 20th century, Black music evolved with American history and often in a climate of rage, discrimination and segregation. The music was a huge part of African American history; it has been a way of conveying a message of black Americans experience in the United States.⁴⁶

II.3. Work songs and Negro spirituals

Enslaved Africans were not allowed to speak with each other so they sang to communicate with one another, at the beginning, the slave music was all about “work songs” in which they described their working condition in plantation fields

⁴⁶Blassingame Berry, F., And, “Africa, Slavery, & the Roots of Contemporary Black Culture.” The Massachusetts Review, vol. 18, no. 3, 1977, pp. 509.

and railroad tracks, and it soon developed into a new genre of music known as “negro spirituals”, in which slaves, combined the hardship of work, slavery, and religious elements of Christianity. The spirituals were sung during work, in churches and in secret meetings where slaves gathered⁴⁷

The work songs are linked to a form of work, while performing a certain task which might be an associated narrative or a protest song.⁴⁸ The work songs functioned according to a system of call-and-responses that is a testimony of its African origins.⁴⁹ The music genre accompanied the toil in the plantations, on the roads, on the railways but also in prisons. They are the profane source of Jazz, the same way the Negro spiritual is the religious source of jazz. And Jazz announced the advent of Blues. Therefore, one can understand that black music in general, is nothing but an evolution to a classical genre that was once sung by their ancestors.

The field songs are divided into several subgroups such as the hunting and pastoral songs, the agricultural work songs and others. However, the African American work songs were developed during an era of captivity; they reflected an epoch during which the oral culture had no fixed form.⁵⁰ It served as a reminder of the “African Home”, a way to resist hardship and express their wrath. The fear of rebellion of the African slaves led white masters to ban drums during the early time of captivity, to prevent the slaves from communicating and most importantly initiating rebels.⁵¹

But the work songs are not the only chants who permitted a mean of expression for the slaves. The psalms and religious ceremonies brought by religion and Protestantism were a good refuge. Once again, the faith of uprooted slaves will be expressed by a new musical style, through rhythmic prayers on the themes of triumph, liberation and resilience called Negro Spirituals. The chants often contained a coded message that the masters could not understand. For example, the song “Go Down Moses” evoked the fate of the Hebrews allowed the slaves to beseech the lord and shout out their misfortune freely.

⁴⁷Ellen Koskoff, *Music cultures in the United States*, (New York, Routledge,2005),9,192-198.

⁴⁸Bonnet, «Revendication et politiques en paroles: chansons de la communauté noire américaine», *Mots. Les langages du politique* [En ligne], 70 2002, mis en ligne le 07 mai 2008, consulté le 24 novembre 2016.

⁴⁹Kauffman,. (1973). [Review of *Black Music of Two Worlds*]. *African Arts*, 6(3), P 78–80

⁵⁰Mosley,. “On the Aesthetics of Black Music”. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 35.3 (2001): 94–98.

⁵¹ Dorson 1955, *Midwest Folklore*. *Midwest Folklore*, vol. 5, no. 2., pp. 130–132.

www.jstor.org/stable/4317525.

Another type of music is The field hollers or field call, a type of music of the southern laborers which conveyed a helpful message or expressed emotions until the civil war. The genre is linked to spiritual music because it expresses religious feelings but also make subtle allusions to different ways to escape from bondage. Slaves were allowed to sing and dance freely at a place called the “Congo Square” in New Orleans. In 1853, Frederick Law Olmstead described it as “long, loud, musical shout, rising and falling and breaking into falsetto”. Some field hollers are lyric-less like «field call» by Annie Grace Horn Dodson⁵² or contain lyrics like “Melismas”⁵³. The field Hollers are considered to be the precursors of blues music.

II.4. The Emergence of Ragtime

The black music witnessed different types of music styles in history. Among them, the Ragtime. The Ragtime is a type of African American music that emerged between 1893 and 1917 and was originally born in Saint. Louis, Missouri, the ragtime is a word taken from the term “ragged time” meaning rhythmically broke up melodies. It is known by the use of the piano as the central instrument of the band.⁵⁴

The well-known artists of the ragtime music are Scott Joplin who’s considered to be the “king of Ragtime”, and Ernest Hogan, who developed the musical genre and created the name “ragtime”, Joseph LaMothe, Eubie Blake, James P. Johnson, Joseph Lamb, and James Scott.⁵⁵ Although the ragtime was barely heard after 1917, it had influenced the creation of the Blues.⁵⁶

II.5. The blues from slavery towards the inclusion

Blues music is considered to be a huge step in the African American musical history. It is the fruit of the previous musical genres that accompanied African Americans from slavery to the verge of the twentieth century. However, Blues has its own history that differed according to time and place. It has a feature of evolving with the social circumstances of a given era and adapting to different situations that African Americans went through, to serve as the voice of the segregated minority. Understanding this music and its various aspects will provide a better understanding for its success, and for what it represents.

⁵²From Annie Grace Horn Dodson's Album Music Down Home: An Introduction to Negro Folk Music, U.S.A. January 1, 1965.

⁵³ Melismas are the passage of several notes sung to a syllable.

⁵⁴ Michael Verity, What is Ragtime, Thoughtco, <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-ragtime2039546>, (Accessed April 14, 2018).

⁵⁵Ibid.,

⁵⁶ Ragtime, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ragtime/>(Accessed April 14,2018).

II.5.1. The Blues

To understand the music, it is important to study the word, its etymology, and its origins. Why the word “blues”? What is its meaning when evoking music? When one looks at its definition, one realizes that it transcribes a feeling of sadness, melancholy, and depression. The blues is a form of music that tells a personal story, it is used as an expression of misery or regret about something, bad luck, representing and tackling topics such as sufferance in jail, loneliness, segregation, and evil treatment and racial injustice.

In his book, *Authentic Blues, its History and its Themes*⁵⁷ Robert Springer, in his research based on the Oxford English Dictionary, found out that the word “Blues” originated in the sixteenth century. Indeed, at this time, the blue color was the color of the devil, and every depressed individual was expected to experience these feelings because of those blue devils. The term blues is explained by the sadness and the melancholy of the music; it is called the “blues devil”, the hypnotic state and almost trance-like conveyed by the sound of Blues music. Then, this term began to carry a more negative connotation, and one has to wait until the beginning of the twentieth century for the term “Blues” to be associated with a musical genre.⁵⁸ The Blues is “nothing but a good man feeling bad,” or as famous bluesman Robert Johnson says in his song “Walking Blues,”

*“Some people tell you the worried Blues ain’t so bad, but it’s the worst feeling a good man most ever had.”*⁵⁹

Early blues is distinguished from slave music, among other things, by the fact that it is individualistic rather than collective. Blues music is a feeling, a means of expression. It is musical form indeed, but it means much more for the African American community. Blues is an individual reaction, mostly negative and painful, to a given situation experienced in one’s life. Thus, it appears difficult to give Blues music a precise birth date. Officially, by examining records sales, Blues was born in the early twentieth century. However, it appears obvious that this music was played before it was given a name. Indeed, people, and especially the African American community, did not wait until last century to experience feelings and transcribe them into music. The locations where Blues began are easier to find though.

⁵⁷ Robert Springer, *Authentic Blues, its History and its Themes* (Paris: Filipacchi, 1985).

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 37.

⁵⁹ Robert Johnson, “Walking Blues.” URL: <http://www.lyricstime.com/robert-johnson-walkingblues-lyrics.html>.

II.5.2. Birth Place of the Blues

Blues appeared in the region in America surrounding Mississippi, Arkansas, and the south of Tennessee, Alabama, and parts of Louisiana. This area was where segregation was the most strongly applied and where African Americans represented the largest part of the population. These hard conditions of living, from slavery to segregation in the south, were a fuel for inspiration, and became reflected in their music, as the following examples show:

*I never will go back to Alabama, that is not the place for me,
I never will go back to Alabama, that is not the place for me,
You know they killed my sister and my brother,
And the whole world let them people go down there free.
I never will love Alabama, Alabama seem to never have loved poor me,
I never will love Alabama, Alabama seem to never have loved poor me.
Oh God I wish you would rise up one day,
Lead my people to the land of pea'
My brother was taken up for my mother, and a police officer shot him
down,
My brother was taken up for my mother, and a police officer shot him
down,
I can't help but to sit down and cry sometime,
Think about how my poor brother lost his life.
Alabama, Alabama, why you wanna be so mean,
Alabama, Alabama, why you wanna be so mean,
You got my people behind a barbwire fence,
Now you tryin' to take my freedom away from me.⁶⁰*

This song describes the physical violence anticipated against African Americans in a realistic way. And goes further to narrate Segregation that is also a form of psychological violence that inflicted the African American community. The song is not intended to inspire an uprising against the oppression. Internally, the character of the song may be praying for peace and freedom from suffering, however, he does not have any confidence that he will reach this salvation. Therefore, he must leave Alabama, if he even can.⁶¹

⁶⁰J.B. Lenoir, "AlabamaBlues."Url : <http://www.lyrics007.com/J.B.%20Lenoir%20Lyrics/Alabama%20Blues%20Lyrics.html>.

⁶¹<https://shadowproof.com/2015/08/17/protest-song-of-the-week-alabama-blues/>

II.5.3. Formal Structure of the Blues: Historical Development, AAB Form, Language, and Call-and-Response

II.5.3.1. Historical Development of the Blues

Like its message, Blues did not appear in the form one knows today. It followed a process of development, along with the African American experience. The African heritage influenced this music in the sense that it is the common root of all African Americans brought to the North American continent. The biggest influence can be found in slavery. Beyond slave songs and Negro Spirituals, the feeling of inequality had the biggest influence. It brought, in a non-elaborated way, the first signs of protest and expression. Afterwards, the emancipation process began to individualize African-Americans. As a result, field hollers, the individual version of work songs, appeared.

