

African and African-American Contributions to World Music

by

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INTRODUCTION

In ancient times, the African people of the Nile Valley (particularly Egyptians) led the world in musical development, and that legacy continued with the African people here in the Americas. Music in the African-American Tradition in less than two centuries became the dominant influence on world music. Today we find the Spirituals, Gospel, Blues, Ragtime, the classical form mistakenly labeled "Jazz" and all aspects of African-American music in the movies, on Broadway, on television, in commercial jingles, in music videos, and in untold contemporary uses by people all over the world. The commercial establishments of the modern world reap unimaginable profits from the invention and genius of the transplanted Africans. Through "Soul" music (including Rhythm and Blues/Rock and Roll), Reggae from Jamaica, Salsa from Latin America, and even Highlife from urban African cities, multinationals exert greater and more powerful social control in the artistic and economic arenas.

The acknowledgement of Africa's tremendous contributions to the world from ancient times to the present remains generally unheralded. Children in America, African-American children in particular, grow up believing untruths - that all significant developments in music originated and occur solely in the European world. While these distortions contribute to the intellectual underdevelopment of all, they

are most detrimental to African-American children. **Through this essay we hope to place in perspective the influence of African and African-American music throughout the world.**

The focus of this study - the universal reality of African music - begins in Egypt and we will trace the patterns to contemporary Music in the African-American Tradition. However, the history of African and African-American music proves too broad a subject to cover adequately and the problem of any writer is to narrow it to something reasonable. **In this essay, therefore, we will include only those facts that substantiate the following:**

- (1) Africans in ancient Egypt developed highly advanced basic musical modes and traditional African instruments;
- (2) Specific musical elements reflect a cultural continuity from ancient Egypt through the rest of Africa and African America - including the Caribbean and Central, South and North America;
- (3) Egypt considerably influenced the "civilizations" of the ancient world, particularly the Greek, Assyrian and Hebrew; and
- (4) The base of world contemporary, popular music derives from the African-American Tradition.

We begin with Egypt, iterating Chancellor Williams' assertions that "Egypt was not only African but the very name `EGYPT' derived from the Blacks ... The Land of the Blacks was not only the `Cradle of Civilization' itself but that the Blacks were one of the leading people on earth,... and that the Blacks were the pioneers in the sciences, medicine, architecture, writing ..." and music.¹ Music represents one of the most recognizable

ways of establishing cultural continuums and influences. The direct relationship of Egyptian music to African music rests in recognizing Egypt as an African country. Therefore, we will trace linkages to the rest of Africa and to Europe to establish influences in two directions from Africa to the Americas. The points which we will emphasize are:

1. The basics of music in the Western world both European and African-American can be traced to Africa (particularly Egypt).
2. The musical modes and instruments in Greece and Rome were learned in Egypt by Pythagoras and other notable Greeks, who took them to Greece and incorporated them in what the Western world calls classical music.
3. Throughout the world, music derived from the African tradition adheres to fundamentals such as: melody dependence on speech tone, spontaneous selfgenerated creations, collective and group improvisation within traditional frameworks, frequent use of call-and-response patterns (antiphony), harmony, polyrhythmic and cross-rhythmic organization, community participation, group and self-criticism, and (w)holistic approaches in which music exists as one with all essential elements of the society.
4. The African music traditions transplanted to the Americas retained their universal character and presently hold the pre-eminent position globally.
5. African-Americans have set the trends for the development of American, and particularly, contemporary world music.

In our emphasis on the universal quality of Music in the African and AfricanAmerican Tradition, we begin with ancient Egypt and trace instruments, modes, themes and patterns to many different places in the world. **We do not claim, however, that all music and**

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musical forms originated in Africa; rather, we suggest that one cannot understand world music without recognizing a tremendous debt to Africa. One could demonstrate Egypt influenced Asiatic, European, American and other African music, but for the purposes of this essay, we will concentrate only on the last three.

CLASSICAL AFRICA'S INFLUENCE ON OTHER CIVILIZATIONS

By 4,000 B.C.E. (before the Christian era), Egypt entered what many consider high civilization. The integration and sophistication of ancient Egyptian music within the culture contributed to this status. According to Herodotus, "most of the ancient Greek musical instruments were invented by the Egyptians: the triangular lyre, the *monaulos* or single flute, the cymbal, the kettle-drum and the *sistrum*" used for sacrifices. Reports by other notable Greeks in their recorded visits to Egypt included remarks about the music, performance, and developmental stages of the instruments. They observed some evidence in person and some from the various representations on the walls. These paintings give clear indications of music development and performance in ancient Egypt, clearer than all the textual translations later writers produced.²

Ancient Egyptian Instruments

Archaeologists, historians, and ethnomusicologists have traced the historical development and influences of musical instruments and forms. For instance, some scholars observed ancient remains and deduced that music began with vocals and,

through the use of handclapping, woodclappers, rattles, and drums moved to rhythmical sounds. Melody became more rhythmical when humans began to make instruments such as harmonicons and finger pianos, which vibrate by finger plucking or pounding with sticks to produce particular tones versus nondistinct sounds. The finger piano brought on the ordering of notes in regularized intervals (a musical scale). Each nation tended to produce its own scales. Like their Nubian and other African ancestors south of them, Egyptians used strips of hollowed-out woods with gourds underneath each slat for sounding boards.

At very early stages, before the wind instruments with fingerholes, one-string instruments were made. These one-string ancestors of the harp or lyre tended to be bow-shaped sticks, strung with one or two stretched pieces of plant fibre or animal hair. The players plucked or strummed them by hand or a piece of wood or bone called a plectrum. Africans invented the five-string or multiple-stringed instruments, such as the kissar, guitar, or lute, which came with a fingerboard neck or apparatus suitable to produce a variety of notes on each string. The lute, found in the hieroglyphs, required a greater quantity of notes than the harps, substantiating the impression that the Egyptians had quite progressive music very early.

The Egyptians constructed a great variety of harps on the same principle as all Eastern harps without a front pillar. The Eastern harp (which is what musical historians call instruments without front pillars) did not exist among Europeans, but the Finn *kantele* or *harpu* and Scottish and Irish harps derived from it. The people of West Africa and the Sudan possessed an instrument which bore a strong resemblance to harps seen on Egyptian monuments. The Senegalese, Gambians, and Guineans

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called it *boulou* or *ombi* and used strings from a kind of creeping plant or the fibrous roots of a tree.

The overall contrivance of the Egyptian and Assyrian lyres resembled *kissars* used in Nubia. The *kissar* had five catgut strings which rested on a wood bridge above the body. While musicians twanged the strings with their left hands, they used a pluck to strike the strings with their right. Some *kissars* were square and some circular. Most had five strings but some had six or more. An Abyssinian square shaped *kissar* with ten strings had no sounding holes. The Nubian *kissar* was made of hollow wood, covered with sheepskin, and punctured with three or more equidistant holes.

Instruments such as the double-pipe and castenet-type *sistrum*, historically associated with the Hebrews, also originated in Egypt. The Egyptians used the *sistrum* in religious activities. Ancient Egypt also produced the *kemangeh roumy*, parent of the Greek violin. This instrument later translated into the guitar, which some experts say the Moors brought to Spain. This transmission might account for the pattern of playing the instrument with both hands and also for the pounding out of rhythmic accompaniment while plucking the strings for which *flamenco* artists are famous. Observers also found the European pattern of using the bow on stringed instruments throughout Africa.³

Many critics and writers held the opinion that the origins of Western civilization traced solely to Mesopotamia and the Assyrians, but the evidence refutes this belief. The Egyptologist, Samuel Sharpe, used ancient artifacts to prove that in addition to Egyptian music influencing Assyrian culture, "several pieces of (Assyrian) sculptured ivory

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are copied from Egyptian sculptures and show how much Assyria was indebted to Egypt for its knowledge of art." One is the goddess of Athor and another of Aobeno-Ra, the Asiatic way of spelling Amun-Ra. Sharpe stated that one would not question the origins of these gods. Therefore, it remains illogical to ignore the evidence and obvious conclusions to be drawn from it.⁴

Since the Western world recognizes influences from Assyria, a warlike kingdom of Northern Mesopotamia (presently located in Northern Iraq), a comparative table of musical instruments will reveal the developmental level of the Egyptians over the Assyrians.

Egyptian	Assyrian
1. Trigonon (similar to Asor) 2. Lyre (various kinds) 3. Lute (similar to Guitar) 4. Single Pipe 5. Double Pipe 6. Trumpet (two kinds) 7. Tambourine (three kinds) 8. Drums (three kinds) 9. Cymbals 10. Bells 11. Flute 12. Harp (varying more in shape and ornamentation than in construction) 13. Four-stringed instrument borne on shoulder	1. Asor (similar to Trigonon) 2. Lyre (three different forms) 3. Tamboura 4. Single Pipe 5. Double Pipe 6. Trumpet 7. Tambourine 8. Drums (three kinds) 9. Cymbals 10. Bells 11. Dulcimer 12. Harp (varying more in construction)

14. Five-stringed instrument	
15. Sistrum (Castanet)	
16. Percussion instrument	
17. Crotalum (a kind of)	

The only Assyrian instrument not on the Egyptian list is the dulcimer. There are five Egyptian instruments of greater variety, particularly the stringed instruments. The one considered most advanced, the harp, was far superior in construction, yielding more powerful and sonorous tones than the Assyrian counterpart. The construction of the Egyptian harps and lutes far exceeded the Assyrian instruments in elegance of shape and ornamentation.⁵

Ancient Egyptian Music and Forms

The superiority in musical instruments reflected the central role sound played in Egyptian living. For Egyptians, music, mathematics, and sound represented their basic understanding of the harmony of the universe. They recognized that the length of a string or the size of wind and percussive instruments determined the sound produced. Their word for sound, *herw*, literally translated meant "voice" for musical instruments and served primarily to extend Egyptian's communion with the universe.⁶

In fact, Egyptians believed each note held cosmic values in terms of sound, color, energy, and human quality. Harmony for the Egyptians, according to Hunter Havelin Adams, III, "was not restricted just to the earth but to the ruling principle *maat* of

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Nature and the Cosmos." Adams further states that Egyptians perceived music as "ordered energy," a force that controlled "the primordial infinite ocean of space, after the 'first time' and the polarization of energy which brings into manifestation the entire life process." Hence music became key to their understanding the secrets of the universe. Searching for this understanding, the Egyptians uncovered the science of sound, **acoustics**. They discovered that the same note under differing physical conditions will resonate a different quality. For instance, the note C on a stringed instrument will sound significantly different from a C on a wind instrument. Using the planets (Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn) as guides, Egyptians related "the seven tones [do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti] of the diatonic scale to the seven colors of the rainbow..." They determined that "the ratio between the lowest tone and the highest was the same as between the most distant planet, Saturn, and the nearest, the Moon." From this determination, they introduced the concepts of "the harmony of the spheres, the magical effects of modes (ethos), and the efficacy of numbers."⁷

Pythagoras, the Sixth Century Greek philosopher, studied for 20 years in Egypt and brought back to Greece mathematical as well as musical theories. In addition to the theories transmitted by Pythagoras, other notables brought the Greeks musical gifts from Egypt. The most ancient Greek people, the Lacedaemonians, came to the Dorian province from Egypt and brought with them the *dorian, phrygian, and lydian modes* along with many Egyptian musical instruments.⁸ Egyptian born Claudius Ptolemy (127-151 A.D.) contributed a music theory to Greece; and Cteseibi, the Egyptian from Alexandria, invented the water organ *hydraulis* which many mistakenly credit to the Greeks.⁹ For thirteen years during the 4th Century B.C.E. Plato traveled and studied in Egypt. He admired the character of Egyptian music, particularly the concept that

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music held the capability to develop or corrupt morals. In designing an educational philosophy, he required the incorporation of music as a means to discipline and enlighten students. He gained this reverence for music in Egypt.¹⁰ Non-Greek scholars such as Abbe Roussier believed the Egyptian musical system to be at the base of the Greek system; and the music scholar, M. Fetis, agreed with Roussier, stating that modern Greek ecclesiastical musical notation came from ancient Egypt.¹¹

The connection between Egyptian and Grecian music paralleled another connection between Egyptian and Hebrew music. By merely looking in the Bible, we find in *Acts* 7:22, that Moses, raised by Pharaoh's daughter, "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Then in ***Exodus*** 32:19, "The singing of the children of Israel before the golden calf after their departure from Egypt was in the Egyptian manner." These passages support claims that at the earliest period after the Exodus, "Hebrew and Egyptian music were identical." This conclusion fits when we recall that the Hebrews- remained 430 years as free people in Egypt and were regarded as captives only the last 80 years. In those four-plus centuries, the Hebrews absorbed much of the dominant culture, including the music. While influences always move back and forth between cultures, it appears that most of the musical influences moved from Egypt north to Europe.¹²

One fairly universal musical motif whose origin also has been traced to Egypt is the *pentatonic* scale, claimed musicologist and author Carl Engel. He took his evidence from Burney's ***History of Music***. Burney wrote that Olympus composed in the *dorian* mode and used the Egyptian five-tone scale. Engel claims to have given this five-tone scale the

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name, **pentatonic**.¹³ This pentatonic mode was dominant in East Africa, Asia - particularly India and China - and among the early Greeks and Egyptians. West and Southern African national music incorporated several musical forms, the pentatonic to a much lesser degree.

Daniel Alomia Robles, a Peruvian musician and archaeologist, found a five-string harp, with a *re, fa, so!, la* scale, later enlarged to the interval of a third, which completed the Inca pentatonic. He found this instrument in one of the old Inca tombs which was 3,000 years old. Therefore, he believed that the Inca pentatonic scale predated the Greeks. Whether true or not, the pentatonic scale in so large a portion of the world renders evidence to the global spread of ancient African influences.¹⁴

Verses on wall representations reveal that Egyptians employed basic well-known African patterns such as call-and-response, worksongs, group playing, and religious invocations throughout their music. These forms we will constantly encounter as we review music derived from the African tradition in many parts of the world. Other verses suggested alternating duets between two priestesses, solos by an Isis priestess, and hymns to Osiris by males. Like all Africans, Egyptians could not worship or celebrate historic occasions without music.¹⁵ On the tomb of Ramesis III, two harpists perform sacred music, and the heads on the bases of these harpists represent signs indicating the joining of upper and lower Egypt.¹⁶ During the building of temples between 3000 and 2000 B.C.E., Egyptian priests chanted to the gods. Revered as powerful means to meet their sacred charges, special chants appeared to be the singular property of holy men. The priests often used the *sistrum* and other instruments such as clappers and large tambourines to accompany the chants.

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They employed the harp, reed pipes, and flutes for other sacred or secular music. In the wall representations, we also see group playing by bands of musicians.¹⁷

Even on the day-to-day level, evidence of ancestral traditions exist. Nile Valley Africans used clappers to chase away crop pests, to accompany fertility dances and to produce rhythmic sounds for workers in the vineyards. Ancient Egyptian music, like all Music in the African Tradition, represented a utilitarian force. It was not an "art form" separated from the rhythm of daily life, but an intrinsically necessary element without which the people could not survive. These patterns exist in the music of Africans all over the continent and in the diaspora.

MIGRATION AND EVOLUTION OF MUSIC THROUGHOUT CONTINENTAL AFRICA

Having begun at the beginning of the African-American experience with Egypt, we move to examine the musical traditions in other parts of the African continent. E.W. Lane, in his **An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians**, remarked that "The people who bear the greatest resemblance to the ancient Egyptians at present are the Nubians, and next to these the Abyssinians [Ethiopians] and the Copts [Christian Egyptians], who are notwithstanding, much unlike each other." Lane meant that their physical appearances remained similar but their customs, particularly the religions, had changed. In addition to the Greeks, the Arab intrusion represented one major influence on Egypt and to a great extent created a discernible type of music throughout North Africa when compared with the music of the rest of the continent.¹⁸

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This essay section, however, will emphasize the music south of the Sahara, simply because the historical evidence supports the claim that most of the influences in America came from that area. Certainly, the records indicate that most of the Africans brought to the Americas were stolen from areas south and west of the Sahara, though some were inadvertently brought from Northeast Africa. When appropriate, we will include North African musical traditions.

Long before the contact with Europeans, African nations made contact with one another. Yet, despite the interaction with other people (which we recognize always brings change) and despite the great number of ethnic groups (with their specific language patterns and diverse idioms), we still assert that an underlying unity exists in the music of traditional Africa. We agree with Akin Euba, in his "introduction to Music in Africa" who argued that "African traditional music represents a fine balance between unity and diversity, and there are enough unifying principles to enable us to speak of an African music in the same way in which we identify a European or Chinese music...." ¹⁹ The term, "traditional music," here refers to pre-colonial Africa.

Based on the oral tradition, Africans learn their music directly from its creators. They learn through actual performance to understand, describe, and reproduce from memory the structure and practice of the music. The music involves highly developed rhythmic and tonal patterns. Instrumental African music tends to be percussive with handclapping, drum, and other percussive instrument accompaniment. Because of the use of music for almost all events, musical instruments function as a language, to convey certain signals, and to combine with voices and other instruments.

