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KOMUNYAKAA, CLARKE, AND PEREIRA: JAZZ, BLUES, AND SAMBA POETICS

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Só um blue / é justo e completo como um abraço

(Edimilson de Almeida Pereira, 2002)

ABSTRACT

The present work investigates textual interweaving between jazz, blues, samba and Afro-Brazilian, Afro-American, and Afro-Canadian writing. The investigation concerns the commonality of experiences in the African diaspora conveyed through the poetics of resistance and the meaning of each identities in such contexts. The study analyses the intertextuality between the poetry of Edimilson de Almeida Pereira, Yusef Komunyakaa, and George Elliott Clarke and the use of the elements of jazz, blues, and samba in their texts. The research presents a transnational analysis according to the theory of Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. The analysis considers tradition and improvisation as relevant elements of the African diasporic experience depicted through jazz, blues and samba and in the interweaving of these genres with poetry.

Key words: poetics of resistance, jazz, blues, samba

RESUMO

Este trabalho investiga os entrelaçamentos textuais do jazz, blues e samba na poesia de autores afrobrasileiros, afroamericanos e afrocanadenses considerando as experiências comuns da diáspora africana e as poéticas de resistência e os significados de cada uma dessas identidades nesse contexto. O estudo analisa a intertextualidade na poesia de Edimilson de Almeida Pereira, Yusef Komunyakaa e George Elliott Clarke e o uso dos elementos do jazz, blues e samba nos textos desses autores. A pesquisa apresenta um análise transnacional de acordo com a teoria do *Atlântico Negro: Modernidade e Dupla Consciência* de Paul Gilroy. A análise considera tradição e improvisação como elementos relevantes da experiência afro-diaspórica presentes no jazz, blues e samba e no entrelaçamento desses gêneros musicais com a poesia

Palavras-chave: poéticas de resistência, jazz, blues, samba

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INTRODUCTION

This is a song for the genius child.
Sing it softly, for the song is wild.
Sing it softly as ever you can –
Lest the song get out of hand.

Nobody loves a genius child[1].

--Langston Hughes

The cultures that originated from the African diaspora have music as one of the greatest conveyors of resistance, tradition, and cultural identity. African-descendant music, since the very beginning, expresses struggle against racism, exile, social and political exclusion; or it conveys instances of sorrow, nostalgia, relief from pain, spiritual and communion. In *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Paul Gilroy[2] affirms that music has enhanced diffusion and sharing of common experiences among blacks, beyond the power of spoken and written words (76). The authors studied in the current investigation infuse their writing with elements from African rhythms that are present mainly in their poetry.

The general context of this investigation is African-descendant music infused writing. The rhythms resulted amidst the conflicts stemmed from the African diaspora. Forbidden to have musical instruments and denied the right to read and write, enslaved blacks relied on the power of voice and body to produce music to communicate. The specific context is the use of elements of jazz, blues, and samba in the poetry by African-Canadian George Elliot Clarke, African-American Yusef Komunyakaa, and African-Brazilian Edimilson de Almeida Pereira.

In order to elucidate the context of the investigation, I choose to initiate with a discussion about theories on race and racism related to discourses used by dominant groups to justify slavery, the racial terror of the middle passage, and African diaspora. I discuss how

[1] "Genius Child." *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes*.

[2] Although specialists have criticized Gilroy's works as essentialist, I decide to use some of his statements to explain the commonality of the experiences in the African Diaspora related to music as a conveyor of tradition, resistance and spirituality.

these discourses permeate institutional practices of racism in the contemporaneity and perpetuate racial exclusion through its mechanisms. Cultural appropriation and commodification as mechanisms of cultural imperialism have categorized black culture as acceptable or not acceptable forms of cultural expressions along different historical periods. I investigate how jazz, blues, and samba have been assimilated, appropriated, commodified, and resisted disavowal in the domain of popular culture.

The study researches the three musical genres as poetics of resistance, and the innovative, transgressive, politically assertive, resilient, and protesting character of their creative processes and outcome. Furthermore, this research intends to examine similar characteristics in Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's writings, and in which ways their lines interconnect and their discourses converge in spite of their diversities concerning nation, language, and ethnicity.

A delineation of the historical and political context regarding the formation of jazz, blues, and samba offers the necessary basis for further analysis. The investigation concerns depiction of blackness in African-Canadian, African-Brazilian, and African-American music, and the elements that frame this cultural expression. An introduction to the study of jazz, blues, and samba infused writings presents the pervasiveness of jazz in other artistic expressions, and in writing in particular. A list of authors, Afro-descendant or not, in the U.S.A., Canada, and Brazil, is present to evidence the interweaving of music and writing as a long-observed practice. Furthermore, I point out how the elements of these genres permeate poetry.

Tradition is a relevant element in African-descendant experience. The current study considers tradition an impulse towards innovation and change. By revisiting tradition, African-descendant experience recreates and renews modes of interpreting reality, adapting and accommodating constantly. This conception is based on Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic* and Amiri Baraka's "changing same" (qtd in Gilroy x). In this sense, tradition is not an invariant repetition.

The comparative analysis aims at discussing the presence of the elements of jazz, blues, and samba in Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's poetry from a transnational, multicultural perspective of poetics of resistance. Personally, the proposed research is relevant because it is the continuity of studies on African-descendant Literature that I commenced during a specialization course at Universidade do Planalto Catarinense – Lages, SC in 2004. After that, in a Master's program at Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina in 2009, I developed

a comparative study on African-Canadian and African-Brazilian poetry entitled "What We Desire is African: Intertextuality of Negritude in Clarke's and Trindade's Poetry." Furthermore, the academic significance of the proposed investigation relies on the necessity to make African-descendant writing as an element of the cultural production of the African Diaspora more visible. The need for widening the criticism on black literary activity is urgent. Until the present, one doctoral dissertation and nine master theses have been written on African-descendant literature at PPGI-UFSC. There is only one comparative study on African-Canadian and African-Brazilian poetry. The proposed study is an attempt to contribute to comparative studies on African-descendant literatures; critical studies on the works of each of the poets; readings of Pereira's work abroad; studies on the relations between poetry and music (samba, jazz, and blues); and a contribution to further readings of Clarke and Komunyakaa that are still incipient in Brazil.

Paraphrasing Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*, here is one aspiration I would like to share with the reader of the current work: I would like this dissertation to depict a voyage on a ship. It is not a desire to turn this work a racialized approach, but an invitation to sense and embrace the unavoidable hybridity and intermixture of experiences in an urgent need to communicate in order to survive (xi).

CHAPTER I
POETICS OF RESISTANCE: THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF JAZZ, BLUES, AND SAMBA

> *Silence from and about the object was the order of the day. Some of the silences were broken, and some were maintained by authors who lived with and within the policing narrative. What I am interested in are the strategies for breaking it.*
>
> *--Toni Morrison*

1.1 Introduction

The current chapter is a contextualization that aims at elucidating social, cultural, and political facts that impregnated the creation of jazz, blues, and samba as African diasporic expressions. The scope of theory and criticism concerning the musical genres is wide and in constant revisiting. I aim at presenting critical aspects regarding the dynamic contexts that shaped jazz, blues, and samba and the interconnections with African diasporic literature. Before I begin the discussion about theory and criticism concerning poetics of resistance, cultural appropriation, as well as the social function of music in the African diaspora, I consider studying race and racism and the ideology that shapes racial discrimination in the Americas as a crucial starting point.

The concepts of race permeated the enslavement of Africans in the West for almost four centuries and are still present nowadays. The current work does not aim at the assertion of race as a crucial element that define the whole African-descendant experience. Along the research, critical categories concerning gender, class, and nationality contextualize the discussions. However, in order to weave the reflection on issues such as cultural appropriation and resistance, I present some concepts from Michel Foucault's theory in *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collége de France, 1975-76*, about race and racism as mechanisms of exclusion and control of racially marginalized groups. I

bring the concepts in order to clarify the use of cultural appropriation as one of the mechanisms of exclusion of the racially oppressed black population in the African diaspora. Silencing is another mechanism of oppression and, as Morrison's quote in the epigraph points out, I investigate the strategies to disrupt silencing through the poetics of resistance, more precisely the poetics of resistance that emerges in racially hostile environments that concern the African Diaspora in musical production, writing and the threads that may connect one with another. I attempt to point out the social and political functions of the blues, jazz, and samba and the presence of the elements of the genres in written poetic discourse. Furthermore, I discuss the studies of Aparecida Sueli Carneiro, Jurema Pinto Werneck, and Foucault's theory to pinpoint the relation between racism and the mechanisms of exclusion.

Though concepts that delineate racist discourse may be present along the dissertation, it is not my purpose to display an essentialist view of the poetics of resistance in the poems by Clarke, Komunyakaa, Pereira. The individual perspectives of the authors and the differences concerning cultural sites will be discussed. I am interested in investigating how the authors write their lines having elements from musical patterns of blues, jazz, and samba as frame and reference. Moreover, I research in which way the poetic discourse in the selected poems engages in denouncement and protest. I try to evidence that the poets studied in the current work produce not only poetics of resistance, and that not all of them take over the role of spokespersons to their communities, but also write poetry from an individual site of self-expression through diverse tools. In *Scandalous Bodies*, Smaro Kamboureli writes that authors who possess a "common heritage" usually display the same themes while point out individual differences and diverse interests. Kamboureli asserts that the borders that separate cultures can merge and that the "singularity of imagination" connects with cultural delineation. A single literary expression cannot display the intricacy of a cultural group (7).

Despite black people in the African Diaspora are discriminated against worldwide, matters of identity are crucial for the analysis of the poets' works. In the words of Franz Fanon:

> In the beginning I wanted to confine myself to the Antilles. But regardless of consequences, dialectic took the upper hand and I was compelled to see that the Antillean is first of all a Negro. Nevertheless it would be impossible to overlook

> the fact that there are Negroes whose nationality is Belgian, French, English; there are also Negro Republics. How can one claim to have got hold of an essential when such facts as these demand one's recognition? The truth is that the Negro race has been scattered, that it no longer can claim unity. […]. In the universal situation of the Negro there is an ambiguity, which is however resolved in his concrete existence. This in a way places him beside the Jew. Against all the arguments I have just cited, I come back to one fact: Wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro. (172-3) (author's emphasis)

Fanon observes the commonality of experience regarding racial discrimination that blacks face in the diaspora. In Fanon's statement, before bearing any nationality, the black individual assumes his racial identity first. Moreover, the philosopher highlights the necessity to acknowledge cultural identity concerning nationality when analyzing racial belonging. The ambiguity declared by Fanon may compare to Dubois's double consciousness – a concept that I discuss in the second chapter. Black individuals perceive their identity from their own standpoint and from others' perspective that concerns race. In her doctoral dissertation entitled *A Construção do Outro Como Não-Ser Como Fundamento do Ser*, Carneiro asserts that racial relations form a site that fabricates and combines knowledge, power, and modes of subjectivity. The researcher comments that just like sexuality, if race is a domain to be studied, it is because power relations have "established it as a possible object. In exchange, if power can take race as a target, it is because it became possible to invest on it through knowledge techniques and discursive products"[3] (34). Carneiro explains that race is "understood as a relational concept that corresponds to a social dimension emerging from the interaction of groups racially delimited. The groups carry the weight of conceptions constructed historically and culturally about human diversity" (34). The scholar adds that being white and being black are distinctions that convey cultural values, privileges, and detriment that stem from belonging to any of the polarities.

Foucault writes that the racist discourse is the revisiting of the discourse about the "race war" by the end of the nineteenth century. The discourse was "reworked" aiming at social conservatism and, in certain cases, colonial domination (63). The philosopher observes that history has been the report of victories and the submission to the law for purposes of strengthening of power. Therefore, history performs two roles: by narrating the history of kings, of the sovereigns, and their triumphs, history links men to power through the law by the force of its continuity. History is the discourse of power, the utterance of the duties that power subjugates; it is also the telling of the fascination, fear, immobilization, and terror that power carries out. Foucault concludes that power connects and immobilizes in order to found and maintain order; and history is the discourse that intensifies and implements order (66).

[3] In the current work I translate poems, song lyrics, and citations of originals in Portuguese and Spanish.

Foucault notes that a new discourse appears in the late Middle Age, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The historical utterance becomes the discourse of the races, the narration of the race struggle, the conflict between races through nations and the law. In the history of races and the conflicts between races under and by the law, the identification between people and sovereignty disappears (69). The history of the races struggle gains visibility and a counter-history emerges. The new discourse is similar to certain epic, mythical or religious forms that, instead of telling the glory of the sovereign, takes over the role of narrating the ancestors' infelicities, exile, and subjugation. The new utterance denounces the subjugation enforced against the excluded and that it is still time to hope for the promised land and the fulfillment of old promises that will reassure old rights as well as the lost glory (70-3).

However, the philosopher highlights that the discourse of the races struggle does not belong exclusively to the oppressed. He affirms that "[i]t was, for a long time, the utterance of oppositions, of different groups of opposition; it was, moving fast from one to another, an instrument of criticism and struggle against a form of power, though divided between different enemies or different forms of opposition"(89). Foucault adds that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the discourse relates to the post-revolutionary project of writing the history of the people. Nevertheless, some years later, the discourse helps to form the disqualification of the "colonized sub-races" (89-90). The author declares that the discourse, therefore, is mobile and polyvalent and that its origin does not delimit it enough to cause it to have only one meaning (90).

It is possible to affirm that discourses of resistance and protest display opposition between groups. The discourses concerning resistance against racial discrimination depict the history of the struggle of the discriminated against the oppressor power. Poetics of resistance concerning African diaspora narrates history from the oppressed standpoint and recreates reality from the marginalized experience of being black in a white dominant society. This is the example of the black "anti-epic", term coined by Zilá Bernd to delineate on one of the features of the African-Brazilian poetry. The term refers to the poetic discourse that retells history from the black standpoint, that is, from the history of the black people. The black "anti-epic" is an attempt to bridge the gaps in traditional history. By explaining the black anti-epic applying Foucault's theory, it is possible to affirm that it is the narration of the struggle of black people and the search for liberty, subjugation,

exile and murder of the black people in the African diaspora. The counter-history concept proposed by Foucault can explain aspects of the poetics of resistance that is present in black poetry in the Americas. The poetics of resistance in the African diaspora denounces institutionalized practices of marginalization present in the Western societies. The practices limit citizenship and access to health assistance, jobs, education, and housing. White dominant societies keep social mobility under control through a mechanism explained by Foucault as "biopower" (242).

Foucault emphasizes that from the absolute power of sovereignty of "being able to decide who dies" originates another power that is 'being able to make live" by the end of the eighteenth century. The technology of biopower is the technology of power over the population, the man as a living being, an ongoing scientific power, that is, the power "to make live". The author explains that the technology of biopower opposes to the power of sovereignty. Biopower consists of "making live and letting die" (247). Foucault explains biopower as a positive regulation of bodies, habits, health, reproductive practices, hygiene and sanitation, prevention of epidemics, and the notion of sexuality. The necessity of explaining power rationally causes the decline of the fascination that the public ritual of death (hanging and beheading) as a passage from a power to another performs (295).

For Foucault, racism is firstly a means to introduce a feature to justify the choice between what receives permission to live and what should die. As a way to determine which groups are inferior in relation to others, the biological continuum of the human species, the appearance, distinction, hierarchy, and the qualification of certain races as inferior fragment the biological area that power takes over. Second, racism justifies the murder of the inferior species because its foundation is the need to kill inferiors in order to let a superior race survive. Race and racism are present in a society normalized by the biopower. Racism enables normalization to justify murder. Foucault explains that murder does not convey only the act of killing, but also the act of exposing to death, to multiply the risk of death, or the political death, expelling, rejecting, etc (254).

Though Foucault's assertions refer mainly to Nazism, in *Society Must be Defended* the philosopher briefly points out that it is possible to understand the development of racism in modern societies where biopower is the fundamental mode. Racism stems at certain historical events that require the right to death. Therefore, racism develops along with colonization, that is, the colonizing genocide. Biopower turns

possible to kill people, populations, and civilizations through the evolutionist terms and racism (256-7).

The heterogeneity of the practices of racism and racial discrimination encompasses discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, laws and administrative procedures, scientific utterances, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic proposals. Racism establishes a rational ordering permitting the hierarchy of groups according to the belief in the supremacy of a certain race in relation to other. It maintains the *status quo* and establishes the biological feature as a political stance. Racism builds the depictions of blacks during the colonial period and allows the constructions of practices and discourse that justified the establishment of masters and slaves. Racism consolidates the colonization of Africa and Latin America, for instance. Racialism re-signifies whites and blacks in the twentieth century and creates a political weapon of the European imperialist politics.

In her doctoral dissertation entitled *O Samba Segundo as Ialodês: Mulheres Negras e Cultura Midiática*, Werneck argues that patterns of gender and sexuality establish regulation that serves domination or subjugation according to the level of acceptability of the racial group. From this point of view, the researcher highlights another perspective: "the impact of race on black subjects beyond suffering and racial terror," that is, the observation of different modes of resistance and struggle, proposed and practiced alternatives, enabling the rebuilding of appropriate territories[4] for survival as individuals and as people. The attributes of a territory are physical, cultural and symbolic and enable the continuity of the group (13).

The Middle Passage and the African Diaspora are of particular interest for the scope of the dissertation as physical, cultural and symbolic territories that shape the cultural activity of blacks in the West. Depictions of diaspora experience are a constant theme that performs a major role in black literature in the Americas. Shared narrations of enslavement, oppression, exclusion, racism, cultural resistance, and political unrest are conflicts faced by African descendants in the New World. Separation, dislocation, and consequent displacement frame imagination and self-understanding displayed through the cultural activity of blacks in the Americas.

[4] Werneck quotes Milton Santos's definition of territory: "[t]erritories are forms, but the used territory are objects and actions, synonym for human space, inhabited space" (13).

1.2. Diaspora

Werneck observes the relevance of the processes of racial assertion that diverse discriminated groups endeavor, especially the diasporic peoples. The scholar defines diaspora as a "heterogenic process of dispersion and re-grouping that enslaved Africans and their descendants endure in different parts of the world, particularly in the West." Such process exposes to several instances of "instability, violence, and subordination" (5).