Following emancipation, there was another influence on the complete development of Blues. African Americans were then confronted with a White, Western culture; to their way of life, but also to their customs and traditions. Among them were the ballads.⁶² A few songs from this repertoire were borrowed but the major influence to Blues concerns the structure of ballads. Indeed, they were following the rules of a very strict code that separates songs into various stanzas. This mix between White folklore and African American heritage resulted in the Blues structure one knows today.

II.5.3.2. Call and Response

Call-and-response⁶³ is one lyrical pattern that fascinated blues scholars. Referred to by Kofi Agawu as a “catch-all term,”⁶⁴ call-and-response is widely associated with generic concepts of African musical style and form, and can be used to describe the conversational nature of music from nearly all parts of Africa. A great simulation of this pattern could be seen during the years of the Atlantic slave trade, where musical performance in West African nations often consisted of repeating a relatively short musical unit again and again, with variation in its

⁶² The ballad is the most distinguished of all the types of folk songs. These songs are intended to be sung solo instead of by groups. It is a longer song that has short stanzas. They usually tell a story, or an event. Judith Tick, *Music in the USA, a Documentary Companion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 34

⁶³ Call-and-response is defined by *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* as: “The performance of musical phrases or longer passages in alternation by different voices or distinct groups, used in opposition in such a way as to suggest that they answer one another; it may involve spatial separation of the groups, and contrasts of volume, pitch, timbre, etc.” See, Barry Kernfeld, “Call and response.” *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd ed. Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed July 13, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>

⁶⁴ Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 110.

repetition”⁶⁵ Musical performance often featured two groups of rhythm, allowing both the leader of the reciters and the leader of the tom-toms⁶⁶ to give themselves up entirely to their inspiration and to multiply counter-time and syncopé.⁶⁷

“Call and response” is very common in the slave songs singing as well as African American folk and religious songs. However, since blues is generally a solo vocal tradition, the improvised guitar (or other instrumental) serves as an interlocutor and **responds** to each vocal line.⁶⁸ In other words, it is not the B line of an AAB blues that is the response; rather, the response is the instrumental (generally guitar) line that answers the vocal line at the end of each of the three four-measure phrases of the blues form.

This scheme is an integral part of the blues,⁶⁹ and vocal and instrumental lines alternate in call-and-response form. We can clearly see this pattern in B.B. King's method of singing, then playing his guitar then singing, then playing his guitar again. He seldom if ever does both at the same time. He says that his guitar “Lucille” answers his singing,

*“When I sing, I play in my mind; the minute I stop singing orally, I start to sing by playing Lucille.”*⁷⁰

II.5.3.3. AAB form and the 12 Bars Form

AAB/12 Bar Blues is the most common blues song form. An AAB pattern is used in both lyrics and melody. This is often set out in a "question-question-answer" format, made up of three 4 bar phrases in AAB Song Form.

*I would rather be buried in some cypress grove,
I would rather be buried in some cypress grove,
To have some woman, Lord, that I can't control.*⁷¹

The fundamental structure of 12 Bar Blues is three four-bar lines or sections. Often the first two and a half bars of each 4-bar section are vocal melody,

⁶⁵ Southern, Eileen. *The Music of Black Americans: A History*. 1971. 3rd. ed. New York: Norton, 1997.

⁶⁶ Tom-toms are a medium-sized cylindrical drum, of which one to three may be used in a drum kit.

⁶⁷ Senghor, Léopold Sédar. “The Spirit of Civilisation, or the Laws of African Negro Culture.” *Spec. issue of Présence Africaine* 8-10 (1956): 51-64.

⁶⁸ Oliver, Paul. *Blues Fell This Morning: The Meaning of the Blues*. New York: Horizon Press, 1960.

⁶⁹ Kubik, Gerhard. *Africa and the Blues*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999.

⁷⁰ <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1225845>

⁷¹ Skip James, “Cypress Grove Blues.” Url: <http://www.harptab.com/lyrics/ly4873.shtml>.

while the last one and a half bars contain an instrumental melodic hook that gives a sense of completion for the line. The instrumental melody often answers, echoes, repeats, or compliments the vocal melody being sung in the first two and a half bars. The AAB stanza likely arose from a performance culture of a call-and-response patterning where a second hemistich answers the first, an instrumental response answers each line, and a B-line answers the A-lines. Unlike the symmetrically balanced hierarchies of the 4/4 structure, the 12-bar structure is composed of worried symmetry at every level. Within each line, the balance shifts toward the “response” element and within each stanza, the balance shifts toward “call” element (the A-units)⁷².

The 12-bar structure used in the AAB pattern is a very common structure in blues music. Many Blues songs are structured using the AAB format. Unlike AAA or AABA song forms, which describe the overall structure of the song, AAB describes the structure of an individual verse. AAB is always used as a compound form⁷³.

The AAB verse form, when performed by blues singers, is characterized by a specific sort of repetition-with-variation: The A line, when repeated, is sung over a different chord (the subdominant or IV chord) than the first time around, and singers frequently embroider or “worry” the repeated line in a series of microtonal adjustments, sometimes with lyric elisions or embellishments, that highlight this chord change in subtle but important ways. The difference between the two iterations of the A line is just substantial enough that scholars sometimes refer to the second A line as the A-prime line. The B line, by contrast, is an answering line rather than an echoing line; it almost always rhymes with the A line (although eye-rhymes and non-rhymes occasionally show up), and it sometimes puts an unexpected spin on the theme or emotion or question that was set in motion by the AA pair.

II.5.3.4. The Blues Language

Just by existing and expressing its true self, and without consciously striving for it, Blues music represented a challenge to the tyranny of dominant culture. The society in which it came to life was based on the notion of supremacy of “White” ideals. The Eurocentric culture was dominant in every single social construct, in every symbol and in every icon. Blues music, as the voice of an oppressed and exploited minority of people, created an antithesis to dominant social structures; it did so in an unexpected way, by breaking the musical status

⁷²Du Bois, W. E. B. “Criteria of Negro Art.” 1926. Gates and Jarrett 257-260.

⁷³<https://www.songstuff.com/song-writing/article/aab-song-form/>

quo.⁷⁴Blues music did not intend to be political, nor did it aim at deconstructing a dominant system. That is where the true force of this form of expression lies; not in its intention, but in its actual, unrefined and simple existence.

Blues music thus originates as a non-verbal language, as a necessity to express feelings of pain and grief, and in this way as a tool of (passive) resistance. It became an instrument of cultural affirmation among African-Americans, and more importantly, specifically made for African-Americans⁷⁵ Blues artists, songwriters and performers often dealt with the leading idea of mortality in an ambivalent way. Emotional trauma forcibly confronts one with the vulnerability of human existence which is dominated by suffering, death, loss and unpredictability. Conflicting emotions about mortality are conveyed through the lyrics of a song by an unknown writer that inspired Richard M. Jones's poem "Trouble In Mind":

*I'm goin' to lay my head on some
Lonesome railroad track
I'm goin' to lay my head on some
Lonesome railroad track
And when the train come along, I'll snatch my damn head back.*

This song expresses, both tragically and ironically, the absurdity in dealing with mortality: Life is depicted as too painful to be dealt with, but too valuable for it to end at the same time.

One can notice an unusual amount of repetition and a distinctive form in most blues song's lyrics, it is one of the things that characterizes early blues music. American music in the first two decades of the twentieth century, whether the popular music of Tin Pan Alley⁷⁶ or the religious music of the mainline black churches, gravitated towards a sixteen-bar verse format, with popular music often adding a sixteen-bar bridge. Blues, by contrast, offered itself in a three-line, twelve-bar format, and without a bridge as discusses in the previous section. In a philosophical sense, it is almost as though what blues song does is try out a statement, one that proposes an emotional or stylistic orientation towards life's traumas, then reprises or repeats that statement in a way that suggests either a possible variant on the initial stance or, by contrast, an intensification of the ini-

⁷⁴ Salaam; Kalamu ya (1995): It Didn't Jes Grew: The Social and Aesthetic Significance of AfricanAmerican Music. African American Review, Vol. 29, No. 2, Special Issues on The Music (Summer,1995), pp. 351-375. Indiana State University

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

⁷⁶ Tin Pan Alley comprised the commercial music of songwriters of ballads, dance music, and Vaudeville and its name eventually became synonymous with American popular music in general.

tial stance. The B line, in any case, puts a cap on it—or in it—and sends the listener hurtling into the next verse.

The repetition-with-variation-as-intensification dynamic, so crucial to the language and formal structure of the blues, is one that feels uncannily familiar to those who have suffered on the field of battle that is failed love:

*I hate you
I hate you
Take the damn house, and your little dog, too.*

In an urgently felt need to unburden an aching heart, and in the way that a certain kind of immediately repeated complaint may facilitate that unburdening, repeating their indictments in this way, blues songs harden romantic rage with metaphors that exaggerate to produce bitter laughter. New Orleans blues guitarist Lonnie Johnson ended his seven-year common-law marriage to blues singer Mary Smith in 1932—she had borne him six children during that period—and the acrimony that powered that breakup is audible in “She’s Making Whoopee in Hell Tonight”:

*Baby, you’ve been gone all day baby . . . set to make whoopee tonight
You’ve been gone all day . . . set to make whoopee tonight
I’m gonna take my razor and cut your late hours . . . I will be serving you
right*

*The undertaker’s been here and gone, I give him your height and size
Undertaker’s been here and gone, I give him your height and size
You’ll be making whoopee with the devil in hell tomorrow night*

*You made me love you . . . just got me for your slave
You made me love you . . . just got me for your slave
And from now on you’ll be making whoopee in your lonesome grave*

*Devil got ninety thousand women, he just needs one more.
Devil got ninety thousand women, he just needs one more.
An’ you just the type of woman for him, mama, you booked out and
bound to go.*

*I tol’ you next time you go out, please carry your black dress ‘long.
Tol’ you next time you go out, please carry your black dress ‘long.*

'Cause a coffin will be your present, and hell will be your bran' new home.⁷⁷

II.6. Jazz from the inclusion towards revolutionizing the American culture

The jazz era was a cultural period of the “Roaring Twenties” or 1920's which influenced all aspect of the American culture such as literature, fashion, industry, music. The Jazz culture touched all segments of the society in the post-world II era and after the tumult of the Great Depression⁷⁸.