Traditional Instruments

Throughout Africa, a large variety of musical instruments existed. Experts categorized these instruments in four main categories: (1) **Idiophones**: instruments whose vibrated bodies produce sound such as rattles, bells, gongs, rasps, and other scraped instruments like stamping tubes, stone clappers, wooden slit drums, thumb pianos, and xylophones; (2) **Aerophones**: wind instruments such as horns, trumpets, panpipes, whistles, ocarinas, and flutes, both end-blown and transverse made from animal horns, tusks, gourds, bamboos, wood, and metal; (3) **Membranophones**: drums with skin heads made several ways, covering one end with a skin of any hollow vessel made of gourds, earthenware pots, small wooden rectangular frames, strips of wood or a solid log of wood; and (4) **Chordaphones**: crude fiddles throughout Africa which are bowed, such as lutes, harps, and zithers; also dulcimer types that are struck with a stick, reed, straw or rattles.

Many Africans, because of music's primary function in their lives, are involved in the making of the instruments. Similarities and significant differences in the many constructions occur because the local environment greatly determines what can be produced. In treeless areas, Africans make more instruments of pottery or calabash than of wood and rely more on foot stomping and handclapping rather than percussive instruments. Africans create instruments from anything available such as "clay, metal, gourds, bamboo, tortoise shells, hides, snake skins, seeds, stones, palm leaves, calabash fruit ..." woods, reeds, etc. 20

As we found with the Egyptians, we find instruments from other parts of Africa

utilized throughout the world. For instance, "the *kinindi-kinubi* from West Africa," represents a variation of an ancient Greek lyre of five strings. Also "In the Cameroons, there is a species of hand-harp which had its counterpart in the ancient Egyptian harps dug from thousand-year-old graves. The *daluka* from Sudan is identical to an Egyptian drum. In their worship of Isis, Egyptians used a *seshesh*, the Abyssinian *sistrum* called *sansasel*, and in Hebrew called *tzeltzelin*. The *sistrum*, also found in Nubia, consists of a frame of bronze or brass into which three or four metal bars are loosely inserted to produce a jingling noise when shaken."²¹

Among the Mittoo people of Central Africa, an anthropologist, Schweinforth, found the Nubian *robaba* (a cross between a lyre and a mandolin). Made with five strings and a quadrangular sounding board covered with skin, from the large shell of a mussel, the *robaba* has a circling sounding hole at each corner. According to Schweinforth, the *robaba* "constituted one of the evidences [that the] inhabitants of the Nile valley had real affinity with ... Central Africa."²²

The Nubian *kissar* was found in West Africa. Egyptians possessed the instrument and people of the Nile district used the *kissar* in a worship dance, the **zar**. Made of wood and leather with the wood hollowed in the form of a bowl covered with sheepskin, the *kissar* has five strings (made from the intestines of a camel) which vibrate when plucked by the fingers and a plectrum (made of horn or leather fastened with a chord to the instrument). The fingers and plectrum play alternately, often in the pentatonic scale.

A connection to the Eastern world can be seen in the similarity of the *hona guitar* of

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Madagascar with the *tzetze* in the Congo and the *janter* in India. Another connection noticed is the *kasso* of Senegal and Gambia with the harp of Burma; and the Madagascan *marouvane* or *valika*, a bamboo instrument made with 16 strings which is similar to the *sousounm* and the *gendang boelve* of Sumatra. It has also been found in the Phillipines and Borneo among the Dyak people.

Besides the Atlantic Ocean, one major connector between East and West remains the Mediterranean Sea. Movement throughout that area has been well documented. One example can be seen in the *rabab-kafir-reber*, an instrument more like a double bass. In Arab terms the name translates to "unbeliever." Similar double bass instruments with fretted sound holes and four double strings tuned in pairs of fifths have a shape like the mandolin and sit on the ground like a cello. These instruments were taken to Spain by the African Moors. The "bull roarer" from the Yoruba culture is made of a thin strip of wood, tapering at the ends and fastened to a stick with a string which produces a roaring noise. This instrument was used in the mysteries of ancient Greece and has been found in other parts of the world (e.g., New Mexico, New Zealand, and South America).

The *marimba*, an African xylophone, was constructed out of two wooden bars placed side-by-side with 15 to 20 pieces of hard wood of different lengths with a calabash hung under each bar. The wooden keyboard, in graduated lengths, allowed musicians to create music by using two rubber ended sticks to beat on the individual keys. In West Africa, the keys were wooden. In East Africa, the keys were iron. In Northern communities, the shape was circular. In Southern areas, the shape was straight. Regarded a creole instrument in Latin America, the *marimba* (also called

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mihimbi, and *valapo*) came to that area through the Guatemalan Africans. One example of its universal appeal can be noted by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra's introduction of the *marimba* in its 1917 "in A Nutshell" performance.²³

Traditional Music and Forms

Within the context of the traditional African culture, music and musical instruments fall under strict regulations. Many African communities restrict who performs the music as well as when, how, where, and why the musical activity can occur. Unlike the Western world, traditional African music serves to organize the society in relation to activities and needs of everyday life. Therefore, the musicians use their instruments for many purposes that fit under non-entertainment categories. Even the sounds that African musicians produce at times seem harsh and/or unpleasant, for players attempt to reproduce nature's sounds in their incorporation of music in all facets of their life.

All Africans belong to a certain cultural unity, particularly in the East, West, Central and Southern regions despite the fact that Africa holds more than six hundred million people, with at least 2,000 distinctively different groups, and 800 to 2400 languages and dialects. Each has its own music, yet certain elements transcend the diversity. In singing, one hears call-and-response patterns with short musical phrases usually repeated or with longer lines of phrases never repeated. The music tends to be percussive, communal and functional.²⁴ Music maintains deep connections between every aspect of life, deeper than having songs for special occasions. In fact, some groups or languages have words for song or tune but none for music. Francis Bebey explained how

Africans regard music: "The musical art is so much a part of man himself that he has seen no purpose of giving it a separate name." No distinction exists between music and dance, for music equals part of the artistic whole. Musical sounds represent only one element of a total experience that includes performance attitudes, bodily movements, costumes, audience responses, and the relationship to speech. Nearly all African music is vocally oriented.²⁵

African musical traits include:

1. Melody dependence on speech tone.
2. Frequent use of antiphony, polyphony, and harmony.
3. Complex rhythmic organization.
4. Spontaneous creation.
5. Improvisation by performers within the traditional framework of melody and rhythm.

Traditional African words give meaning according to the tone of the sound spoken. Therefore, lyrics can only be understood when the melodies rise and fall in line with the tones of the spoken word because "music derives its distinctiveness from the 'stress' and rhythm of the spoken language" which influences the tone as well. Naturally, then, "in structure African melodies are closely associated with each of the many languages of the continent."²⁶ The relationship to language is exemplified by the Niam-Niam. Their *ogidigbo drums* of different sizes preserve the name of **Ajagbo**, reputed to be the first king of the Yoruba who reigned about 1780. Each drum has its own measure; and in order to preserve this rhythm, sentences are invented to call the rhythm to mind. For instance, "*gbo Ajagbo gbo-uba gbo ki emi ki osi gbo*" means "grow old, Ajagbo, grow old King, grow old, may I also grow old."²⁷

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It is commonplace for African instrumentalists to engage in conversations through their music, like the Jabo xylophone players of Liberia who maintain a commentary in music about the activities they see as they sit in the marketplace. The Igbo use flutes and trumpets similarly. Jean-Baptists Abama described these "speaking instruments" as the main link between the melody, harmony, and rhythm in African music. Singing must accommodate the tone sequence of the words, but instrumental music comes from a composer utilizing the "tone contour of sung words and the physical action of the hands upon the instrument."²⁸ These two factors "act as memory aids" for African instrumentalists in a manner similar to written notes in other societies.²⁹

One needs to also recognize that traditional African music is outdoor music and designed to penetrate the entirety of their social and religious reality. Therefore, it attempts to create as nearly as possible the sounds of nature, Africans include the burred or buzz sound. The nasal or buzzing tones carry very well in the open air. To achieve this effect, the instrumentalists attach bits of metal to the finger pianos' prongs which produce the "buzz" tone. Africans wish to make music effective rather than artistic, for the singing meets the need of the activity. The music is clear when representing birds, hushed to convey satire, harsh or tender according to the situation. They do not intend to make pleasing sounds but rather to "live the actions of everyday life by means of sound." African singing concepts include "sliding up to the first note of a phrase and sliding down off the last note." Africans also "bend" notes and "shout" songs. The particular community, as well as the occasion, determines who does or doesn't possess a fine voice. The Akan like "open"; whereas the Frafra appreciate a more intense quality. Other groups prefer falsetto.³⁰

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Although the entire community engages in musical activities, professional and semi-professional musicians do exist within traditional African communities. One would consider "the Bambara farmers from Upper Volta [Burkina Faso] who work as musicians during the dry season," as semi-professional musicians. The royal drummer permitted to play the six royal drums of the king of the Tutsi people in Rwanda and "the West African *griot* or the Fang story-teller from equatorial Africa" fall under the category of professional. The latter two serve also as "dancers, storytellers and traditional historians," meeting the responsibilities of the griots. Songs and music represent and keep the pulse of the community. Only when the village approves and uses the songs, new words, and/or variations can the music be accepted and the composer recognized.³¹

Worksongs provide the rhythmic compulsion that keeps hoeing, threshing, pounding grain and other forms of labor at a steady pace, making the task a song or dance. In Malawi, for instance, three women will pound together in one mortar alternating their blows between them in rhythm or in song or in cross-rhythms. Communal labor such as hauling, lifting heavy loads, digging, hammering, and so forth, often occur with a leader and a group in call-and-response singing (antiphony). The activity (i.e., funeral, birth, hunting, leader praise song, insult, criticism, commentary, storytelling, spiritual, giving proverbs) determines the type of song.

Musicians become semi-professional through becoming known, accepted and respected. Their contributions must fit in with the values and traditions of the community, for Africans believe that songs effect moral behavior and public opinion. Songs may be sung about or for individuals or groups in all arenas - political, social,

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or religious. From village-to-village and town-to-town, musicians travel in small troupes or as minstrels accompanied by drums and other instruments to translate the legends and enact stories. Skilled musicians play and the general audience adds responses by singing, dancing, and/or handclapping.

Traditional Africans utilize most things for multifunctions. Music-making also serves to attract attention, transmit messages, guide movements of dancers or initiates, imitate animal sounds or create the appropriate ambience for religious rites and activities. Each classification of instruments tends to have many duties. Stringed instruments often backup solo singing, or add to story-telling, poetry reading, or praise song singing. Wind and percussive instruments, including the drums, can be used for solo, small group or ensemble playing, often in combination with voice and dance. Contrary to the wide belief that Africans use drums the most, the most common form of accompaniment remains handclapping, then the rhythm type sticks, and then the drums. Drums exist in most cultures, but social predispositions constrain their use. Except for Indian and Chinese people, Africans possess a wide range of instruments that are used multifunctionally compared with most other cultures.

African music is polyrhythmic (consisting of simultaneous distinct rhythm patterns) and polyphonic (consisting of simultaneous sounds or melodic lines). Africans utilize two forms of rhythm: (1) they divide time in equal pieces which results in a regular beat; and (2) at the beginning of each piece, they add little pieces of time and unequal length with a stress. They also have two approaches for producing the two rhythm forms: (1) rhythmic drumming; and (2) background drumming with handclapping, bells, and rattles.

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The rhythmic as opposed to background drumming differs in that the former creates constant cross rhythms between each drum; and each drum produces different pitches and tone quality, allowing a distinctive tune to emit from each. This effect produces multi-cross rhythms and multi-tones. The background music principle is to stress a clash or tension so that the stress of the song and the stress of the claps must not be together, "keep in step" so to speak. Africans use a divisive rhythm (equal beats) for claps; and an additive rhythm (unequal beats) for the song. The rhythm becomes more complex if both the clap and song use additive rhythm. In children's songs, the rhythm diverts from "the normal speech accents" and utilizes a divisive rhythmic pattern. Also, some African songs cannot take a handclap. They exist "in completely free rhythm."

Although many groups have little tradition of carving or other plastic art, there is no community on the whole continent without its own music, which in many cases is considerably complex. The most complex patterns in African music are the multiple background rhythms with several different clap patterns simultaneously played with a bell or two and a rattle. Each played with its own rhythm might be divisive (equal beats) or additive (unequal beats) added to the song's additive beat. An example of the Ewe in Ghana illustrates the complexity in African traditional music. The master drummer's task involves:

1. establishing the first motif with several repetitions;
2. improvising guided by fragments of the rhythmic pattern; 3. imbuing the dancers with more excitement;
4. accompanying the song suitably;
5. exhausting all rhythmic pattern possibilities; and
6. turning to a different master drum pattern applicable to that particular dance.

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The middle drum changes accordingly and in reply to the new patterns. The small drum maintains its original beat. African dance music combines the fixed and free patterns and spontaneous creation with all of the above. Against the galaxy of cross rhythms described above, the dancers enter. Each dancer chooses or is assigned a particular drum to dance to. The dancing adds a cross rhythm to all the other cross rhythms. The dance ends if a drummer peters out or by a signal of the master drummer. Each group practices its individual customs, but we must understand that dance in Africa reflects the completeness of African rhythms. One can never hear the same dance played the same way.³²

Islamic Influences

Africans south of the Sahara influenced North African Moorish, Spanish, and Portuguese music, particularly with the inclusion of percussion instruments. In return, the Moors introduced Arab patterns and reduced some African harmony, moving the music into using greater melodic phrases. The Muslim call-to-prayer five times every day for hundreds of years throughout Islamic areas of Africa fused the long Arabic melodic line with the percussive and syncopated traditional African patterns. This was due to Bilal, who sung the Holy Koran for Prophet Mohammed. The influence spread through Spain during the eight hundred years of Moorish dominance, particularly in the Mozarabi kingdoms from the Middle Ages on. Moorish influences include the rhythmic approach, recitative singing minus meter, decorated introductory syllables which became "ay y y" in Spanish or "ah h h h" in Arabic.

African-Moorish music forms a highly important link between the musical worlds of

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Europe, West Africa and parts of the Americas. Moorish musical influences include ornamental devices, high pitch, and harshness and can be found throughout Islamic Africa, and parts of Europe - Spain, Portugal, France, and the British Islands. Even with the instruments we see the connections. The Moorish oboe *rhaita* is named *gaita* in Spanish and *alghaita* in Hausa. Europe (specifically Portugal), Brazil and many other parts in the world gained the guitar, fiddle, certain drums and rhythms from Moorish influences. The African-Latin regions of the "new world" contain national music that most truly synthesizes traditions from the two sources. Still, African and European music have the most in common from the Islamic influenced areas of both continents.³³

AFRICAN MUSIC IN THE AMERICAS

In the Americas, we encounter two types of African music: Neo-African whose elements remain totally African, and African-American whose elements encompass a variety-of blends. Generally, however, Neo-African music blends various aspects from particular African groups who were transported here during slavery. All the elements derived from Africa but never had been played there in the manner created here. Neo-African music persists mainly in Africanized religious movements in the Americas such as Hatian *voudou* traced to the Fon people in Dahomey; Brazil's *condomble*, Cuba's *lucumi*, and Trinidad's *shango* all traced to Yoruba in Nigeria. In some instances, the music of these religious movements in the Americas cannot be distinguished from the original music in West Africa.³⁴

Neo-African Instruments - The Caribbean and South America

The players use specific drum rhythms which reflect the voice of the gods in all the ceremonies. The drums summon the spirits by each one's special rhythm. "No drums, no Spirit - no ritual." Players also use the *bata* drums in Yoruba or *lucumi* ceremonials. The *conga* drum, according to Leonard Goines, began with African Cuban cults.³⁵ Drums in much of the Caribbean and South America came in sets of two or three similar to West Africa's Yoruba and Ewe. In the Barloventa region of Venezuela, three drums (*piyao*, *cruzado*, and *dorrido*) can be found which include African traits. The player uses one small stick in one hand and mutes the drum head by the other hand or by his heel if he is seated on the instrument. Another trait found also in West Africa involves the second man with small sticks beating a counter rhythm on the side of the first man's drum. In several parts of the Caribbean one can find this pattern, particularly in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Interestingly, this pattern was utilized *by a tambo* drummer whom John Storm Roberts interviewed among the Trelawney Maroons in Jamaica. The interviewee traced his music to his Congolese grandmother. Jamaican culture generally derives from Ashanti in Ghana, but strong Congolese and some Yoruba traits exist there as well.³⁶

Ghanaian drums, the *bamboula* and *ka*, are known in the Caribbean and also accompany folk songs in creole Louisiana.³⁷ In Puerto Rico and Haiti, players use a large drum, the *bomba*, alone or with other hollowed wood and gourd instruments of African origin. Latrope, in 1819, found several African instruments: a New Orleans square drum, a calabash with nails, and a slit drum. Just as in Africa, the calabash was played by a woman with two sticks and reflected the Hausa tradition. The Dominican

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Republic retained the *villa mella* congos with a choral style from the Congo-Angola people. This dance included *palos*, African drums of real significance.