The scholar comments that diaspora reorganizes the present from principles of coexistence by requesting a reordering of the past of origin. The coexistence puts the diverse cultures into contact in a present experience. Thus, diaspora demands that the black population be active and participative. It demands an ongoing critical process and a revisiting of the current diverse facts. The researcher adds that antagonistic circumstances set by deterritorialization, racism, and xenophobia force blacks to fabricate strategies to rebuild identities based on racial categories. The individual and social self-assertion as descendants of Africans and exiled from the African continent -- heirs of rediscovered cultures and histories -- permits the rescue and redefinition of traditions. Werneck states that a varied source of symbolic, cultural and political resources of production originate positive identities that countenance survival and embedding to open freedom paths in a racist society (6).

The positive assertion regarding diasporic culture proposed by Werneck is particularly interesting to the current work. Besides depictions of constraints as consequences of forced separation, dislocation, dispersion, and constant feeling of loss and exile, diaspora displays instances of resistance, resilience, and the emergence of distinct cultures. Diaspora depicts movement, and it can refer to an ongoing, ever-changing transformation through distinct contacts, assimilation, allegiance to origins and tradition, assertion of cultural identity, and transnationalism. The various forms of cultural expression in the diaspora convey instability, tension, but also a site of imagination and creation in hybrid cultures.

Studies evidence the unequivocal relation among the cultures that stemmed from the Middle Passage, and currently from the African and African-Caribbean diaspora. Descendants of enslaved Africans in the Americas have reproduced inherited cultural practices. Music and poetry are instances of the Western activity that display the presence of African heritage permeating the construct of cultural identity in the countries

that used African enslaved labor. Nevertheless, black populations are not the only participants in the production of black diasporic cultures. Processes of hybridization and racial mixing originated nations with diverse multicultural and hybrid sites. In the introduction of *O Atlântico em Movimento: Signos da Diáspora Africana na Poesia Contemporânea de Língua Portuguesa*, Prisca Agustoni writes that historical and ideological reasons lead to an implied connection between the contribution of the African heritage in colonized countries with the African descendant population. Inasmuch as the African descendants possess the heritage in the sense of historical lineage (13). However, Agustoni highlights that it is not possible to omit the fact that all the population of a geographical site coexist arbitrarily with cultural traits pre-established by local or universal historical processes. The scholar suggests the example of the constant re-appropriation of the Greek mythology in Brazilian literature. According to Agustoni, the instance helps to understand the way the choices regarding cultural parameters forge the ideal delineation of a culture. The Greek culture itself, elected as the origin of the universal knowledge – suggesting a pure and unique origin – has its plural roots stemmed from the contact with different peoples and cultures (13).

While tracing the origins of the blues, jazz, and samba, the concepts pointed out by Agustoni are clarifying. The amalgamation of diverse ethnic groups in contact with European culture provides the traces that helped frame the musical conception of the black experience during slavery and the critical periods that followed abolition up to the present, in an ongoing process. In sites of constraints caused by slavery and racism, blacks appropriated dominant standards and transformed them into an expression very much of their own. Hybridism and syncretism is present in religious rituals, music, poetry, and in the way black diasporic communities perceive life and human activity.

In "Introduction: Criticism in the Contact Zone," Mary Louise Pratt applies the term "contact zones" to describe "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of dominations and subordination – such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (7). According to Pratt, Eurocentric reports about the culture and the way subjugated people perceive their experience denote the imperialist knowledge and interpretation about the colonized or enslaved. Notwithstanding, subjugated people conveyed their own practices using the European's own devices.

It is the object of study by ethnographers the use of materials presented to subjugated peoples to articulate their own cultural activity; how they make choices and recreate from materials provided by a dominant culture. Subjugated people cannot control the Eurocentric standpoint about their experience; on the other hand, it is for them possible to decide what to use and absorb, how to apply it, and what it signifies. Pratt concludes that "[t]ransculturation is a phenomenon of the contact zone" (7). Pratt adds that contact zones refer to "the space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (8). The scholar points out the borrowing of the term "contact" from linguists that define the improvised language among individuals with different idioms who need to communicate frequently in the sites of labor and commerce. Called pidgins, these languages become creoles when they happen to be the native language of future generations (8).

The contact with diverse ethnic groups from Africa and the European colonizers as slave masters in the Americas enabled the emergence of pidgins and creoles. Enslaved Africans had the urgent need to communicate among themselves to provide resistance and survival in a racially hostile environment. The bonds created through orality expanded into musical expression that permitted broader intra-communication and cultural integration among the enslaved Africans. It is possible to say that oral language was the first attempt to create interchange among Africans in the Americas because the vast majority of the enslaved people came to the New World dispossessed of their belongings such as their musical instruments. This fact originated languages such as Black English or African-American Vernacular English in the U.S.A and the creoles in Jamaica and Haiti, for instance. Besides the exchange of musical knowledge among the enslaved black people, they also had contact with European music through musical artifacts such as the guitar, the violin, and the piano. The phenomenon of "transculturation", as Pratt puts it, provided the invention and recreation of some musical instruments. Berimbaus, banjos, as instances of instruments, and unique ways to compose music are examples of the products of transculturation during the slavery period and the years after the abolition.

Pratt concludes that the application of the term "contact zone" in her work delineates "colonial frontier" (8). The scholar explains that the latter term has its origin from the "European expansionist perspective",

while "contact zone" suggests a diverse standpoint and another "center of gravity." The term frontier signifies delimitation or border only in relation to Europe. "Contact zone" depicts the site and the time where individuals dissociated by history and locale co-exist; the point at which their paths cross. In Pratt's words:

> The term "contact" foregrounds the interactive, improvisational dimensions of imperial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by accounts of conquest and domination told from the invader's perspective. A "contact" perspective emphasizes how subjects get constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and "travelees,"not in terms of separateness, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, and often within radically asymmetrical relations of power". (8)

In relation to the "contact zones" in the African diaspora, the term may appear to delineate an optimistic point of view, inasmuch as the "contact" also results in discriminatory violent practices of erasure and silencing. The point at which the paths of separated cultures cross is, undoubtedly, a point of conflict and ambivalence. Pratt highlights that the interaction occurs within extremely unequal relations of power. Colonialism in the New World displays examples of genocide of the indigenous populations and slavery. The current situation of the racialized groups is normalized by practices of racism evident in hard access to education -- from elementary to higher -- public health, employment, housing segregation, and imprisonment of the black population and killing by the police forces. I borrow Foucault's concept of "biopower" to suggest a clearer depiction of the role of the state in maintaining the *status quo*. I parallel the "biopower" regulation of black bodies with Dionne Brand's discussions in *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*, a biography that depicts the experience of the Middle Passage and the modern African-Caribbean diaspora.

Brand declares that diaspora locates the black body as a site of particular signifiers, forced to dance, to work, whipped, cursed, valued, and curved. Those are bodies dissected for the good of science (35). They are wild bodies because they may evoke transgression, desire, opposition, and resistance. They carry culturally constructed codes such as physical strength, musical talent, sexual fantasy, and moral

transgression. Brand writes that the "Black body is a kind of naturalized body in the popular culture" (36). It is appreciated in athletes, but for the Western science, it remains captive like anything else which is considered natural. Displayed in lines in prisons, sometimes double chained, in images so compelling that young people adopted baggy trousers that hide their feet. (36-7).

In *Diasporas,* James Clifford affirms that a diasporic awareness emerges from the positive association with historical, cultural, and political forces such as Africa and China. Strategical adaptation and frequent "visions of renewal" counterbalance the perception of loss, exile, and marginality. Destitution and hope permeate the tension in diaspora consciousness. Clifford notes that "[…] the mix of destruction, adaptation, preservation, and creation varies with each historical case and moment" (256-7). Clifford quotes William Safran's definition of Diasporas as "a variety of collective experiences in terms of their similarity and difference from a defining model" (247). Safran explains diaspora as:

> "[E]xpatriate minority communities" (1) that are dispersed from an original "center" to at least two "peripheral" places; (2) that maintain a memory, vision or myth about their original homeland; (3) that "believe they are not – and perhaps cannot be -- fully accepted by their host country; (4) that see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right; (5) that are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; (6) which the group's consciousness and solidarity are "importantly defined" by this continuing relationship with the homeland, and a collective identity importantly defined by this relationship. (247)

The experiences of the African diaspora display characteristics that meet Safran's model. The forced dispersion scattered black populations in the Americas and Europe. The dispersion, however, does not prevent the African descendants from maintaining the collective imagination of Africa as motherland, as redemptive an idyllic place of return and reunion. This image is present in instances of black poetry in Brazil and elsewhere.

Clifford explains that diverse migrant groups do not necessarily present all the features that may define them as diasporic communities.

The scholar points out that a real or symbolic homeland is not the primary element that articulates diasporic experience. Connections and attachments, which are lateral or decentered, may play a role as important as that formed around a desire for return to the homeland. Shared histories of displacement, deprivation and adaptation may be as relevant as the sense of belonging to a certain origin (249). As Clifford puts it: "[t]hus the term "diaspora" is a signifier not simply of transnationality and movement but of political struggles to define the local, as distinctive community in historical contexts of displacement" (252).

The African diaspora is one of the common themes that permeates cultural expression through black poetry. Nevertheless, the image of the idyllic return is not the only constant theme in African-Brazilian, African-American or African-Canadian poetry. In these countries, it is possible to evidence the desire for building an African-Brazilian, African-Canadian, or an African-American identity. More than return, black poetry in Brazil, Canada, and the U.S.A denotes feeling of exile, displacement and the experience of being invisible in a territory of normalizing racist practices in a dominant culture. The following poetic lines evidence the desire to regionalize African descendant experience, that is, a desire to be perceived as an African-Canadian, African-Brazilian, or African-American individual, and the need to have citizenship asserted. Clarke's line in the poem "Africadian Experience:" "To carry Montreal in epic suitcases with Harlem accent" (7); Solano Trindade's lines in "I am also a friend of America's": "America/ I am also your friend" (1-2); and Langston Hughes's lines in "I too": "I, too, sing America / I am the darker brother" (1-2) convey the struggle against the feeling of exile caused by constant exclusion and inequality. Furthermore, in the case of Trindade's poem, it is possible to affirm that the lines denote the desire for acknowledgement of the contribution of African-Brazilians in the Americas as a cultural power. Both Clarke and Trindade challenge the construct of black America as the major resistance against racism. Hughes's lines claim for the legitimation of a black identity in the U.S.A. against invisibility and feeling of exile. Idyllic return, when present in black poetry, may signify the feeling of loss, disruption, and the irreversible dispersion in the New World.

In *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*, Dionne Brand writes:

> The Door of No Return – real and metaphoric as some places are, mythic to those of us scattered in

> the Americas today. To have one's belonging lodged in a metaphor is voluptuous intrigue; to inhabit a trope; to be a kind of fiction. To live in the Black Diaspora is I think to live as a fiction – a creation of empires, and also self-creation. It is to be a being living inside and outside of herself. It is to apprehend the sign one makes yet to be unable to escape it except in radiant moments of ordinariness made like art. To be a fiction in search of its most resonant metaphor then is even more intriguing. So I am scouring maps of all kinds, the way that some fictions do, discursively, elliptically, trying to locate their own transferred selves (18-9).

Diasporic identity is fragmented. Poetics of resistance in a diasporic culture is the work of imagination to build and rebuild consciousness, rejecting and resisting erasure and adapting and accommodating experience. The image of a mythical mother Africa symbolizes refuge and spiritual healing for the abandoned and stigmatized child. It embraces the lonely and uprooted sons and daughters providing their imagination with rich metaphors that frame the rebuilding of self-creation.

In the essay *Thinking the Diaspora: Home thoughts from Abroad*, Stuart Hall asserts that many accounts of returnees denounce the difficulties in reconnecting with their homeland. Used to the pace of cosmopolitan life, many feel that home has somehow changed. They experience the feeling that the bonds of commonality have disrupted beyond all perception. Many realize that the diasporic experience broke the natural and spontaneous attachment to the homeland (3). In "*Um Defeito de Cor*," the African-Brazilian author Ana Maria Gonçalves inscribes the experience of returning to Africa. The character Kehinde, an enslaved African woman, buys her freedom and returns to Africa in search for her disappeared son. Arriving in Benin, Kehinde finds it hard to adapt to African costumes. Along with other freed and escaped African returnees as well as African-Brazilians, the character faces the limitations of language and social interaction forming a distinct community on the African soil:

> In, Uidá, *eve*, which I soon remembered, was widely heard along with *iorubá*, *fon*, and sometimes, another African language, because

> there were people from several places. Brazilians insisted on speaking only in Portuguese, and I guess it constructed their fame as arrogant, which increased every day. Some of them had already built houses more similar to houses in Bahia, detaching them from the Africans' ugly old and poor houses[5]. (307)

Hall asserts that the formation of identity presumably happens during birth as part of nature, printed by kinship and gene lineage, and as part of the inner self. The assumption indicates that identity is not changed by something so mundane, secular and superficial as temporary moving of residency (3). However, the forced dispersion of peoples in different parts of the world evidences that the diasporic phenomenon may disrupt and reshape identities. Imperial legacy causes deprivation, underdevelopment, lack of opportunities forcing people to disperse. Nevertheless, every dispersion brings the promise of return. This is a powerful conception of the term diaspora (3-4). The scholar adds that "[t]he closed concept of diaspora relies on a binary conception of difference. It is founded on a construction of a boundary of exclusion and it depends on the framing of an "Other" and of a fixed opposition between inside and outside". The author applies Derrida's term of "*différance*" that refers to a difference that does not convey binary practices, merged frontiers that do not separate, but depict "*places de passage*", relational and locational significations moving along a "spectrum that has no beginning and no ending". Hall explains that difference is crucial for signification and signification is crucial for culture (7).

1.3. Culture, popular culture, black culture

[5] Em Uidá ouvia-se mais o eve, que logo recordei, mas também o iorubá, o fon e, de vez em quando, alguma outra língua africana, pois havia gente de vários lugares. Os brasileiros faziam questão de conversar somente em português, e acho que isso acabava contribuindo para a fama de arrogantes, que aumentava a cada dia. Alguns já tinham construído casas que se pareciam o mais possível com as casas da Bahia, fazendo com que se destacassem muito das casas pobres, feias e velhas dos africanos. (307)

I choose to write about the topics of culture, popular culture and black culture in order to clarify the specificity of the term cultural appropriation. Nowadays, the discussion about cultural appropriation has popularized and raised misunderstandings and misconceptions about what the term implies. In a site of imperialism and racial hostility, resistance against appropriation and assimilation is part of the fabric of the poetics that give voice to marginalized discourses. The concepts of culture in the current research aim at evidencing the presence of the Western culture in the expressive forms of black culture. The existence of "contact zones" between white European culture and diverse black cultural expressions transform the latter into a hybrid product. The transformation also occurs because of the contacts among heterogeneous African ethnic groups and their descendants in the New World.

In *Notes on Deconstructing the Popular*, Hall points out that the terms popular and culture, when applied together, denote a complex conception. During the passage to the agrarian capitalism and the development and consolidation of the industrial capitalism, a struggle involving the workers, the working classes, and the poor's culture take place. It is possible to evidence changes in the balance and in the relation between social strengths along history through the observation of the conflicts about culture, traditions, and the popular classes' way of life. The interest of the capital in the culture of the popular classes denotes that the establishment of a new social order demands a re-education in a broad sense. Popular tradition is one of the most important sites of resistance against the re-education of the popular classes. The traditionalism of the popular culture has a broader meaning than a conservative, backwards, and anachronistic impulse (442). It conveys resistance and struggle against appropriation and expropriation. Currently, the transformation of specific ways of life have occurred constantly. The "cultural transformation" indicates the "process by which some cultural forms and practices are driven out the centre of the popular life, actively marginalized" (443).

Hall highlights that "popular culture is neither, in a 'pure' sense, the popular traditions of resistance to these processes, nor is it the forms which are superimposed on and over them" (443). Popular culture is the site where transformation happens and it has a double movement of containing and resisting. It is not possible to study popular culture without studying the history of work and its institutions. Hall's comments of popular culture are particularly important to help build the scope of my dissertation to explain one of the functions of music and its relations with the poetics of resistance in the African diaspora and the

formation of the blues, jazz, and samba as territories of resistance. The statements are also crucial to explain the position of black culture inside popular culture.

Néstor García Canclini asserts that the popular depicts the excluded: the ones who do not possess patrimony or who cannot make the patrimony legitimized and maintained. Artisans who are not individualized artists and do not take part in the market of the legitimate symbolic goods; the spectators who are located outside universities and markets because they cannot recognize high culture due to the lack of knowledge of the history of styles (205). Canclini's statement denounces the ideological parameters that support dominant cultures. It points out the opposition between high culture (where the literary canon emerged) and oral culture. In the essay *La Ciudad Letrada*, the critic Ángel Rama delineates the tension between these two cultural models:

> [T]he bastion city, the Harbor city, the pioneer city of the civilizing frontiers, but above all the administrative city that established the norm of the baroque city, constituted the material, visible, and tangible part, of colonizer order, where the life of the community was ruled. However, inside them there has always been another city, not less walled but more aggressive and redemptive, which ruled it and led it. It is the one I believe we must call *ciudad letrada*, because its action was done in the foremost order of the signs[6] (...). (author's emphasis 25)

[6] [L]a ciudad bastion, la ciudad Puerto, la ciudad pionera de las fronteras civilizadoras, pero sobre todo, la ciudade sede administrativa que fue ela que fijó la norma de la ciudad barroca, constituyeron la parte material, visible y sensible, del orden colonizador, dentro de las cuales, se encuadraba la vida de la comunidade. Pero dentro de ellas siempre hubo uma outra ciudad, no menos amurallada sino más agressiva y redentorista, que la rigió y condujo. Es la que creo debemos llamar la *ciudad letrada*, porque su acción se cumplió em el proritario orden de los signos.

Rama's statement explains the existent separation between the dominant culture and popular culture. It is possible to affirm that the dominant culture builds walls as the norms established by Eurocentric standards, which ruled acceptable behavior and cultural expression. Popular culture may denote the transgressive movement that counterbalance the norm: a movement that is "aggressive" in terms of challenging and transforming.