Jazz music was created in New Orleans, quickly expanded in New York and Kansas City passing through Chicago. The local musicians impacted the sound of the music in each city and increased the number of records made by black singers. It helped the availability of jazz music in the United States to the upper middle-class listeners and could reach the white audience. Furthermore, its success had aroused a melting-pot contrary to blues music for example which was performed mainly by African American.

Unlike blues music, that was exclusively performed by blacks, jazz music was as inter-racial as the melting pot of New Orleans. Blacks were not the only ones who played jazz. Jazz groups were formed by Italians, Creoles and all sorts of European immigrant.

II.6.1. An attempt to define jazz

The word jazz remains entangled in a web of etymological confusion. For instance, jazz is said to come from Chas. (Charles), Jasbo⁷⁹ or from an African word meaning "to hurry up"⁸⁰. Musically, jazz has its roots in the meter, harmonic rhythm. And melodic figurations of ragtime, flavored with the "worried tones" (blue notes) and the relaxed rhythmic articulation of the blues. With “improvisation” and “swing” as the main musical standards that makes it unique.

But the question “what is this thing called jazz?” remains unanswered due to the complexity of the development of this art form. Defining jazz is not as easy as attributing a historical, thematic and formalistic definition to any other musical genre. Simply because, Jazz is a diverse and dynamic subject and it cannot be

⁷⁷ Lonnie Johnson, “She's Making Whoopee In Hell Tonight (1930)” URL: <https://www.lyricsbox.com/lonnie-johnson-she-s-making-whoopee-in-hell-tonight-1930-lyrics-xhpw5jn.html>

⁷⁸**The Great Depression** was the worst economic downturn in the history of the industrialized world, lasting from 1929 to 1939. It began after the stock market crash of October 1929, which sent Wall Street into a panic and wiped-out millions of investors.

⁷⁹**Jasbo Brown** was an itinerant, and perhaps, legendary Negro musician.

⁸⁰ Dom Cerulli, Burt Kora11 and Mort Nasatir, editors, *The Jazz Word* (New York, 1960).

analyzed using traditional means. The main reason that jazz is difficult to analyze is because of the improvisation that jazz uses. It is difficult to track things that aren't recorded and improvisation changes every time it is played and it isn't written down

Thus, this part of the thesis will attempt to contextualize Jazz and its development from a geographical perspective and a chronological approach.

II.6.2. Different Jazz in different geographical locations

Jazz is considered to be the first true American art form and it has diffused from a central location as a result of the blending of cultures throughout the locations. With geographical expansion, it moved from the speakeasies to dancehalls and clubs. Social problems along with economic issues spurred the movement of jazz from New Orleans to other places, such as Chicago, New York, and Kansas City. These places are very influential to the development of jazz music. As jazz became mobile, moving from place to place, it evolved differently, using the cultural influences that each location offered at that time.

II.6.2.1. New Orleans

New Orleans was established in 1718 by the French. In 1783, France ceded the territory to Spain and shortly after that, it was returned to France. The United States acquired the land as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803⁸¹. Because of this somewhat consistent trade of land, an early mixing of cultures occurred in this area. French, Spanish, and African influences are the notable cultures that were present in this area.

Following the abolition of slavery, many African Americans migrated to New Orleans. An integral port city that offered them more opportunities than rural regions in the South. There is common consensus among jazz aficionados⁸² that jazz music developed in New Orleans by the African Americans. This early jazz, known as Dixieland, was pioneered by black musicians, and was born specifically, in Congo Square, now called Louis Armstrong Park⁸³ where African Americans gathered to play music and have a sense of nostalgia towards their homeland. During these gatherings, they used percussion and string instruments, much like those used in western Africa. In conjunction with these instruments, the people would chant, as a form of early improvisation. The New Orleans region al-

⁸¹Wikipedia contributors, "History of New Orleans," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=History_of_New_Orleans&oldid=1025913753 (accessed June 17, 2021).

⁸²a person who is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about an activity, subject, or pastime.

lowed African Americans to reproduce their native music and dance, however, these opportunities decreased drastically throughout the 20th century.⁸⁴

Dixieland combined traditional African rhythms, as well as earlier styles like Ragtime, Blues, and marches. It also included new aspects as improvisation. Songs like “When the Saints Go Marching In” defined the Dixieland style, and techniques like having one instrument (usually a Trumpet) play a melody while other instruments improvise around that melody the same way Call-and-response characterizes the nature of most of the early African American music. Solos were not common at this point in the evolution of jazz though. The emphasis was on collective improvisation.

To understand the birth of jazz music, one must understand the atmosphere that was conducive to the cultural blending that occurred. Around the turn of the 20th century, New Orleans was a melting pot of cultures; it was a major port city that gathered people from all over the world. The people of New Orleans were exposed to a variety of traditions and cultures from around the globe. The party atmosphere was present in New Orleans because of the location of the area, it received many visitors and they all contributed to the cultures and traditions of New Orleans.

The streets of New Orleans were alive with music, such as blues, ragtime and the favored brass bands. The brass bands spread into the area of Storyville (created in 1897 by a city ordinance). Storyville, referred to the District by musicians, is essential to the development of jazz; it was the red-light district where one could find saloons, dancehalls, clubs and brothels. These establishments created a thriving economic system and a demand for live music that was funded by the continuous party environment. Ethnicity was seen not as a problem, but as a solution to make the party even better by combining the differences and enhancing the party.⁸⁵

In 1917, Storyville was shut down by the U.S. navy and this resulted in a loss of work and was a catalyst to the diffusion of jazz. Jazz simply moved along at that point. The black musicians went north for better jobs and more tolerant attitudes. This resulted in the black communities of Chicago, New York and Kansas City. The Era of New Orleans jazz lasted through the 1920 and it is very closely related to the marching bands that were popular in New Orleans at the turn of the century and lasted until the beginning of the early twentieth century.

⁸⁴Gioia, Ted. "The History of Jazz." In *The History of Jazz*, by Ted Gioia, 1-197. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

⁸⁵ *Music in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1966), p. 651

II.6.2.2. Chicago

By the mid-teens of the 20th century, jazz had moved from its cultural hearth of New Orleans and diffused to the north, infusing the cities of Chicago and New York with the culture and music of the jazz tradition. By 1916, the spread of prohibition (which banned the sale of alcohol in the USA) caused numerous speakeasies⁸⁶ to spring forth. This establishment that sold contraband alcohol emerged as lively venues for jazz music. This time period, known as the “Jazz Age”, was both a highly influential and highly detrimental to jazz culture.

By 1917, ragtime had faded away and was fully replaced by jazz. Chicago was a destination for migrating musicians using railroads and waterways for transport out of the American south and into the northern areas of America. The great jazz era of the 1920s centered in Chicago, mostly in the downtown section south of the Chicago River. The roaring twenties was also an Age of Jazz.

Jazz remained deeply rooted in New Orleans, with innovative performers and bandleader like Louis Armstrong forging new ground for the genre with addition of “scat” singing (vocalizing melodic, nonsensical words) and a shift toward solo playing. Jazz cultivated in New Orleans moved into Chicago with African American migrants, and took on the moniker of “hot jazz”⁸⁷

Due to jazz’s reputation of being tied to speakeasies, many saw it as vulgar and immoral, and a key element of the decadent “Roaring 20’s”. Regardless, jazz was able to persevere, and the period produced one the first jazz-inspired orchestral pieces, George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blues* that has become a staple of 20th-century classical music.⁸⁸

Chicago jazz is also referred to as Dixieland and it lasted through the 1920s. This happened when musicians left New Orleans for Chicago, searching for employment and better social conditions. Dixieland is very close to New Orleans jazz. Dixieland jazz made use of the collective improvisation and it also allowed for the solos and incorporated the piano⁸⁹. The movement of jazz to Chicago and then to New York illustrates that both Chicago and New York can be labeled as a dual secondary cultural hearth of jazz. At the same time in the 1920s that jazz was thriving in Chicago, it was also thriving in New York.

⁸⁶An illicit liquor shop or drinking club.

⁸⁷Early Jazz (New York, 1968), p 94

⁸⁸Winthrop Sargeant, *Jazz: A History* (original Title: jazz, hot and Hybrid (New York, 1964), PP, 169-170.

⁸⁹ Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz* (New York, 1968), p. 80

II.6.2.3. New York

New York, as Gunther Schuller has pointed out

Was in the 1920s, as it is now, the musical centre of the world. The most important publishing houses, recording companies and other business activity involved with music were located there or nearby. The city irresistibly attracted musicians in all fields and styles. Sooner or later everyone in the music field, regardless of where his first successes were scored, had to come to New York for ultimate recognition. And so too, the new popular music styles and dances that developed during World War I and in the immediate post-war period made their way to New York. This period of course, coincides with the emergence of jazz on a national scale⁹⁰

Jazz in New York is categorized according to geographical styles⁹¹, and since New York at the time was the cultural center of the world, opportunities were plentiful of hearing European “classical” music played by the commercial white musicians. But the mainstream of jazz in New York was performed by the Harlem Musicians.

While it has always been possible to hear musicians playing New Orleans and Chicago jazz, many of the characteristics of the white New York style were not developed, or were simply ignored by later generations of jazz musicians. This is particularly true in the areas of harmony, instrumental technique, and Integration of musical ideas. Similarly, the intricacies of the music of this school have been largely ignored by jazz historians as a valid current in the mainstream of early jazz.