As in Africa, some Africans in the Americas never used drums; and others, only used drums moderately. Yet, the music remained essentially percussive. Besides drums, other musical instruments and elements (marimbas, maraccas, rhythm bells, and the roles of the performers) transferred across the ocean.³⁸ African Brazilians used the *agogo* in religious music and introduced the instrument to the United States. This two-note clapperless double bell connected by a curved piece of metal from West Africa was struck by a new stick.³⁹

Inca music was absorbed by the Spanish then modified by African Moorish influences. The *marimba* played an important role in this modification process. In 1673, Ligon found a *marimba* in Barbados. This instrument was also found in Mexico and South America (e.g., Brazil, and Colombia). Though the *marimba* originated in Africa, it is often mistakenly considered Amerindian in origin because they so readily adapted it to their use. Ortiz Oderigo believed Amerindians took on African drumming patterns also when they adopted the African marimba. Colombians use *marimbas*, stamping tubes, *quitiplos* and the *merecure* drum. Haiti also had instruments and techniques which are direct descendants of ones used in various African locations; for instance, stamping tubes, which were hollow bamboo tapped on the ground when played, and *vaccines*, one-note bamboo instruments played in sequence, which produce highly rhythmic music for communal purposes.

Observers found the African *sanza* or thumb piano in several forms in New Orleans,

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Trinidad, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. One was the *marimbula*, a bass descendant of the *sanza*. Tuned to play a series of bass notes, it consisted of a wooden box with prongs of metal fastened to it.⁴⁰ Other observers found the "bull roarer," a thin strip of wood two and a half to twelve inches long tapering at ends and fastened to a stick with string in New Mexico, New Zealand, and South America. This instrument produced a strange roaring noise. Reportedly, it was once used in the mysteries of ancient Greece.

Among the Maroons of Jamaica and Sierra Leone, travelers discovered the *gumbia*, a hollow block of wood which required two players. The Maroons probably brought this instrument to and from Africa through their travels during the 18th Century from Jamaica to Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone.⁴¹ Other African instruments found in Jamaica include a *banquil*, a crude guitar; the *banjour*, a stringed instrument similar to the banjo; a *bender* which sounds like a jew's-harp; and flutes made of bamboo. In Trinidad, the transported Africans used oil drums to make instruments and created what we know today as the steel band. They cut off about six inches to a foot of the head of the oil drum for the body, then heated and hammered a series of bumps on the top to produce musical notes when beaten with mallets. Some steel pans have many notes for playing melodies; other bass pans have only three or four notes. Steel bands create resonant and sweet music. Their range and sounds appears nearer to the xylophone than to African drumming.⁴²

In the United States, slaveowners forbade drumming. Slaves substituted hand-clapping, footstomping and the use of other things to make rhythms. Slaves created the washtub bass by taking a large tub of galvanized metal and poking a hole in the

center of the bottom. They put a rope knotted on one end through the hole, turned the tub upside down with the rope attached to a standing wooden pole. They proceeded to make rhythmic sounds by strumming the rope like modern players strum the bass fiddle. The washtub bass resembled an African earthbow. Sometimes the creative African-Americans put a turned over metal washtub similar to the washtub bass in another water-filled tub and beat it to make it sound like a slit log drum. Later, African-Americans employed the washtub strumming technique on the stringed bass, plucking and slapping the instrument in what became known as "gutbucket" playing.⁴³ In this manner, African-Americans changed the concept of the string bass from a bowed instrument to a plucked one.

African-Americans also took the component parts of a marching band, combined the snares and bass with a cymbal and created the beginnings of the modern drumset. The New Orleans pioneer drummer, Warren "Baby" Dodds made his first pair of drumsticks from the legs of a kitchen chair. Also, Buddy Bolden thrust half a coconut shell, a bathroom plunger, and an old derby hat into the bell of his instrument to serve as mutes.⁴⁴

Neo-African Dance

Music and dance remained essential within any social setting for Africans in the Americas. They blended work and mutual help with parades, carnivals, festive and somber occasions in Brazil, Haiti, Trinidad, and the United States just like their Ashanti, Fon, Yoruba or Ghanaian forebearers had always done. Many dances reflected the African base. One observer found the *bomba* dances in Cuba, Puerto Rico,

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Liberia, and Santo Domingo. All offered the same characteristics: the form was similar to many African dances; the lead dancer set the rhythm, not the master drummer; the drums came in; then, the music opened with unaccompanied voices; the dancer integrated his movements with the music by dancing to the lead drum and creating improvised rhythm with his feet. Last, the drummer replied by copying the dancer's rhythm, developing a competition between the two. Bombas incorporate many African aspects such as: short phrase melodies, repeated lyrics, diverse complicated rhythms, collective activities with the inclusion of instruments, dancers and audience participation. During slavery the *bomba* and *bomboula* occurred on estates, at countryhouses, and was danced by mixed White, Mulatto, and Black groups in Louisiana and Georgia as well as throughout French and British speaking islands.

Other widespread dances included the *samba* (a ring dance) from Brazil and Puerto Rico plus the *juba* and *kalinda* from Trinidad, Puerto Rico, and Louisiana. The *juba* and *kalinda* resembled the *bomba* in form. Solo-singing openings followed by the chorus could also be found in Panama's *tamboritos* and Trinidad's *calypso*. Observers also noticed the *Juba* in Haiti. *Juba*, in the United States, translated to "jubilant" and "jubilee." It equaled a reel dance in slavery times; and on New Year's Day on plantations, the slaves held jubilees - eating and drinking and then dancing to the accompaniment of handclapping, rattling bones and often a banjo or a violin. In the Carolinas, Georgia and Louisiana, a version of the *juba* is represented in children's game songs. These game songs underwent African changes, for the African American children used the games as excuses to dance. They added African call-and-response forms and rhythms. African ring games, which tended to turn into

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dances accompanied by free and complex rhythms, proved very popular throughout the island of Jamaica also.

African mixes can be found in the dancing and music throughout this hemisphere. For example, the Uruguayans dance the *candome*. Venezuelans hold *manpulario*, a wake for children. The people of Carriacou, in the Grenadines, still utilize a 'nation' dance which fuses African traits. It was originally Ashanti, then Igbo, Mende, Arada, and Congo elements were added to its parts. Most of us are familiar with the Mardi Gras held in Brazil, Trinidad, and New Orleans. Brazilians dance the *samba da roda*, a ring dance; the *batuque*, a Congo or Angolan dance, and the *umbriguda*, a belly bounce also performed in Mexico. The dance drama *congada*, the Mozambique war dance (which included only percussion instruments), and the *cucumbi* (derived from the Congo and performed at Christmas and carnivals) are almost pure African dances with few Portuguese influences. They still exist in Brazil. Cucumi songs have African words traceable to Bantu linguistic roots. Some of these dances may have existed in Africa as they are performed in Brazil. Others developed from a fusion of different African elements.

In Colombia, the most African dance, *cumbia*, requires the male dancer to invite the female to dance by offering her candles which she holds while circling him and undulating her hips. The *cumbia's* driving beat emphasizes drums and rattles, varying rhythms from the lead drummer, and repetitive melodic lines on the fiddle or accordion. The most influential *rumba* festival dance, *guanguancó*, began with lengthy narratives in song, then a courtship dance. When the *guanguancó* entered popular nightclubs and

such, the colorful costumes created a fiesta feeling. The *lucumi* and *abakwa* rituals danced by one person in satirical fashion required the singer and lead drummer to compete rhythmically.⁴⁵

Religion and rituals played major roles in preserving the African dance traditions. Funerals, particularly wakes for children, involved cheerful musical ceremonies in Puerto Rico and Jamaica. In the United States, the ring shout- a religious dance - retained many African traits. Courlander described the African elements as including the "posture and gesture, the manner of standing, the bent knees, the flat feet on the floor or ground, the way the arms are held out for balance or pressed against the sides, the movements with the shoulders..." These traits were also found in Jamaican revival Zion services.⁴⁶

All African-type activities maintain the song-dance-visual-aural performer-spectator synthesis fundamental to the African aesthetic concepts. Africans in the Americas created these neo-African dances as they learned European instruments such as fifes, fiddles, triangles, jew's-harps, and played them along with their banjoes and tambourines. The European instruments resemble African types, particularly the Hausa drums and metal percussion instruments.⁴⁷

Neo-African Music and Forms

Music in South America blended African and European elements, particularly those from Spain and Portugal. Spanish folk music already had adopted the drums and tambourines. *Flamenco* used the African incorporation of driving rhythms to a steady pulsating pattern with cross rhythms, overlays of triple on duple rhythms, and

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rhythmic improvisation plus handclapping across the main pulse. Argentinians use the African rhythmic forms, *mulonga*, *malembo* and *zamba*. Colombian, Panamanian, and Venezuelan music reflect obvious Africanisms.

The Colombia national form called *bambuco* traces back to Mali and encompasses duple (two beats to a measure) and triple meter. The popular *merengue* danced here in the U.S. originated in the Dominican Republic but can be found throughout the region. For instance, Atlantic Coast African Colombians play *merengue*, plus *cumbia*, and related *cumbiamba*, *punto*, *porro*, *mejorana*, and *rhumba* rhythms. The Pacific Coast Colombians' African-oriented music *currulao* includes a fiery rhythm in dance as background for the *alaboa* praise songs. These songs have many African traits, particularly call-and-response with oblique fragmented texts.

Panamanians originated the *mejorana* form, played on five-string guitars with percussion. The *mejorana* appears very African, blending triple rhythm with a melody of duple time and verses of short repeated phrases. Panamanian music utilizes another clear African form - the *tamborita*, a woman's music - accompanied by drum. The lead drummer guides the musicians, dancers and audience in the entire production. The lyrics repeat call-and-response phrases reflecting strong Africanisms. The melody and words don't always fit, a trait similar to the Ewe who often use the last beat of one drummed phrase as the first beat of the singing part. This pattern is called free rhythm and is also common among North Africans who are known for indistinguishable beginning and ending musical forms.

Venezuelan music includes African rhythms known as *golpe*. *Golpe* drumming

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patterns stemmed from the Barlovento Region whose music involves polyrhythms, call-and-answer for drums, a different set of call-and-response for singers (each set with its own rhythm added to the polyrhythms), and an extra beat by a second player of sticks. The *passillo* of Venezuela incorporates elements similar to Trinidadian *calypso*.

Africans in the Caribbean embrace more neo-African forms and carry certain elements between islands, usually but not necessarily between those who speak the same languages. Among the English speaking islands (Trinidad, the Virgin Islands, San Andres, Jamaica and Barbados), *calypso* represents the best known music. One legend claims *calypso* originated during *gayap*, a form of communal labor. After work, a lead singer would create praise songs for his team and derisive lyrics about the other work groups. Another myth traces the seed of calypso to a slave, Gros Jean, who was appointed as "Mait Caiso" on the Diego Martin estate when France ruled Trinidad. The *calypso* represents a war of words between improvisers who compose praising or ridiculing lyrics about their subjects. Calypso incorporates short call-and-response verses of social commentaries.

The original instrumentation for *calypso* included drums, a scraper called a *vira*, rattles, and a bottle and spoon used in a manner similar to a West African gong. It draws elements from some African nations, Spain, Britain, France and even India. The role of *calypso* serves as a social and political vehicle and for other purposes as well, such as moral judgment. One particularity of *calypso* is the discussion of sexual activities usually through double-meaning verses. The double-tone, long melody line *calypso* has less Africanisms than the single-tone, shorter melody line songs which

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incorporate call-and-response and allow for more improvisation and complex rhythms. They use the most commonly retained African musical trait, call-and-response, for group singing. The lead sings a line; the group answers. The lead remains free to improvise but the response represents the important part of the tune. Call-and-response can be traced to Egypt and throughout Europe.⁴⁸

Anancy stories represent the strongest African retentions. Represented in Ghana by a spider and among the Bantu as a rabbit (br'er rabbit in the U.S.), *anancy in* Jamaica loses its folktale spider/hare identity and remains in music and storytelling form instead. In addition to the English elements of the anancy musical forms, the African ones include call-and-response, contrasting long and short-note phrases, unscheduled audience participation which also becomes a chorus, the use of falsetto, and words like "*nyam*" - to eat - which resemble Twi "*enam*" or the Bantu "*nyama*" - to eat. All these traits reflect the African tradition.

Africans in the Americas provided the catalyst for remodeling European music so that clear musical traditions evolved in this hemisphere. When compared with the music of Europe, the great importance placed on musical instruments in Spain, Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States reflect the African influence, although the Caribbean has remained essentially African.

MUSIC IN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN TRADITION

During slavery in the United States, a pattern required African-Americans to play European music when Anglo Americans considered being a musician too low a

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status for whites. Many states prohibited African-Americans from using the drums, but slaveowners bought fiddles and strings and encouraged slaves to engage in music. These slave owners continued to ban the more rhythmic drum-oriented music in favor of Eurocentric music. This practice forced African-Americans into two creative patterns: development of neo-African music for themselves and transformation of European music to their African aesthetic.

African-Americans found themselves fusing African and European musical forms while attempting to maintain their neo-African cultures. By the end of slavery, African-Americans had blended in survival traits with the newly acquired western lifestyle. Their post-emancipation music developed vocally and instrumentally and transcended what could be considered true folk music.⁴⁹ Country music used hands, fiddles, mouth harps, guitars, washtub basses, kazoos, and a variety of percussive instruments. Eventually, the music (e.g., Worksongs, Shouts, Hollers, Spirituals, Blues, "Jazz" and Rhythm and Blues) and African-American contemporary forms came to influence most styles thought of as typical White American folk and popular music. Space does not permit reviewing the oppressive environment under which African-Americans created these new forms of music. To do so would redirect the focus of this essay, which is to establish the influence of Music in the African and the African-American Tradition from ancient Egypt to the present.

When we assert that Music in the African-American Tradition proved to be the major influence on the music of this country and then the world, we do not imply that other music forms did not make significant contributions. We emphasize the African-American because White American cultural historians have chosen to either deny it or to give

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White people in the field of music the undeserved credit for it. Alain Locke, a foremost African-American scholar and aesthetician, reminded us: "Early America was mostly Anglo-Saxon ... and that meant a weak musical heritage, a very plain musical taste, and a Puritan bias against music as a child of sin and the devil, dangerous to work, seriousness and moral restraint..." Yet, within an atmosphere dominated since the 17th Century by this negative Puritan attitude, Americans have produced the world's most viable music. This American product became the world's most popular music and derives from the African-American Tradition. We agree with another Locke contention that had Anglo-Americans been unsuccessful in disrupting the culture and destroying the way of life of the indigenous people of this hemisphere, more aspects of the "American Indian's" music would be apparent in today's music.⁵⁰ That, on the other hand, is another story.

No writer can adequately trace the history or development of Music in the African-American Tradition in this short overview. Consequently, we will cite some major factors which we believe prove that the music of African-Americans influenced the direction of popular music, particularly in the Western World. Locke provided us with a calendar which charts the entry of significant types of African-American music:

1. Before 1830: Age of the Plantation Shout and "Breakdown" - African Reminiscences and Survivals.
2. 1830-1850: Age of the Sorrow-Songs - the Classic Folk Period, great Spirituals and Folk Ballads.
3. 1850-1877: First Age of Minstrelsy, Stephen Foster - Sentimental Ballads.
4. 1877-1895: Second Age of Minstrelsy - Farce and Buffoonery, "Buck and Wing," "Coon" Songs, and Folk Blues.
5. 1895-1918: Age of Ragtime - Vaudeville and Music Comedy.

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6. 1918-1926: Jazz Age - Stomp, Artificial Blues and Dance Comedy.

7. 1926--: Age of Classical Jazz - Dawn of Classical African-American Music.

In his effort to categorize the music, Locke identified strains of musical expressions: (1) **spirituals** such as *Steal Away* and *Go Down Moses* and **secular ballads** like *John Henry* and *Steel Driver Sam*, he called true folk classics; (2) **popular music**, like *Swanee River*, *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, and *Minnie the Moocher*, he considered Ragtime and "Jazz"; and, (3) **classical "Jazz"** - music by Duke Ellington and others of that caliber, who created pieces like *Black and Tan Fantasy*.

Locke further divided African-American music according to geographical zones. In Virginia and the Upper South, he suggested that the music proved melodic, was heavily influenced by Irish and English folk ballads and dances, and consequently gained favor among the White community very early. From this area came Jim Bland, who wrote *Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny*. For the next area, the Creole South, Locke mentioned the mixed tradition with melodic influences coming from Spanish, French, and Cuban idioms. He cited an African-American version of the French lullaby, *Petite Ma'mselle*. Next, the Seaboard Lower South, according to him, produced a more racy strain of folk ballads. These products of the Carolinas and Georgia tended to be more realistic, less sentimental road songs, picking songs, shouts, game songs, blues, and ballads. Two notable ones are *John Henry* and *Casey Jones*.