Hall adds that the term popular refers to activities and forms that stem from social and material circumstances of particular classes. The activities and forms are present in popular traditions and practices. Popular culture evidences the continuous tension (of relationship, effect, and antagonism) with the dominant culture. The definition indicates a conception of a polarized culture in the cultural dialectics that considers the domains of cultural forms and activities as an unstable area. Besides, the conception points out the relations that frame this area into subordinate and dominant forms and investigates how these relations of dominance and subordination are structured. Hall argues that the concept treats the relations as:

> [T]he process by means of which somethings are actively preferred so that others can be dethroned. It has at its centre the changing and uneven relations of force which define the field of culture – that is, the question of cultural struggle and its many forms. Its main focus of attention is the relation between culture and questions of hegemony. (449)

Popular culture as a site of vehement conflicts. The disputes are in a constant tension and refer to what we are, what we want to be, and what is imposed to us as a definition of what we are. In such circumstances, different subordinated groups have the capacity of resistance and proposition. In the essay *What is This "Black" in Popular Culture?*, Hall quotes Cornel West who locates black popular culture in a moment that presents three frames. The first is the decentering of the European standards of culture and of Europe as a universal subject of culture. Second, the rise and establishment of the United States as a cultural power that may diffuse new cultural dimensions. Third, the appearance of decolonized experiences (21). Hall explains that:

> Within culture, marginality, though it remains peripheral to the broader mainstream, has never

> been such a productive space as it is now. And that is not simply the opening with the dominant spaces that those outside can occupy. It is also the result of the cultural politics of difference, of the production of new identities, of the appearance of new subjects on the political and cultural stage. (24)

Inserted in this panorama of complexities of popular culture, black culture emerges as forms of expression, daily practices, and black narratives. Hall's statement evidences the dimension of black culture and its relationship with popular culture in general. In order to propose the matter of black culture, the author points out the ambiguities of the transition of the cultural center from Europe to America. The dislocation includes the ambivalent relation of the United States with the high European culture and the multifaceted relation of the United States with their internal ethnic hierarchy (22). Hall observes that Western Europe has just acknowledged its ethnic diversity. On the other hand, the U.S.A. has always had a variety of ethnic groups and the fabric of ethnic hierarchy has shaped cultural politics. Consequently, American popular culture locates itself in this silenced and unacknowledged transition and it has accommodated, silenced or not, the vernacular traditions of black American popular culture. In Hall's words: "Maybe it is hard to remember that, when it is seen outside the U.S.A, American mass culture has always included certain traditions that can only be assigned to traditions of black vernacular popular culture" (22).

In her doctoral dissertation, Werneck argues that there is a connection between black culture and the site of the Western culture and that there is a straight link between the concepts of black popular culture and diasporic culture (28). The concept of black popular culture as imbricated in the diasporic culture is relevant to the current work. It allows the investigation of diverse modes of expression that develop beyond national borders. Thus, it is possible to study and evidence the interchange between diasporic cultural activities and black popular culture. Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* asserts the commonality among the cultures in the black diaspora. The term "Black Atlantic", coined by the author, defines a cultural phenomenon in countries that exploited African slave labor during the colonial period and in the modern diaspora endured by peoples in search for better opportunities in the first world. He

comments that slave ships are the starting point for the building of cultures in the displacement of black Africans:

> The image of the ship – a living micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion, -- is especially important for historical and theoretical reasons that I hope will become clearer below. Ships immediately focus attention on the middle passage, on the various projects for redemptive return to an African homeland, on the circulation of ideas and activists as well as the movement of key cultural and political artefacts: tracts, books, gramophone records, and choirs (4).

1Gilroy's statement points out the desire of transcending the borders of nations and state. It is possible to say that the assertion also indicates the formation of hybrid cultures by memory and project of return, whether idyllic or redemptive, which is present in diverse black cultural activities.

According to Werneck, the term "black" to characterize popular culture refers to "forms of production and connection that exist inside and outside national borders and share experiences of deterritorialization and racism, as well as they convey common repertoire that refers to the African past" (27). Perceiving black music from a transnational standpoint is to consider the dialogic characteristic that includes differences among common patterns of expressions of diverse black social groups. The groups develop their narratives inside and outside nation-state frontiers in different parts in the West. Because I am interested in pinpointing the diffusion of the blues and jazz poetics in the Americas and possible interconnections with samba poetics, the concepts highlighted by Hall and explained by Werneck contribute to evidence such goals. I write about black popular culture, black music and black poetry in the current work as expressions of new strengths and experiences and as tools of resistance and transformation related to popular territory. In Hall's words:

> In its expressivity, its musicality, its orality, and in its rich, deep and varied attention to speech; in its inflections toward the vernacular and the local; in its rich production of counter-narratives, and above all, in its metaphorical use of the musical vocabulary, black popular culture has enabled the

> surfacing, inside the mixed and contradictory modes even of some mainstream popular culture, of elements of a discourse that is different – other forms of life, other traditions of representation (27).

1.4. Black popular music and cultural hegemony

Besides entertainment, intellectual activity, music may perform a role of conveyor of resistance, tradition, and cultural identity. Since the beginning, African descendant music expresses struggle against racism, the constraints of exile, social and political exclusion; it conveys instances of sorrow, nostalgia, relief from pain, spiritual and ritual communion. According to Gilroy, music has enhanced diffusion and sharing of common experiences among blacks beyond the power of spoken and written words (76). Music, during the slavery period in the black Atlantic, helped form communities, transmitted the terrors of the time, helped organize rebellions through the work songs in the plantations, and amalgamated cultural elements from diverse ethnic backgrounds brought along with enslaved people from Africa.

Gilroy explains that the music produced by the slaves' experiences of racism defies the principle that language and writing are the conspicuous expressions of human cognizance. Music has proven its growing potency and significance in the black Atlantic in relation to the limitations of language. The author highlights the fact that "literacy was often denied on pain of death" and not many cultural chances were possible as substitutes for "the other forms of individual autonomy denied by life on the plantations and in the barracoons." Music turns crucial when "linguistic and semantic indeterminacy/polyphony" emerge in the middle of the conflict between masters, mistresses and enslaved people (74).

Werneck asserts that the circumstances that permeate spoken language production also pervade the development of musical activity. It is possible to affirm that amidst hostile conditions, the needs and possibilities of a certain group permeate musical expression. The needs and possibilities transform into action and confront (28). Hall points out the opposition against the *status quo* as a profound structure of the cultural life in the black diaspora based on music in response to the

cultural dominance of writing (28).Facing the prohibition of writing, music and the aesthetics of performance take over a central role in conveying the slaves will. Music has a privileged position before censorship and violence against those who produce it.

Gilroy writes that a study about the role of music in the black Atlantic involves researching on the "self-understanding" constructed by musicians who have composed it, the 'symbolic use" other black artists and authors give to it, and the social connections that have fabricated and refabricated the "unique expressive culture in which music comprises a central and even foundational element". Gilroy affirms that "traditions of musical expression" have sustained the appearance of a group of intellectuals who convey experiences that provide a clear focus on the crisis of modernity and modern values. These are intellectuals who work without the conditions that come either from the relationship with the modern state or from the institutional locations inside the cultural industries. The intellectuals perform roles as "legislators or interpreters" and have acted as temporary guardians of a distinct and often threatened cultural sensibility, which has also served as political and philosophical reserve (74-6). The author states that:

> The irrepressible rhythms of the once forbidden drum are often still audible in their work. Its characteristic syncopations still animate the basic desires – to be free and to be oneself – that are revealed in this counterculture's unique conjunction of body and music. Music, the grudging gift that supposedly compensated slaves not only for their exile, from the ambiguous legacies of practical reason but for their complete exclusion from modern political society, has been refined and developed so that it provides an enhanced mode of communication beyond the petty power of words – spoken or written (76).

Music, in the black Atlantic, develops in order to bridge the gaps and fractures that the Middle Passage caused. It conveys the discursive practices of resistance against the violence of slavery, the performance of the struggle against racism and the assertion of identity when denial of the sense of humanity was enforced.

Gilroy comments that it is worth reconstructing the neglected history of black music and it may point out diverse possibilities and arise other plausible models. However, the author suggests that the

bourgeois democracy that orients the "genteel metropolitan guise" cannot serve as an ideal model for all modern processes. Secondly, he emphasizes deviating attention from the issues of "beauty, taste, and artistic judgement" in order not to limit the discussion in terms of vehement textuality. Investigating the history of black music making demands distinct analytic conceptualizations:

> This demand is amplified by the need to make sense of musical performances in which identity is fleetingly experienced in the most intensive ways and sometimes socially reproduced by means of neglected modes of signifying practices like mimesis, gesture, kinesis and costume (77-8).

The scholar has concluded that antiphony is the main formal characteristic of black musical tradition. Antiphony (call and response) conveys a means to connect music with diverse forms of cultural expressions, supporting, along with "improvisation, montage, and dramaturgy", the modern interpretative keys to the complete miscellany of black artistic activities. These elements inflicted in jazz poetry and samba poetics constitute tools of the black musical tradition. In terms of discourse, both jazz poetry and samba poetics may convey resistance against marginalization of black culture.

1.5. Poetics of resistance and cultural appropriation

In the essay "Half-Bread Poetics", Fred Wah offers a definition of the term "poetics of resistance" from a Chinese-Canadian perspective. According to the author, poetics denotes "in its practical and applied sense, as the tools designed or located by writers and artists to initiate movement and change. That is, poetics as a sort of *applied poetic*, in the sense that engineering is a form of applied mathematics" (author's emphasis 51). It is important to highlight that the author refers to the multicultural Canadian site. Regarding jazz poetry and samba poetry, the culturally marginalized writer addresses form and language in a way

to enable cultural, racial, gender, and biographical traits to become dynamic and legitimized.

Wah asserts that writers of color and Aboriginal writers oppose to a "nationalist aesthetic" that is constantly expropriating difference in a "consuming narrative" (75). Such writers achieve social empowerment while taking over the responsibility for their own subjectivity. Although these writers may engage in "borderland poetics or feminist poetics," they feel the need to take part in a "tangible community (despite the cries of 'separatist') in order to locate the cortex of their own social content without it being conditioned by first-world perceptions." (75-6). Wah states that "contradictions, paradoxes and assumptions" point out a circumstance and a proceeding that are crucial to any poetics of resistance (racial, feminist, sexual). The scholar explains that poetics of resistance is "the poetics of the 'trans-', method of translation, transference, transition, transposition, or poetics that speaks of the awareness and use of any means of occupying a site that is continually being magnetized. How to pass through without being appropriated" (90).

The poetics of resistance, in terms of language and form, displays instances of innovation, originality and transgression. However, inserted in the ambivalent process that popular culture develops, poetics of resistance may reject the canonical structures or it may appropriate the canon. In the essay *Transnegressão*, Ronald Augusto writes that a group of black Brazilian authors, aware of their social responsibilities as spokespersons of a community, produce poetry considering the specificity of poetic language (425). Besides the pre-established norms that attempt to define what black poetry is, the authors use language as a tool for provocative, subtle lines, sometimes using the demotic, antiphony, jazz scat, code switching, and polyphony. It is possible to affirm, according to Augusto's statement, that Clarke, Komunyakaa and Pereira are poets of *transnegressão*," and that definition is a branch of the poetics of resistance. The authors' lines denounce, protest, revisit tradition, and besides protest the writing engages with creating black aesthetics. The poets apply strategies that make difference concerning both popular culture and black culture.

Hall writes that the cultural strategies able to make difference and to displace power regulations are the resistance against hegemonic cultural politics. The author acknowledges that the spaces difference has conquered are limited and dispersed, carefully monitored and ruled. These places receive pitiful funding and are aggregated when transgression gets lost turning into spectacle. He acknowledges that visibility is ruled and segregated; however, the author advises not to depreciate visibility in order to avoid repeating the specific model of cultural politics that plays the "game of inversion", when a certain cultural practice replaces another (24-5). Nevertheless, cultures in contact zones, as Pratt writes, are always in asymmetrical relations. The effect of a dominant culture over another may give rise to acculturation, assimilation, and appropriation. Appropriation, in the current study, will be analyzed as a mechanism of cultural imperialism, a device of dominant cultures to select when and which popular forms are acceptable or not.

In the essay *"*Whose Gaze and Who Speaks for Whom", Brand explains that cultural appropriation does not define the issue of cultural imperialism. The scholar writes that cultural imperialism is a more precise term to define the abiding organized repression of the cultural life of the oppressed people. Denial of the historical and cultural development of the excluded maintains imperialist domination. Racism stratifies economy affecting the lives of non-whites in Canada. A "common sense" racist ideology maintains the stratification and cultural imperialism and appropriation. The establishment of white supremacy determines formal culture and the destination of public funds. "Whiteness" organizes culture by the agency of "para-statal bodies," including television broadcasting, councils and private media and educational institutions. Brand states that "[f]ormal culture is itself stratified by class, gender and sexuality, organized around maleness, class and heterosexual privilege" (122-4).

Furthermore, Brand explains that cultural appropriation is a "critical category" that refers to the location of the author and the text at specific historical moments: occasions that "give rise" to issues on race, gender, sexuality, class, and alterity; issues stemmed from colonialism,

slavery and economic exploitation. It examines how the author relates to the text, within and apart from it, and the relation of the author within the text concerning colonial discourse, sexist discourse and racial discourse. The critical category of cultural appropriation questions the author's anonymity, "it challenges the writer's 'interests' in the text," it states that the author does not bear a neutral attitude towards race, gender, sexuality and class. Brand argues;

> And it locates the production of the text and the production of the author within practices that give rise to gender, race, class subordination and colonial subjugation. It proposes that imagery, images, the imagination and representation are deeply ideological in that they suggest ways of thinking about people and the world. This critique goes beyond the mere notion of 'good' and 'bad' representation; it is more concerned with how we see, enact and re-enact, make, define and redefine, vision how we lived and how we are going to live. (127-8)

In "Jazz", the critic adds that nowadays jazz is shaped into the "most passive and acceptable icon of African-American culture (…)" (151). The current acceptance of jazz in the American cultural panorama is in contrast with its past of exclusion and discrimination. Brand writes that jazz is profoundly resonant in North American culture these days, even though African-Americans remain constantly marginalized. African-American culture is present in the lives of people from diverse backgrounds in America and the West. The fascination with African-American culture ranges from music – jazz, blues, rhythm and blues, hip hop, rap – to language – phrases, accents, and cadences – and physical expression – body language, manner, styles, and fashion. The author states that the acceptance results partly from acknowledgement of African-American history and politics; the perception of "inside-outsider;" and "the investing of all extra emotion, beliefs, personal and communal fears" (149).

According to Brand, the acceptance does not occur only because of mass media and commodification, but also because of recognition

and identification. Mass media performs a central role in defining which cultural forms receive attention, alternating the cultural forms according to the social moment. Each musical genre – from blues to hip hop – has been more visible through these moments. These cultural forms appear in popular culture, "not only as social or aesthetic constructs in the same way as, let's say, European classical music, but also as political constructs." Also, they surpass the mass media management, leaking into the culture by "cunning, desire, appropriation, appeal or ability for precise articulation of a particular social moment;" the connection to the icon of the African-American cultural groundwork highlighted or made obscure in relation to the immediate demand. These complexities permeate African-American culture and jazz in North-American culture (Jazz 150).

Hall writes that style, in black repertoire, becomes the core of the cultural event, though cultural critics consider it a simple cover. Along with music, people in the black diaspora have used their body as their only cultural capital – and during a long time, it was true. Black people have worked on themselves as canvas of self-depiction. These are profound questions of cultural transmission and heritage, of the complexity between African origins and the immutable diasporic dispersion. European cultural appropriation, association, and rearrangement of European ideologies, culture, and institutions in relation to an African patrimony lead to innovative linguistic practices of using the body (27).

Music is one of the main activities in the site of cultural disputes and is one of the most important vehicles through which conflicts for depiction of the subordinated groups take place. Music connects with the oral aspect of Brazilian popular culture that stems from the presence of African tradition. The current study also focuses attention on the African descendant musical activity of samba as a tool of communicating worldviews, developing and conveying strategies of freedom and resistance. Samba can also provide a sound territory, diffusing knowledge about experience creating social groups that share the commonality of experiencing racism and exclusion.

However, just like jazz, samba has also endured a battle for recognition and legitimation. Samba has depicted an instance of black aesthetics in Brazil and helped form black communities where traditions and counter-narratives are kept alive, transformed and transmitted. I discuss the history of samba as well as the history of jazz and the blues in more details in the next chapters of the dissertation. By now, following the topic of appropriation and poetics of resistance I present the way samba endures the dispute for depiction and legitimation in the site of popular culture in Brazil.

According to Werneck, the black population in Rio de Janeiro in the early twentieth century achieves certain acknowledgement of their agency as political subjects. The dislocation of the interest in the European musical forms to samba permits a movement for greater participation and cultural identity because of well-succeeded disputes of different purposes. The researcher criticizes certain analyses of the popular music in Brazil that omit the divergent political-ideological interests present in Brazilian popular culture and in Brazilian black music. The author points out the analysis of the Brazilian anthropologist Hermano Vianna's *O Mistério do Samba*, whose text focuses on the power of culture, overlooking the social conflicts of the period (35).

The field of disputes in the site of popular culture is always in motion and alternating positions between legitimized and marginalized expressions. Werneck affirms that journalists, intellectuals and musicians have restlessly discussed about the marginalization or hegemony of samba. The author suggests that a perspective of an ongoing dispute in the field of popular culture as well as in the area of popular music may provide a step ahead. Instead of discussing if samba is marginalized or not, threatened or dominant, it is necessary to point out the inconstancies and disputes for legitimacy and wider depiction that the conceptualization of popular culture as a site of instability offers. Werneck emphasizes that racism, discrimination, and economic exploitation permeate the processes of legitimacy of musical forms (36).

In the essay,"O Passarinho e a Mercadoria", Carlos Sandroni reports that samba has two styles: the old style and the modern form. The old style is associated with the gatherings at Tia Ciata's, the black

baiana who joined singers, musicians, and composers of samba in her house at a time when the police force repressed reunions with black people playing samba in the beginning of the twentieth century. The modern style relates to the pubs in Rio de Janeiro where *sambistas* reunited to present and share their music in the 1930's. The period marks the commodification of the samba. Sandroni writes that modern samba gains a professional context and reification and becomes autonomous in relation to the creators. Because of that, samba begins to be stolen and then sold. The necessity of composing samba in two distinct parts, lyrics and music, emerges. As an independent object, the establishment of frontiers without place for improvisation demands that samba has lyrics and music appropriately written, published, and recorded (155). Sandroni observes that a great part of researchers on the matter considers the commercialization of samba as a one-sided event reporting white bourgeois people taking advantage of black naïve working class songwriters after the 1920's. The author asserts that this is the perspective of many accounts. However, the real story may be more complex because popular songwriters also take advantage of the discovery of the monetary value of something that used to be in the public domain. The *sambistas* become aware of the original *savoir faire* that could provide them with earnings and access to the growing modern cultural market. The practice distinguishes the songwriters of the old and the modern styles. In the case of the former, the work of the author was in an inchoate form that dismissed monetary intermediation and appropriation was an ordinary event (150-1).