Harlem in New York was the location for jazz. What was once a predominantly white, upper-class neighborhood in the late nineteen-teens, seventy percent of Harlem was owned by African Americans and their economy was excellent. Because there was such an influx of people into Harlem, rent was often double the number of sections of New York that were owned by white people. The epic of the Harlem Renaissance isn't one that is easily told, the general consensus is that it must be experienced however, it can be somewhat defined by the rent parties and speakeasies that littered the landscape at the Harlem location. Because of the high rent for living in the area, renters became very innovative, throwing parties where you could come and dance for a small fee at the door. The speakeasies came about due to a rumor that “America was dry”, however,

⁹⁰Early Jazz (New York, 1968), pp. 245-246.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p 275

the gangsters and the bootleggers kept the liquor flowing at these establishments like the way it was in Chicago.⁹²

One of the earliest and most enterprising of Negro Harlem musicians was James Reese Europe (1881-1919). Europe founded the Clef Club in 1910, an organization which united Negro musicians in New York, thus gaining for them the power of collective bargaining and increased job opportunities. The Clef Club also put on concerts featuring Negro religious music, ragtime, popular soloists, and minstrelsy. After a successful concert at Carnegie Hall in 1914, Europe left the Clef Club and joined the famous dance team of Irene and Vernon Castle as their musical director. In 1913, Europe made his first recordings for Victor, the tunes "Too Kuch Mustard"⁵ and "Down Home Rag."

The following statement by Charters and Kunststadt describes very colorfully- how this music sounds on recordings:

Despite the poor quality of the recording techniques the exuberance of Europe's orchestra comes through. Men are shouting back and forth, instruments are playing the lead in unison, giving it back and forth, trying to outdo each other in variations. Usually the melody is played straight by the clarinet and violin until the last choruses, when one of the other begins to play rhythmic figures behind the melodic line. Unfortunately the brass instruments were placed in the background, so there is only a suggestion of (trumpeter) Cricket Smith's playing. But the excitement of the others is almost overwhelming.⁹³

The Negro jazz musician in New York has a long history, more varied and more influential than his compatriots in New Orleans and Chicago. This is due, of course, to the fact that New York is one of the entertainment capitals of the world. New Orleans musicians, influenced by the blues and such extra musical factors as the slower pace of Southern rural life. Negro musicians in the Mid-and Southwest however, were greatly influenced by ragtime and showed a fondness for marching and concert bands.

II.6.2.4. Kansas City

Kansas City hosted a venue of jazz during the 1930s and the swing era was born. Kansas City jazz is closely identified with the black bands of the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1930s, the city was the crossroads of the United States resulting in a mix of cultures that were previously separate. Most travel required a stop in Kansas City. In addition to that, the city completely disregarded the liquor laws and

⁹²John Edward:(*Jazz The First Century*,Harper Collins).(New York, 2000).

⁹³ Charters and Kunststadt, *Jazz: A History of the New York Scene*, pp. 38-39.

hours, it welcomed musicians with open arms, something that made it the “New Storyville” because of this utter disregard for the rules set forth.

Kansas City jazz musicians were mostly not native to the area, but jam battles⁹⁴ could keep variations of a song being played all night long. Also, the Swing Era was first introduced in Kansas, probably the most genre-typifying time in jazz of the 1930s and the 1940’s, in which jazz music spread across the country. The swing era meant big bands, vocal leads, and danceable music, which moved jazz from the immoral reputation it acquired during the jazz age. This era birthed many of the big names known in jazz today such as Benny Goodman, Gloria Parker (one of the first female band leaders), William “Count” Basie, and Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington.

Swing music lasted from 1935 to 1945, also known as the Big Band era. Swing is more repetitious because of the size of the orchestra and it required written arrangements. Swing was the most popular of any jazz era. Because of the cultural blending that occurred at this location as well. The music alienated some African American crowds, as they felt the style was a departure from the roots of jazz. They were concerned with the influx of white players and bandleaders in a traditionally African American genre. Regardless, swing was the most popular form of American music throughout much of the 1940’s, becoming the soundtrack to the Second World War.

Jazz moved back up to New York, this time making its home on 52nd Street, between 5th and 6th Avenues and it covered the spillover that surrounded Radio City. When prohibition was repealed, the first jazz clubs opened on 52nd Street.⁹⁵

II.6.3. Chronological study of the development of Jazz through history

The process of identifying a history and tradition of jazz has been one of the most significant influences on jazz music and culture. The quick succession of stylistic changes in jazz due to the geographical changes affected by different cultures have often caused disagreements as to the role of innovation in jazz and the character of its authentic forms.⁹⁶ While these disagreements are now largely amongst academics, throughout the twentieth century musicians, critics, and members of the music industry had been the principal actors in formulating jazz

⁹⁴two different musicians playing variations of the same song

⁹⁵A Passion for Jazz www.apassion4jazz.net

⁹⁶John Gennari, ‘Jazz Criticism: Its Development and Ideologies’, *Black American Literature Forum* 25.3 (1991); Scott DeVeaux, ‘Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography’, *Black American Literature Forum* 25.3 (1991).

history.⁹⁷ Their participation has helped shape the music itself, the manner in which it is performed, and its place in American culture.

This part of the dissertation suggests a chronological study of jazz development.

II.6.3.1. The 1920s and 1930s

The revival of “traditional” jazz that started in the late 1930s marked the first major impact of history on the industry. The revivalists were a group of musicians and critics who often complained that the developments that characterized swing were too formulaic and clichéd.⁹⁸ They promoted jazz musicians from the 1920s and earlier as purveyors of the timeless and historically significant style. While a large number of white musicians participated in this revival, the focus of most traditionalist critics, journals, and record labels was on the black musicians of New Orleans.⁹⁹ Many of these “original” New Orleans musicians represented the uneducated, “folk” roots of jazz epitomized by the experiences of many blacks in the early twentieth century South.¹⁰⁰ In fact, it was their “folk” quality that implied their authenticity and historical significance as the pioneers of American popular music.

II.6.3.2. The 1940’s

As the revivalists looked back to the roots of jazz to identify “authentic” musicians, the critics and musicians promoting bebop in the mid-1940s advertised themselves as creating original and therefore authentic jazz by moving the genre forward.¹⁰¹ Bebop musicians wanted to break away from the conceptions of the blues championed by the traditionalists because they found these limiting and unforgiving of their progressive, modern style.¹⁰² Inseeing themselves as the next dominant style of jazz, bebop musicians hoped to enjoy the same popularity as

⁹⁷Blesh, *Shining Trumpets*; Paul Eduard Miller, *Esquire’s 1945 Jazz Book* (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1945); Nat Hentoff and Albert J McCarthy, editors, *Jazz: new perspectives on the history of jazz by twelve of the world’s foremost jazz critics and scholars* (New York: Rinehart, 1959).

⁹⁸Leonard Feather, *The Jazz Years: earwitness to an era* (London: Quartet, 1986), 82-83; Barry Ulanov, ‘Mouldy Figs vs. Moderns!’ *Metronome* (1947) in *Riffs and Choruses*, ed. Andrew Clark (New York: Continuum, 2001), 137-138.

⁹⁹David Stuart, ‘Bunk Johnson and His Superior Jazz Band/Bunk Johnson (Good Time Jazz M 12048) 1962’, in *Setting the Tempo*, ed. Tom Piazza (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 61-68; Paul Eduard Miller, ‘The Jazz Scene: 1944’, in *Esquire’s Jazz Book 1945*, ed. Paul Eduard Miller (New York: Esquire, 1945), 114-115

¹⁰⁰Stuart ‘Bunk Johnson’ 65

¹⁰¹Bernard Gendron, ‘Mouldy Figs’ and Modernists: *Jazz at War (1942-1946)* in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 31-56.

¹⁰²Miles Davis and Quincy Troupe, *Miles: the autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster), 59; Leonard Feather, *Inside Be-bop* (New York: J.J. Robbins & Sons, 1949), 45.

swing big bands, but had significant trouble winning over the sizable audiences who were looking for dance music.¹⁰³

This failure led to varied efforts to popularize bebop, which in conjunction with the uninformed mainstream media, had by the end of the 1940s created popular confusion as to what defined bebop.¹⁰⁴ Despite the confusion amongst the public, bebop had established itself as the most popular style among young musicians and had consequently positioned itself at the forefront of jazz.

II.6.3.3. The 1950s

The dominant style of jazz changed once again in the 1950s as young black musicians reintroduced elements of the blues and gospel into jazz to form a style referred to as hard bop. This music developed alongside the Civil Rights movement, and eventually took on a politically assertive role with musicians calling for freedom and racial equality.¹⁰⁵

II.6.3.4. The 1960s

The assertiveness of the 1950s grew more during the 1960s as the Civil Rights movements intensified.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, free jazz was introduced by a new generation of musicians who rejected many fundamental aspects of Western music in favor of political and musical freedom, but the abstract nature of their style failed to attract significant record sales and live audiences.¹⁰⁷ The increased political assertiveness and decreased audiences of many young musicians created a situation in which the industry instead promoted older musicians such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, extolling them as leading representatives of jazz music.¹⁰⁸ Their historical prominence, international popularity, relative political moderation, and steady, if small, domestic fan base all contributed to the wide public acceptance and profitability of these musicians. Their increasing age also meant that a founding era of jazz history was about to pass away forever.

¹⁰³Bechet et al., *Treat It Gentle*, 192-193; Dizzy Gillespie and Al Fraser, *To Be, or not...to Bop: memoirs* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1979), 223.

¹⁰⁴Danny Barker and Alyn Shipton, *A Life in Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 170; Stowe, *Swing Changes*, 215; John S Wilson, 'Nat Nominates Himself Advance Man for Bop', *Down Beat* 16.7 (April 22, 1949), 1.

¹⁰⁵Saul, *Freedom Is, Freedom Ain't*; John Szwed, 'Musical Style and Racial Conflict', *Phylon* 27.4 (1966).

¹⁰⁶Archie Shepp, 'Black Power and Black Jazz', *New York Times* (November 26, 1967); Frank Kofsky, 'The Freedom Suite/Sonny Rollins (Riverside 3010) 1968' in *Setting the Tempo*, 221.

¹⁰⁷Yanow called free jazz the 'least commercial and accessible form of improvised music.' Yanow, *Jazz: A Regional Exploration*, 200.