Describing the next area, the Mississippi Strain, the Levee and Delta Music, Locke called the music racy, sentimental and the taproot of "Jazz" from which we received

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Joe Turner, Memphis Blues, St. Louis and Gulf Coast Blues. Moving out of the Southwest to Kansas, Oklahoma, and Mississippi, Locke found a musical strain heavily influenced by cowboys and the western ballad style. For example, Locke claimed that *St. James Infirmary Blues* is not pure African-American but "Negroid." His last category, Mountain Music, paralleled African-American versions of hill ballads, like *Frankie and Johnnie* and *Careless Love* from the Kentucky and Virginia highlands. These, too, he found to be not actually African-American but "Negroid."

Just as Anglo-Americans learned to sing in the African-American pattern, Africans learned European music in many ways in the United States. However, more often than not, they applied African traits to the White music, making the original almost unrecognizable. Black ballads became "ballads without verse form and the blues without blues form."⁵¹ A Black ballad might emphasize historical and trivial facts whereas a British ballad probably would include a moral. Even when the African-Americans introduced the moral, it tended to be biblically oriented. To understand this process of musical Africanization, we begin with the precursor to the Plantation Shout, the Worksongs.

Worksongs

Worksongs of the new world preserved many Africanisms. They proved functional since they regulated the flow of work, particularly communal tasks. Worksongs reflected the type of labor involved. In Africa certain areas contained greater numbers of Worksongs than others. For instance, the Yoruba, Ewe, and Igbo from the rain forest area tended crops which required less collective effort than field crops. The people from the open

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savanna countries of West Africa who tended field crops produced many Worksongs. Sometimes in Africa, professional musicians and singers who did no other work outside their music performed to encourage workers. Other times, the workers themselves sang to direct the operations.

During slavery in the United States because of team-type plantation work, African-Americans created many Worksongs. Sometimes the workers sang in near unison with minute variations which produced very unique sounds quite similar to Yoruba traditional music. Other African-American Worksongs, which used fourths, octaves, and occasional fifths, had harmonies almost identical to certain Congolese songs. Both in Africa and in the United States, these Worksongs covered a wide range of subjects.⁵² Through the prison system, many of these songs have survived. Naturally in the prisons, songs focused on predictable themes: women, length of sentence, escape, and harsh jailers. More important, however, their superb musical quality reflected the Mississippi style and true African traits, particularly the rough voice timbre and overlapping of leader and chorus. The lyrics covered human bitterness, humorous incidents, and courage in adversity.

Whether in or out of prison, African-Americans created Worksongs for very particular purposes like telling someone every step for laying tracks on a railroad job. This typical African functional quality differed significantly from the European pattern. Europeans tend to sing while working or in their leisure but not to guide or instruct someone in the way to work. Some African-American Worksongs resembled African praise, chronicle or satirical songs. In the United States, a significant body of these songs possessed long unrhymed litanies coupled with group responses. Many

included poetic images without attribution that often formed the second half of the song. This call-and-response pattern invoked the chorus picking up variations in the lead melody, then singing in response. This approach produced many more and varied melodic themes than the regular improvised call-fixed-response approach.⁵³

Hollers;

John W. Work discussed songs called the Holler which individuals sang as they worked. Hollers were generally insignificant melodies of long wavering one or twoline calls often in falsetto voice which related the incidences and occurrences of day-to-day living in a subject verse all very African traits.⁵⁴ The music possessed a semi-cadence and cadence as well as a climax note. The Hollers' focus on life's incidentals differed from the Blues. Alan Lomax described the Holler as the forerunner of the Blues. He wrote "The listener will notice the same use of falsetto stops, the same stop of the voice at the end of lines that characterize the Blues."⁵⁵ Many Hollers became short tunes, incorporating "Yodeled" notes along with the falsetto voices as part of the main melody. Early Hollers Used West African dialects and probably functioned as signals. As in Africa, the African-American signaler's sounds resembled a horn imitating speech rather than actual words.⁵⁶

Spirituals

The Worksongs and Hollers retained more Africanisms than the better known Spirituals. A genuine Spiritual is always a folk composition or a group production spontaneously composed as a choral expression of religious feelings, according to Alain

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Locke and Zora Neal Hurston (African-American ethnographer and folklorist). Hurston further argued a presentation of genuine African-American Spirituals could not occur on concert stages or in prepared presentations. What these types of arranged performances offer, she said, are African-American musical compositions based on Spirituals; and at best could be called neo-Spirituals. To Hurston, African-American religious songs had to be sung by a group. She meant a group bent on expression of feelings and not on sound effects. She described genuine Spirituals as requiring spontaneous jagged harmony filled with dissonances. Different parts would enter according to the feeling, not by preplanned arrangements. The singers would employ falsetto voices, key changes, totally new creations, and unique renditions each time and seemingly adhere to no rules. A purist, Ms. Hurston claimed genuine Spirituals could not be created or sung by a soloist or even a quartet.⁵⁷

Renowned African-American sociologist, scholar and historian W.E.B. DuBois held a narrower concept of the Spirituals in terms of their content. He wrote that the themes tended to include the mother and child but rarely the father; fugitives and weary wanderers calling for pity and affection but seldom wooing and weddings; rocks and mountains but not the home. To DuBois, Spirituals tended to have few love but frequent death songs. Hurston called W.E.B. DuBois's characterization of the Spirituals as sorrow songs ridiculous, saying that the Spirituals covered "subjects from a peeve at gossips to Death and Judgment." Upon closer examination, Hurston focused on the African reality of the Spirituals, while DuBois considered them as originating from the discontentment of the slaves.⁵⁸

The DuBois and Hurston controversy appears mild when compared to the treatment

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by noted musicologists. Many White scholars have gone to great lengths to claim European origins of the spirituals while an equal number of White and Black scholars have established African origins. No such controversy surrounded the Worksongs or Hollers or even the Blues. Some writers attempted to resolve the argument by claiming that the Spirituals were born of the African-American suffering in slavery.

In an unpublished study, M. Kolinski supports the claim that Spirituals have their roots in Africa. Kolinski found thirty-six Spirituals identical or very similar in scale and mode to West African songs. *Cyan Ride* resembles a Nigerian song, and *No More Auction Block* resembles an Ashanti song. The Spirituals include many and varied African musical traits. For instance, the Spirituals and African songs share the antiphonic call-and-response pattern. Fifty Spirituals possess the same West African formal structure while thirty-four open with Ghanaian and Dahomeyan rhythms.

It is true that some African-American spirituals did evolve from reworking white hymns, but even then the interpretations remained African. The overwhelming amount of evidence supports the fact that while Spirituals are genuine American folk music, their form (like all Music in the African-American Tradition) can be traced back to Africa.

Ring Shout

The **Shout** represents the most African of all the African-American religious forms. Obviously, Ring Shout music and dance-like activity preserved African forms of worship. The **Ring Shout** consisted of people singing as they moved singularly around the center of a circle in a dance action similar to those found in African ceremonies. People on one Sea Island also beat the floor with broom handles, an

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activity found in the Dahomeyan *dikgambo*, the Haitian *ganbo*, and the Trinidadian *tambo bamboo*.⁵⁹ Lorenzo Turner traced the Shout, a pre-emancipation Spiritual, to a Wolof word *saut* which means "to dance before the Tabernacle."⁶⁰

The congregations at racially mixed camp meetings and some rural churches of the South still sing Shouts today. The pace and excitement of the Ring Shout builds until possession by a spirit occurs. Some educated Black ministers looked down upon the Ring Shout, implicitly agreeing with those Anglo-Americans who forbade drumming and dancing. But, the purpose of the Spirituals transcended adherence to simple religious doctrines and theories. Slaves used Christian terms in Spirituals to couch and pass on their beliefs in the ancestral gods. The songs they created became "the musical expression of spiritual emotions created *by* the race and not *for* it!"⁶¹ Therefore, this African religious music represents the beginning of Music in the African-American Tradition. The reason some would like to dispute this obvious fact is that both Spirituals and African-American folk songs, for almost a century, formed the basis of much of the world's popular music, undergird the musical trends of today, and have become America's greatest cultural export.

At a precise and psychic moment, the enslaved African in the Americas fused the spirit of Christianity with their ancestral soul and created a new African-American Christianity.⁶² These Africans brought to the Christian service religious traditions from Africa as well as established methods of treating music and invocations.⁶³ Plantation songs included: revival shouts, burial songs, hymns of consolation, signals, and means of communication, particularly when planning secret meetings or plotting escapes. Many of these songs held multiple meanings.⁶⁴ The musical forms paralleled

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the African forms, including incremental leading lines with choral responses. The African-Americans built the earliest spirituals on this African call-and-response form and the bulk of the Spirituals still reflect this pattern.

A perceptive ear heard the voices tell plainly of the singer's melancholy, happiness or anger. When in slavery, however, the African singers necessarily tampered with the actual language for safety's sake. But, the inflection, pitch, tone, visceralness in the music clearly voiced the slaves' feelings without equivocation. Coupling the African pattern of using multiple meanings with their misconstruction or misapprehension of the facts in their source material (generally the Bible) and limited by their imperfect exposure to the language, these slaves creatively adjusted words to fit the rhythm and melody.

A genuine Spiritual represented a folk composition, a group production, spontaneously composed as a choral expression of religious feeling. Each choral and polyrhythmic group creation grew and lived as a continuum of varying group performances. Each participant contributed a bit of harmony, a small rhythmic device, and a shade of vocal color. If heard separately, these singers might have seemed somewhat unmusical. But heard altogether, the individual contributions produced a bewitching effect. The words, tune, and accompaniment flowed in a pulsing, sensuous whole, while the musical rhythm played tricks with the verbal accents. The many voices of the chorus blended in simple unvarying chords answering the lead singer. To be the lead singer, one needed a strong voice; a gift of melody to create, pitch, and settle clearly the appealing tune; and a good memory and talent for poetry to fashion the graphic phrase and remember the lines.⁶⁵

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As in Africa, the rhythms combined duple meter (two beats to a measure) from the singers and triple time from the drummers. The singers and drummers exchanged rhythms. Patting feet, swaying bodies, and clapping hands kept the subtle rhythms of the songs when they had few or no instruments. Participants physically responded in different ways according to their emotions. Some displayed religious ecstasy by the swaying of head and body. They exhibited pleasure, humor, hilarity, love or joy of life by patting their feet or hands. Performers kept the subtle and elusive rhythms of the spirituals in perfect union with the religious ecstasy. Their swaying bodies appeared to be guided by the baton of some very sensitive conductor.⁶⁶

Authentic Music in the African-American Tradition utilized two rhythmic patterns: sacred music used one based on the swinging of the head and body; and secular music used another based on the patting of hands and feet. The rhapsodical handclapping connected with worship differed from the dance-time handclapping. But for African-Americans as time went on, the distinctions between religious and worldly music became quite blurred. As Locke noted, African-American music "has contrasts between stately Spiritual chorales and the jubilant spiritual campmeeting Shouts in the religious sector and the slow swaying melancholy Blues and the skipping Ragtime and fast-rocking Jazz in the secular sector of music."⁶⁷

Just before the Civil War, the Spirituals became the first African-American music which Anglo-Americans took seriously. Then in 1870 when the Fisk Jubilee Singers toured Europe, America again became aware of this music.⁶⁸ Spirituals were not fully appreciated until Ragtime and "Jazz" gained acceptance and opened the way. In order to explain the development of Ragtime and "Jazz," we must cover Minstrelsy, Blues, and Classical.⁶⁹

Minstrelsy

The term "Minstrelsy" should be understood in its correct connotation and not as a reflection of the racist practice which developed here in the United States with the blackened-faced White imitators of the African-American performers. The African *griots* perform the true role of minstrels in the African tradition. Not surprisingly, African performers, musicians, and storytellers practiced minstrelsy throughout the world. Frank Snowden made particular reference to African troubadours in Europe during the Middle Ages.⁷⁰ Therefore, it was natural that African-American performances became part of the African-American tradition during the earliest colonial times. Minstrelsy occurred on the plantations. The talented enslaved Africans would sing, dance, and play music to entertain the slave owners and their guests. Through this pattern, significant numbers of African-Americans maintained or developed musical talents. Then before 1800, these quasi-professional entertainers formed in troupes and played a circuit defined by the boundaries of slavery. Reading a poster from around 1800 gives us an idea of the roles African-Americans played in minstrels. It cited many instruments and "one strong colored cornet player ... salary must be low (!)" Through these activities, enslaved African-Americans were responsible for the embryonic stages of American Minstrelsy in their contributions to form, style, instrumentation and performance practices.

Minstrelsy operated similarly to a variety show with announcers, comedians, dancers, soloists, choruses and other small ensembles. The performances contained no storyline and included dances, songs, and spoken dialogue with emphasis on southern Black life. Talented African-Americans took to the professional stage, traveled throughout

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the country, and alternated their acts with songs, dances, jokes, dialogues and clowning. Many played "banjos, pianos, guitars, gongs, tambourines, other percussion and wind instruments. The music included introductions, interludes, postludes, and accompaniment with solos, duets, choruses." Historical references to African-American entertainers on stage begin about 1820 and the information is sketchy and not verified. For when Minstrelsy moved to the stage, it arrived with White actors who blackened their faces to comically imitate the original African plantation slave entertainers. It was called Ethiopian Minstrelsy because the White actors blackened their faces to look like caricatures of the Black people they were imitating.

White historians usually credit Thomas D. Rice, a White man, with being the founder of Ethiopian Minstrelsy, because he popularized it. Rice had been doing these black-faced imitations of African-Americans between acts at a Cincinnati theater. From his dressing room, he observed an old slave who served as a handyman for the theater's proprietor. This man suffered severe physical impairment with a left shoulder significantly lower than his right and a stiff left leg crooked at the knee. His condition caused him to have a painful limp. While working, he often crooned an old tune in his own words, "Wheel about, turn about, Do jus so, An' ebery time I wheel about I jump Jim Crow." In 1830, Rice copied this man's actions and tune, added some verses and created a unique character for the American stage. His introduction of this "Jim Crow" character so delighted the Louisville audience they gave him 20 recalls. By 1832, known affectionately as "Jim Crow" Rice, he moved to the New York stage. Minstrelsy became the first form of stage entertainment born in the United States and set in motion the development of vaudeville and musical comedy.

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Despite the fact that the form and content of Minstrelsy derived from the enslaved Africans, not until 1843 did the first band of African-American minstrels formally organize in New York. This group consisted of "Dan" Emmet, "Frank" Brower, "Billy" Whitlock, and "Dick" Pelham. They made their first appearance at the Chatham Theatre and later toured the United States and Europe. The forms within American Minstrelsy had set in solidly before 1830. By the time White producers allowed African-Americans to belong to Minstrel troupes, the Black entertainers were also required to blacken their faces to look like the White performers. This requirement exemplified the height of "white supremacy." Black men blacking their faces to look like White men blacking their faces to look like Black men. Not only did the Blacks have to imitate the Whites imitating the Blacks, in face and costume, but the White producers required the Blacks to perform in accordance with the White patterns.

Rice became so popular to White audiences, he took his act to Europe. In 1860, he died. By 1865, two African-American Minstrel troupes toured the United States and Europe. They introduced more energy, better humor, and stronger musicianship since they were expert instrumentalists. By 1876 The Georgia Minstrels (the first professional all Black Minstrel company) comprised a compliment of 21 highly trained individuals; most were superior musicians. They played in concert halls and incorporated European music into this stereotyped Minstrelsy. Their offerings differed greatly from the White slapstick burlesque. Later, these groups developed into Ragtime bands.

Alain Locke divided Minstrelsy into two stages: 1850-1875 and 1875-1895. Clearcut distinctions existed between the characterization of the African-Americans in the first and

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second stages. In the first stage, African-Americans were very pathetic, romantic and serious. In the second, they were too comic and over ridiculous. Minstrelsy music also took two forms: "twangy swift banjo music" and "stately sugary guitar music." Stephen Foster and James Bland, two outstanding composers, emerged during Locke's first Minstrelsy period. They belonged to the sweet category.

James Bland (an African-American of mixed African, "Indian," and European ancestry from Long Island) and Stephen Foster (an Anglo-American Democrat from Pittsburgh) were both northerners, both objects of tragic troubadour lives. These men wrote songs based on the African-American experience which remain standards in America's music. Except for *Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair*, most of the songs that Foster wrote outside of the African-American strain remain unknown. But those with the African-American traits, such as *De Camptown Races*, *Swanee River*, *Old Folks at Home*, *Massa's in de Cole*, *Cold Ground*, *My Old Kentucky Home*, and *Old Black Joe*, became and have remained worldwide favorites. Whereas, Americans remember Foster's name as well as his music, Bland - who wrote *Oh, Dem Golden Slippers*, *In the Morning by the Bright Light*, *In the Evening by the Moonlight*, and *Carry me Back to Old Virginny*- remains relatively unknown to most people with the exception of those individuals interested in the history of African-Americans. Yet Bland's music is as American and as famous as Stephen Foster's.