A brief discussion about the distinction between this kind of appropriation from the process that the current chapter intends to point out becomes necessary here. Before the appearance of the modern samba that can be commercialized and appropriated, the gatherings at the houses of *baianas* had the purpose of maintaining African descendant tradition and keeping the bonds of cultural identity. In "Da Sala de Jantar à Sala de Visitas", Sandroni comments that, in the middle of the nineteenth century, an increasing migration from the Northeast to the Southeast of Brazil occurs. The migration follows the dislocation of the economic center and the capital from Salvador to Rio de Janeiro.

Part of the people who migrate are freeborn black *baianos*, some of them not underprivileged. The group, reunited because of strong bonds of solidarity, forms a "*baiana* community" in the Saúde district downtown Rio. The presence of the *Tias*, elderly *baianas* who performed family, religious, and leisure leadership, helped to organize parties where musicians and vocalists improvise. The most famous of the *Tias* is Tia Ciata, already mentioned (102). These black old *baianas* have a central role in the formation of the modern samba and it is at Tia Ciata's house that an important event in the creation of the modern samba occurs.

The story of the creation of "Pelo Telefone"[7], the first samba recorded in 1916, takes place at Tia Ciata's. Sandroni argues that many researchers relate the conception of "Pelo Telefone" to a night session at the old *baiana*'s place. At least, a significant portion of the composition stems directly from the folkloric samba played in the dining rooms of the *Tias* in the early twentieth century. The success of Donga's recording causes reactions among his friends. Sandroni reports that the newspaper *Jornal do Brasil* publishes a note by Tia Ciata and others protesting against Donga's claims for the authorship of "Pelo Telefone" in 1917. Years later, Donga himself recognizes that he is not the only author when he declares in an interview quoted by Sandroni that he "collected a folkloric theme that did not belong to anyone and developed it (…)". The researcher adds that Mauro de Almeida, the official author of the lyrics of the original recording, also affirms his authorship as relative. Almeida states that the lines in "Pelo Telefone" are not his and that he collected them from popular ballads (118-9).

Sandroni quotes Donga's statement that refers to important figures in the *baiano-carioca* community:

> Germano and I…, and the deceased Didi da Gracinda, always sought for the late Hilário Jovino and we advised each other about the best folkloric repertoire to choose in order to introduce it to the society as soon as the opportunity is

[7] "Pelo Telefone" 'On the Phone' is the first modern samba recorded by Donga. The record at the National Library of Rio de Janeiro designates it as carnival samba.

> provided and that happened in 1916, when we began to put pressure… Because that was the time[8] (119).

The appropriation of folkloric lines and the adaptation to modern samba evidences the need to make the black popular cultural form acceptable by the dominant culture. Sandroni highlights Donga's statement that making samba public means to show the society that the genre is not what they are thinking about and that the melodies can be heard in carnival parties. Nevertheless, the folkloric repertoire needs alteration and adaptation through diverse mediations. In the researcher's words:

> A carnival could hardly be enough to insert samba in the society as it was in fact – that is, an instance of entertainment, including choreography, codes of behavior, poetic improvisation etc. It was necessary, from the behaviors and relation between people, to highlight residues, objects capable of moving between the lines of the society (creating new relations along the transition). And molding the objects into forms able to adapt to the means of transmission of the time: the score for the piano to be commercialized, the arrangement for the band, the printed lyrics whose inflexibility turns improvisations into mere parodies, the recording on vinyl records. (119-120)

Furthermore, it was requisite to have a register in the National Library aiming at preserving copyright and the "protection" of Mauro de Almeida, described by Sandroni as a "white ally, journalist, and an important figure in one of the main carnival institutions, The Club of the Democrats" (120). The author states that Donga's work resulted in the modernization of a cultural activity that was exclusive to a particular community. It transformed the activity into a popular musical genre in a modern sense concerning author, recording, access to press, and success in the society. He might not be the author of "Pelo Telefone"; nevertheless, his attitude transforms the history of samba. Sandroni

[8] Donga, Pixinguinha and João da Baiana. *As vozes Desassombradas do Museu*. Rio de Janeiro: MIS, 1970.

comments that "he is the author of history, he is the inventor of the song and thus the inventor of *samba carioca* in many of its present characteristics" (120). Samba has developed in the contradictory site of popular culture that excludes, marginalizes, adapts, transforms and accepts diverse forms of cultural activities. Once considered marginal, it was turned into a symbol of national identity during the Vargas era.

Referring to Brand's discussion on appropriation, I write about the kind of appropriation subordinated to cultural imperialism and that has racism as one of its mechanisms. Let us consider the samba "Vá Cuidar da Sua Vida" composed by Geraldo Filme[9] in 1980:

Vá cuidar de sua vida
Diz o dito popular
Quem cuida da vida alheia
Da sua não pode cuidar
[.....]
Crioulo cantando samba
Era coisa feia
Esse negro é vagabundo
Bote o negro na cadeia
Hoje o branco tá no samba
Quero ver como é que fica
Todo mundo bate palmas
Quando ele toca cuíca
[.....]
Nego jogando pernada
Mesmo jogando rasteira
Todo mundo condenava
Uma simples brincadeira
E o negro deixou de tudo
Acreditou na besteira

[9] Geraldo Filme (1928-1995) was an African-Brazilian songwriter, singer, and activist. The samba "Mind your Own Business"(Vá Cuidar da Sua Vida) was also recorded by Itamar Assumpção and Virgínia Rodrigues – both African-Brazilian artists.

Hoje só tem gente branca
Na escola de capoeira
[.....]
Negro falava de umbanda
Branco ficava cabreiro
Fica longe desse negro
Esse negro é feiticeiro
Hoje o preto vai à missa
E chega sempre primeiro
O branco vai pra macumba
Já babá de terreiro[10] (1-44)

The lyrics emphasizes the contradictory movement of excluding and appropriating African-Brazilian cultural elements in Brazilian popular culture. The lines refer to the period after the abolition of slavery by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries when the marginalization and criminalization of the African descendant practices concerning black popular culture occur violently. Police constantly repressed and arrested blacks engaging these activities and some of the gatherings to practice capoeira, to attend religious rituals, and to dance and sing samba had to be secret or under the protection of a white elite citizen. Historical accounts about the samba of Tia Ciata report that intellectuals like Gilberto Freyre were usual presences. Tia Ciata possessed a certain prestige in the white elite due to the sweets she made and commercialized. Sandroni reports that Tia Ciata's husband, João Batista da Silva, also a black baiano, studied Medicine for two years in Salvador. Later, Silva got a job in the office of the police chief in the federal capital (102). The author offers the report of one of Tia Ciata's grandson narrating that Silva got the position because his wife

[10] Mind your business/ the popular saying says/ Who minds somebody else's business/ cannot mind their own/[…]/ A negro singing samba/ Was an ugly thing/ That negro is a roamer/ Send him to jail/ Today the white is in the samba/ I wanna see what it is like/ Everyone claps their hands/ When he plays the cuíca/ […]/
Negro playing pernada/ Even playing low/ everyone damned/ A simple game/ Today there are only white people/in the capoeira circle […]/ The negro talked about umbanda/ The white got scared/ Stay away from this negro/ This negro is a wizard/ Today the negro attends the mass/ The first to arrive/ The white attend macumba/ And is the babá in the terreiro […] 1-44

had asked the help of the orixás[11] to heal President Wenceslau Brás's[12] leg (102).

According to the scholar, the architecture of Tia Ciata's house and its application suggests that the path from the front to the backyard – from the outside to the inside – delineates the polarity between the public and the private. The separation of the rooms depicts ruptures that manifest the polarity gradually. The living room was for formal guests who could not enter the intimacy of the dining room. Thus, the dining room received close friends and family who could act and behave in a way that would not be acceptable before formal guests. Sandroni borrows the term "cultural screens[13]" from Muniz Sodré to explain that the separations limit the access either in a sense or in another acting like a filter. The filter can be somewhat pervious, consequently providing different conceptions concerning the diffusion of cultural practices between the public and the private and, in the case of this study, the creation of samba (109-111).

Sandroni suggests that it is possible to explain the division of the rooms in Tia Ciata's house by means of the idea of "censorship" introduced by Freud. In *Folclore Negro no* Brasil, Arthur Ramos[14] compares the *Praça Onze*, a locality in Rio de Janeiro that was the main stage of black carioca carnival until 1930, in a similar way. Ramos writes that because of persecution, blacks hid their beliefs in *terreiros* of *candomblé*[15] and *macumba.* Folklore was the tool to communicate with the white civilization mainly in carnival. That event was a yearly collective catharsis that elaborates the unconscious material and prepares it to the introduction to the "civilization". *Praça Onze* was the censor of the black African unconscious. "It is the frontier between

[11] Orixás are African deities.
[12] Wenceslau Brás was a Brazilian politician who served as the ninth president of Brazil from 1914 to 1918.
[13] From the Portuguese "biombos culturais", a term introduced by Muniz Sodré.
[14] Arthur Ramos de Araújo Pereira (1936-1949) was a Brazilian psychiatrist, social psychologist, ethnologist, folklorist, and anthropologist and responsible for the institutionalization of the Social Sciences in Brazil.
[15] Candomblé is African-Brazilian religion that worships the orixás. Macumba is a popular term for the act of wizardry and animal sacrifices in the African descendant religions. However, the term is used wrongly because macumba is, in fact, a musical instrument of African origins.

black culture and white European culture, a frontier with no precise limits, where institutions interpenetrate and cultures alternate (274-5).

In "Da Sala de Jantar à Sala de Visitas", Sandroni comments that Tia Ciata's house, located in *Praça Onze,* played the same role of communicating vehicle between the "black African unconscious" and the "white civilization". Nevertheless, the scholar observes that the applicability of Freud's psychological theory to the sociological level is questionable. Furthermore, he points out that the equivalence of the unconscious and black culture suggested by Ramos is problematic. The analogy achieves its purpose highlighting two paradigms in the history of samba: repression and topic conception. The thesis of repression concerns the fact that black culture was victim of persecution, interdiction, and suppression during three centuries of slavery. The topic conception points out that repressed cultural practices survived because of veiling and limitation to certain places. The author writes that the "[i]mage of cultural contents put outside the reach of a repressive instance and, thus, kept away from general diffusion of ideas in the society suits the psychoanalytic analogy made by Ramos" (112).

Sandroni's study suggests that repression was not the only posture that the dominant elite took in relation to samba. In Sandroni's perspective there is a certain overreaction about the theme in texts and reports concerning the early periods of the formation of the genre. However, the author does not silence reports of *sambistas* like Cartola. In Cartola's words: "in my time the samba circles… were dissolved by the police many times because samba was a marginal and swindler's stuff" (113). Or in João da Baiana's statement: "I was arrested may times for playing the tambourine." It is clear that the genre in formation faced barriers of discrimination (113).

Vianna, in *o Mistério do Samba*, argues that the "mistery of samba" denotes the existence of cultural mediators and social sites that enable the implementation of the mediation. The author asserts that this is the central idea to analyze the "mistery of samba". Brazilian culture is heterogeneous and presents harmonious or conflicting coexistence of plural traditions founded on occupational, ethnic, religious backgrounds etc. Vianna quotes Gilberto Velho who affirms that "[c]ultural

heterogeneity is one of the main characteristics of complex societies, seen as an unfinished product of the interaction and negotiation of the reality actualized by groups or even individuals whose interests are, at first, potentially divergent" (41). Sandroni comments that the acceptance of samba as a musical genre in the thirties in Vianna's text was the "crowning of a secular tradition of contacts… among diverse social groups in an attempt to invent Brazilian identity and popular culture" (113).

To reflect more profoundly about the topic, I return to Hall's statement concerning black popular culture:

> Always these forms are the product of partial synchronization, of engagement across cultural boundaries, of the confluence of more than one cultural tradition, of the negotiations of dominant and subordinated positions, of the subterranean strategies of recoding and transcoding, of critical signification, of critical signification, of signifying (28).

Sandroni's and Vianna's assertions may be euphemistic in relation to the marginalization and persecution of samba. Cultural imperialism disavows the marginalized other's ability to be agent of history and to possess legitimate culture, as Brand writes (122-4). The social condition of the creators of samba, though not all of them suffered economic deprivation, did not provide them with entire access to citizenship considering black skin color as a major hindrance. In the reports about Tia Ciata in Sandroni's work, it is possible to evidence that the dominant elite mediated the access to basic rights of cultural expression and tradition. Hall suggests a more complex and realistic analysis of the conflict inside popular culture that considers the effort of critical signifying. To conceptualize the formation of samba apart from the historic violent exclusion of black population is to consider that black people's rights to express culturally is a contribution or even a concession of the elite. It is necessary to read Sandroni and Vianna critically in order to avoid adopting a celebratory viewpoint while studying the history of samba. The title of Vianna's book *O Mistério do*

Samba may suggest that the studies have been inconclusive so far and that there are many gaps to bridge. Maybe the acknowledgement of the violence of racism that permeated the precursors of the genre might help clear the topic.

In "A Lógica Branca da Morte de Johny Alf", Augusto writes about appropriation and invisibility defining them as interdictions, obstacles and meritocratic impostures in relation to the work of certain black creators. Some of them receive late recognition, usually posthumous. The poet cites Cruz e Sousa[16] in Literature and Johnny Alf[17] in music. I will focus on the report about Alf that is particularly interesting for the topic of the current text. Augusto states that in order to produce a *Bossa Nova* for exportation it was more suitable that the new genre was white, not black. Consequently, whitening samba through jazz was the ideal mixing, paradoxically. Moreover, the legitimate representatives should be white. The group from the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro concentrated the cultural capital and no black creators were among them. Augusto affirms that in the history of jazz, many black artists had to give up their positions as creators to white inferior talented whites in order not to threaten the segregation in the United States of that time. As Little Richard and Ray Charles preoccupied white parents of white teenage fans, Elvis Presley was the whitening solution for the segregationist entertainment industry: a white boy that possessed black shuffle, black music with white make-up. The music was black but the musicians should be white in the industry and consumption standpoint (par. 6).

Augusto points out that the Brazilian writer, journalist and biographer Ruy Castro states that Alf is the real father of *bossa nova*. Antonio Carlos Jobim and João Gilberto transformed *bossa nova* in a worldwide phenomenon; however, Alf began his career much earlier and spent part of the 1950s playing at the *Beco das Garrafas*[18].The musician João Donato reports that he learned from Alf all the modern harmonies that Brazilian popular music began to apply. Tom Jobim gave

[16] Cruz e Sousa is the greatest Brazilian symbolist poet (1861-1898).
[17] Johnny Alf (1929-2010) was a Brazilian composer, pianist, and singer.
[18] *Beco das Garrafas* or 'Bottles Alley' was a nightclub in Rio de Janeiro where famous Brazilian musicians and singers performed.

Alf a nickname: Genialf. In Augusto's analysis, the nickname denotes the intention to veil the indifference in relation to the music and arranger softening the conflict by means of the racial cordiality current in the period when the myth of the racial democracy permeated Brazilian racial relations. However, in spite of his geniality, Alf died in a retirement home, alone and almost forgotten (par 2).

The history of black culture unveils moments of denial, silencing and discrimination, then, appropriation. The mechanisms serve the dominant culture and the maintenance of the status quo. However, black culture has always resisted against the traps of exclusion -- especially black music -- always reinvented, revisited, and renewed. In the next chapter, I write about the diverse periods that blues, jazz, and samba have endured in the West functioning as an original artistic expression and the conveyors of tradition and resistance.

CHAPTER II
THE HISTORY OF BLUES, JAZZ, AND SAMBA

As I stated in the first chapter, the investigation about the origins of blues, jazz and samba requires a broad interdisciplinary research. In the first chapter, I attempted to trace the social function of music from the Middle Passage to the African diaspora from a perspective that concerns resistance, coalition, resiliency, and cultural identity. The site of popular culture presents tension, contradiction, assimilation, expropriation, and appropriation. Inserted in this panorama, black culture resists against acculturation by means of revisiting, adapting, and transforming tradition through diverse strategies. In the current chapter, I attempt to describe the historical and ongoing process of creation of the three musical genres and the intertextual echoes from one to another as well as the common traits and differences of black experience that blues, jazz, and samba may delineate. I investigate the strategies that make the outbreak of rhythms and their permanence possible, the strategies that stand against

silencing, erasing and invisibility. Furthermore, I intend to point out the approaches that enable the appearance of a black aesthetics. Though it is not a historical study, an overview of the history of the blues, jazz, and samba is interesting to the scope of the dissertation in order to pinpoint intertextuality in Clarke's, Komunyakaa's and Pereira's poetry.

2.1. Work songs, spirituals and blues

> *The blues was not born in bars, in cheap lounges… The blues come from cotton plantations… While blacks in America remained unable to convert the culture they had left behind into a language of their own, they remained wordless creatures*[19].
>
> -- *James Son Thomas*

In *Panorama de La Musica AfroAmericana*, Nestor Ortiz Oderigo writes that Afro-American music is a clear mirror of the experience of its creators (19). The Afro-American life is an experience of deprivation, disillusionment, exclusion, subjugation, but also of hope, spirituality, creativity, self-assertion, solidarity, and survival. A brief study on the work songs in the American South is a relevant starting point. As precursors of the blues and jazz, the work songs convey two important aspects: the aesthetic and the social. The current study does not concern music, literature and Afro-American arts only, but also considers a brief investigation of life and labor. Oderigo explains that these specific work songs originated from the everyday pace of manual labor, convey the anxiety, pain, joy and pleasure that permeate the experience of black people in the Southern U.S.A. It is possible to evidence the social and psychological condition of the enslaved blacks through the lines of the work songs (19).

Oderigo explains that work songs are interwoven with descriptive phrases, ingenious rhetoric figures, and intense dramatic exclamations that reveal an imaginative mind. The music and the poetics stem from improvisation and possess vigor and vitality. Neither music nor poetics fit any determined shape. They do not respond to any routine. They flow from improvisation, spontaneously (20).