¹⁰⁸Paul Eduard Miller, 'Corrected Manuscript for *The Best Jazz 1967*', 111-112; Von Eschen, *Satchmo*.

II.6.3.5. The 1970s

In the 1970s, the aging musicians were included as part of an effort organized by black scholars to rewrite American history.¹⁰⁹ Although black musicians were the primary focus of this history, white writers published most of the new works on jazz. They authored the first jazz canon and comprehensive histories of jazz in the 1970s. Although different canons had been promoted under various styles, many musicians and critics supported the creation of one that demonstrated an evolutionary progression of jazz. The vast majority of critics interested in creating this canon also saw hard bop as the ending point, with free jazz gaining brief mention at best and fusion being generally excluded from the genre.

The interest in jazz history and the age of many canonical musicians gave urgency to certain projects, such as capturing oral histories and publishing autobiographies. Most jazz autobiographies were written by ghost writers, who generally demonstrated an interest primarily in the musician's contributions to the developing canon. Musicians considered part of the new jazz canon such as Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, and Dizzy Gillespie were also given recognition for their contribution to American music and culture through Presidential awards and honorary doctorates.

II.6.4. Determining Jazz's artistic and cultural status

Jazz had created a sizable conflict throughout the 1920s over whether or not it embodied American values and was thus a truly American music. However, even among those who supported jazz, the question remained of determining its artistic and cultural status.

The divide between classical music as high art and popular music was one that played a significant role in the production and consumption of both forms. These categories were fundamental to determining venues, record labels, advertising, and remuneration for musicians. Thus record companies limited popular music recordings, including jazz, to three minutes, because of the physical limitations of the record itself.¹¹⁰ However, because classical music had developed before the advent of such technology, record companies imposed no such limitations and instead used the required amount of discs required to record the entire

¹⁰⁹See Murray's chapter entitled 'Black Studies and the aims of education' in Albert Murray, *The Omni-Americans: Black Experience and American Culture* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970).

¹¹⁰William Howard Kenney, 'Historical Context and the Definition of Jazz: Putting more of the History in "Jazz History"', in: Krin Gabbard, editor, *Jazz Among the Discourses* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 110-111.

piece.¹¹¹ Besides the significant differences in the industry, high art and popular music were seen by contemporaries as having contrary cultural value. In an assessment typical of many articles on jazz from the early 1920s, composer and pianist Percy Grainger noted the differences between the categories:

*The public likes Jazz because of the shortness of its forms and its slender mental demands upon the hearer. No music is ever really popular which is too long or too complicated. On the other hand, length and the ability to handle complicated music are invariable characteristics of really great genius... Therefore, the laws which govern Jazz and other popular music can never govern music of the greatest depth or the greatest importance. I do not wish to belittle Jazz or other popular music... but there will always exist between the best popular music and classical music that same distinction that there is between a perfect farmhouse and a perfect cathedral.*¹¹²

While jazz began to earn widespread acceptance by many musicians and journalists in the early 1920s, this music simultaneously faced musical, moral, and racial opposition that created considerable pressures within the industry. Jazz was still characterized as black music, and so journalists largely affiliated it with the cabarets, sporting houses, speakeasies, theatres, and various other places that were accessible to black musicians who faced segregation elsewhere. The aesthetics of jazz, rightly or wrongly, were therefore associated with activities that occurred in these venues—most notably gambling, drinking, relaxed sexual mores, and even prostitution. Vices of this nature were far removed from the music of “respectable” concert and dance halls. Although guided more by racist stereotypes than evidence, jazz appeared to such people as guilty by association, which helps explain why many distanced themselves from the music.

By participating in the high art of classical music, black musicians performed on the same playing field as the best white musicians, thus avoiding the negative and racist descriptions and reviews of critics. While there was some logic to this approach, it failed to acknowledge the considerable professional restrictions black musicians faced when performing “white” music, and the pressure to limit themselves to forms of music recognized as black, which kept most of them away from classical music. However, the black press faced considerable pressure from their readers to counteract racial stereotypes, but often this had to be done in a way that minimized controversy and the threat of retribution from

¹¹¹The term record ‘album’ comes from these early classical recordings, which required several records and were therefore collected and sold as book-like albums.

¹¹²Percy Grainger, ‘What Effect is Jazz Likely to Have Upon the Music of the Future?’ *Etude* (September 1924) in *Jazz in Print*, 353.

white authorities or vigilantes. The result of this difficult situation was that throughout the 1920s black publications featured a variety of responses to jazz, but few were of substantial help to musicians.

The situation was precarious enough to discourage most black political publications from even commenting on music, but as debate about the unique contributions of jazz to American arts developed it became harder for writers to ignore. For instance, it took two years for the black political magazine **The Opportunity** to feature an editorial on jazz in America. In May 1925, editorialist Charles Johnson agreed with the position that the “American essence” was expressed in jazz by the “unlikely Negro.” Encouraged by the increasingly popular and prominent place that jazz had achieved in American culture, Johnson concluded:

What an immense, even if unconscious irony the Negroes have devised! They, who of all Americans are most limited in self-expression, least considered and most denied, have forged the key to the interpretation of the American spirit.¹¹³

The affinity of the black middle class for classical music was also shared by many white musicians who were turned away from jazz by the racial, moral, and musical condemnations that it provoked. White musicians were alert to the commercial benefits of “hot jazz” and that was adapted to classical instrumentation and arrangements. In the process, however, such musicians and composers eliminated or greatly simplified most of intrinsic characteristics of black music which made it popular as something representative of America, namely improvisation, its unique rhythm, timbre, harmony and melody. Such a move was expedient for white musicians, not least because it helped make jazz into a more generally American product disassociated with race.

The balance between being at once artistic, inspiring morally acceptable dancing, and achieving commercial success was often very difficult to obtain, but it characterized the country’s most successful jazz bands in the 1920s. Because these bands were invariably white, they made jazz as “American music” somewhat paradoxical. The majority of the jazz music Americans were listening to was produced by white musicians who were consciously distancing themselves from the music’s black innovators. While being seen by most present-day scholars as compromising jazz or not playing jazz at all, white band leaders like Paul Whiteman were indispensable in making it the popular music of America.

¹¹³Charles Johnson *The Opportunity* (May 1925) quoted in Alwyn Williams, ‘Jazz and the New Negro: Harlem’s intellectuals wrestle with the art of the age’, *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 21.1 (2002), 6.

II.6.5. Jazz representing the black experience

Just as early white band leaders like Isham Jones, Vincent Lopez, and Rudy Valley rejected the term jazz because of its associations with black music, black musicians had by the 1950s often rejected the term jazz because of its associations with pre-war white bands. They saw jazz as a genre fashioned by whites, while black musicians simply referred to their music as black music or African American music.

Thus, in an interview with fellow musician Art Taylor, trumpeter Charles Tolliver insisted that jazz could not be defined by the music or musicians, for “what it should be and what it isn’t is a matter of who controls what.” He suggested that “If you control the media, you can change the dictionary and put in, ‘Our form of music is a black experience. It was originated by black people and it should be called Afro-American music’; something like that would be cool.”¹¹⁴

Asserting that jazz was a product of black experience proved to be an unpopular move amongst those who were more comfortable with jazz as a race-less and class-less American music. Included in this group were many in the press, academia, and government, and white musicians were particularly outspoken in this regard. Their livelihoods were directly threatened, and many consequently accused their black counterparts of discriminating against them, a kind of inverse discrimination labeled ‘Crow Jim.’ Outspoken bassist and band leader Charles Mingus exemplified the black musicians’ reaction to this when he suggested that:

*Until we start lynching white people, there is no word that can mean the same as Jim Crow means. Until we own Bethlehem Steel and RCA Victor, plus Columbia Records and several other industries, the term Crow Jim has no meaning...Aren’t you white men asking too much when you ask me to stop saying this is my music? Especially when you don’t give me anything else?*¹¹⁵

Still others saw the African American moniker for jazz as not going far enough to remove white participation and ownership in jazz. In conjunction with ideas of Afrocentrism in the 1960s and 1970s, many black artists simply called jazz African music, taking it out of its American context. For drummer Art Blakey, acknowledgments of jazz’s American historical roots were imperative to dealing with its place in American culture, as “Jazz is known all over the world as an American musical art form and that’s it. No America, no jazz. I’ve seen people

¹¹⁴Charles Tolliver quoted in Taylor, Notes and Tones, 220.

¹¹⁵Charles Mingus quoted in ‘The Playboy Panel: Jazz—Today and Tomorrow’ (February 1964) in Saul, Freedom Is, Freedom Ain’t, 154-155.

try to connect it to other countries, for instance to Africa, but it doesn't have a damn thing to do with Africa." While some of the musical culture of black Americans had clearly descended from their African ancestors, it was their experience in America's "multi-racial society" that defined the culture and music: "There are no black people in America who can say they are of pure African descent. Our parents were slaves, so you don't know whose grandmother was bending over picking cotton when the slave owner walked up behind her! There was nothing we could do about it."¹¹⁶ Blakey articulated a common perception that the unique racial situations in the United States had produced the people and sensibilities from which jazz came.

Although influenced by the Civil Rights movements, advancing the idea that jazz represented black American experience was not simply a political stance. In many ways, the social impact of the jazz industry was considerably different for black musicians because for much of the twentieth century music was one of the only professional fields available to blacks in the United States. Even within the music industry, black musicians were mostly restricted to genres recognized as black in origin, making jazz itself particularly important. Many jazz musicians had hoped to play classical music, but realized this was not possible. This kind of discrimination continued through the years of Civil Rights, and Miles Davis experienced it during his studies at Juilliard, claiming that "I knew that no white symphony orchestra was going to hire a Nigro like me, no matter how good I was or how much music I knew."¹¹⁷

In addition to the institutions identified as important to the birth of jazz, black musicians also mentioned the special social functions that the music had enjoyed over its development. More than simply an aesthetic expression, various forms of black music had served as an essential form of social communication when more overt forms were either dangerous or socially and commercially unviable. This level of communication was important through much of the development of jazz.