For two decades (between 1870 and 1890), there was a clash between America's popular and classical music. Minstrel music labeled Jig, Clog, Double Shuffle, Pigeonwing, Minstrel ballad, Coon song, and the Cakewalk existed primarily in Burlesque. Locke termed this second age of Minstrelsy, "the circus age," for the

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music reflected the "gaudy and cheap" aspects associated with carnivals and tent shows.⁷¹ African-American music along with musical theatre declined because of gross commercialism. By 1930 almost every White American musician and/or dancer such as Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor, had come from the burnt cork blackfaced minstrel stage.⁷² In the midst of this decline, a wave of enthusiasm for the Spirituals rolled forward with the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Their popularity kept bringing genuine African-American music to the wider audience.

In the 1890s Tin Pan Alley emerged, riding high on the popularity of the African-American Cakewalk and Ragtime. Some claim that the Cakewalk also originated on plantations when slaves imitated the masters dancing the minuet. Along with other African-American forms (such as Tap dances, Rags, Camel Walk, Turkey Trots, Grizzly Bear and the Lamé Duck), the Cakewalk - an elaborate strutting effect - became popular in Vaudeville shows. High society readily took to the "kicked up high" Cakewalk dance, so much so that the famous African-American minstrel entertainer, Bert Williams, challenged the wealthy aristocrat, William K. Vanderbilt, to a contest to determine New York's best Cakewalker.

Another African-American dance, the *juba*, came off the plantation through Minstrelsy. The African-American Minstrel men took the *juba* dance to the stage, smoothed it up and introduced it all over America and Europe. Mr. William Henry Lane, a freeborn African-American from Providence, Rhode Island emerged as the most influential *juba* entertainer and became known as Mr. Juba. He lived in New York and had a reputation as a "Jig" dancer. When big-time minstrel shows became interracial, he worked in the best troupes with top billing as Mr. Juba. Mr. Juba's sense of artistry

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allowed him to blend the energetic African patterns with the softer type dance of "old world" folk dances. He became the king of dancers but died prematurely in London at age 29.⁷³

During the turn-of-the-century decade, African-American musicians blended African musical traits with newly acquired European patterns to continue creating Music in the African-American Tradition. They incorporated truly African derived techniques and concepts and reconstructed European elements in song forms: the Ballads and the Blues. These forms also came from and through African-American Minstrelsy.

Early Blues

One could characterize the ballad as a romantic or sentimental musical narrative which expressed emotion in short simple stanzas, whereas the blues generally involved commentaries and conveyed moods of depression, self-pity, love, despair, and often cynicism.⁷⁴ Both types used beginning verses of two or three lines which often rhymed in ABAB structure, then a choral refrain in ABAC structure, and then a repeat of the first ABAB verse pattern. Both derived from the African-American spirituals.⁷⁵

No one has definitely established the beginning of the Blues or where the Spirituals, specifically the Holler, ends. Perhaps it occurred when the singer of the Holler just sang the "Going down the river before long," line without the introductory "O-o-o-ah" nonword phrase. But the song with or without the omission still retained the African

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traits of allusive lyrics and repetition of musical and poetic forms. Some set the beginning according to when the musicians began to establish a particular set of forms for the Blues such as the repeated first line couplet within a 12-bar frame. However, this form only applied to group singing and not to one person singing accompanied by whatever instrument s/he could play. Early solo Blues singers allowed themselves much more flexibility than this rigid 12-bar frame. They tended to stay very close to the field Holler tradition. In fact, the Queen of the Blues, Bessie Smith, sang more songs that were not in the 12-bar structure. People locked Blues into this form because promoters recorded a very large body of the music in the 1920s. By that time, this form had been set - particularly on commercial records. African-American women such as Bessie Smith, Ida Cox, and Ma Rainey sang on many of these early Blues records. Their songs really fit in the Vaudeville song category, but because of their technique, the songs sounded like and became Blues. These early "classic" singers improvised the music, created their own songs or new versions of old tunes, used free association and floating verses (lines found in many songs), and generally retained folk Blues elements.

Therefore, we can trace the Blues' call-and-response pattern to Africa, for we recognize that cultural survivals need not be identically reproduced. When singing the early or country Blues, musicians used the guitar as a percussive instrument combining rhythm and melody in a very African manner. In fast Blues, the singer played the guitar and incorporated repeated short phrases on the instrument while repeating and improvising longer melodic lines as was done in Africa. Although the guitar did not truly answer the verse, it did "*fill in the breaks* with accompanying figures," performing a function similar to stringed instruments in Ghana. Many parallels between African

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musical patterns and Blues forms can be found. A final one is that Blues and dance, like almost all African-American music, are inextricably linked. Early Blues bands' instruments (fiddles, guitars, and homemade percussions) resembled those of the African savanna. These early Blues bands served as precursors to the instrumental dance ensembles and big band era.

In the rhythmic elements of the Blues, one finds African traits: playing and/or singing around the beat; displacing accents to create cross-rhythms between voice and instrument; and using triple and duple rhythms simultaneously. Early and country Blues used triplets against a basic 4/4 beat to create the duple-triple tension found extensively throughout African music. Even the rhythm of the lyrics allow for much flexibility to create cross-rhythms over the regular steady beat of the accompanying instrument. An Alabama Blues singer described the relationship between language and melody in the Blues similar to the manner in which Africans relate the two. He said, "You pattern the words to rise and fall in a way similar to the way that you would speak them, and construct the words not just any way but so they flow naturally with the flow of the melody."

Singers regularly trailed off and let the guitar playing end a line. Country Blues singers sometimes sang only a few beginning words then hummed or let the guitar carry the main burden of the song. This treating the instrument like a person signified something deeper than just the "talking" function of the drums or other African instruments. It indicated a semi-personification (like B.B. King's famous guitar "Lucille") of the instrument to a spiritual level.⁷⁶ Even the Blues vocal styles retained pitched voices, deep tones, mid-line yodeling, fast vibrato, gravelly quality, tearing, many Africanisms:

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falsetto, fairly high-pitched voices, deep tones, mid-line yodeling, of Music in the African-American Tradition from Worksongs to the Blues; from "Jazz," Rhythm and Blues, Rock and Roll to contemporary American music.

W. C. Handy, between 1909 and 1912, championed the pure Mississippi folk music which had unleashed this overwhelming flood of the Blues onto the world's stage.⁷⁷ To him and most African-American musicians following him, the Blues remained in a pre-eminent position within the tradition. African-American musicians believe that a Blues sequence represents the acid test of a performer's improvising ability and the litmus test of his talent. Even though the possibilities appear to be limited, the players continually must stretch beyond the seeming boundaries.⁷⁸,

Boogie Woogie

Around 1930, another form of Blues, Barrelhouse piano playing, called **Boogie Woogie**, originated in Southern social-shacks. It involved highly rhythmical, lefthand playing with repeated bass patterns, while improvising blues phrases on the right hand, a repetition of short rhythmic phrases by both hands, continually engaged in cross rhythms. Boogie Woogie represents a pure example of various African musical strands in which the actual form does not exist in Africa. Pianists use Boogie Woogie or Barrelhouse Blues as a solo style or background to their own singing as dance music. Other forms of Barrelhouse piano playing exemplify strong similarities to West African xylophone techniques, particularly short, rhythmic, contrasting patterns set against each other. Hugh Tracey recorded a Congolese piece with a xylophone introduction clearly employing what we deem a basic Boogie left-hand figure.⁷⁹

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Alain Locke believed that the improvised interval break of the Blues represented the cradle from which "Jazz" originated. Locke described African-American music as one essential tradition with three different dimensions: Spirituals, Ragtime, and Jazz. The latter, he claimed, "reflected a fluctuation of speed within musical phrase" against steady rhythmic beat that is a peculiar characteristic of African-Americans which they had kept secret for years. He called Ragtime the mother of "Jazz" and saw Ragtime lurking beneath the ecstasy and rhythms of the more jubilant Spirituals.⁸⁰

A Note on "Jazz"

Whether one talks about the early traditional, mainstream or modern styles, the (w)holistic nature of the Music in the African-American Tradition requires all musicians to engage in harmonic exploration and growth of their musical vocabulary. Locke called the modern period music "Jazz." He believed it represents transfers of West African musical traditions through cultural memory, and he described "Jazz" as an-African music human enough to be universal in appeal and expressiveness.⁸¹

Many individuals have attempted to trace the origins of the term "Jazz." Some have found African words which they consider its origins; others have gone to the French influence on the language of the early New Orleans players. Until 1913, when a sports writer for the *San Francisco Bulletin* used "Jazz" to mean pep and enthusiasm, New Orleans musicians called their music Ragtime.⁸² Veteran musicians stated that "Jazz" meant sexual drive. In fact, Sydney Bechet in his autobiography stated that the word "jazz" in its original form "jars" was local New Orleans slang for sexual intercourse.⁸³ Eubie Blake corroborated this interpretation in a conversation with my husband and me

during breakfast at the Hampton Jazz Festival in 1968. My husband, a noted musician and scholar, Dr. Ken McIntyre, had the very great privilege to play on the same program with Mr. Blake and asked him, "How long have you been playing `Jazz'?" In answer to this question, Mr. Blake replied, "Don't use that term to describe our music, for `jazz' means to copulate." Guided by the sacredness of the African-American oral tradition, we recognize Mr. Bechet and Mr. Blake's interpretation as primary evidence concerning the origins and meaning of the term. We, therefore, put it in quotes and will use it for convention only. The term, "Jazz" has been used generically to cover a very great body of African-American music but no specific style. Still, there are general traits of the music known as "Jazz." We can list some of the characteristics of "Jazz":

1. More suave, more melodies, more vocal melody than that of Ragtime. 2. Sustained melody over throbbing accompaniment.
3. Superimposition of complex rhythmic patterns.
4. More major than minor tonalities.
5. Use of added tones in harmony (added 6th or 2nd degree in the final tonic).
6. Parallelism on 7th or 9th chords.
7. Instrumentation with little use of strings and prominence of percussion, woodwinds, and brass.
8. Improvisation - unlike European "classical" music, "Jazz" is not invariant - it is inclusive rather than exclusive - it is self-organizing.

The major contributions this music made to Western music include new orchestration and instrumentation in the use of brass and woodwinds, particularly, the saxophone; new chords and chordal progressions; unique rhythmic devices, especially syncopated patterns; and the use of Blues techniques within harmony and melody.⁸⁴

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"Jazz" musicians translated the conventional music symbolic structure into a new approach to melodic contour and pulse. They then devised their own supplementary symbols to indicate to other musicians in the tradition the desired performance effects. To musicians trained only in European music, these new symbols appeared unintelligible and European trained musicians could not use the old western symbols and apply them to the new tradition. Therefore, a dichotomy arose. The European dominated musical unity broke. European "classical" musicians found themselves removed from contemporary Western musical terms.

America's popular music, imitated throughout the world, represents a fusion of African and African-American sources with some European elements. More important, the new tradition remains dominated by African-Americans. Sociologically, the dominance of African-American musical traits relegates players of any racial background to a lower level of social or artistic achievement. The schism set European "classical" music apart from American music because African-Americans had heavily influenced American music's source and changes. Henry Pleasants, a professional music critic and author, wrote that:

"When we talk of American popular music whether jazz or any of the countless jazz derivatives, we speak of a music that evolved outside the continuity of a Western and hitherto European evolution. We must recognize its own folklore, tradition, environment, history, aspirations, schedule of evaluation, instruments and instrumentation - playing and combining inherit instruments - its own masters, critical fraternity, factions and descriptive terminology."

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Pleasants further argued that the music possessed a characteristic directness, assertiveness, conception of pulse, contour and cadence; and, when "Jazz" musicians compromise their music or play to accommodate a more nearly European frame of expressive reference (calling upon strings or employing European instruments in an European manner) these "Jazz" musicians jeopardize the idiomatic identity of the music.⁸⁵

Ragtime

Whether one uses the term "Jazz" or not, most historians agree that this is an organized form of music that began with Ragtime. Basically a piano music composed, written, and intended to be performed according to how it was written, Ragtime emerged from Minstrel bands and required strong technical ability.⁸⁶ The picture of the earliest Ragtime musician is usually a lone piano player-substituting for an entire band - performing in cheap eating places, honky-tonk spots, saloons and riverside dives for low wages or maybe even tips. Because of economic reasons, the piano (being a solo instrument) prevailed. But, other elements influenced the playing style, including dances such as Quadrilles, Marches and Country Dances; songs such as Coon songs, Shouts, Clogs, Jigs, and Ballads; Barrelhouse rhythms; Minstrel bands; banjo pieces and other instruments. In fact, the piano's strength developed because it imitated the "missing" instruments. And the name, Ragtime, probably came from the Clog dancing which they called "ragging" and/or the "rag" dance which involved mostly shuffling to banjo music. Banjo music divided one beat into two short notes similar to handclapping patterns.

Ragtime probably represented the clearest fusion between African-American and European music. Despite the European features in Ragtime, this musical form also linked with other African-American traits, particularly the right-hand syncopated rhythm which can be found in Brazilian, Caribbean and Blues patterns. Ragtime incorporated rhythms from the Cakewalk and March patterns like Scott Joplin's *Combination March*. Also, Ragtime used cross-rhythms with the right hand against the left and constructed melodies from short and repeated rhythmic phrases with frequent variations. The left hand used a "walking" characteristic which means it accented the offbeat in the bass pattern in duple time. Ragtime musicians labeled the technique "Stride."⁸⁷

Stride

The **Stride** premise involved the creation of harmonic and melodic effects by playing more than one note at the same time. And, the best Stride music played 10-note chords pounding rhythms on the left hand and a strong melodic line on the right hand. This approach created compositions with great harmonic possibilities and rhythmic diversity. J. P. Johnson and Willie "the Lion" Smith represented the preeminent Stride players. The Smith/Johnson school produced such greats as Fats Waller and Duke Ellington. Both eclipsed their masters and moved passed Stride playing. Another piano style, the "trumpet," developed concurrently with Stride. Stride also went out of favor through the popularity of Earl "Fatha" Hines who demonstrated that harmony on the left hand could be accompanied by "Trumpet" style single-note, straight ahead improvised melodic variations on the right hand.⁸⁸ Hines played the piano as if it were a lead instrument, fusing instrumental and piano styles. From the solo syncopated musical pattern of Ragtime, the music moved to group playing and improvising. This approach included New Orleans, Chicago, and Swing Styles.

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New Orleans Music

During this nation's first two centuries, dancing served as the main social function for most Americans. Sports activities only became popular about a hundred years ago. A high demand for musicians encouraged slave owners to exploit the talents of their enslaved persons, creating a tradition of using African-Americans for dance music. These African-American musicians introduced their own forms, such as the twisting or bending of certain notes away from the European's idea of true pitch to the special African rhythmic pulse and into American dance music. White writers attempted to write down these innovations but found they couldn't capture African traits in European notation.

From the early 18th Century, New Orleans granted special privileges to a group called Creoles (people of mixed ancestry, French, "Indian," and African or some other combination, neither fully Black nor White). Creoles- a people of all complexions, some indistinguishable from Whites and others identical to very dark-skinned African-Americans - over time developed a distinctive culture with their own language, myths, folklore, and social customs. Jim Crow legislation in 1877 separated all U.S. citizens into two categories, Black or White. The imposition of the Jim Crow (apartheid) laws stripped the Creoles of their privileges and pushed them uptown into the African-American community, a move they resented. Within this close proximity, however, the Creoles with their European musical orientation came into greater contact with the African-American Musical Tradition. The Creoles shared trumpet,

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trombone, clarinet, tuba, and saxophone techniques in exchange for the rhythms and bent notes of the African-American's Blues musicians.

Twenty years later, Spanish American War bandsmen disbanded in New Orleans, flooding the city with musical instruments. About the same time, the City officials of New Orleans created Storyville, an area restricted for vice, especially houses of ill-repute. These establishments hired musicians to keep the customers entertained. In addition to working in the Storyville section, Creole musicians played marching band music in street parades, public ceremonies, funerals, dances, and parties. They mixed in Spirituals, hymns, other types of church music, popular songs, arias, and other concert pieces. The Creole musicians tended to, embellish a little figure here and there but not to improvise. They either read or memorized their parts. The African-American Blues bands usually played dance halls and beer joints. Made up of smaller groups, they almost always improvised their music. During this time Ragtime and the New Orleans style emerged."

New Orleans' music style developed out of the fusion of the Creole marching parade band with the African-American Blues band. Classic New Orleans instrumentation consisted of one or two cornets, a trombone, clarinet, drums, tuba, and banjo. Later, pianos were added to the rhythm section. New Orleans style followed the marching band form. The trumpets played the melody straight, clarinets played trills and quick figures, and trombones filled in the gaps, the main difference being the drum keeping a steady beat with an African-American rhythm instead of the rigid left-right-left-right marching band beat. Playing mostly in ensembles with few solos, New Orleans style musicians memorized their parts. They improvised collectively, a unique New Orleans trait.