[19] In Massena, Alexandre and Prince, Adamo. *Blues: Base Arrangements*. São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale S.A., 2013.

Researchers, explorers, and writers of travel diaries report that in countries such as the USA, Brazil, and the West Indies black people used to sing while working. A vast array of instances can denote that singing while working is an ancestor heritage (21). The "boat songs" are among the oldest musical creations of the blacks. The crew of the steamships that sailed around Mississippi and across the West Indies and the American harbors such as Baltimore and New Orleans commonly sang these songs. Simultaneously, the rural worker sang "corn songs" (21).

The author adds that all the workers had their favorite songs: the harbor workers in New Orleans, Mobile and Savannah; the cotton harvesters in Mississippi and Louisiana; the miners in Alabama and Tennessee; the sugar plantation laborers in Missouri and Louisiana; the stone masons in Georgia and the Carolinas; the woodcutters in Texas and Florida; the tobacco workers in Virginia. These laborers created songs that compose a folk group of great merit (21)

Oderigo asserts that improvisation has been the element observed from African to Afro-American music. It is present in the work songs as one of their main characteristics. Oderigo affirms that because of the dynamic process of improvisation the work songs are in constant formation and hardly sung the same manner twice. From a region to another, from mouth to mouth, new phrases and musical variation are added. Sometimes the variations result into new songs that become independent from the song that originated them (22). There is a vast array of work songs. However, the group of pieces, which constitute the instances of the origins of the work songs, is the one that displays rhythmic variation, melodic particularities, structure, and verse contents adjusting to the body movements while working.

The scholar comments that work songs express daily concerns: the "gal," the "woman," "sweetheart," "mamma"; and the work: "free labor," "chain gang labor," "pay day," "boss," Captain," "driver," "overseer." Work songs from the period after the Civil War translate the pain and needs of the working class: low wages, lack of money, bad working conditions, long hours work in the rice swamps in the Carolinas (23). Oderigo quotes Booker T. Washington who writes that, during slavery, men and women were paid to lead the singing in order to raise the intensity of work. According to Oderigo, a certain Afro-American song conveys a request of the slaves asking the lead singer not to sing a particular fragment because it would make them work too hard (24).

The scholar asserts that the woman is the most common topic in the Afro-American songs. It is the spirit and the heart of the blues. It is present in the prisoners' songs, in the music meant to dance, in the plantation and the protest songs. In these songs, the woman is depicted as the reason of everything. The boss, portrayed as the exploiter, is also a constant topic. In addition, there are the events of the hard activity, the minor rivalry among the fellows, hope for a better life, or disillusionment of the longing for freedom. Sometimes, metaphors veil the topics. Occasionally, they are clear and direct (24).

After the Abolition of slavery in 1863, African-Americans faced exclusion and racism in a semi-feudal Southern system before the beginning of migration to the Northern industrial sites. The Klu Klux Klan and the segregationist laws such as the Jim Crow or chain gangs restrained African-Americans citizenship. In the folk song "Hard to be a Nigger," the exploitation of the black working class is expressed (25):

> Well, it makes no difference
> How you make out your time. White man sho' to bring a
> Nigger out behin\
> ***Chorus:***
> *Ain't* it hard? ain't it hard?
> Ain't it hard to be a nigger? nigger? nigger?
> Ain't it hard? ain't it hard?
> For you cain't get yo' money when it's due.
> Lemme tell you, white man,
> Lemme tell you, honey, Nigger makes de cotton,
> White folks gets de money. (26)

The parallel between blacks and whites is continuous. The black working person receives lower wages or none. In the lines of the work songs there is no expression of hope or future joy. The lines describe disillusionment regarding blacks' condition in the white dominant Southern. The Negro Spirituals express hope for future joy as redemptive death and consequent entrance to Heaven, a transition, another mythic passage as the end of suffering and pain.

The Negro spirituals – or jubilees – are the African-Americans' sacred hymns. They constitute the rich range of the Afro-American folklore along with the work songs and the blues. The spirituals display simple-hearted, emotional message, rich melodic vein, imagery and

symbolism. Deserved respect from critics from different regions has categorized the spirituals as one of the most vibrant expressions of folk traditions in the globe. Oderigo quotes Alain LeRoy Locke who states that the evidence of the immortality of the spirituals resides in the fact that they have overcome every trace of abuse (33).

The author points out that the authentic folk spirituals are not written; however, they have been recorded in anthologies and books nowadays. Their expression is not diffused through scores but through the oral tradition of the communities. Spirituals convey collective feelings differentiating from the blues that tells individual stories. The exact pulse of the spirituals can only be achieved through choirs; it originates from collective singing. The performers do not search for brilliant sound effects aimed at the educated musician; they intend to give flow to their expression. Beauty – which is often achieved – is secondary. The spirituals are born from the typical and characteristic format of folkloric originals. In a religious gathering, one person suggests a verse inspired by the current religious event or by some happening that has caused impression – the sale of a slave, a friend or relative passing away. Another person responds by reproducing the verse or introducing any variant. Other voices integrate, repeating the first verse. This is how the spirituals are built (34-5).

Folk blues are the blues created by the people and transmitted orally. Blues composed for the people by certain composers are called popular blues or race blues. Many of the authentic dirty, low-down blues are played in concert halls in the USA. Oderigo observes that in order to study the blues, it is essential to select the pieces carefully. Some of the original folkloric poetry of the blues has been adapted, manufactured, and altered by popular composers so it can be heard in records. Certain knowledge of the vernacular, of the several forms of artistic expression, and of the social conditions in which the blues are born becomes crucial for an authoritative study of the genre (76).

Blues, as well as ballads, are individual songs. Along with the work songs, they constitute the first generations of the African-American songbooks (77). The blues convey feelings and state of mind that depict the experience of the African-Americans as free people. The period after the Civil War is considered the time of the blues' germination (81). The blues are not mere sorrow songs – as they sometimes are labeled.

Oderigo writes that the formation of the blues poetics conveys the struggle for resistance, legitimation and assertion of rights. The verse, the melodic phrases, the persistent and regular rhythm translate a

profound pain. Rural life – with its romantic, economic, domestic, and social aspects – is present in the poetic fragments. Themes such as betrayal – whether committed by a friend or a lover – the hindrances of the segregationist laws, the grievance of the work, the constant floods of the Mississippi River, the sorrow and solitude of the singer are constantly delivered through a language which is simple but not naïve -- full of imagery and symbolism -- and metaphors in colloquial vernacular (82).

In the foreword of *Blues-Philosophy for Everyone: Thinking Deep about Feeling Low*, Bruce Iglauer states that the Blues is more than simply music. The blues convey the whole experience of oppressed people. An isolated group of people, segregated by racism, exclusion, and enforced illiteracy, who were brought in chains from Africa and were forced to work to death by the white dominant group, created the blues. Frequently, these people were separated from the families and original social groups, besides being prevented from owning musical instruments. Even after the abolition of slavery in the United States, the sharecropping system prevented African-Americans from escaping poverty, from building a future for their children, and from owning land. In the nation of freedom and equal opportunities, African-Americans remained, and still remain, "the ultimate others" (xi).

In "Our Spiritual Strivings", William Edward Burghardt Dubois writes that America does not provide the black individual with a true self-consciousness. Such world only enables a view of oneself through the standpoint of the other. Dubois states that double consciousness is an awkward feeling that makes Afro-Americans perceive themselves from the others' perspectives, from the gaze that persist to view them with scorn and piety. The author also points out that the African-American history is the history of the struggle to turn double consciousness into a better and truer self avoiding that any of these identities get lost. Dubois argues that the African-American "[w]ould not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and American" (11). Dubois highlights the African-American yearn for the legitimation of blackness amalgamated with American ideals and the right for equal opportunities. Therefore, the inherent quest for beauty and harmony, and the struggle for survival that taught black people to dance and sing arose amid the cruel and hostile site. The black artist's spirit searched for

ways to transmit the beauty of the souls of a race eschewed by the great majority (10-11).

Du Bois's statement about the lessons America has to teach Africa and the world displays one of the myths of American culture, that is, the manifest destiny. The myth that America, as promised land for a civilized and morally superior population, is in charge of teaching democratic values and technological development to the uncivilized and underdeveloped rest of the world. As a matter of ideal, Du Bois's writings depict that blacks in the U.S.A., more precisely in the American South, should have their identity integrated with American standards. He refutes assimilation and acculturation. However, African-Americans should have their rights as citizens ensured in the American society. The author's conception may denote that African descendants would be equal as American citizens, but superior in relation to Africans.

2.2. The intertextual origins of blues, jazz, and samba

It is not difficult to investigate the various connections between the origins of the rhythms as a diasporic cultural phenomenon. Resulting from diverse contacts among ethnic groups from several origins and the European dominant culture, the blues, jazz, and samba present congruencies that I point out in the current text. Firstly, I write about the intricacies between jazz and blues. Tracing a frontier between them proved to be meaningless because the borders end up melting. Regarding the Brazilian rhythm and the blues and jazz, it is possible to affirm that the geographical sites and the different colonization helped form a more demarcated boundary. However, the common traits trespass geographical limits, suffering, and exclusion and concern subjectivity, creation and imagination. I apply the studies of Brazilian and foreign authors to establish the parallels and point out differences.

In the essay *Talking to Myself Again: A Dialogue on the Evolution of the Blues*, Joel Rudinow offers a reflection on the blues as a variation of music that "served an essential social function within its community of origin" (3). Circumscribed by time and place, the blues is a derivative of folk music that is inherent to the post-reconstruction American South. Therefore, if considered apart from its original context, the blues is music that is "merely sterile and derivative." Rudinow argues that the permanence of the genre after the 1960's advent of rock and roll was improbable for some critics. However, more than "ten years into the

twenty-first century it is quite apparent that the blues has survived, thrived, and arrived" (4).

In the preface of *The Land Where the Blues Began*, Alan Lomax reports that the twentieth century could be termed the century of the blues. The gloomy music style appeared sometime around 1900 in the Mississippi Delta. The author affirms that the blues has been state of the soul as well as a way of singing. The style arose at a time similar to the current one with unemployed and homeless people living at the shadow of productivity and capitalism. Cotton plantations became a profitable activity and planters enriched easily while the black majority, who worked in the fields, lived in poor housing and "roamed from job to job". Some blacks endeavored to manage their own businesses, but racial barriers prevented them from succeeding. Lynch laws and guns kept the rebellious in their place ruled by the properties (*x*). In the author's opinion, present days are similarly harsh and terrorized. Technology has made the human species wealthy and ingenious, but with all the riches and resources in the hands of a few individuals, corporations, and privileged nations.

Lomax writes that at the time he and his father, John A. Lomax[20], began to record Southern black folk songs in the fields in the 1930s, they found a black population silent and afraid of speaking. The author adds that: "[w]orking-class blacks who talked ran the risk of losing their jobs, if not their lives. Blacks who hobnobbed with strangers might also land in serious trouble. Whites who protested were stigmatized as "nigger lovers" and faced social exclusion or worse" (*x*). Lomax interviewed Zora Neale Hurston[21] and Lead Belly[22] during his research. He reports that even Hurston did not elicit any event of oppression, nor did she discuss it. The folklorist concludes that Hurston might have considered too risky to denounce oppression at that time. In a site of extreme and violent exclusion, the blues and jazz appear as strategies against silencing.

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[20] John Avery Lomax (1867-1948) and his son Alan Lomax (1915-2002) were musicologists and folklorists who did a lot for the preservation of American folk music.

[21] Zora Neale Hurston was an African-American folklorist and novelist. Her writing presents the use of the African-American Vernacular English of the Southern states as one of the characteristics. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston describes black rural life in the American South.

[22] Hudy William Ledbetter (1888-1949) was an African-American musician, one of the pioneers of the rural blues, an acoustic style. Lead Belly recorded his most known songs with the help of John and Alan Lomax.

The intricacy between the blues and jazz is constant in the American musical panorama. Furthermore, the musical genres have originated and developed as protest and resistance against exclusion. The current work attempts to evidence the functional characteristic of the blues, jazz and samba as instances of resistance through musical expression. I use the term functional to describe the African descendant musical creation as a strategy to refute silencing, erasure, assimilation, acculturation, exclusion, exile, sorrow, and racism. The musical expressions depict individual emotions and feelings as well as echo collective experiences in a site of constraints. The term functional, regarding the genres in the present study, pinpoints the emergence of an art of transgression.

Jazz and the blues are regarded as diverse genres that convey two different American musical traditions. The genres share the common origin in the American South. Sometimes, the confusion between the two stems from the intersections that artists constantly do. A simple definition may depict the blues as a type of American jazz music with a slow, sad sound. In the essay "Twelve-Bar Zombies: Wittgensteinian Reflections on the Blues", Wade Fox and Richard Greene explain that identifying the blues with certain features (structure, for instance) does not convey the complexity of the genre. The blues is most related to the Mississippi Delta region, but there are diverse styles of the blues that originated in Chicago, New Orleans, Saint Louis and other parts of the United States. Stating that the blues is an "acoustic guitar-based-form" is a misleading track. Though instrumentation is frequently used to characterize the blues, Fox and Greene highlight that "bands, jazz bands, rock and roll bands, orchestras, pianists, mandolin players, saxophone players and zither players have all performed and recorded blues numbers" (28). Furthermore, the authors do not recommend to define the blues in terms of geographical origins and the use of instruments. Most of the blues songs follow the twelve-bar chord progression, but several other non-blues songs use the format. The authors state that "[t]he problem, however, with defining the blues in terms of any particular set of narrowly defined chord progressions is that a large number of paradigmatic blues don't, in fact, follow these progressions, even though they are what folks most often have in mind when they think of the blues" (29).

Focusing on topic and structure, Fox and Greene point out that many blues songs present repetition: "each verse consists of a line repeated twice followed by a second line" (30). Nevertheless, the repetition pattern is not a feature of all the blues songs and many non-

blues songs also consist of repeated verse. In terms of lyrical content, the usual topics in the blues songs are melancholy, mourning, pain, suffering, difficulty, strife, and facing ruin; but many non-blues songs, like rap, also present these lyrical elements. The scholars consider that any attempts to try to establish what makes the blues real blues is a normative, inappropriate way that fails to describe what blues musicians perceive they are doing when they write, sing and dance the blues.

However, Ted Gioia offers a distinct perspective on the differences and connections between jazz and blues. While work songs convey rhythmic discipline for the work, blues songs are the other source of the African rhythms, the "Dyonisian" side that provides release. Instead of a collective expression, the blues provides the performer with the "individual statement of pain, oppression, poverty, longing, and desire" (12). Avoiding self-pity and guilt, the blues songs propose a catharsis, an idealized apprehension of the individual's plight through emotional or spiritual encouragement to deal with appalling circumstances usually retold in the frame of the songs. Gioia adds:

> In this regard, the blues offers us a psychological enigma as profound as any posed by classical tragedy. How art finds fulfillment – for both artist and audience – by dwelling on the oppressive and the tragic has been an issue for speculation at least since the time of Aristotle. Simply substitute the word *blues* for *tragedy* in most of these discussions, and we find ourselves addressing the same questions, only now in the context of African American music. (12)

The scholar highlights that the blues occupied a marginal position in African-American music until it became a force in the recording industry in the 1920s. However, scholars have dug earlier instances of the music throughout former slave states in the nineteenth century, particularly where a high proportion of black sharecroppers and farmworkers lived. Differently from jazz, that developed in New Orleans and spread over other large cities, the blues found a fertile soil in rural areas and the most impoverished parts of the United States. In spite of its humble origins, the blues became the provider of much of the wealth of the later entertainment industry in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, and elsewhere. Many of the branches such as rock, R&B, funk, and other associated urban genres derive from this rustic music (12).

Gioia writes that researchers have attempted to establish connections between the blues convention of a singer accompanied by a solo guitar with the oral African tradition, relating the blues to the West-African performances of the *griots*, "the musical bards of their aural-oral societies." The country blues tradition relying on the presence of the solo singer -- usually male -- that accompanies himself on guitar, may evidence the tight connection with the African ancestry (15). Before proceeding with the reflections on the connections between blues and jazz, it is important to write, though briefly, about the traditional *griots* and their functions in African societies. The explanation is interesting to the analyses of the poems by Clarke, Komunyakaa, and Pereira in order to highlight the poets' engagement with traditional forms of African diasporic culture when presenting the intertextual analyses of the poetry.

In "Poéticas da Voz e da Imagem," Agustoni writes that contemporary poets have delineated their poetics from body and voice. Both are fundamental elements in the construction of performance. The author points out the existence of an event in contemporary poetry defined as "griotization" (168). The voice is the basic instrument in any performance, claims Agustoni. Paul Zumthor states that "(…) performance is the complex action through which a poetic message is simultaneously, here and now, transmitted and perceived (33). Zumthor adds that "speaker, receiver, and circumstances (…) are directly confronted, unquestionable" (33). The scholar has concluded that performance delimits two axes of social communication: the one that connects speaker and author; and the one that links situation to tradition. The language function performs the task of "approaching and calling, provoking the Other, and of requesting beyond the production of meaning" (33).

According to the definition of performance and its social function, Agustoni quotes the ethnomusicologist Tolia Nikiprowetsky who argues that *griots* perform a multifaceted role:

> As historians and genealogists, they are the chief repositories of the history of a region, its designated chroniclers. As musicians, their presence was traditionally required at all celebrations and rituals […] among them, one finds the most virtuosic of singers and instrumentalists. Their education and training, exclusively oral, necessitates a lengthy apprenticeship under the direction of a teacher […].It is necessary to study for many years in

> order to master the technique of an instrument or to learn all the songs and histories, and master the ensemble work indispensable to the activities of the professional.(169)

The quotation depicts the *griots* as respected figures in their societies because they master techniques of voice and instruments as well as they keep history and tradition. The importance of the education and training denotes the commitment to the society's symbolic wealth. Agustoni writes that the traditional art of griots include "voice, gestures, the *kora*[23], meaningful silences, the repertoire of knowledge and histories" that they know and report and are instruments they master and develop specific techniques to use them (169). The similarities of the blues performer with the griots range from the ability with instruments and the transmission of African descendant tradition.