II.7. Conclusion

All in all, African American music had always played an important role in the lives of black Americans, from the days of slavery to its development throughout the years to be a form of peaceful rebellion against social and political problems as well as racism and racial discrimination. Blues and Jazz precisely, carried the African Americans throughout the dusty roads of segregation in their

¹¹⁶Art Blakey quoted in Taylor, *Notes and Tones*, 242.

¹¹⁷Davis and Troupe, *Miles*, 59.

American experience journey. Although the barriers and the color lines African American musicians saw during the development of these art forms, yet they managed to participate in the political and social movements as a contribution to the African American community. They created new ways and styles, and paved the floor to other African American art forms to emerge. They survived and broke down the stereotypes and protocols upon the American society, and helped the African American subculture to penetrate it.



**CHAPTER-III. The Conceptualization of
the African-American
Identity through Blues
and Jazz**

III.1. Introduction

The identity of African Americans has been greatly influenced by the cultural forces of the social structure. Blues and jazz, like any artistic expression that emerges from a society, reflected all the changes in their identity, all racial, ethnic and class prejudices. African American music will reveal important data about all these issues. From its beginnings in the times of slavery, going through abolition, and its struggle for a denied identity in the sixties. Blackness and art as a political action.

Within this framework and in order open the black box of ethnicity in blues and jazz, historical and psycho-cultural influences on Black Americans' identity development will be analyzed in this chapter, beginning with the slavery of the eighteenth century, for psycho-historians have misinterpreted the unique psychological aspects of the experiences of Black Americans when interpreting the history of Blacks and in developing relevant psychological theories. Moving to the period after the abolition of slavery and the civil right movement. And after highlighting the roll of Blues and Jazz in the development of identity, there will be an attempt to show how Blues and Jazz played a role in female artist's development of identity

III.2. The development of African American Cultural Identity

III.2.1. Cultural Identity

The cultural identity refers to the common features of a person "self-definition" in relation to race – genetic features – age, tradition, religion, social class, and language. The cultural identity is the emotional significance linked to one's sense of belonging and affiliation of the cultural characteristics in relation to his ethnic group.¹¹⁸

III.2.2. History of the development of the African American cultural identity

Identity must be examined not just from an individual perspective, but also in terms of the individual's relationship within the social and historical developments of society.¹¹⁹ No human thought is immune from the ideologizing influences of its social context. This position opposes the idea that an individual's inner motives, ego, and traits are the primary determinants in the development of

¹¹⁸Hansberry William, Cynthia: *The Sound Of Blackness: African American Language, Social and Cultural Identities* (Nashville, Tennessee, 2007).

¹¹⁹Erikson, E. *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 1968

identity.¹²⁰ Cultural forces are more influential than genetic factors. Therefore, the Black American's identity is shaped by the dominant culture of Whites, so the cultural identity of African Americans was developed in a psycho-cultural framework of oppressed individuals. Black persons develop within a culture that teaches that all their behaviors, beliefs, and characteristics are inferior, mal-adjusted, and inadequate. Thus, Black Americans internalize a sense of inadequacy. And since they are enveloped by patterns of depersonalization and conflict in social values and experiences, are condemned to unavoidable and unresolvable conflict and struggle for a satisfying identity or self-image.¹²¹

III.2.2.1. During slavery

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Blacks were bought and sold as pieces of property for cheap agricultural labor. Families of Blacks both in America and Africa were broken up-husbands and wives, parents and children were separated. The prevailing philosophy of that time (inherited from the Renaissance, from which flourished industrialization, capitalism, and urbanism) was the principle that all were free to follow their own ambitions or appetites without any subordination or allegiance. All that this meant for the Black American slaves was that they were merely a means to an end of wealth, success, and power for the White master. A major way Black slaves within the context of the majority society validated their identity was in an objectification of work activities, or productions. This objectification was necessary in Black Americans' survival because the institution had reduced them to a state of pure object, with no human identity.

III.2.2.1.1. Psychological effects

The psychological effect of the slave role left Blacks feeling both fearful of and angry toward the majority population. The anger resulted from a sense of the oppression and inequities of slavery. Many of the rebellions and uprisings were based on a knowledge that there were less restrictive and more human environments. This type of rebellious anger when manifested by Black Americans has usually been interpreted by culturally ignorant psychologists as reflecting an inward anger or hatred of self, leading to a negative self-image.¹²²

¹²⁰Berger, P. L. and Luckman, T. *The Social Construction of Reality*. Doubleday and Company, New York, 1967.

¹²¹Mosby, D. P. *Toward a Theory of the Unique Personality of Blacks: A Psychocultural Assessment*. In *Black Psychology*, Jonca, R. L., Ed. Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1972.

¹²²Nobles, W. *Psychological Research and the Black Self-Concept: A Critical Review*. *J. Social Issue*, 19: 1-33, 1973

A different interpretation is that, conversely, such anger may reflect a healthy personality reacting to unjust forces of the social system. Anger was also used as a disguise for fears and feelings of inadequacy. As a commodity slaves were aware that "super-nigger" characteristics would bring favors to the family and reprieves from cruelty. When these characteristics could not be achieved, feelings of anger sometimes emerged to hide feelings of worthlessness. Black slaves knew that failure to produce a quota of work, even a failure based on realities of sickness, injury, or age, could result in death or in being traded and separated from one's family. And at all times Black slaves lived with the fear of brutality and cruelty which were often suffered at the whim of White masters.

III.2.2.1.2. Survival strategies as psychological defense mechanisms

To cope with these feelings some Blacks engaged in adaptive survival strategies that some psychologists would refer to as defense mechanisms. One strategy used was that of adopting Whites' stereotypes about Blacks. This identification process led Blacks to display stereotypic behaviors of incompetence, laziness, and other negative attributes.¹²³ For some, an internalization of this identity occurred. The White master's conceptualization of the slave role became a sense of identity rather than a periodic adoption of a role. Black slaves, rather than feel powerless, hopeless, and without a sense of self, found that identification with the master provided the power of the master. With such perceived power, slaves felt they were in a position to treat other Blacks as the master had treated them. In fact, such identity frequently made some slaves more powerful, for often they were less abused and more favors were granted according to the acceptable behaviors exhibited. Positions of authority, comfort, or education were often the reward.

By identifying with the master, slaves gained a false sense of security and a misleading notion of ego. They abdicated responsibility for self-definition and did not grapple with the process of who they were. The result of this kind of process was that the direction of the individual's life and self-identity was determined by the greater whole into which slaves had submerged themselves. Without a sense of a cultural self, the slave's ethnicity was lost. What was left was a self-riddled by feelings of anxiety, doubt, and inferiority. Thus, these feelings are not an inherent part of Black Americans' personality, but result from institutional racism through the role of slavery.

¹²³ Comer, J. The Dynamics of Black and White Violence. In *Violence in America*, Graham, H. and Gutt. Bantam Books, New York. 1969

In addition to identification with the master, other adaptive mechanisms used to achieve a sense of self-esteem by slaves were religion, languages, and music. Within the context of religion, Black slaves were able to conceive a self-identity in a different way from that dictated by the White master. The church became a source of comfort and support and gave the slaves pride, self-respect, a sense of family, and culture. The church also provided an arena in which achievement, upward mobility, and the development of characteristics other than work-related ones were encouraged and recognized. It was a protective sanctuary for self-development of Black slaves.¹²⁴ The role of the church in the Black community is so important. It was the church structure that enabled the survival for many African Americans after the abolition of slavery by providing a substitute society. A great number of the leaders in the Black community continue to come from the church.¹²⁵

Language was another important adaptive mechanism that enabled the Black slave to maintain some remnants of the African tradition and to develop a sense of pride. The language of Black Americans is probably one of the most notable areas where the dynamics of both the Black experience in America and the traces of African heritage are simultaneously manifested.

Language is the symbolic medium by which culture and philosophy are transmitted. In slavery, language and music became important mediums for transmitting messages and expressing individualism without reprisal from White masters. It is thought that the dialect of Black Americans, often criticized for its poor grammar, was evolved to deceive masters. The music of Black slaves allowed an expression of individualism and an establishment of a unique sense of self. Ironically, while expressing individualism, deceptions of vocalized tones, drum messages, chants, and other kinds of songs and a speech full of double negatives, double engenders, and half-truths led to “dual identities.” The notion of dual identities implies the existence of two selves.¹²⁶ There is a “pseudo self” and a “real or true self” Within a pseudo self an individual merges totally into a personality created by culture and society. The real self is defined as one which has developed through a reflexive, conscious process rather than through a process of conformity.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Frazier, E. F. *The Negro Church in America*. Schocken Books, New York, 1963

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*,

¹²⁶ Haskins, J. & Butts, H. F. *The Psychology of Black Language*. Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1973

¹²⁷ Fromm, E. *Escape From Freedom*. Avon Books, New York, 1941.

If identification with the slave master and deception in language and music contributed to dual identities, so did the master-slave relationship. Many of the dynamics of a parent-child relationship were present in it. The slave and the master were dependent on one another economically and psychologically, giving the relationship a symbiotic quality. On a psychological level, each was dependent on the other for validation of self-worth. The master needed to brag of his commodities, slaves needed to brag of their work. The slave, like the child, sought praise and rewards and emotional gratification from the White master. What one might interpret as superego, slaves were told of feelings of guilt and desires to be punished when they disobeyed White masters. It is within this relationship that the pseudo self of the Black developed, causing the real self to become more and more estranged. Those slaves who maintained a dual identity may have been better able to transcend slavery to reach freedom.¹²⁸

III.2.2.2. African American Cultural Identity during The Reconstruction Era

Many of the psychological dynamics and adaptive skills that were developed during slavery persisted after the Emancipation Proclamation through the Reconstruction. Black Americans during the initial phase of Reconstruction were filled with hopes and dreams. The bonds of dependency and identification that had existed in the master-slave relationship were starting to change. Other dynamics were at work as some free Blacks became individualistic and, in their attempts to imitate Whites, lost their sense of community with other Blacks. Some Blacks were beginning to demand such subsistence rights as housing, a system of social welfare, and employment. Others became elected to political parties to create a new way of life for Blacks and a new sense of self-esteem for themselves. Whites were unable to accept this change in the Black American role. If African Americans were no longer slaves, then Whites could no longer find security and identity in the role of master. The interracial cohabiting that had begun during the early Reconstruction period were threatening to the identity of White males.¹²⁹ With the establishment and support by private funds of Black educational institutions, many of the stereotypes that helped maintain the concept of intellectual inferiority of Blacks were being dissolved. The Fears and threats of some Whites led them to acts of terrorism, lynching and property destruction.¹³⁰

¹²⁸Botkin, B. A. (*Lay My Burden Down*). University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1945.