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No other style managed to have several instruments improvising at one time. Some writers claim that the instrumentation with the clarinet playing high, the trumpet in the middle, and the trombone on the bottom provided them the ability to produce this collective improvisation.⁹⁰

One major figure of the New Orleans style, Buddy Bolden, possessed a powerful and dramatic sound that could be heard "for miles," according to the reports of a fellow musician, Bunk Johnson. Freddie Keppard replaced Bolden as "King" of the New Orleans Style. Keppard played with a handkerchief over his playing hand so no one could imitate his system of fingering. He worried about people "stealing his stuff" so much that in 1916 he refused to put his music on record. Unfortunately, when he did record, he had passed his peak. His refusal led to a White group, the Original Dixieland Jass Band, becoming the first to record the New Orleans Style. Their name and Keppard's action contributed to the music being called "jass."⁹¹ Joe "King" Oliver played trombone and cornet. He became very popular. In 1918, he moved to Chicago and in 1920 began leading the Creole Jazz Band which became the first African-American New Orleans style band to record.

Chicago and Dixieland Styles

America inherited three important musical contributions from the New Orleans Style: The Chicago Style, Dixieland, and Louis Armstrong. The Chicago Style consisted of mostly young White musicians who attempted to imitate the New Orleans bands but created a less controlled and brasher music. This style kept the trumpet, trombone, and clarinet but added the saxophone.⁹² The music in this style began and ended

with the ensemble playing. In the middle of each piece, each musician played, creating a string of solos. Out of this school came the well-known Benny Goodman and Bix Beiderbecke. By the early 30s, most of these players had moved into either the Dixieland or the new Swing Style. Dixieland incorporates the collective improvisation from the New Orleans style but fits its rhythm to the new Swing Style. We find more White musicians playing this style, notably Eddie Condon, Jack Teagarden, Bobby Hackett, and Pee Wee Russell. From these small ensembles, the music moved to Big Bands and Swing.⁹³

Swing Style

The term "Swing" means three very different things in African-American music. First, musicians talk about a "feeling of swing" as something necessary to **all** good African-American music. Does the music swing? Next, the title "Swing bands" really refers to big dance bands of the 1930s and 1940s whether they offered a feeling of "swing" or not. Last, the approach to rhythm changed and the mode of playing called the Swing Style developed in the 1930s. The change occurred with the simultaneous development of the Chicago Style Dixieland, and Louis Armstrong.⁹⁴

In the Swing Style, the emphasis tends to be equal on all four beats, giving the feeling of a steady pulse unlike the New Orleans Style which generally emphasized the first and third of a four beat measure. Also, when Swing musicians play two notes together, instead of making the first one distinctly longer than the second, the notes tend to be of equal duration. In addition, Swing musicians replaced the tuba with the string bass and the banjo with the guitar and the music seemed smoother. The Swing bands also incorporate

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polyrhythmic approaches. Most use the steady four-to-the bar rhythm section as a base for the cross-rhythms and conflicting accents. We hear the horns in the front-line playing. To hear the cross-rhythms, the listener must key in on more than just the rhythm section. S/he must listen to the different rhythms of the entire ensemble and how they intermesh and interplay.

The major factor in the swing style involved the development of 12 to 20-piece bands playing written music. Before the age of amplification, large ballrooms required loud music. Large bands could project sound to the farthest corner of crowded halls. But oftentimes these large bands had new players who had never worked together. To control the end product and reduce the rehearsal time, bands began using written arrangements. With so many musicians involved, soloists found themselves waiting to be featured. Many opted to stay in smaller groups and others, who could not read, had no choice but to play in more intimate places. Thus, small swing bands as well as big ones existed.⁹⁵

Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton appears to have created the first organized group of African-American players; however, the acknowledged first orchestral figure in this tradition is Fletcher Henderson, who pioneered the big bands. Henderson wrote his music out in orchestrations which seemed a contradiction since improvisation proved necessary for the tradition. But in introducing written parts, Henderson managed to retain the music's vitality. He introduced the idea of having sections with three or four voices (instruments) playing in harmony responses to the solo voice (instrument). This approach is an African trait. Performers could space and adjust their solos to the way the overall piece was arranged. Successors to Henderson,

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Benny Moten, Chick Webb, Jimmy Lunceford, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington all had touring orchestras (which enjoyed national and international acclaim) in the 1930s. Henderson formed his group in 1923 and became the first orchestra to gain wide fame playing in this African-American music style.⁹⁶

Duke Ellington introduced the concept of using his orchestra as his instrument. A fine pianist and composer, Ellington began creating small bands for dances and parties as a teenager in Washington, D. C. In late 1927, the Cotton Club hired Duke Ellington's orchestra. The place was an uptown New York nightclub which catered only to White audiences. The owners designed the interior as an exotic jungle, with beautiful dancing girls and a full entertainment show. Many of Duke's compositions appeared to be inspired by the club's atmosphere. Billy Strayhorn arranged a significant body of Ellington's works and contributed much to the sound which made the orchestra so famous. Henderson and Ellington's orchestras possessed many of the finest soloists in the history of the music, including Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Benny Carter, Juan Tizol, Cootie Williams, and Lawrence Brown, to name a few. Ellington held his orchestra together for over fifty years and now under the leadership of his son, Mercer, it continues to perform to audiences all over the world.⁹⁷

Generations of musicians committed to memory solos from Count Basie's first recordings in 1937 and 1938, particularly those from his *One O'Clock Jump*. Basie's ensembles sounded like a combination between a relaxed small combo with the drive and discipline of a large band. His rhythm section, guitar, bass and drums kept time - giving Basie the opportunity to develop his sparing romping pattern on piano. Basie liked to fill in with appropriately placed staccato notes. Playing for Basie, Jo

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Jones introduced brisk bright tonal colors on wire brushes and the cymbals. Basie's band produced stars such as Buck Clayton, Harry "Sweets" Edison, and Buddy Tate like Ellington and Henderson's orchestras had developed the great soloists Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins and Lester "Prez" Young.⁹⁸

After learning to read music in the two years with Oliver, Armstrong moved to Fletcher Henderson's orchestra. An innovative musician, Armstrong introduced the extended seemingly limitless improvised solo. This innovation changed the convention of ensemble playing. Before this change, the whole group improvised all at the same time. Armstrong's approach featured improvising soloists. Thoroughly versed in the music, Armstrong summarized all the musical styles in the tradition that preceded him and contributed a whole new range of melodic possibilities.

Armstrong overshadowed other members of any groups with whom he played. Between the late 1920's and 1930, he starred with many large bands whose arrangements generally featured him. His trumpet playing was dramatic, sweeping, vibrant and warm. He also popularized scat singing. Almost singlehandedly, Louis Armstrong directed the mainstream of the music. He influenced almost all - Black and White - musicians in the African-American tradition who followed him. He became the first African-American out of the New Orleans school to become a national and international figure in films as well as music.⁹⁹

The popularity of the saxophone, particularly the tenor, came through Coleman Hawkins. Hawkins raised the status of the tenor sax through his particularly unique ability to play slower ballads. He incorporated deep passionate tones with an indefinable sense

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of form which allowed him to put fragmented phrases and related runs of notes into composite musical renditions. Even today, his interpretation of "Body and Soul" remains supreme. His follower, Lester Young, set a style (for a generation to come) on the saxophone distinctly different from Coleman Hawkins'. Young demonstrated a new way of building an improvised solo with rarely used chords, such as the minor sixth. He introduced spaces of silence, breaking up runs of notes (arpeggios) in intervals of conventional harmonies. He perfected a series of new fingerings to produce many densities of sounds on the same note. Young created a new vocabulary within the musical tradition of his times.¹⁰⁰

Big Bands

The **Big Bands** featured most of the better known artists. But these "stars" sometimes formed small groups to play in nightclubs or record. Again, Fletcher Henderson set the pattern. He served as a regular for Black Swan Records accompanying singers; and sometimes he organized small backup groups for them. When he was asked to organize a band for the Club Alabam in New York, he began recording with it and it became the most important Swing band of the twenties and early thirties.¹⁰¹ The Big Bands that followed Henderson dominated the American music scene until the late 40's after World War II. Even the remaining Big Bands -- Count Basie, and Duke Ellington - follow the Henderson model.

These pioneering African-American musicians created a new musical tradition guided by their African traditions, reformulated by time and conditions. This musical tradition involves the process of composing utilizing group improvisation. The musicians must have a whole chain of musical expertise, an acute musical ear, an instinctive feeling for harmony, the courage and capacity to improvise and

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interpolate, and a canny sense for the total effect. Africans have the same musical traits, only with a stronger self-concept. Africans employ free style and voice trill vocal habits within their choral singing. Out of these African vocal patterns (the slur and quaver, the use of single sustained voice tone as a suspension note, and the chorus changes of harmony) came the elaborate harmonic system instrumentalists used in the modern Music in the African-American Tradition.¹⁰²

White Imitators

Music in the African-American Tradition soon entered the White commercial world of dances, soirees, drawing room ballads, concerts, opera and theater. Historically Whites expropriated African-American musical forms such as Minstrelsy, the Cakewalk, the Foxtrot, Dixieland, the New Orleans Style, and the Chicago Style. For instance, they organized the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and the New Orleans Rhythm Kings who developed a new style, a compromise between the ensemble New Orleans style and the Armstrong solo approach.

Big White bands of Benny Goodman, Bix Beiderbecke, later Artie Shaw, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, and Glen Miller copied African-American music and to make their sound authentic actually used African-American orchestrators and arrangers. Tommy Dorsey used Sy Oliver and Charlie Barnet used Horace Henderson. Jimmy Mundy wrote for Paul Whiteman, known for his "symphonic jazz"; Bob Crosby played arrangements based on Louis Armstrong's work; and Benny Goodman used these arrangers to a greater extent than any other White band leader and became renowned when he hired Teddy Wilson on piano, integrating his band during a time

when racial segregation was considered legal and socially correct. These dance bands provided music for White America, and their successors still do, particularly for today's college audiences.¹⁰³

BeBop

BeBop represents an age of change. Individual musicians, tired of old musical clichés in the Swing style, musically took off on their own. First and foremost comes alto saxophonist Charlie "Yardbird" Parker (affectionately called "Bird") who as a member of the pianist Jay McShann's Band in 1942 introduced new harmonic and rhythmic improvisational ideas. Next in importance, trumpeter James Berks "Dizzy" Gillespie while in Teddy Hill's band copied trumpeter Roy Eldridge's style and went to Cab Calloway's big band experimenting with a new way to phrase and link intricate harmonies. The bassist, Milt Hinton, not only encouraged Gillespie but also rehearsed a new pattern of chord progressions with him. About the same time, Thelonius Monk experimented with piano and introduced a style that expressly ignored rapid playing. Instead he incorporated short phrases of intricate harmonies and brilliant rhythm. A companion genius, Bud Powell, played long sweeping . extended phrases, the opposite of the Monk Style. J. J. Johnson altered the playing of the trombone. He possessed an advanced technique and introduced the playing of fast-moving complicated Bop tunes which for many years stood as **the** way to play that instrument.

Kenny Clarke pioneered a style which provided drummers greater rhythmic freedom. He used cymbals to accent the bass rhythm, keeping the pulse of the tune. Beating the tempo on the cymbals, he used the hi-hat cymbals to play off-beats. He replaced

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long snare rolls with snappy intermittent interjections, phrases which complemented the cymbal and enhanced the soloists' phrasing. Instead of using the bass drum solely for keeping time, Clarke used it to create short punctuated accents, some on and some off the beat. These irregular beats were known as "dropping bombs." Two major artists who extended Clarke's concepts are Max Roach and Art Blakey.¹⁰⁴

The change in bass playing occurred because of Jimmy Blanton and Hinton's work with Parker. Blanton introduced "playing harmonically interesting musical lines with precision and rhythm." The string bass became the central instrument in the rhythm section. It provided the pulse so the pianist could embellish chord changes rather than concentrate on rhythm. This change allowed the drum to produce tone colours and fill in rhythmic phrases instead of just keeping time. Premiere drummer, Max Roach, popularized a pattern introduced by Kenny Clarke of using the large cymbal to assist the bass player in keeping the beat moving forward. The cymbal became known as the "ride" cymbal. It projected a "ping" rather than "splash" or "crash" sound and gave a feeling of forward motion. Drummers created a swing feeling when using the "ride" cymbal and also by the use of brushes on the snare drum played in swing rhythm. The change in the functions of the rhythm section created a looser sound with the bass and cymbal keeping the beat and the piano and drums filling in gaps of the front-line's improvised solos.¹⁰⁵

Older sympathetic musicians all had influenced the new direction of the music. By 1944, Hawkins began to record with Bop musicians. Earl "Fatha" Hines hired Parker as a tenor saxophonist. Gillespie and several other Bop musicians (Wardell Gray and Bennie Green) also were in Hines' band along with Parker and tried out "new" musical things.

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Gillespie and Parker clicked and arrived together in Billy Eckstine's band. Eckstine, who had been Hines' vocalist, employed Sarah "Sassy" Vaughan. All of Eckstine's band members, like Howard McGhee, Fats Navarro, and Kenny Durham, embraced the "Bop" school of music. As soloists, Bop musicians tended to play long cascades of very fast notes, unlike the medium tempo played in the Swing Style.

These Bop musicians gathered together in jam sessions and developed small-band Bop arrangements featuring front-line instruments playing the same notes without harmony. After this unison playing, each player soloed and all then concluded the tune by repeating the opening notes, again without harmony. White Big Bands found it very difficult to use this format, but many arrangers like Tad Dameron, Gil Fuller, and George Russell incorporated Bop effects and phrasings into their arrangements. They also created new voicings for each section of the Big Bands with "wide sumptuous Bop harmonies."

Singing styles changed also and vocal technique reigned over the traditional emotion-charged Blues form. Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, Carmen McRae, and of course, Gillespie utilized the wordless "scat singing," introduced in the early years by Armstrong.

Armstrong served as a major influence for singers. By 1944, small Bop bands found greater employment opportunities, particularly in New York. Soon after, Gillespie, Parker, Powell, and others began to record. This made "BeBop" music more acceptable. "Jazz" devotees could hear Bop featured in 52nd Street clubs like Birdland where Symphony Sid played the music on a late-night radio show heard across the country.

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During the Bop era, a split occurred. Big Bands like Andy Kirk, Lucky Millinder, Jimmy Lunceford, and Lionel Hampton continued their Big Band swing traditions. But oldtimers hurled names at modernists like "dirty boppers" and in return the modernists called the old guys "moldy figs." Yet, from the old bands like Hampton's, fantastic Bop musicians such as tenor saxophonist Dexter Gordon (of the Oscar award winning film Round Midnight), trumpeter Clifford Brown, and saxophonists Jimmy Cleveland and Johnny Griffin emerged. Only Duke Ellington remained outside the controversy. Old and new, Black and White, European and American - all people respected the Duke's musical genius.¹⁰⁶

Bop proved difficult to dance to for most people and this made it hard for Bop musicians to achieve popularity. One factor which confused the dancers was the drumming which had changed from the four-four beat emphasis to having intermittent bass drum accents "dropping bombs" in unusual places.¹⁰⁷ BeBop required one to hear the beat coming from the bass or whatever instrument kept the steady pulse. Whereas; historically the dancers had relied on the drum to keep them in time. Also, the very fast tunes required the dancer to half-time the tempo. (This means to dance to a tempo half as fast as the one the band played.) Although many dancers could keep up with the fast tempo, those who could dance half-time were considered the better dancers.

In the early days, 1947, Gillespie had taken issue with this non-dancing charge, saying "Bop is part of Jazz and Jazz music is to dance." Charlie Parker, however, stated that "The beat in a Bop band is with the music, against it, behind it. It pushes, it helps it. It has no continuity of beat, no steady chug-chug."¹⁰⁸ These two concepts conflict.

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Bird obviously represented what BeBoppers believed, with the exception perhaps of alto saxophonist Julian "Cannonball" Adderley. Cannon remarked "If you can't shake your fanny, it ain't music," - or words to that effect.

Expropriators, Promoters, and Critics

Some critics suggested that Bop was just protest music, because all of its innovators were African Americans.¹⁰⁹ The truth is if one examines the historical evolution of indigenous American music, one discovers that *all* its innovators were African-Americans. Furthermore, African-American music was always a creative expression of the particular social dynamic of the time, so there always was an element of "protest" present. And certainly, Bop, the newest creative expression of "Jazz," born from the womb of the World War II social dynamic and African-American lifeways, was no exception. Yet, BeBop being so revolutionary, so different in style from the popular dance band music style was not only very difficult to imitate but was generally not very profitable and consequently almost no white musicians played BeBop.