However, Agustoni explains that the analysis that parallels the traditional African *griot* to the contemporary performer is not a precise task. The researcher affirms that, in the same way, it is not just a matter of comparing the cries of the slaves in the plantation to the contemporary blues structures. Social changes, the inclusion of the structures and messages in individuals' lives, the legitimation of the excluded voices in the American arts scene, and the addition of instruments and performances that transformed the cries into blues mediate the relation between both. Even if the blues is not the cry in its original form, it is important to add that the constraints and a strong emotional appeal are present in the lines of the blues (170).

The importance of the sacred presence of the traditional *griot* in Western African societies and the function of the blues and the performer as a social conveyor of the black experience in the Southern U.S.A is what connects them regarding function and symbolism. Poets in the African diaspora that may take the role of spokespersons who search for maintaining tradition and master language as a strategy against erasure and silencing are comparable to the traditional *griots.*

In "Elaborations: A Blues Theory of African-American Poetics", Tony Bolden comments that long before black bards created the poetics and music that would be defined as the blues, slavery forbid black musicians to possess drums, which were fundamental to "African discursive modes" (38). In "Sorrow Songs", Dubois begins tracing the history of the blues tradition:

[23] Kora is a harp with 21 chords widely used in Western Africa.

> They that walked in the darkness sang songs in the old days -- Sorrow Songs – for they were weary at heart. And so before each though that I have written in this book I have set a phrase, a haunting echo of these weird old songs in which the soul of the black slave spoke to men. Ever since I was a child these songs have attired me strangely. They came out of the South unknown to me, one by one, and yet at once I knew them as of me and mine. (…). Out of them rose for me morning, noon, and night, bursts of wonderful melody, full of the voices of my brothers and sisters, full of the voices of the past. (162-3)

Beyond neglect, oblivion, despise, and misunderstanding, the "Negro folk-song" remains as one of the "most beautiful expression of human experience" in the Southern America, claims Dubois (163). The author's comment is an instance of a collective and inherited experience concerning African-American tradition and coalition. The author offers a perspective that surpasses the view of sorrow and suffering and reveals beauty and contemplation. Dubois's report is a testimony of resiliency, the ability to transform negative experiences into creative strategies for survival.

Bolden states that the history of the blues tradition is the narrative of "dialectical interchanges between colonizer and colonized, theft, exploitation, and recreation in a drama without closure" (38). The word blues can refer to a varied range of diverse meanings: "emotion, a technique, a musical form, and a song lyric" (39). In it is original meaning, the word blues concerns the gloomy mood that corresponds to having the "blue devils" applied in Elizabethan England. During the nineteenth century, Lord Byron, Washington Irving, and Thomas Jefferson used the terms "blues" and "blue devils" in their texts (39).

The use of the term "blues" to characterize the musical style evidences the cultural interchange (though in an asymmetrical process) between the colonizer and enslaved blacks. The "contact zone" enabled not only the appearance of a musical genre, but it also shaped language. Enslaved Africans had to learn English from their masters as a second language and it caused the assimilation of terms to designate African-American experience.

Bolden adds that one of the attempts to standardize the blues refers "to an aab pattern in which twelve bars are divided into four

sections that consist of three lines. The first line is repeated (often with some variation), and the last line rhymes with the first. In addition, there are other stanzaic pattern common in blues songs, including aaa, aaab, ab, and ab with a refrain", claims Bolden (39). Nevertheless, the author comments that describing the blues through a stanzaic pattern is not sufficient. Instrumentation also provides the music with emotional strength. Synthesis and hybridization are other important features of the style. The blues absorbed the capacity to resolve contradictions (God/devil, bad/good) from the ballads and the spirituals. The blues incorporates other forms such as "fables, metaphors, and melodies. Field hollers supplied vocal techniques and tonality. More than likely the 'blue notes' had their origins in the arhoolies[24]. Work songs supplied antiphony, cross-rhythms, and important thematic material" (39-40). Blues is a compelling force, an instance of creolization, preserving its distinctiveness while embodying new contours.

Gioia adds that the blues continued to have a body that resisted assimilation and alteration. The author points out that by listening to Bessie Smith in collaboration with Louis Armstrong in 1925 it is possible to notice the aesthetic differences that even at this early phase marked the beginning of the distinction between jazz and blues idioms. While Armstrong treats embellishment and complexity especially in his music, Smith sings with "unadorned emotional directness" (18). The blues idiom stayed true to an inspiring vision, while jazz has embodied a more volatile characteristic, altering its method and words constantly. Nevertheless, jazz and the blues have been collaborators over the years. The researcher states that the proximity of the two genres has remained "despite these many fluctuations – an intimacy so close that, at times, it is hard to determine where the one ends and the other begins" (19). The poets in the current study alternate references from jazz and the blues in their texts. The scholars that provide my work with theoretical ground frequently interweave both genres.

Bolden argues that the specific nature of the blues idiom relies on the fact that the blues performer may sing songs from various styles while blues music maintains a particular shape of sound that the audience acknowledges as the blues: "[b]lues music constitutes a metastyle, a style of style" (40). Bolden's concept of the blues encircles the "oral/aural tradition ranging from earlier forms as ballads and arhoolies to jazz and rhythm and blues" (40). The researcher considers blues as jazz expression, because the blues concerns the basis of jazz.

[24] American roots music.

Work songs, spirituals, sorrow songs provide the blues with its specific features. In the same manners, blues enables jazz with distinct characteristics. It is possible to affirm that an attempt to mark the frontiers between jazz and the blues is misleading. The blues is the cradle of jazz. Separating both is denying the historical process of the formation of jazz. Some of the instances of fusion between jazz and blues suggest that "jazz is an urban manifestation of the blues idiom, that is, a more sophisticated elaboration of the blues", remarks Bolden (42).

In "Prehistory", Eric J. Hobsbawn affirms that jazz became an acknowledged music around 1900 (55). In "Jazz and the Other Arts", the author affirms that many musical genres have received the influence of jazz directly or indirectly. However, jazz itself has not been widely heard. The most famous jazz album, Armstrong's *West End Blues*, has been constantly edited, but it did not sell more than twenty thousand copies in England in the first twenty years. Hobsbawn considers the total number of sold copies as modest even for the most intellectualized patterns of art (151). The sociologist highlights that the jazz audience has been sharply distinct from the public of the other arts for reasons that are historical and social. As evidenced in my research, at the beginning of the formation of the genre, jazz faced discrimination and exclusion from the mainstream. It is interesting to remember Brand's argument to explain the status of jazz as "icon of African-American culture"; however, the African-American population still has the access to high culture prevented. Jazz has been played in concert halls to a white audience, distant from its original site.

Popularized pieces are not the most innovative ones, but the most repeated into the dominant culture. Brand quotes Fanon: "(…) what a dominant culture likes about its dominated class is the repetition of its cultural forms, as relic and booty, rather than its new propositions, which might challenge the order of social arrangements" (151-2). The familiarity that repetition produces numbs the agency of jazz as a tool of resistance and nullifies the struggle once the elements of improvisation, orality, tradition, and performance are not viewed as marks of cultural identity. The appropriation of cultural forms of the dominated classes by the elites is a mechanism of social control.

According to Gioia, the origins of jazz date back to the XIX century when slave dances happened in New Orleans in the open area known as Congo Square. Written accounts of those events confirm that slaves played musical instruments that were characteristic of indigenous African music (3-4). Apparently, the accounts may reveal not more than

slaves partying; however, as Gioia observes, "(…) to play a hand drum in 1819 in the United States, where overt manifestations of Africanness had elsewhere been so thoroughly, deliberately erased, was a tremendous act of will, memory and resistance" (4).

The accounts of slave dances provide the studies on African-American music with evidence of real time and locale, a real transcultural event of African rituals to the native land of the Americas. The Congo Square dances, characterized by dancers moving in a circle, were similar to the ritual ceremonies in Africa. Gradually, "a more intrinsically African congruence of sound and movement" replaced the Western separation between performer and audience, song and dance. The dances in Congo Square portrayed a combination of ceremony and social gathering and broke barriers between the secular and the spiritual. Gioia points out that early accounts applied the term "worship" to describe the dances. The transplantation of African ritual plays a major role in the collective memory and oral history of the city of New Orleans. The memories built the jazz-performer's self-portrait and the self-perspective of what it means to be an African American musician (5).

However, the amalgamation of African and European culture is older than the slave dances in Congo Square; probably a thousand years before the founding of New Orleans in 1718. Gioia adds:

> Anthropologists call this process *syncretism* – the blending together of cultural elements that previously existed separately. This dynamic, so essential to the history of jazz, remains powerful even in the present day, when African-American styles of performance blend seamlessly with other musics of other cultures, European, Asian, Latin, and, coming full circle, African (5).

The merging of African and European aspects begins to take place during the North-African conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighteenth century. The cultural impacts are still present in the particular characteristics of Spanish architecture, painting and music. The diffusion of African elements into the broader branches of Western culture take longer to expand and it is more a consequence of defeat than conquest, of the dolorous commerce of slave ships headed to the New World. Gioia affirms that the Moorish descent may have formed

the groundwork to the birth of African-American jazz thousand years later. The author argues:

> Can it be mere coincidence that this same commingling of Spanish, French and African influences was present in New Orleans at the birth of jazz? Perhaps because of this marked Moorish legacy, Latin cultures have always seemed receptive to fresh influences from Africa. Indeed, in the area of music alone the number of successful African and Latin hybrids (including salsa, calypso, samba, tango, and cumbia, to name only a few) is so great that one can only speculate that these two cultures retain a residual magnetic attraction, a lingering affinity due to this original cross-fertilization (5-6)

The most important elements of the hybrid society of New Orleans come from the African-American underclass creatively amalgamated with French, Spanish, Choctaw, German, and other cultural traditions. Long before music turned into a product it was considered a marginalized activity. The entrance of jazz into the center of the society is a continuous saga (7).

The body as an instrument in African diasporic culture is deducible in the blues, jazz, and samba. Hall's argument that the body was and has been the only cultural capital that blacks had or have had is particularly interesting here. The body is the screen of cultural expression (27). The elements such as orality, improvisation, repetition, and performance are common among these African descendant genres. Resistance, resiliency, sorrow, nostalgia, idyllic redemption, and tradition are some of the axes in the music studied.

These bodies, thirsty for freedom, searched for a better life in the lands of Canada, taking along with them their rhythmic culture. Following the American Revolution, Nova Scotia, in Canada, received freed black loyalists and freed slaves who had fought for the Crown in exchange for land during the Independence war in the United States. In the introduction of *The History of Blacks in Canada: A Selective Annotated Bibliography*, George H. Junne, Jr. declares that the history of blacks in Canada stretches back four centuries intertwined with the African-Atlantic slave trade. The first influx of Canada's black

population were fugitive slaves and free immigrant people from the United States. Nevertheless, in the 1960s there was a significant change of immigration standards with most of black people coming from the Caribbean and Africa (xii).

Junne reports that Black experiences in Canada were not as harsh as they were in the United States. Records evidence that many enslaved blacks fled to Canada to escape slavery, while freed ones crossed the borders to escape racism and opportunities closed to them in the United States. In spite of the protection of the British Crown, life in Canada soon revealed not to be a paradise. Junne writes that "[f]or many blacks it became a choice of living under a system of more racism or less racism. Many of the researches disputes the prevailing myth of Canada being a place where there are few or no race related problems (xii).

The history of blacks in Canada is intertwined with the history of Canada as a nation. The French named Acadia the colonial territory in North America where Quebec, Ontario, and Nova Scotia locate today. Before the arrival of the French colonizers in 1604, the Mik'maq First Nations People occupied the territory. The Scottish settlers arrived in 1620 and, in 1624, a treaty caused them to leave. In the mid-1700s the French occupied the territory again but it did not prevent their defeat and expulsion later. British North America meant the promise land for black loyalists, black refugees, fugitive, freeborn, and freed slaves. Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad organization helped slaves to escape to the Northern U.S. and Canada. American Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 consequently increased the perception of Canada as haven. Many blacks attempted to escape perceiving Canada as a place where they could be free if they resisted the horrors of the journey. The African-American presence and the struggle for freedom and equality frame African-Canadian identity.

In the introduction to *The Refugee: Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada*, Clarke states that Canadians criticize the American Revolution once it did not ensure equal rights and freedom for all. Only white bible follower males would have the rights granted (10). However, both old and contemporary narratives about Canada as land of freedom and multiculturalism display contradictory facts. There is a trend to believe that there is no trace of slavery or racial discrimination in the Canadian territory. In fact, slavery in Canada was less expressive than in the U.S., the Caribbean, and South America. The British Empire abolished slavery all over its domains in 1834 (12). Notwithstanding, events of racial conflicts, slavery, discrimination, and laws that ruled immigration have prevented Canada to be an egalitarian society. The

examples of black American presence in African-Canadian culture are many and range from religion (African Baptist churches) to music (blues, jazz, and spirituals), artists (James Brown and Nat King Cole), language (African-American Vernacular English), writing, and black American styles in general.

In the essay "Black English in Nova Scotia", Clarke reports that two collections of "church-sung hymns" and spirituals published respectively by Rev. F.R. Langford and Rev. W.N. States in 1882 and 1903 evidence the presence of religious songs in African-Canadian communities. Clarke states that "spirituals epitomized oral art" (94). Blyden Jackson considers spirituals as "the epic verse of black America through which an African ethnicity speaks… in their incremental leading lines, their choral iterations, and their call-and-response chants" (qtd. in Clarke 94).

The commonality of the experiences of African-Canadian and African-American identities is undeniable. However, the identities present differences concerning geographical, political, and cultural aspects. African-Canadian identity is not merely a derivative of the black American presence. Junne reports that because of racial exclusion, blacks built their own schools and took over the education of their children in Canada. Canadian black people demonstrated "clear goals and objectives". They developed awareness of who they were as black people in Canada while struggling against racism and slavery. They opposed to Canadian government, society, or the dominant culture. They began to establish their own communities, institutions, and identity to satisfy their needs. Blacks founded Birchtown in 1873, the first of a dozen black communities. North Buxton, Preston, Hammond Plains, Africville, the Saltspring Island settlement, Wilberforce, Three Mile Plains, Dresden, Sackville, and Lucasville are examples of towns blacks created (xiv).

Junne sates that because of discrimination at churches, where blacks had to occupy the black galleries called "nigger heaven", African Canadians began to build their own religious institutions. Blacks founded their oldest church in Sandwich, a suburb of Windsor, Ontario in 1841. In Junne's words: "[n]ot only were they escaping racism, but they were also worshipping in a manner that expressed their beliefs in a manner that they chose. Before the end of the 1850s, Blacks established the African Baptist Association and the British Methodist Episcopal Church (BME)" (xv).

In "Songs of Freedom: How Spirituals Connect to the Slave Era", Calvin Earl[25] declares:

> For thousands of years, human beings from around the world have sought comfort and connection. We build communities and seek safety, comfort, and guidance through different practices like mantras, religious beliefs and nonreligious practices; it was no different for the African slaves first arriving in the North American colonies in 1619. Throughout history and until 1865 when legal slavery came to an end in the United States, slaves were only considered three-fifths human. They were not allowed to have a voice, which made it difficult for them to have that essential outlet we all need to release our fears and burdens. They were not afforded the time or place to worship, build community or seek comfort and safety, so they created an original music we know today as spirituals. (par. 6)

African-Canadian musical identity intertwines with spirituals. Being the songs of freedom and the expression of humanity, spirituals convey the escape to the promise land, the Canaan for enslaved blacks. Differently from the idyllic return to Africa as motherland expressed in African-Brazilian culture, African-Canadian identity may depict the dream of freedom that came true.

According to Earl, the basic nature of the spirituals is the "sacred inner voice" of the enslaved reconnecting to the origin of all creation, telling their own stories and having their existence professed. Spirituals helped slaves to stay focused on freedom courageously, because the verse asserted that one day liberty would belong to them. The songs encircled a strong feeling and emotion, a universal cry for freedom that is the yearning of all the humanity. Spirituals convey "pure, raw, and unadulterated" emotion (par.7).

Earl reports that the craving for having our voices heard and acknowledged is a powerful force that drives human beings. Slaves could heal their pain, teach their children, maintain tradition, and convey "life-saving messages". Spirituals lyrics could convey secret communications between slaves, without warning the masters and

[25] Calvin Earl is a writer, lecturer, composer, and the ambassador for the legacy and teachings of African American spirituals and the oral history of the slaves.

arousing suspicion. The Underground Railroad was a 19th century organization of paths and safe shelters that protected slaves in the search for freedom in today Canada (par. 8). Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman were both escaped slaves and leaders of the abolitionist movement, claims Earl. The researcher states that Douglass and Tubman declared that it was common knowledge among slaves that the North of the American frontier was a haven for slaves. Spirituals meant both a pathfinder to the Underground Railroad and to life. Earl suggests that in the spiritual "I'm on my Way to Canaan Land", the term "Canaan" not only signified heaven, it also referred to North, more precisely the British colonies that eventually is Canada. Once in the "Canaan", escaped slaves and their families continued to sing the songs of freedom of their ancestors. They transmitted the songs orally from generation to generation. The former slaves introduced these songs into the local culture in places like Upper Canada (par 9).

Earl comments that most lyrics concern death and crossing over towards life after death where slavery does not exist. Spirituals conveyed that death would be the way to escape slavery and the secret message in the verse would tell that if the slaves took the Underground Railroad, they would not have to die to be free.. Earl affirms in the spiritual "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot", "[t]he secret code in this song is the word "low", which referred to the Deep South. In other words, the song was saying: "Lift me out of the South and out of slavery and carry me to freedom in the North" (par.10).

The writer adds that "Go Down Moses" became a forbidden song for the slaves as their master found out it was a secret code about escaping. The slaves linked to the biblical character leading his people to liberty. The spiritual turned out to be an inspiration; therefore, it was hard for the masters to prevent slaves from fleeing. Tubman, considered the Moses of her people, used to defy her masters singing the spiritual "at the top of her lungs", remarks Earl (par.11). In the words of the researcher:

> The spiritual "Wade in the Water" is filled with specific instructions for escaping slaves. For an example right from the title, the song was providing a tip, telling escaping slaves that if they could wade in water, the hound dogs that slave masters sent out to find them wouldn't be able to pick up their scent. The spiritual "Deep River" has a similar theme. In it, the Jordan River is code for

> the Ohio River, if you could get across the Ohio River, you could live in freedom. (par. 12).