¹²⁹Dollard, J. *Cassie and Class in Southern Town*. Yale University, New Haven. 1937.

¹³⁰Comer, J. *The Dynamics of Black and White Violence*. In *Violence in America*, Graham, H. and Gutt. Bantam Books, New York. 1969.

III.2.2.3. During the Jim Crow Era

The rise in racism of the Jim Crow period from approximately 1877 to 1914 spread from the South to the North and West where previously Blacks had found democracy, housing, and jobs. In the Jim Crow period many of the menial jobs were given to immigrants. Blacks were stripped of their employment, segregated in their housing and social interactions, and forced to live in poverty. In the South the Ku Klux Klan grew in membership, and terrorism rose. Most of all, the interracial socializing was ended by watchdog groups like the Ku Klux Klan.¹³¹

On a psychological level these activities had a profound effect on the identity development of Blacks. The anger of African Americans increased, but because of the extreme violence and murders, the tendency toward rebellion decreased. Previously, Southern slaves had looked to the North as a place of refuge, but as the North no longer served as such, Blacks' desire to escape or rebel ceased while fear increased. The anger which was the main characteristic of African Americans of that period was often misinterpreted as self-hatred. For instance, the excessive use of drugs and alcohol were passive, self-destructive behaviors or anger turned against the self as expressions of low self-esteem. And violent behavior of Blacks against other Blacks as well as the low aspiration level and high rate of family conflicts, was often a displacement of anger toward Whites.¹³²

The racial segregation of this period, which created the ghettos, led to a greater sense of community and tribal relationship among Blacks. For Blacks as a group to survive, many of the tasks of child rearing and emotional support were divided among the entire community. African Americans who had food, shelter, and other goods shared with those less fortunate.

The policy of racial segregation that allowed Black educational institutions to continue allowed a few selected Blacks to develop skills and gain jobs to take care of other Blacks so that Whites would not have the responsibilities. Teaching, nursing and social work where jobs were occupied by African Americans, which created a sense of contribution and participation in their self-development. Something that did not exist in the production process of slavery. African Americans were able to look at their products and feel pride -since they were getting rewarded of their labor-, achieve visibility from their work, and fulfill their potential as never before. Maintaining their sense of community prevented the individualism and psychological isolation that Whites had experienced with the rise in their productions.

¹³¹Leslie V. Tischauser, *Jim Crow Laws*, (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2012)

¹³²

The pride experienced by African Americans via community participation developed as a survival force in the face of the expressions of racism and denigration by Whites.

III.2.2.4. Civil Rights and Civil Arts

In the mid to late 1960s, expressions of unity and racial solidarity became the hallmark of the civil rights struggle in the United States. Young black activists began to see the political struggle in nationalistic terms.¹³³ Groups like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party put pressure on various segments of the African-American community to cite their contribution to the political struggle in the United States. African-American artists were not exempted. They were called upon to explain the value of their "art" in these "revolutionary" times. Black artists faced two difficulties: first, artistic standards historically have been set by the larger white community and these most often had been antithetical to the experiences of black people. Second, many black artists had adopted the view that art should be separated from politics.¹³⁴ That is, art should not be conceived of as an ideological weapon. As the civil rights struggle surged forward the position of "art for art's sake" was replaced with the view that black art should and could make either a statement about the black experience and/or raise consciousness through cultural awareness. Artists shared the ability to communicate certain images (or information) through their work. Thus, much of the art by black Americans in the 1960s and 1970s was seen in part as an attempt to foster a sense of transcendent identity by raising the black American's self-image and awareness of cultural roots.¹³⁵

Following the American Civil War, the recently freed African Americans still had to discover their identity and create their network. They were finally free, but their limited life experiences continued to condemn them mostly to plantation jobs, as whites continued hoarding the job opportunities. The American blacks travelled looking for work at that time and began to discover the rest of the country, which gave them a better insight into where they lived and their new identity¹³⁶. They were Africans no longer; they were Americans.¹³⁷ It was an inequality, based on a categorical inequality: race, but also boosted by the lack of

¹³³Alphonso Pinkney, *Red, Black, and Green: Black Nationalism in the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 76.

¹³⁴Alphonso Pinkney, *Red, Black, and Green: Black Nationalism in the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 76- 80.

¹³⁵The Black Panther Party denounced cultural nationalists, calling them "pork-chop" nationalists. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹³⁶Jones, L. *Blues People: The Negro experience in white America and the music that developed from it*. NY: Apollo Editions. New York, 1968

¹³⁷*Ibid.*,

social recognition of their full citizenship. The vision of the black citizen as a person without full rights would still last a long time, which is a contradiction. Rights are supposedly within citizenship and should not be contingent.¹³⁸ Similarly, we have to remember that the United States Declaration of Independence (1776) said that all men are created equal, but that only included whites. At that time, slavery still existed.

Just as that alien environment, created the characteristics of African American, inevitably, the American black music was born and reflected that uniqueness. Nonetheless, unlike other places in America, where different Africanisms survived, in the United States most of the black culture was wiped out. Only less obvious and immaterial aspects survived, such as music, dance and religion. That kind of art will specifically reflect new boundaries, cultural prejudices and social categories.

III.3. Ethnic and racial identity through Blues and Jazz

The abolition of slavery was decisive in the transformation of blues, and each man had his own voice and his own way of shouting - his own life to sing about.¹³⁹ It is easy to think that the growing individualism in search of a new identity and horizons, alongside the absence of singing co-workers, perhaps favored the replacement of the latter by an instrument (the guitar). It was much like the African banjo and also allowed singing.¹⁴⁰ Not only did they learn, in the long run, to play an instrument, they also mastered the English language. Until then, the lyrics of the songs barely contained some words in Africanized English, but that early blues moved toward pure American lyrics. The new scenario of certain freedom, music and language mastering, were the beginning of a new African American identity.

Westerners see music as something to enrich the spirit. The role of music in African culture is entirely different since it fulfils social and not merely artistic functions. There is no dichotomy between music and life because they are the same thing for them.¹⁴¹ That is why blues and jazz will remain linked to their ethnic identity based on the cosmogony of African Americans.

¹³⁸Brubaker, R. (2015). *Grounds for difference*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

¹³⁹ Jones, L. *Blues People: The Negro experience in white America and the music that developed from it*. NY: Apollo Editions. New York, 1968 p 61

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p 70

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*,

Blues did not begin anywhere else before the slavery of black people in the United States, because it was a product of those living conditions. As soon as pure African music was exposed to Euro-American culture, it changed. African American music, which will later become Blues and Jazz, will reflect throughout history the social changes that were happening throughout society, as well as the search for black identity.

In New Orleans, soon African Americans began to play new instruments. European teachers even musically trained some, so they started to add to their music some musical elements from the European tradition. Nonetheless, the uptown bands, in the African American suburbs of New Orleans, black people used to play pure black music. Whereas Downtown, the Creole¹⁴² bands played mainly European music, such as quadrilles, schottisches, polkas or ragtime tunes, since black music was not widely accepted. That happened because Creoles with African and European ancestry, had an excellent socioeconomic status in New Orleans, and many of them were rich, educated and worked side by side with whites. Interestingly, even some of them owned slaves. But in 1894, with the segregation acts, they lost their jobs, so the brown Creoles were banned to play Downtown.

This makes us think how arbitrary and socially constructed are ethnic and racial hierarchies and its boundaries, despite the Creoles having acted as white, played white music, had an equal economic position, and even owned slaves as the whites. Also, according to Song, it makes us think that minority groups themselves are active in boundary-keeping practices by defining the limits of their identities. What we have seen is nothing more than scripts of behavior. In addition, the one-drop rule constantly forces multiracial people to identify themselves as monoracial, (often non-white), which denies their own agency.¹⁴³

Some of the black immigrant musicians went north and eventually made a living as musicians. It was common for them to play European-style music during their working day. Whereas at night, they switched to black music at house parties in South Chicago or Harlem, New York. The music itself drew ethnic boundaries not only in the north and south of New Orleans, but now within the daily life of the African-American community. As Song says, acting “black” also derive partly from racial representations of black people in the wider society¹⁴⁴. Or playing “black” in this case, since not only blacks, but all human beings uphold differ-

¹⁴²Creoles: a mother tongue formed from the contact of a European language (especially English, French, Spanish, or Portuguese) with local languages (especially African languages spoken by slaves in the West Indies).

¹⁴³ Smith, M. John Coltrane: jazz, racismo y resistencia. El Viejo Topo Barcelona, Spain. 2003

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p 50

ent social codes according to their environment, either by playing black or European music or by speaking “proper English” instead of slang and Black English.