When Bop became economically profitable, White musicians and promoters' interest increased. In the early 1940's, Norman Granz (a White fan) began promoting the music. He began assembling groups of the best Black musicians and presenting them in scheduled jam sessions in nightclubs. These sessions proved so successful that in 1942 Granz moved to the concert hall. He presented a group of seven or eight top musicians in an on-stage jam session in the Philharmonic Auditorium in Los Angeles. This became the first of the world famous *Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP)* concerts. The JATP became *very* successful and for many individuals across the country it was their introduction to Jazz. Granz changed the jam session approach to what

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we know today as the festival format, choosing to promote a very **select** group of musicians whom **he liked** - particularly Ella Fitzgerald and "Flip" Phillips.

The concept of jam sessions in the African-American Tradition can be traced to the earliest days of the music. The BeBoppers came together in their own sessions at Minton's and Monroe's nightclubs in Harlem. Monk, Powell, Kenny Clarke, Charles Mingus (bassist and composer), Gillespie, and Charlie Christian - who introduced the electric guitar- "jammed" together regularly. Novices, hoping to be discovered, flocked to Minton's.¹¹⁰ Oldtimers frequented the place also to keep up with the "new" music. The jam sessions often turned into contests called "cutting sessions." They served as entry points for new players to the music. They separated the good players and worthy innovators from the poor and unworthy. They served as networks for building reputations and as a consequence hiring halls in an age of no press coverage for African-American musicians.

When Granz introduced his Jazz at the Philharmonic - a concept which George Wein has kept alive and expanded on with the Newport Jazz Festival - the press covered every event, and their assessment based on their European tastes became the measure of what was good and/or bad "Jazz!" At this particular juncture, "Jazz" became very interracial and the African-American *community* no longer served as the acknowledged critics of this music. Rather, "Jazz" magazines and the JATP concerts dominated by determining who became considered the best musician. By 1947, popularity polls (organized by the magazines) began to establish White "Jazz" artists as good or better than the African-American. The first United States trade paper *down beat (db)*, devoted solely to covering Jazz music, and its rival, *Metro-*

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nome, stressed White "name" band leaders and soon they topped the readers' popularity polls. For Swing, they chose Benny Goodman and Glen Miller over Basie and Hampton; for "Jazz" singer, they chose Frank Sinatra over Louis Armstrong.¹¹¹

Another push in favor of White musicians was the constant airplay of their recordings and the lack of airplay of Black recordings. Due to the development of the television, radio, movie and record industries, the media became more involved in the music and the press' influence increased. The commercial aspect of the music allowed for media-hype to create mediocre musicianship while rare talent languished and too often literally died. Artistry conflicted with the marketplace and classical African-American musicians found themselves called upon to shape their talent to the dictates of the balance sheet.

An extraordinary African-American instrumentalist like pianist Nat King Cole - once considered a threat to the legendary Art Tatum - was found serving as a matinee idol for Middle America, singing sugary pop ballads. Even Louis Armstrong and Earl "Fatha" Hines chose, under threats of death of their careers, to sublimate some of their genius to the commercial goals of the music business. Duke Ellington, the supreme musician of the century, refused to compromise his artistry for commercial gain. Even at the height of his world-wide prestige, he often played to only *half-filled* theatres in his home country.

Jazz Blues

Despite all the changes, the basis of Bop remained the Blues which can clearly be

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heard in Parker's solos and most African-Americans' playing - even those in the Cool School, Avant-Garde and New Wave. The Blues represents the mother lode of Music in the African-American Tradition. Even White imitators found themselves drawn to the Blues for inspiration. The Beatles drew *Can't Buy Me Love* and *Say the Word* from the Blues. The Rolling Stones' *Love in Vain* imitated Bessie Smith's *Lost Your Head*. Cream, the electrified rock group, took *Born too Late* from Robert Johnson's Delta Blues of 1930. Bill Haley and the Comets' *Rock Around the Clock* which thrust Rock and Roll out as a national pop music came from *My Daddy Rocks Me*, a 1920 sex-Blues. Elvis Presley's *Hound Dog* note for note came from Willie Mae Thorton.

Jerome Kern wrote *Can't Help Lovin Dat Man* from the Broadway musical **Showboat** and Harold Arlen wrote *Blues in the Night* using the 12-bar Blues form as almost all Jazz-oriented Broadway composers do today. We know Louis Armstrong influenced African-American musicians. But, he had major impact on White singers also: Louis Prima, to name the most obvious singer in the Blues vein; and Lee Wiley and Bing Crosby to name the most well-known for Ballads. Billie Holiday (premier Jazz and Blues singer of all time) influenced an entire generation of vocalists. She wore out Armstrong's records as a child. Earlier, even Ethel Waters, whom many White singers copied, imitated Armstrong's *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*.

Despite all the imitations, few White performers were able to capture the African-American essence of the Blues. Melody, harmony, rhythm and timbre (tone color) represent basic music elements. When played in a European manner, the latter two differ significantly from when played in the African-American Tradition. For instance, the

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rhythm in Meade Lux Lewis' *Honky Tonk Train* cannot be written. For true to his African heritage, Lewis managed to keep two rhythms going at once - something any African drummer does automatically, based on the phenomenon of the African sense of rhythm.

Gunther Schuller called "African rhythm ... the most complicated form of music that exists." Part of the phenomenon rests within how African-Americans perceive their music as extensions of themselves and their instruments (whether it is their voice, horn, or drum) and as their pure personal expressions. This sense of **rhythm is something lived**, not learned, which explains why the young people throughout the world, having been nurtured on Music in the African-American Tradition, can dance better and sing better to it, to the extent of some being able to produce excellent imitations.¹¹² The Africanness of the Blues precluded whites expropriating that genre, so white American music critics and historians acknowledged W.C. Handy as *the* "father of the Blues."

The Cool School

One would have to consider Lester "Prez" Young, the predecessor of the Cool School. Musicians accustomed to the broad deep tenor tones of Coleman Hawkins taunted Young about the light alto sound he emitted on his tenor. Billie Holiday, whom Young named "Lady Day," loved his light throaty almost vibrato tone. Billie sang almost in the same fashion as Young played. As Billie had predicted, Young's sound influenced almost the entire Cool School adherents from which major White performers such as saxophonists Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Stan Getz and guitarist

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Chet Baker emerged, while Coleman Hawkins remained the major influence on the African-American tenor men.

In 1949, Miles Davis, protege of Charlie Parker and probably the most influential trumpeter since Louis Armstrong, introduced the Cool Style. This style embraced and controlled subtle harmonic shifts, tone colors and attention to loudness and softness attacks. Davis often muted his trumpet. He moved into a more symphonic style than the easy swing heard in Bop arrangements. Other artists in this symphonic type included the Modern Jazz Quartet, featuring John Lewis on piano, Connie Kay on drums, Milt Jackson on vibraphones, and Percy Heath on bass.

BeBop gave birth to modern "Jazz" and increased interracial mixing in the combos and ensembles. White clarinetist, Artie Shaw, used an African-American trumpeter, Roy Eldridge, and Ellington hired Louis Bellson, a White drummer. The White bands and combos on the West Coast followed Miles Davis into the Cool School. Stan Kenton With a non-swing orchestra, eventually focusing on African Latin music, represented what became known as "Progressive Jazz," meaning the music was progressing toward becoming more European than African. Cool "Jazz" musicians tended to be European classically oriented and formed quiet chamber "Jazz" groups, such as the George Shearing Trio, the Red Norvo Trio, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and the Dave Brubeck Quartet with Paul Desmond. One might find, in this style, music which fused BeBop harmonies with Debussy and Ravel and the semi-Baroque type counterpoint. Brubeck's Quartet represented a particularly unique group which reflected good compositions but poor improvisation.¹¹³

Hard Bop

African-American musicians and the East Coast responded with Hard Bop. Along with pianist Horace Silver, drummer Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, and the Max Roach-Clifford Brown Quintet, Miles again led the school into Hard Bop with a heavy Blues orientation. The Roach-Brown lineup copied the Parker-Gillespie format, combining the hard edged urgency of the Sonny Rollins tenor saxophone with the brilliant flavor of Brownie's trumpet on slow ballads or incredible fast tempos. Brownie's rich warm tones combined with his technical mastery has remained unsurpassed. Brownie's improvisations at break neck speed seemed like compositions already written. His passing inspired Benny Golson to write the now standard *I Remember Clifford*. The renown modern-type "scat" singer, John Hendricks, penned the lyric.¹¹⁴

Miles introduced modal jazz with a sextet that included Julian "Cannonball" Adderley on alto saxophone, John "Trane" Coltrane on tenor saxophone, Jimmy Cobb on drums, Wynton Kelly on piano, and Paul Chambers on bass. To many *aficionados*, this sextet represented the best ensemble ever assembled. They recorded an all-time best selling album *Kind of Blue*. Nearly every tune on this album was acceptable on the first take (recording). The structure departed from the earlier forms because they used the modal approach, meaning the playing is based on a single chord or mode for several measures rather than on melody or chord progressions.

Cannonball Adderley, an alto saxophonist, who derived his style from Charlie Parker but played in a deep full tone, was often mistaken for a tenor. His superior technical facilities

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allowed him to not only keep up with Coltrane but occasionally to surpass him in improvisational prowess. Cannonball often incorporated blue notes and wails, bits of pop tunes, and humor in solos known for their funky melodic figures. After leaving Miles he lead his own group, featuring his brother Nat, an excellent cometist.¹¹⁵

Before John Coltrane's entrance on the scene, Sonny Rollins reigned as the supreme hard Bop tenor. But by the time John Coltrane left Miles' group, he was acknowledged by many as **the** giant next to Parker in modern African-American music. Followers, musicians or not, regard him as a Guru. His group with drummers Elvin Jones, sometimes Roy Haynes, pianists McCoy Tyner, and later his wife (Alice) remained the paramount group of the 60's. Listening to his recording, *Giant Steps*, serves as a lesson guide to improvisation for musical aspirants. In its structure, the chord changes constantly occur every two beats. His solos, often at never heard before tempos, encompass many variations on a few well-chosen chords but remain pleasing because the melody always comes through the intensity and excitement. A popular tune, *My Favorite Things*, received the Coltrane modal treatment on soprano saxophone. This 14-minute piece established Trane as a premiere creative musician in Music in the African-American Tradition. Like many of his predecessors, he studied African music intensely and his emotionally charged *Kulu se Mama* merges African percussion and chanting with the Free School.¹¹⁶ In his later years, Coltrane became interested in Eastern religion and music; his *A Love Supreme* referred to the Supreme Spirit that guides ALL.

Free School

The term "Free School" probably brings Ornette Coleman to mind most often. In 1958, Ornette represented the "new" Charlie Parker to many people. Other musicians such as Cecil Taylor, Sam Rivers, Jimmy Lyons, Andrew Cyrille to name a few in the Free School, predated Ornette Coleman. Ornette's entry to the music world split musicians; many rejected his approach outright. Others welcomed his "I-play-ignoring-all-rules" philosophy. Using a plastic alto saxophone with a piercing tone, he left out the piano in his quartet to free his playing from the pianistic prison of the chromatic scale so he could explore off-pitch notes and quarter tones that would clash with standard European tuning.

Ornette was considered one of the most avant-garde musicians of his time. His attitude reflected some of his African heritage, and one can readily see this when he talked about the music. Ornette said, "There are some intervals that carry the *human* quality if you play them in the right pitch. I don't care how many intervals a person can play on an instrument, you can always reach into the human sound of a voice on your horn if you're actually hearing and trying to express the warmth of the human voice."¹¹⁷

Avant-Garde/Experimenters

Many Avant-Garde Musicians (i.e., John Coltrane, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Eric Dolphy, Ken McIntyre, and others) incorporated the "crying" and "laughing" sounds and sounds of nature - bird songs - on their horns. Not having the piano in their groups

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freed these artists from improvising solely on the chords of the songs. But, unlike Ornette (who with no training would pick up any instrument, even the violin and play it in whatever "free" style he chose) these musicians were accomplished multi-instrumentalists. The most extraordinary of the group would be "Rahsaan" Roland Kirk. Though blind, he could cram three horns in his mouth at one time, playing two and three part harmony with a fingering that people have been unable to describe. Not limited to any one style, Rahsaan played Blues, Gospel, BeBop, Big Band, Swing and Free Form.

Another extraordinary talent, Eric Dolphy (lately becoming known for the true genius he was) played on my husband Ken McIntyre's first released recording *Looking Ahead*. This album has just been re-released as a Prestige Jazz Classic. I cite this to establish the relevancy of these comments. Ken called Dolphy one of the "hardest" blowers he had ever heard, meaning Dolphy put a lot of effort and energy into his playing. Dolphy was well-focused. A multi-instrumentalist with equal proficiency on the alto sax, flute, and bass clarinet, he played and influenced musicians from every style, including but not limited to: "Cool School" MJQ's John Lewis; Avant-Garde's Andrew Hill and Ken McIntyre; Third-Stream's Gunther Schuller; and Fusion's Tony Williams. Already proficient on alto, flute, and clarinet, Ken took up the bass clarinet after Dolphy's death, and Ken's style is very reminiscent of Dolphy's, his friend. Ken later added the oboe and the bassoon.¹¹⁸ These men approached music similarly to Ornette and his free concept. But they should be understood as "Experimenters" rather than members of the "Free School" with the connotation of doing anything one likes. Dolphy, McIntyre, Rahsaan, and many multi-instrumentalists that followed created their music informed by extraordinary technique on all of their instruments.

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The majority of the major figures in this "experimenters" school, often labeled Avant-Garde, have tended to stretch the limits of their instruments in the tradition of Armstrong, Parker and Trane. For instance, in addition to his simultaneous playing of three horns, Rahsaan developed a form of breathing similar to circular breathing. He would sustain one note for a long time on one horn and play chord changes on the others at the same time.

In the early 60's, McIntyre developed fingerings that enabled him to play notes significantly above what was considered the range of the alto. On the upper register of the alto, his range goes an octave above from F to F; and on the bass clarinet an octave and a minor third above, from G to Bb. Heavily steeped in Music in the African-American Tradition, conservatory trained Dr. Ken McIntyre created and chairs the only Bachelor Degree granting Performing Arts Program with a concentration in African and African-American music at the State University of New York system. While many colleges and universities today offer "Jazz" studies, McIntyre's program appears to be the only one focusing on the continuum from Africa to the Caribbean to the United States.

Fusion

Some writers claim that the ascendancy of the "free Jazz" or "new thing" school caused the descendancy of leading nightclubs. Others see the decline as due to the rise of Rock music. White youth preferred to follow Rock entertainers (like Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead) or Rhythm and Blues entertainers (like Diana Ross and the Supremes, the Temptations, Stevie Wonder, and Aretha Franklin), and thus

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many "Jazz" nightclubs went out of business. Due to the promotion of integration, some Rock players moved toward "Jazz" and "Jazz" players moved toward Rock, producing a new category, "Fusion."

Miles, again, led in the new direction with his album *In a Silent Way*. His music included Rock's repetitive electronic beat with a nervous, chattering trumpet style, which is similar in content to a drone tone in East Indian music. All his sidemen on his *Bitches Brew* album reign today in the Fusion style. Joe Zawinul on electric piano and organ moved from Julian Cannonball "Ball" Adderley's Hard Bop and Funk Quartet to the group, Weather Report, which also featured Wayne Shorter on tenor saxophone. Miles Davis' new direction strongly influenced pianist Herbie Hancock to explore synthesizer music and subsequently led to the gold record "Headhunters." Hancock most recently composed the academy award winning score for the movie *Round 'Bout Midnight*, featuring tenor saxophonists Dexter Gordon and Wayne Shorter. John McLaughlin, the White guitar player, joined drummer Tony Williams' group, Lifetime. Keith Jarrett replaced Chick Corea with Miles. Keith, an inveterate foe of electronic music, fused every music style and plays hours-long solo piano concerts.¹¹⁹ Looking at this line-up, we see the fragmenting pattern as some musicians in the modern era took the music to wherever they wished it to go. The appropriate expression in musicians' vernacular is "took it outside!"

For reasons which would require intensive analysis and are beyond the scope of this essay, the classical music of African-Americans known as "Jazz" moved from its Blues African roots to being considered by the musicians themselves as an "art form." But the move represented to White America the ultimate fusion of the African-

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American musicians' creations. As demonstrated throughout this essay, the fusing of musical cultures has occurred since ancient Egypt. Therefore to call any particular music "fusion" ignores a basic reality concerning the ebb and flow of cultures.¹²⁰

Latin Tinge

Sketchily, we will now talk about other fusions such as the Latin tinge in American music and Jamaica's modern music, Reggae. Both reflect African and AfricanAmerican traditions and have influenced music globally. Incorporation of the Latin flavor can be traced to 1898 when Ragtime incorporated the *habanera*. Other African Spanish rhythms included minor elements basic to the African-American styles in *The Dream* and again in 1930 in the *Five O'Clock Blues*. In 1914, W. C. Handy composed a *tangana* rhythm related to the tango and called it the *St. Louis Blues*. This same rhythm was called *rumba* in 1920; *conga* in 1930 in Cab Calloway's series of *Congas and* Ellington's *Caravan* recordings; and samba in Woody Herman's *Bihu* in 1.945.