Earl concludes that the Emancipation Proclamation in 1865 caused American culture a great transformation. The musical expression of jazz, the blues, rhythm and blues and gospel appeared gradually. However, all these genres find their inspiration and roots in the original sounds of freedom. After the transformation, African-Americans sang spirituals less frequently (par.13). The most inspiring aspect of the spirituals is that the slaves created these songs amidst suffering and despair. Spirituals carried their voices, supported, encouraged, and enlivened their souls in the search for freedom. They conveyed secret messages of survival and hope.

The blues in Canada stems from and infuses African-Canadian experience. I mean that the blues is a product of the experiences of pain, suffer, nostalgia, deprivation, and racism; however, such negative aspects of living are not the only mottos for musical productions. In "Some Aspects of Blues Use in George Elliott Clarke's *Whyllah Falls*," H. Nigel Thomas claims that the blues is in the matrix of Africadian[26] communities. The author writes that Africadian reality develops from the "secular and sacred poles of blues and Africadian Baptist rituals (…)" (72). The blues had a social function and performed the role of an institution among illiterate blacks.

Thomas reports that the musical genre was a conveyor of their concerns and provided a means of psychological solidarity among the African descendant communities spread across North America. The diffusion of the communality of experiences were possible due to recent phenomenon of radio broadcasting, the phonographic industry, and discography (72). All of the African descendants struggled against economic exploitation and racism. The author states that during the Great Depression the legendary blues female figure, Ma Rainey, had her heyday recordings. Furthermore, in spite of the harsh period, or because of that, Bessie Smith and Ida Cox were at their best artistic period. The singers sang about the hard luck of black people amidst the devastation of the cotton crops of the Southern U.S., the floods of the Mississippi, as well as the impoverishment that came with the Depression. Rainey's,

[26] The words African and Canadian form the term "Africadian", coined by Clarke. Named by the French, Acadia was the colonial territory in North America where Quebec, Ontario, and Nova Scotia exist today. Mik'maq First Nations People dwelled the territory before the arrival of the French colonizers. The term Africadian denotes the nationalization of African descendant experience in Canada.

Smith's, and Cox's blues became references for blacks in the period. The blues portrayed the existential troubles of being black – afflicted or not by the deprivation of the period in North America – aggravated by racism (73). However, the blues also deconstructed negative feelings turning them into revelation of beauty, spirituality, humanity, solidarity, and resiliency.

In the essay "The Relevance of Jazz History in the Twentieth Century: Jazz Practice and Pedagogy in Canada", Jeremy Hepner states that "jazz history in Canada is the story of a people and their relationship to a jazz identity; however, jazz in Canada has always been greatly influenced by its proximity to the United States" (179). As the jazz musician Duke Ellington puts it:"I am well aware that a problem of communication exists between Canada with its twenty-one million people and us, the big neighbor to the South, with our two hundred and three million. Canada has a character and a spirit of its own, which we should recognize and never take for granted" (qtd in Hepner 179).

Despite the African-American presence in the formation of the African-Canadian musical identity, it is essential to demarcate frontiers concerning the specificities of black Canadian experience. Spirituals, the blues, and jazz crossed borders towards North along with the escaped and former slaves. Nevertheless, black Canadians contributed to the establishment of the genres in Africadian communities and transmitted musical tradition to the next generations. The transmission also presents novelty and particularities that concern African-Canadian view of themselves as blacks and as Canadians.

Hepner writes that Canada has offered a variety of jazz innovations. Great names of jazz such as Canadians Oscar Peterson, Gil Evans, and Kenny Wheeler surprise jazz fans and aficionados because of their nationality. The history of jazz in Canada begins with the appearance of the genre in New Orleans and the ensuing move towards north in the early twentieth century. Large Canadian cities close to the border hosted American jazz touring musicians. The author points out that the Creole Band from New Orleans performed the first known jazz concert in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1914. The increasing jazz popularity began with the circulation of recordings from the U.S.A. and the strong American radio signals in 1931. Interest in "this new rhythmic and improvised music" begins with the exposition of the people to jazz (179).

Hepner describes Canada as a bilingual country with two distinct cultures: English and French. The British culture has strong ties with the British Commonwealth. The francophone population, settled

mainly in Quebec, maintains strong cultural bonds with France. In Hepner's thought, Canada is at the center of the twenty-first century jazz history. He adds that European musicians lead the innovative practices of jazz while Americans have focused on past jazz traditions like New Orleans style and swing. The author argues that this notion of Europe as the innovator of jazz and America as the more traditional and historical center is controversial. Hepner points out that Canada offers a different perspective on the jazz panorama because, as a nation, it has "a foot in each world". Canada offers the opportunity to lead the jazz innovative practices "by bridging the American and European approaches" (180).

There is a problem in Hepner's statement. First, the description of Canada as a bilingual country denies the presence of many other languages such as the First Nations idioms and cultures. Furthermore, Canada is a country that receives influx of immigrants from diverse parts of the world who establish their communities preserving mother tongues and cultures. English and French are not the only languages spoken in Canada. Moreover, Hepner's seems not to acknowledge African-Canadian presence. The research does not allude to the possibility of relation between Canadians' interest in jazz with the African-Canadian musical contribution through spirituals. His assertion considers Europe and America the poles of the contemporaneous jazz scene and Canada as the bridge that would counterbalance tradition and innovation, omitting the fact that jazz world scenario has also received great contribution from Brazil concerning bossa-nova and samba, as well as from other cultures. In Hepner's analysis it is possible to evidence cultural appropriation and an assimilationist view. The omission of the contributions of different cultures to Canadian cultural activities and the oblivion of the pioneer participation of African-Canadians is a gap in Hepener's study that needs to be bridged.

Jazz is present in African-Canadian tradition in religious songs with improvisation, syncopated rhythm, call and response, repetition, in the orality of the communities, in jazz-infused writing (Clarke, Frederick Ward, for example). It is a vast range of aspects that should not be underestimated or forgotten. The African descendant cultural expression has resisted against erasure and silencing in the countries that used African slave labor. Instancces of exclusion repeat in the U.S.A, Canada, and Brazil. Brazilian *sambistas* faced a long struggle in order to legitimate their musical expression. The history of samba is also the history of resistance against racism, exclusion, assimilation, and appropriation as well as the history of beauty as artistic creation.

2.3. "Samba, the body owner"

In the lyrics of the samba "Agoniza Mas Não Morre[27]" by Nelson Sargento[28], there is the introduction to some of the aspects that surround African-Brazilian cultural activity:

> Samba,
> Agoniza mas não morre
> Alguém sempre te socorre
> Antes do suspiro derradeiro
> Samba,
> Negro forte destemido
>
> Foi duramente perseguido
> Na esquina, no botequim no terreiro
> Samba,
> Inocente, pé no chão
> A fidalguia do salão
> Te arrastou, te envolveu
> Mudaram,
> Toda sua estrutura
> Te impuseram outra cultura
> E você nem percebeu
> [……..] (1-15)

There is not wide bibliography regarding the origins of samba. Some of the most acclaimed works do not consider the social function of the genre as a clear expression of resistance against the exclusion of black Brazilian population. For instance, works like Vianna's *O Mistério do Samba* present the events related to the appearance of samba as a celebratory amalgamation of the black Brazilian culture with its welcoming European descendant culture, ommiting conflicts and exclusion. The collection of essays by Muniz Sodré in *Samba, o Dono*

[27] Samba, / You agonize but you won't die / Someone always rescues you/ Before the dying breathe/Samba, / Strong fearless black / Harshly persecuted / On the corners, in pubs, in *terreiros*/ Samba, / Innocent, barefoot / Nobility in ballroms / Has dragged you, involved you / They've changed / your whole structure / A new culture imposed on you / And you haven't even noticed / [...] 1-15.

[28] Nelson Sargento (1924) is an African-Brazilian composer, visual artist, actor, writer, and Brazilian culture researcher. He wrote the samba "Agoniza Mas Não Morre" em 1979. Sargento is the composer of about 400 songs

do Corpo, Sandroni's *Feitiço Decente: Transformações do Samba no Rio de Janeiro (1917-1933)*, and Magno Bissoli Siqueira's *Samba e Identidade Nacional* are among the authoritative texts about the theme. The authors present a clear and vast investigation on the race and class relations that permeated the period when samba began to appear as a kind music with social function. However, like jazz, it faced exclusion, appropriation, expropriation, and consequent transformation to serve the purposes of the phonographic industry as explained in the first chapter.

The lyrics of the samba "Agoniza Mas Não Morre" by Sargento is the protest against assimilation and appropriation of the samba culture. The lines also evidence the persecution that musicians of the genre suffered before it became an icon of national identity. The lyrics describe samba as poetics of resistance amid conflicts between the dominant culture and the black popular culture. Sargento, as one of the most important figures of the samba scene, performs the role of a historian that eye witnessed the struggle to maintain African Brazilian tradition in the beginning of the twentieth century. The lyric voice refers to samba as a living being that personifies the black people virtues: "strong fearless black" (6). The personification of the genre stems from the importance of music, more precisely samba, in African-Brazilian culture. The lyrics denote an act of exaltation and homage to resistance as if samba embodied a hero. The lines "[n]obility in the ballroom / has embraced you / involved you" (11-2) denounce the supposed white middle class amiability that enabled samba to enter white dominant spaces. The amiability that stems from the myth of racial democracy widely diffused at that time, mainly because of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala*. It is a tendency to explain the acceptance of samba as a symbol of national identity and the acquiescence of the white dominant class as an act of benevolence suggesting the absence of racial conflicts in the country. However, Sargento states that samba was a marginal culture, being afflicted in its own territory: "On the corners, in pubs, in *terreiros*" (8). The African-Brazilian religions and their sacred places called *terreiros* have suffered marginalization from the post-slavery period up to the present.

In terms of resistance, African-Brazilian religions performed a major role during slavery and still perform it nowadays. The *terreiros* were and have been spiritual refuge, relief, organization, sharing of the experience of loss and trauma, and the possibility of forming a new family in a period when families were torn apart. *Terreiros* serve the communities as shelters and orphanages, taking care of homeless people and abandoned children. The priests and priestesses in African-

Brazilian religions are denominated "mothers" and "fathers" of "saints" (*yalorixás* and *babalorixás*). In the religious rituals, food was and has been shared as an act of solidarity and fraternity. The rituals began as reunions of people from diverse origins and ethnic backgrounds that united in the search of spiritual and physical healing, advice, and support. The *terreiros* were also used as secret places where slaves organized escapes and revolts. *Terreiros* were also political sites

In "Música de Fé, Música de Vida: A Música Sacra do Candomblé e Seu Transbordamento na Cultura Popular Brasileira", Reginaldo Prandi offers a historical report of the different ethnic groups that brought to Brazil their religious conventions and languages. The researcher states that the peoples brought to Brazil divided in two large groups: the Sudanese and the Bantu. The Sudanese came from Ethiopia, Chad, Southern Egypt, Uganda and Northern Tanzania. The main ethnic groups in the Sudanese classification are the *Haussás*, *Nagôs* and *Iorubás* (541). According to Nina Rodrigues, the *haussás* and *Nagôs* constantly revolt against slavery in Bahia. The *haussás* were Islamic people and could read and write (21). The Bantu group came from the Southern Africa, spoke around two thousand languages and similar dialects. Among these languages, three contributed extensively to the formation of the Portuguese spoken in Brazil: *quicongo*, *quimbundo*, and *umbundo*. The presence of diverse terms from these languages in Brazilian Portuguese lexicon evidences their importance to Brazilian culture (542).

It is possible to affirm that African culture perceives music differently from European culture, Prandi writes. (544). The author states that music has a wider meaning for Africans. The meaning goes beyond the aesthetical vehicle to the expression of emotions. African music is movement, communication, and rhythm. Rhythm and its transformation in movement in the West means the temporal organization of music and poetry. In Africa, rhythm is the impulse that generates movement (544). Music in *candomblé* is rhythm produced by drums that are no longer circumscribed to *terreiros*. Nowadays, drummers invade streets during carnival and outside it.

Sodré writes that rhythm was an important link between creolized Africa and the Western, Equatorial, and Eastern Africa inside religious forms. Rhythm is a synthetic temporal form, the organization of time. It is the inventiveness of combining duration according to conventions. Black African music is mainly rhythmic and richly musical (19). Léopold Sedar Senghor explains what rhythm means to African experience:

> What is rhythm? It is the architecture of being, the internal dynamism which gives him form, the system of waves which he emits in relation to Others, the pure expression of vital force. Rhythm is the vibratory shock, the force which, through the senses, seizes us at the root of our being. It is expressed through the most material and most sensual means; lines, surfaces, colours, and volumes in architecture, sculpture or painting: accents in poetry and music: but in doing this it guides all that is concrete towards the light of the mind. (60).

The rhythmic dynamism, according to Senghor, permeates music as well as poetry. And it is possible to say that it permeates African as much as African descendant experience. One of the examples is the occurrence of work songs. The work songs in Brazil have the same characteristics as the ones in the U.S.A. They served as the work pacemaker in the plantations, a strategy of resistance against exhaustive labor during slavery. Many of them, though altered, remain alive in rural areas and are sung during the collective preparation of soil in a community. Neighbors in rural properties frequently organize to help each other all over Brazilian rural areas[29]. It is a common way of sharing and has European, African and indigenous characteristics. Furthermore, washerwomen (enslaved or not) intoned and still intone collective songs during work. Some of the work songs are present in urban areas like the slaves' song "Escravos de Jó", which is taught at primary schools as a popular children's game. Renowned African Brazilian artists such as Milton Nascimento[30] and Clementina de Jesus[31] recorded work songs that they researched and rescued. Jesus interpreted work songs including: "Alegria do Carreiro", "Peixeira Catita", and "Atividade no

[29] These collective and voluntary works are known as *mutirões* or *pixuruns*.

[30] Milton Nascimento (19420 is one of the most important Brazilian artists. Singer, composer, arranger, popular culture researcher and instrumentalist received honorary doctorate from the University of Berkelee, Boston in 2016.

[31] Clementina de Jesus (1901-1987) was one of the most representative icons of African Brazilian culture. Her singular way of singing, with no embellishments or sophistication, was similar to the slaves singing style

Abano", whose authorships are unknown. Jesus's album entitled "Cinco Cantos de Trabalho"[32] is available online.

From my experience as an African descendant child in the seventies, it is possible to affirm that work songs were present in most of the labor activity, mainly when the activity was collective. African descendant females, when doing collective works such as washing clothes, peeling fruit and vegetables for canning, knitting, sewing, embroidering, weaving, and cooking used to sing and they still do it these days. The phonographic industry and radiobroadcasting changed the habits a little; however, music was always the pacemaker of the work. Music would turn the work pleasant and singing along would convey commonality and solidarity. Collectivity related to the maintenance and economy of the social group and beyond them. Sometimes, the work songs permeated the preparation for a wedding ceremony or baptism. Not only did family members take part, but also friends and neighbors.

The bibliography and documentation about the Brazilian work songs is not wide. There are few references about them in the works by Sandroni, Siqueira, and Viana. There is no allusion to work songs in Sodré's collection of essays. The authors begin to report the history of samba from the music genres like *lundus* and *modinhas* that are the acknowledged precursors of samba. Siqueira comments that African-Brazilian dance and singing originated from the religious ceremonies of Africans. Nevertheless, these are not the only activities that music and dance permeate. Musical expression is present in "generalized institutions regarding clan organizations" found in several African civilizations whose populations came to Brazil. These organizations may range from hunting, funerals, homages, war, fishing, or rites of passage (64). According to Siqueira's comment, it is possible to say that the music he refers to includes work songs. However, the author does not expand the comment along the book.

2.4. *Lundus, Modinhas, and Maxixe*

Music was present in the enslaved life in the plantations in Brazil. Sodré reports that the connection between body and music, through dance, was noticeable in the *Quilombo dos Palmares* (11). Rodrigues writes that runaway and freed slaves used to dance to the sound of the

[32] Jesus, Clementina de. *Cinco Cantos de Trabalho* 'Five Work Songs'. EMI, 1982. 25 Mar 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQnvOAOkb4w>

drums during the night performing choreographies in *Palmares*. The dancers clapped their hands and sang in a circle forming the choir and the accompaniment. They took turns to occupy the center of the circle, inviting another participant to dance by waving their hands or by bumping violently into one of them. Sometimes, the entire group took part in the performance and they moved in circles one after the other to the rhythm of the music while moving their arms and bodies (165). The author adds that the black population greatly outnumbered the white folks and because of that, events of black entertainment happened frequently. Repression or maintenance of the black festivities became an issue in Bahia in the colonial period. Slave masters suppressed them violently. The festivities, called *batuques*, spread from the plantations to the cities in Bahia and Maranhão. Later, creoles replaced Africans and acquired habits as an attempt to adapt to Eurocentric patterns of festivities (166-7).

Batuques either altered to adapt to popular parties of European origins or to conform to the urban life standards, claims Sodré (13). African music and dance transformed, losing some aspects and acquiring others, according to the social atmosphere. Thus, the features of an urban Brazilian music began to appear since mid-nineteenth century: *modinha*, *maxixe*, *lundu*, and samba. The scholar explains that, in spite of the hybrid characteristics (African and European features), that music was born amidst black culture, after the abolition of slavery, when a racially hostile environment forced blacks to search for new modes of expression which were acceptable to urban life (13).

Sodré highlights that the abolition caused several psychosocial issues and economic hindrances to black Brazilians. Black people had the possibility of a self-sustainable rural life destroyed. Consequently, black labor became cheap and available, moving from the rural to the urban area constantly. In the thirties, the process of industrialization, that developed technology and hasten urbanization, dismantled the traditional agrarian structures without creating enough jobs in the industries. Today's marginalization of the urban and rural population is the result of the industrialization that excludes and discriminates to generate the economic excess (13). In Sodré's words:

> The socio-economic marginalization of the black individual was already evident in the late nineteenth century through the systematic exclusion because of skin color by the institutions (school, factories, etc.) that could turn their

> qualification as a work force compatible with the demand of the urban market. The "disqualification" was not merely technological (that is, technological knowledge alone did not limit it), but also cultural: costumes, behavior standards, religion, and the skin color itself signified negative *handicaps* (…). (13-4) (author's emphasis)

Black musical expression in Brazil developed in a scenario of exclusion, discrimination and deprivation. Institutionalized racism has kidnapped opportunities from the black population in the country. Many advocate that racism in Brazil is less cruel than in the United States. However; it is possible to affirm that it is equally violent because it excludes silently through diverse mechanisms. Foucault's theory of biopower explains the mechanism that the dominant group applies to keep populations subjugated and excluded through institutionalized practices of exclusion. Biopower selects populations in a discriminatory way keeping the oppressed and their practices away from education, health, housing, and real citizenship (the right to vote, for example). Considered inferior and poor, their costumes, behavior, and cultural expressions are stigmatized and stereotyped.