According to Jones, in the 1920s, the urban black middle-class intelligentsia came up with the idea of the New Negro Renaissance. So, on the one hand, they tried to introduce themselves to mainstream America as something different, but they soon realized that although with some recognition, they were still considered second-class citizens. On the other hand, the poorest blacks did not even fit into that category, since they still thought of themselves as oppressed ex-slaves. So, the idea of the unique identity we have about black people sometimes obscures the stratification that occurs among African Americans themselves. Bourgeois, middle and working-class black people, had and have different experiences by coping with racism depending on their class.¹⁴⁵

III.4. Blues and Jazz as a collective action aiming for freedom

Martin Luther King Jr. once stated, “I cannot reach fulfillment without ‘thou’. ‘The self cannot be self without other selves,’”¹⁴⁶ he also spoke of seeking “a community in which man can realize the full meaning of the self which demands open relationships with others”¹⁴⁷ Richard King also reminds us that the creation of a new free self for an African American “was not the result of individual but collective action.”¹⁴⁸ Martin Luther King and SNCC organizers called not only for negative freedom (liberal freedom), that is, liberation that comes from the absence of restrictions or release from bondage, freedom from, but also participatory freedom, that is, to suggest that freedom comes when one acts with others to achieve that common purpose. Thus, one of the ultimate goals at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement was to establish the “redemptive community”, which reflected the shared nature of public action against segregation.

African American music played a significant role in creating that new African American self because of its already established integrationist sub-cultural nature. Although jazz music remained an essentially marginal form of popular culture and the race relations in mainstream society stayed rather unchanged in general, jazz clubs and other social spaces indeed accommodated various kinds of cross racial interaction between audience members and musicians, creating significant examples of resistance to segregation and embodying a sense of what King

¹⁴⁵ Song, M. *Choosing ethnic identity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. 2003 PP 89-90

¹⁴⁶ Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here?* Boston: Beacon, 1968, p. 180.

¹⁴⁷ Cited in Charles Hersch, "Let the Freedom Ring! Free Jazz and African-American Politics," *Cultural Critique*, No. 32, Winter, 1995-1996, p. 101.

¹⁴⁸ Richard H. King, *Civil Rights and the Idea of Freedom* (1992), p. 101.

called “freedom as collective liberation” Therefore, jazz provided a place for the production of alternative and oppositional identities

Even though Blues was somehow an individualistic form of art aiming for freedom, in the process of “freeing the inner self”, the very idea of jazz was pluralistic, and many jazz musicians explicitly defined their music as a symbol of integrationist freedom within America. Hard bop saxophonist Sonny Rollins talked about jazz and its meaning for freedom:

Jazz has always been a music of integration. In other words, there were definitely lines where blacks would be and whites would begin to mix a little bit. I mean, jazz was not just a music; it was a social force in this country, and it was talking about freedom and people enjoying things for what they are and not having to worry about whether they were supposed to be white, black, and all this stuff, Jazz has always been the music that had this kind of spirit, Now I believe for that reason, the people that would push jazz have not pushed jazz because that's what jazz means. A lot of times, jazz means no barriers Key¹⁴⁹

Blues and Jazz albums of the time echoed King's emphasis upon pride and self-respect as an individual as well as a member of the community with a distinctive heritage. King called for a nonviolent struggle against segregation in America, arguing that, “freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor: it must be demanded by the oppressed”¹⁵⁰, and African American musicians took action to be part of “this psychic freedom,” which could only be purchased with literal or figurative risk of life, using their music as a means of political expression. Blues and jazz community reacted in various ways to some events including the performance of benefit concerts, the recording of albums with political themes, attributing political meaning to particular jazz aesthetics, the exploration of African and other non-Western musical and religious ideas, and engaging in highly charged dialogues about race and racism in the jazz industry.

III.5. Blues and Jazz for the African American female artists

The feminist movement stands as one of the most influential movements of the twentieth century. Feminism addressed not only the lack of equality between men and women but also the imbalance of power. Attempting to serve communi-

¹⁴⁹Sonny Rollins, quoted in Ira Gitler, *Swing to Bop: An Oral History of the Transition in Jazz in the 1940s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 303

¹⁵⁰Martin Luther King Jr., *Why We Can't Wait?* (1964), New York: Signet Classic, 2000, p. 68.

ties of women across France, Britain, and the United States, the feminist movement began as a campaign for suffrage rights and continued to grow into a movement that eventually embraced ideas such as equal pay, “sisterhood,” and an overall broader view of feminism.

Unfortunately, in its early stages, feminism was a movement exclusively for white, middle-class women, leaving women of lower socio-economic statuses and other races out of the picture of equality. Many critics believe racism and sexism to be inseparable issues and believe the white feminists to be at fault for even attempting to separate the two.¹⁵¹ Sadly, much of feminist philosophy remains conceptually white-centered and Eurocentric, and most feminist philosophers are white.¹⁵²

While the official feminist movement didn’t provide African American Jazzwomensuch as Ella Fitzgerald and Mary Lou Williams with a political group with whom they could associate, the feminist movement did produce ideologies and concepts that may still be applied within the discourse of black women in jazz.

To further the conversation of feminism, it is important to begin with an understanding of gender and to realize the difference between gender and sex. Sex is a natural state. One determines the sex according to means of tion.¹⁵³ Gender is culturally constructed. An individual’s gender identity “is the result of social and historical forces,”¹⁵⁴ therefore many argue that the differences between men and women are not biological, but rather arise from deeply embedded social practices and traditions.¹⁵⁵

Derived from the culture’s ideology of gender, then, come prescribed and socially constructed traditional gender roles, the duties women (or men) must fulfill in order to be fully identified with their appropriate gender. These traditional gender roles show men as “rational, strong, protective, and decisive” whereas they present women as “emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive.”¹⁵⁶ These traditional gender roles are now so ingrained in culture that many men and women accept them without questioning their legitimacy. Men must win the bread and butter and women must stay home with the children to raise the

¹⁵¹Alison Bailey and Chris Cuomo Eds. *The Feminist Philosophy Reader* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2008), 261.

¹⁵²*Ibid.*, 261.

¹⁵³Claire Colebrook, *Gender* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 9.

¹⁵⁴Peta Bowden and Jane Mummery, *Understanding Feminism* (Trowbridge: Acumen, 2009), 84.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁵⁶Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 85.

family and protect them from the harshness of the outside world. However, It is the specific women who attempt to challenge these socially constructed gender roles that present a model for the rest of the community of women to follow. These women must be elevated and remembered in history in order for the movement, feminism, and equality to progress.

African American Jazzwomen were affected by these cultural conceptions of gender roles, but rose above them. They often had to legitimize their place on the bandstand through a demonstration of their musical ability, simply because they were women. The culturally appropriate place for Jazzwomen was not on the bandstand, but rather at home. But they persisted and broke the culturally appropriate gender roles by pursuing their music rather than motherhood.

As black women were excluded from the sisterhood of white middle-class feminists, Black Jazzwomen lacked the benefit of the voice of a community. Rather, they were left on their own to develop as women without the aid of an organized women's movement. Yet while they may have been somewhat alone as women, they were not completely alone as blues and jazz African American musicians since blues and Jazz both grew as an African American art form directly rooted in the traditions and cultures of the United States. Therefore, jazz may offer special insight into the unique plight of American black women.

The truth is that although women were seen in that light, if they had a microphone and were allowed to sing, they could show uncomfortable realities and give the audience Goosebumps, as Billie Holiday did when she sang "Strange Fruit" in 1939. A song with lyrics that made an analogy between the fruit of a tree and the blacks that racist whites lynched and hanged from trees.¹⁵⁷

Jazz was changing some things, and it was a cultural meeting point for jazz musicians, from the blackest black to the whitest white, and from any socio-cultural spectrum. But obviously, white prejudices and segregation still prevailed. For example, cool jazz in the mid-twentieth century was a label associated with calm white musicians. Reported by critics as having cleaner and softer playing than blacks. White critics saw that music as a reaction to the furious and rude bebop music of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, which was labeled as anti-jazz. In addition, multiracial jazz bands, when they had to play in music venues, white musicians had to enter through the main door, most of the times, while blacks had to use the back door.

¹⁵⁷ Amoako, A. Strange Fruit: The most shocking song of all time? Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20190415-strange-fruit-the-most-shockingsong-of-all-time>

III.6. Conclusion

The United States is a single highly diverse society, but it is culturally plural. At the heart of that society is a psycho-cultural engine which has crossed expressive practices of European and African ancestry. That same engine has killed many people through direct and indirect racist violence. African-American culture has positive features absent in European-American culture. Even though the White Supremacy have imposed standards that limited African Americans to be forever enslaved, they managed to form an ethnic culture.

The idea of a diverse America, where different cultures cohabit, one another is very tempting. And the possibility of success will surely increase if each part become more aware of the psychological and social mechanisms driving this evolution. White America can afford that awareness only by acknowledging that Western culture is not eternal. The Western way has never been the only route to truth, love, beauty, and justice. And surely the political, scientific, and aesthetic ideals of the Western legacy will flourish more fully in a society freed of emotional repression and its correlative racism.

Similarly, African America needs assurance that history is not a grand white conspiracy against peoples of color. Only with freedom and dignity thus assured can it grow beyond the mentality of victimization to assume the leadership responsibilities which the twenty-first century offers.



General Conclusion

Over the centuries, African American people endured many obstacles, tribulations, and difficulties just because they were blacks .from the day they were forcedly transported to the American land and became slaves for whites owners, black Americans experience a brutal and racist treatments by the whites American, starting with the period of slavery where African slaves were both physically and orally abused by their owners and continually after the Emancipation Proclamation, blacks faced segregation and discrimination where they were prevented from having the same right as the white people, furthermore, the whites not only restricted the blacks right, but they also harass and attack them examples of this are the KKK and the police brutality .

African American had also formed and developed a culture that represented their black identity and that is diverse somehow from whites, this cultural variation is shown in the language they used, their fashion, literature, cinema as well as music. With the leading event that led the African American culture to a new level is the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. it became obvious that black Americans are making their position in the American society. African American music was an important aspect of the lives of African Americans, throughout lyrics and rhythms, blacks were able to express their struggles and sufferance, and 46 the most remarkable style that truly reflects blacks lives and society is Hip Hop music, in which rappers spooked openly in their lyrics about black community and attacked the racism expressed by the whites.

It is important to highlight the largely untold story of the key role blues and jazz music had in helping to shape Black pride and encouraging social change as well as political activity in the United States. Blues and Jazz impact on the African American life can be seen as a proof that ways of non-violence that support the process of change in a society should be given particular attention.



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