Stan Kenton, a White band leader, recorded *Ecuada in* 1946, then *Machita* in 1947. In the fall of the same year, Kenton's band, which included Brazilian Laurindo Almeida, created the "Jazz"-Latin fusion called Bossa Nova. During the Bop era, Charlie Parker recorded *Night in Tunisia* and Dizzy Gillespie produced a series of Latin type recordings including the very popular *Manteca, plus Cubana Be, Cubana Bop, and Guarachi Guarao*. White flutist, Herbie Mann, however, went all the way and recruited several White Brazilians to combine them with mostly White jazzmen. He came up with what he called the Afro-Cuban sound. However, the ultimate Latin African-

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American mix can be heard in the music of musicians of African descent such as Machito, Johnny Pacheco, Ray Barreto, Cuban group Irakere, and the leader of them all - Tito Puente.¹²¹

Reggae

The African Caribbean musicians' connection to "Jazz" is much more internal since many major artists are of African ancestry: Roy Haynes, Eric Dolphy, Sonny Rollins, and, of course, Harry Belafonte. Even Max Roach studied African drumming in Haiti. That Jamaica or any part of the Caribbean would produce a world popular music, therefore, is not surprising. Reggae music originated from confrontation; so, the roots really are from struggle.

In Reggae, you hear confrontation of sound. The music must have the basic vibrant sound heard in the Jamaican ghetto. The drum and bass are loud and provide the basic sound. The musicians believe in the power of their music to do good, to voice problems and frustrations and to unify the people through a common language and rhythm. In a local Ethiopian Federation Church, the members sing Reggae hymns. Accompanied by borrowed guitars, they sing sad melodies exhibiting perfect vocal harmonies.

The Jamaican musical forms, Bluebeat Ska and Rocksteady of 1977, had more rhythm than Reggae but the important thing is the message. The music is sung by one, two or three persons. They accompany themselves with match boxes, newspapers, foot tapping, or whatever they have. They are able to conjure up or improvise lyrics of meaning

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and harmonies of sweet subtlety out of their lives on the hill.

For Jamaicans, music plays a vital role since a significant number of people cannot read or would not believe what they read. People (singers and musicians) spread street news through music (e.g., using a sound system on trucks ... at dances and parties). Anyone can create a record about a particular feud or grievance. Recorded Reggae, updated in the electronic devices, plays the traditional role of the troubadour like an African *griot* updated with a sound system.

Noted Reggae stars include Jimmy Cliff, and of course, Bob Marley with the Wailers. Moving into and among the White world proved difficult for Jimmy Cliff who starred in the movie *The Harder They Come*. Cliff creates music to cover social and racial problems. His later works have been more spiritually oriented. He had a mental conflict working with White musicians. In his own words he said, "We [AfricanJamaicans] have a spiritual side to us which is the highest part of us and that must be developed. My work is now along those lines. That's how I feel about this music. It's really to do with the people not politically but spiritually. That is how I see Reggae. It's the cry of the people."¹²²

Gospel Music

We leave African Modern Music, including Highlife, to turn to modern American Spirituals. To some people, Gospel music is an updated version of the old spirituals which closely resembles Rhythm and Blues. Though generally created for the church, gospel music can be found in nightclubs and concert halls; it is

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entertainment oriented. The vocal techniques combine Blues and Spirituals and Shouts. Gospel verses differ from the simple style of the Spirituals and reflect evangelical teaching, revivalism and good will rather than protest or survival. The word reigns supreme and Gospel includes vocal embellishing with "mms," "Lord," "Ohs," and "Yesses." The melodic line depends almost entirely on the meaning of the lyric which determines the rise and fall of the pitches. The instrumentation includes but is not limited to: tambourines, guitars, trombones, clarinets, organs, pianos, and drums. Gospel also uses clapping, singing in "*a capella*," and footstomping quite frequently. Some call Gospel liturgical "Jazz" or Rhythm and Blues because of the syncopated technique, accents and complex polyphony or antiphony in all three.

Rhythm and Blues

To distinguish one from the other in many cases proves purely arbitrary. Rhythm and Blues comes from the inner soul of a person and tells about love, hardship and troubles: It encompasses a basic rhythm, slow or fast, and heavily accented after the beat. Like the traditional Blues, some songs have 12-bar patterns with three chord changes but many do not. All, however, have universal appeal and reflect the Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday emotional qualities. The songs tend to be simple with short easily understood phrases and the lyrics can be semi-nonsensical. The songs came from early "race music" catalogues which were the recordings designed solely for African-American audiences. In the early 1930s, Columbia sold these records. They actually kept that company solvent during this period.

Few writers review the history of present multi-corporations such as CBS (which

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exert tremendous control over the electronic media, music and entertainment industry) and recognize the significant debt owed to the African-American community. In the time of these "race records," African-Americans not only served as the creators but also as the consumers of the products thereby establishing the financial base of Columbia, Victor, Decca, and many other early record companies. During the wartime, the military needed the shellac used to make the old "78" records. Major record companies shifted to the jukebox industry. Smaller companies took over the African-American artists and reached out to a broader audience.

By the end of the 40's, the record business boomed; and trade papers regularly reported on them. The term "race records" proved offensive to many readers. By 1949, the trade papers put the "race records" under the categories of "Jazz" and Blues. Rhythm and Blues became big business in its own right, spurred on by disc jockeys like Symphony Sid in New York who played "Jazz," Rhythm and Blues, and occasionally Spirituals. Also during the early years of television, programming included late night talk shows like Jerry Lester's. African-American musicians were used on Lester's show because of their ability to improvise.

With the new exposure, the establishment lost control because airwaves allow for the music to receive a wider and multi-racial rather than segregated audience. African-American music on the radio and television changed the industry. The infectious rhythmic, easy-to-dance-to tunes appealed to a cross-section, particularly, the younger population. The war had cooled the dance-band "fever." The James Reese Europe's invention, the "foxtrot," went overseas with young American men in the military, leaving their young siblings without dance tutors. Faced with a choice between the

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Sinatra/Crosby ballads or the rhythmic songs of the Rhythm and Blues artists, the youth chose the tunes over the ballads. Many youngsters purchased records solely by asking for the tune rather than the artist. They enjoyed singing the songs and bouncing to the rhythms.

Many of the African-American artists, like Joe Turner and his *Shake, Rattle and Roll*, came directly from the "race records" catalogue. But, to the chagrin of most of the African-American community, White imitators shot to commercial success copying the renditions of these African-American singers. One in particular, Georgia Gibbs, copied Etta James' *Dance with Me Henry*, Ruth Brown's *Mama, He Treats Your Daughter Mean*; and La Vern Baker's *Tweedle Dee*, to name a few. Ruth Brown became so frustrated she stated in the newspaper that she would just send her records directly to save Georgia time in making the copy. African-American artists appealed to the Congress to amend the Copyright Act to protect their original renditions. The teenagers, however, knew the difference which was probably why only Bill• Haley's version of *Rock Around the Clock* (introduced through the film *Blackboard Jungle*) outsold the original.¹²³

Dance and Music

Television shows like *Bandstand* and much later *Soul Train* altered the process to stardom. One appearance catapulted a struggling performer from obscurity to fame. For instance, Chubby Checker made his debut in April of 1959 with his recording *The Class*. In the meantime, Hank Ballard and the Midnighters had recorded a tune *The Twist* on the B side of their *Teardrops on Your Letter* hit. Nine months after

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Checker's appearance on Dick Clark's *Bandstand*, some of the White teenagers, having listened to the Hank Ballard record, danced the Twist. Dick Clark informed a record producer, Bernie Lowe, about the new dance. Lowe had Chubby Checker do an imitation (politely called "cover") of the original. Checker's case represents a pattern in which White promoters used African-Americans to expropriate creative ideas from other African-American artists rather than promote the originators. The Twist greatly influenced the character of America's dancing patterns. From twoperson touch styles, White youngsters moved to the solo-type dancing so popular today.¹²⁴

Earlier in the African-American community, young people dancing to BeBop had introduced another dance, the "Applejack." This dance pattern combined two person touch-dancing with solo-dancing. In the middle of a fast dance (called the Lindy, Jitterbug, Bopping, or just dancing, depending on the geographical location), the partners would let go of each others' hands to break away and do some improvised solo dancing. The steps were based on recognizable Charleston and tap-dance steps like the Suzy "Q," Sand, Slides or whatever worked in time with the rhythm of the music. While mature people retained the touch-style and sometimes learned the nontouch solo style, the White youth followed the African-American youth. Dance crazes began to influence the type of music Rhythm and Blues and Rock and Roll artists created. This change represented a strange turnaround in the relationship between music and dance in the African-American Tradition.

The flow from the African-American community to the White remained the dominant pattern. When disco music entered, it reigned purely as a dance vehicle with overemphasis on the Disco beat. The White commercial dancers formalized a touch-type

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Disco dance which could actually be learned at Arthur Murray and other similar dance schools. Patterned after the Latin Salsa dances, Mamba, ChaCha, and Merinque, the best formalized Disco dancing still derives from the African-American rhythmic base. Touch dancing, extremely rare among African cultures, historically has been widespread in European cultures. Africans, upon observing the minuet, considered it vulgar and in mockery imitated it, creating the Cakewalk discussed earlier in this essay.

Nontouch dancing represented a very ancient African Tradition. Today, two trends in music and dance also clearly derive from the African and African-American Traditions: the Break Dance and Rap music. The type of actions Break dancers engage in can be found throughout Africa in the high leaps and phenomenal gyrations of many traditional dance groups. Break dancing forms can also be found in the AfroBrazillian self-defense dance style *copeira* in which they simulate fighting through karate type movements and stick fighting. Break dancing goes hand in hand with Rap music. Poetry from the 60's could be considered as the progenitor of Rap music. Particularly the group the Last Poets who influenced Gil Scot Heron who emerged in the 1970's and is very popular today. Rap music truly represents the African tradition in its use of the human voice as the ultimate instrument to produce the song and the accompaniment. A Rapper is greatly removed from the European concept of pure pitch and operatic vocal techniques. The message takes the pre-eminent position. The rhythm accompanies the vocal, and the gyrations of the Rapper serve to punctuate the story or moral conveyed.

Disco music and dancing moved America into the era of Pop-Soul. We can distin-

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guish Pop-Soul from Stone Soul. First, Pop-Soul represents African-American artists who offer "easy-for-white-ears-to-listen-to-approach," singing about love and universally acceptable topics. Some entertainers in this group are Michael Jackson, Diana Ross, Whitney Houston, Lionel Ritchie, and Tina Turner. Stone Soul represents a very African-American sound, exemplifying earthy soul music such as sung by James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, and other Gospel, and Rhythm and Blues artists. So many White imitators of African-American "Soul" music emerged in the Rock and Roll era that Rhythm and Blues could no longer be called just AfricanAmerican music. The lyrics were often changed to appeal to White teenagers. The emphasis on harmony and voice in the music moved producers to the use of echo chambers, increased volume, electric guitars and other gimmicks.¹²⁵ This evolved into Hard Rock which is predominated by screaming guitars and loud vocals. It utilizes keyboards and drums but primarily for keeping the pulse rather than for providing any cohesive melodic feeling. There are only a few well-known AfricanAmerican Hard Rock players.

Crossover, which means an African-American artist produces music that becomes popular to the White audiences, became the key to making money. The whole music scene branched out into four different directions: the Hard Rock, Soul, Disco, and New Wave. What became top forty was anything that crossed over any two or probably three of these categories. There were smaller undercurrents that remained fairly strong and which appear influential today like Southern Rock Blues. This form of "White" blues has limited melody. Another form which has moved up in the past five years is the toned down Punk Rock of the Australians. Their pattern is similar to the old British pop invasion of the Beatles.

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Using African-American derived musical forms, the Beatles became the leaders in a long line of British Bands and musicians that dominated the American popular music scene. They admit they were significantly influenced by the Motown Sound and musical giants such as Sam Cooke and James Brown.

In the 80's, the second British invasion began with New Wave music and from there moved into Megafusion, a blend of Rhythm and Blues, Rock and "Jazz." For instance, the Megafusion artist, Sting, tapped the talents of "Jazz" saxophonist Branford Marsalis. Sting, once a member of the popular British band, The Police, appealed to both die-hard Rock and Rollers and Soul listeners.

Some Megafusion artists, like Madonna, represent multidisciplinary influences from the African-American world. At one time, she belonged to the prestigious Alvin Ailey's dance troupe. Alvin Ailey - an African-American who has transcended all limits in his profession - incorporates all forms of African-American music as well as the European classics within his productions. Probably inspired by her experiences with this master, Madonna combines many African-American traits in her performances.

Soul music is melodic, rhythmic, and danceable; it is also good for listening. It employs harmonies and basically comes out of the African-American Gospel and Rhythm and Blues forms. Predominated by chord changes just like in the Blues, the bass line, keyboard, and drums maintain cohesion through prominent pulsating rhythms. Unlike Soul music, Disco music is designed expressly for dancing. It is dominated by a

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continuous beat which produces a solely dancing beat that is the Disco sound.

When an artist's song becomes number one on music charts around the world and captures the pulse of so many different people like Michael Jackson's *Beat It* did, that definitely is world class Fusion music. Clearly, that substantiates the thesis of this essay, that **music from the African-American Tradition has had a major influence on music throughout the world.**

Coda

Music dominates every facet of our lives. What we hear everyday derived from an African-American base. Not just Rhythm and Blues, not just Rock and Roll, not just Spirituals and Gospel, but most of the contemporary music that we hear can be traced back to African-American musical elements. It is necessary to draw attention to a number of renowned artists such as Lena Horne, Sammy Davis Jr., Marian Anderson, Harry Belafonte, Paul Robeson; and tap dancers like Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Honi Coles, the Nicholas Brothers, Jimmy "Slide" Godboldt, and more who have influenced many generations in those fields but whose contributions have not been discussed here in detail. Also, we have not covered the European classicists, African-American opera and concert singers (e.g., Ira Aldridge, Leontyne Price, Grace Bumbry, Roland Hayes, Shirley Verrett ...) and all the African-American musicians and composers operating in the European classical tradition since most play African-American music styles as well.

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It should be added that the phenomenon of Wynton Marsalis being a virtuoso in both European and African-American classical traditions is not new. This essay has shown that from the very beginning African-American musicians have been required to be proficient in both traditions. Marsalis, fully conscious of this fact, consistently has established his debt to those African-American musicians who influenced and guided him to the position he holds today as a pre-eminent trumpeter. Today, we look at the ascendancy of Wynton Marsalis to the stature of "the" trumpet player in Music in the African-American Tradition and recognize that his rise to fame occurred primarily because of his artistry and appeal to all music critics. African-Americans herald his achievements for he is a consummate performer, but as a young artist, Marsalis as an innovator is yet to emerge.

Like any young musician in the tradition, Marsalis faces a great challenge and an even greater contradiction. To be successful in today's music world, an artist must be commercially oriented rather than innovative. Performers in the Soul-Pop, New Wave popular styles gear their music precisely for the wider audiences at the expense of innovation. But when players in the tradition called "Jazz" produce music for the general market, they do so at the expense of that essential ingredient - innovation. They move the music away from its ancestral roots. Marsalis has attempted to retain these traditional elements as well as seek new ideas which when matured, will add immensely to the genre.

African-American musicians, historically, have understood the importance of Music in the African-American Tradition. To understand the true history of the world, we must begin with **Africa**. In this essay, we have traced the music to present some of that true history.

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GLOSSARY

Abyssinia = Ethiopia

a capella == singing without instrumental accompaniment

antiphony = call-and-response in music; usually the leader sings a line and the chorus answers

astral = visionary and exalted

avant-garde = individuals in the arts who create, produce, or apply new, original or experimental ideas, forms and trends

blue-note= lowering the pitch of a note below what Europeans consider "true" pitch

calabash == gourd

chord changes/progressions = when a player moves from one chord to another; usu. chords pianists play on the left hand while playing the melody on the right

dorian, lydian and phrygian modes = modes belong to the scales used in church music; during the Middle Ages and Renaissance were the basis of religious and secular Western music

dulcimer = musical instrument with wire strings of graduated lengths stretched over a sound box, played with two padded hammers or by plucking .

ethos = a distinguishing character or tone or guiding belief **falsetto** = 80 artificially high voice

griot = African storyteller, entertainer, troubadour, keeper of the community history

harmonicon = harmonica

Hermes -= Greek name for Mercury

hieroglyph = picture script of ancient Egyptian priesthood **lydian** = See *dorian*

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maat = Egyptian concept for truth, justice, order and cosmic consciousness **motif** = a theme or element that occurs repeatedly **pentatonic** = a five-tone scale

phrygian = see *dorian*

polyphony = having many tones or voices

recitative = singing a narrative text without a regular beat, pulse

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