In the essay "Do Lundu ao Samba", Sandroni states that the term *lundu* refers to different but interconnected things. Firstly, the term defined a kind of popular dance, then a ballroom song genre, and finally a type of folk song (41). The current investigation concerns *lundu* as a ballroom song genre. Sandroni reports that the first allusions to *lundu* appeared in 1780. The researcher affirms that the origins of the musical genre are African, brought to Brazil by the enslaved Bantus from Congo and Angola. The word began to refer to a musical genre apart from any choreography in the 1830s with the advent of the musical imprint in Brazil (42-3).

According to Sodré, *modinhas* embodied the adapted lyrics of Italian arias as well as the Portuguese nostalgic melodies and quartets. *Modinhas* had a less vivid tempo than *lundus*. *Lundu*, just like samba and *batuque*, had a circle of spectators, a choreography made up of vigorous swinging of the hips, and bumpings, accompanied by the viola and a pair of soloists. *Lundu* became the first black music accepted by the white population. Sodré affirms that, in fact, it was the first creole musical genre of hybridized characteristics (30).

Sandroni writes that Domingos Caldas Barbosa (1738-1800) was responsible for the introduction of *lundus* and *modinhas* to the Portuguese society. Barbosa was the first historical character of Brazilian popular music and a poet. He was a mulatto and moved to Lisbon in 1770 where he lived for the rest of his life (43). In *Pequena História da Música Popular Segundo Seus Gêneros*, José Ramos Tinhorão comments that Barbosa appears in Lisbon in the court of Queen Maria I in 1775, scandalizing Europeans with the straightforward tone when approaching ladies in his verse and the malice of the chorus that closed his lines (17). Tinhorão adds that *lundus* shocked white dominant society at the beginning. Nevertheless, after the rigid moral imposed by the Inquisition during a long period of absolutism and subjugation, the white population begins to accept the expression of a way of life that was free from prejudice. Fewer moral restraints, far from the censorship of the metropolis, provided the appearance of "love songs of yearnings, sashaying, datings" in the colony (18).

In the words of Sodré, "(…) the acceptance of a rhythm originated from the population socially excluded by the global society implied the creation of different forms (in conformity with the social class) of appropriation and the use of rhythm" (31). The scholar reports that *lundu* had a "mild" form, and another one that was wilder, the "cried *lundu*". In cried *lundu*, the swing of the hips, the body waggle, the sensual movement of the hands were more vigorous (31). Sodré observes that several singings and urban songs stemmed from this rhythm brought by the enslaved Bantus. The polka and habanera made great success in Rio from 1845 on. These rhythms, along with *lundu* that contributed with the syncopation, provided the creation of *maxixe*. The syncopated rhythm was extensively produced "on café's tables, straw hats, matchboxes etc". "The syncopation permitted the recreation or reinvention of the specific effects of the instruments of percussion of the blacks", claims Sodré (31).

Maxixe replaces *lundu* and other dance forms such as habanera and polka. The European musical genres used to apply classic forms (chorus, stanza, chorus); however, *maxixe* had no classic structure (32). Sodré argues that some historians described *maxixe* with a derogatory tone, considering it an exotic process of variable forms stemmed from collective dances with gymnastical features. In spite of that, *maxixe* became the dance of the twenties. People danced *maxixe* in *gafieiras*, popular ballrooms in Rio de Janeiro. Just like *lundus*,

maxixe had "polite" and "wild" forms. The latter provoked scandals and prohibitions leading to an expulsion from the society (32).

2.5. The syncopation

It is possible to affirm that the most important rhythmic characteristic of samba is the syncopation. It is samba's mainspring. Nonetheless, it is not an exclusive feature of samba. It is present in jazz as well as in other African descendant rhythms. Sodré quotes Duke Ellington who affirms that a third person is the one who always sings the blues, "the one who is not there". The author explains Ellington's statement arguing that the "lovers" in the blues lyrics are "the enunciating self and the listener or the enunciating self and the referent implicit in the text". These do not invoke the song, but a missing third is what drags and fascinates them (11).

The researcher points out that the North-American band leader's statement is:

> [a] metaphor to the underlying principle of jazz: the syncopation, the missing beat. Syncopation is the absence of a beat (weak) in the rhythmic pulse that reverberates in another that is stressed. The missing beat can be the missing link that explains the leading power of black music in the Americas. (11)

Sodré explains that, in fact, in jazz, as well as in samba, the syncopation leads the listener to fill up the silence (emptiness) with body movement: swinging, claps, stomp, dance. The appeal of the syncopation leads the listener to complete the absence of the beat with the dynamics of the body. The body demanded by the samba syncopation is the same that slavery assaulted and repressed in Brazilian history: the black body (11). Samba was present in the *quilombos*, mills, plantations, cities, wherever the black population was; samba was a clear display of resistance against the social norms of slavery. The black bodies carried, and still carry, racially constructed stigmas that labeled them as productive machines. Samba was an assertion of the continuity of the African cultural universe (11-2).

According to Sodré, rhythm developed an important role in the maintenance of black culture in the Americas. Melody in black music consists of few notes and simple phrases. The richness of the rhythm superposes melody. Black music preserved the rhythmic basis by means of dislocating the stress in the syncopation. However, it partly submitted to the European melodic supremacy in the contact between cultures from Europe and Africa. As explained before, the syncopation is an alteration that concerns the extending of a weaker beat over a stressed one. The author declares that such alteration is not exclusively African: European music was already acquainted with it. The difference relies on the fact that it concerned melody in Europe, while in Africa, it related to rhythm. Brazilian syncopation is rhythmic and melodic. Enslaved blacks inserted their tempo-cosmic-rhythmic conception into white musical patterns. Sodré points out that it denoted an act of insurrection: blacks attacked the European tonal system and subverted it through the syncopation (25).

The researcher highlights that authors (the preface by Mário de Andrade in Luciano Gallet's *Estudos de Folclore*, for instance) have already affirmed that the syncopation is not African originally. However, Brazilian syncopation may be the result of the alteration of the 6/8 tempo, usual in the Iberian rhythmic structures, accompanied by the division and sub-division of the African percussion. The result is the 2/4 fundamental form of the syncopation. Syncopation is the specificity of jazz as well as samba's. Sodré claims that jazz, uses harmony, besides rhythm, in a special way: the exploring of delay effects that provides a great harmonic and orchestral improvement. Moreover, polyphony (the mixture of instruments, timbres etc.) creates opportunities to alter melody or to improvise. Using these devices, jazz could innovate the use of European instruments such as the piano, the trumpet, the trombone, and others (26).

Sodré declares that the first time Brazilian music technically approached jazz was through *choro*. Blacks and mulattos were the first musicians to play *choro*. The musical genre gave great value to wind instruments (the saxophone, the clarinet) and adopted improvisation in the process of creation. Notwithstanding, Brazilian syncopation was present in samba, mainly. Probably, because of the great familiarity of samba with *terreiros* – the cultural and religious communities that reunited the groups of African descendants in Brazil. The *terreiros* of *candomblé* (Bahia), *Shango* (Pernambuco), *macumba* (Rio de Janeiro), *Tambor de Mina* (Maranhão) have been sites of cultural dynamics. The *terreiros* sheltered the practices of Brazilian dances such as

*maracatus, chegan*ç*as, reisado, congada, bumba-meu-boi* etc, and other profane singings and dances (26-7).

The author highlights that the familiarity between black cults and musical production also occurred in the U.S.A. Blacks organized *Nagô* rituals (Dahomeyan vodum) in the Congo Square until 1885; the year of the demolition of the place. The presence of the French culture and Catholicism preserved the cult in New Orleans. Moreover, syncretic religious practices veiled and protected the permanence of vodum. In spite of the harsh white Anglo-Saxon protestant repression, the cult spread all over the Southern American states. The vodum cult also generated forms of social organization and musical expression just like *candomblé* in Brazil. Sodré affirms that the "vodum trance still persists in black Christian rituals and in the emotional atmosphere of the blues". Ben Sidran acknowledges that performers as well as the audience created New Orleans music in a constant interaction, in an exchange of faith, similarly to the relationship between preacher-congregation or in the vodum ritual (48).

The rhythmic pattern of samba originates from "the process of adaptation, re-elaboration, and synthesis of musical forms that characterize black culture in Brazil", remarks Sodré (35). Black culture, as a genealogic and semiotic system, permeates the diverse types of samba (*samba de terreiro, samba duro,partido-alto, samba cantado, samba de salão*). The dynamic process of selection of black elements provided the assertion of samba as synthesis, adapted for radio broadcasting and phonographic industry; and consequently, adequate to commercialization in urban industrial basis (35).

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The kind of samba, as object of the current study, developed in black ghettos in Rio de Janeiro: the *bahianos* in *Saúde* and the *Praça Onze*. Black entertained themselves dancing to the sound of samba in its diverse styles in family gatherings. *Rancho*, created and rehearsed in the houses, was the samba style introduced to the white society. Sodré reports that, since the nineteenth century, samba had already

penetrated the white society named as *tango*, polka, *marcha*, etc. Tinhorão reports that the composer Chiquinha Gonzaga introduced her Brazilian tango as "the dance of *corta-jaca*" in 1897. Therefore, conductors and composers realized that the moment to take advantage of the characteristics of *maxixe* had arrived along with the possibility to create a new musical genre that could interest thousands of people who bought scores for piano all over Brazil. Gonzaga was the most skillful musician that could adapt the new style to the piano (88-9).

Sodré adds that *rancho* was an entertainment institution of blacks from Bahia, before the appearance of the "*Tias*" from Cidade Nova. *Ranchos* inherited the characteristic of moving files of people from other festivities such as the street parades of *reisados* and *ternos*. The festivities took advantage of the European carnival to penetrate urban territories and to assert an aspect of black cultural identity through music and dance. The schools of samba originated from the *rancho-escola*, a type of "lyrical moving theater", where artists with their creations joined musical performers (orchestra and choir). The use of the term school denoted an ideological alteration: the *rancho-escola* rejected black characteristics to favor patterns of white meanings. The schools of samba appeared in 1923 and maintained part of the old features (street parades, characters, and orchestra) but achieved the "right to penetrate the white urban space" (37).

Sodré writes that the strategies of adaptation, with advancement and retreat, opened path gradually to the acceptance of samba in the white society. As an institutional and territorial basis of black Brazilian culture, black and mulatto artists such as Pixinguinha, João da Bahiana, Donga, Sinhô, Patrício Teixeira, Heitor dos Prazeres -- to name a few -- began to work professionally and gradually entered orchestras, radio stations, phonographic records, taught guitar lessons to rich students, etc. The circumstances would repress or exhibit samba (35).

Viana writes that in the first decades of the twentieth century movie theaters in Rio de Janeiro used to hire musicians to play at the waiting rooms; some of them were famous such as Ernesto Nazareth. Before the 1919 Carnival a flu epidemics devastated the population, including some musicians. The manager Isaac Frankel needed a new orchestra and invited Pixinguinha, who invited eight members of a group he took part with Donga, the latter being the creator of the first recorded samba. The event did not please the conductor Julio Reis who declared in a newspaper that the music played by the "Oito Batutas" – name given to Pixinguinha and Donga's group by Frankel –

was not appropriate to the educated ears of the aristocratic audience of the carioca movie theaters. It seemed that Franke was audacious to hire a band like that to play in the elegant theaters, mainly because most of the members were black (114-5).

The "Oito Batutas" had a heterogeneous repertoire, though most of the songs they played could be considered country music. Their musical interest was not totally national. The group had contact with jazz musicians during the performances in Paris in 1922. The event motivated Pixinguinha to play the sax, and his jazzistic passion was criticized by journalists who commenced a type of nationalist and anti-American criticism. Such criticism became common. Pixinguinha was accused of being biased by the North-American music. The accusations disappeared gradually with the consolidation of the samba as national music (116-8).

Siqueira states that the whitening ideology attacked the musical shape of the samba as well as the poetic structure of the message through a bourgeois context of nationalization. Literature about samba is full of statements about the melodic poverty of the blacks, and consequently, of the inferior poetry. However, the scholar who is informed about the originality of the samba composed by authors such as Isabel, Tia Ciata, Leopoldino Vumbela, Sinhô, Bide, Heitor dos Prazeres, Wilson Batista, Ismael Silva, Cartola, and Valdemar Pereira points out the original use of day by day chronicles and the true musical reports in samba lines (90).

Tia Ciata's house was the womb of samba located in the community of Praça Onze, the only black neighborhood that survived the demolitions imposed by the reforms of the mayor Pereira Passos[33]. Socialization and the formation of the first samba groups had support on the Praça Onze that became a coalition territory. The groups of samba joined at the tias's houses. The tias were the guardians of the *orixás* and lived in the houses located in Pedra do Sol, in the

[33] Francisco Franco Pereira Passos (1863-1913), nominated mayor of the city of Rio de Janeiro by the President Rodrigues Alves from 1902 to 1906, developed large changes to the urban landscape of Rio. The city was going through serious social problems because of the sudden and unplanned growth due to European immigration and the transition from slavery to free labor. Rio de Janeiro had the infrastructure of a colonial city and a million poor inhabitants lacked running water, sewage system, and health and security programs. Downtown Rio had unhealthy collective residencies called cortiços and epidemic yellow fever, cholera, and the pox contaminated the city. The urban reform aimed at sanitation and urbanism providing the city with the aspect of a modern cosmopolitan city. The reform demolished cortiços and evicted the poor black population pushing them up to the hills where they settled and created *favelas*, Brazilian slums.

neighborhood of Gamboa. Sodré states that the similarities with the Congo Square in New Orleans are undeniable. According to the author, squares and corners are intersections that contribute to the connection between the forces of a territory. Squares are locales of gatherings and communication between diverse individuals. One of the dimensions of the territory is the flexibility of its marks opposing to the rigid system of positions of the European space (17).

Moreover, the author explains that squares are the places for important economic, political, and entertainment events. Cities founded by the Portuguese colonization have squares as their main urban unit. Slaves used the squares as the place of socialization. After 1900, the Praça Onze became the place where poor inhabitants of Mangueira, Estácio, and other slums converged. The meetings favored the territorial expansion of the carnival groups and the samba circles (17). Nonetheless, the socialization also had violent features when rival groups confronted. The terms such as "*malandros*", "*capoeiras*", or "hooligans" labeled the violent groups that walked on the streets during carnival. The socialization presented ethnic-cultural heterogeneity and a plurality of affection (love, desire, hate) that forms the territorialization (18).

Sodré concludes that the power of the socializing process of the blacks in the diaspora trespasses the geographical limits turning distant places such as Congo Square and *Praça Onze* so similar. During Mardi Gras in New Orleans, groups of black people dress up as indigenous tribes: the "black indians". The event is similar to the groups of *caboclos*[34] in Brazilian carnival. The "black Indians" in Mardi Gras were yobs who sometimes played the role of the police force in the inner city of New Orleans, enabling the "tribes parade" accompanied by great jazz musicians.

Siqueira states that the process of the formation of the Brazilian cultural panorama did not occur without conflicts. The explanations about the social events with popular participation were not always fair or granted visibility to the popular agency. Consequently, the studies on Brazilian identity, its multiple aspects and convergences demand new sociological and historical readings (1).

The author states that urban environments, aspects of the social life and economic analysis have permeated the Brazilian cultural identity in the last thirty years (1). Siqueira affirms that there is an

[34] *Caboclos* are groups of people who dress up during carnival parades as several ethnic indigenous groups in Brazil.

economic postulate that can explain Brazil along with a political theory of industrialization. The perception of samba as a more stylized music provides a "golden age" of such musical genre in the 1930s. The event occurs at the convergence of radio broadcasting, the phonograph and entertainment business in the largest cities in Brazil, especially Rio de Janeiro (1-2). Samba expands into a commodity in a scenario of cultural transformation. Thus, it gains visibility with the need of the appearance of spectacles and collective leisure.

However, the alteration of samba into a more suitable style that serves the purposes of commercialization, broadcasting, and large spectacles encounters criticism among contemporaneous composers such as Paulinho da Viola. The lyrics of Viola's "Argumento[35]" is a warning against the changes concerning harmony, melody, and instruments that modern sambistas have included in their works. In Viola's lines:

> Tá legal
> Tá legal, eu aceito o argumento
> Mas não me altere o samba tanto assim
> Olha que a rapaziada está sentindo a falta
> Deum cavaco, de um pandeiro e de um tamborim[36]
> Sem preconceito, sem mania de passado
> Sem querer estar do lado de quem não quer navegar
> Faça como velho marinheiro
> Que durante o nevoeiro
> Leva o barco devagar (1-10)

The lyric voice claims for the permanence of the structure that characterizes samba since the beginning. The lines assert the need to maintain tradition. The verse "[n]o prejudice or past mania" denotes the acknowledgement that samba had to transform to suit the acceptance of the social patterns and that the musical genre is the result of a hybrid process in an ongoing evolution in contact with other cultures. Notwithstanding, the voice advices prudence and wisdom to preserve samba as a mark of cultural identity.

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[35] "Argumento" 'The Argument': That's fine/ That's fine / I take the argument/ But don't change samba so much/ See the guys are missing/ The cavaco, the tambourine, or the *tamborim*/ No prejudice or past mania /No wanting to stand by who doesn't want to sail/ Do like the old sailor/ whom during fog / Sails the boat slowly (1-10).

[36] Tamborim is a percussion instrument largely played in school of samba's orchestras.

CHAPTER III
JAZZ, BLUES, AND SAMBA- INFUSED WRITING

3.1. Jazz Literature

Jazz Literature - jazz writing, or jazz-infused writing - is a broad concept inside the dimension of what black literature encompasses in the Americas. Instances of this kind of literature are present in African-Canadian, African-American, as well as African-Brazilian writings. Origins date back to early twentieth century and it still shapes black literature nowadays. I begin with concepts of jazz literature that help understand the intertextuality between poetry and jazz and blues. Furthermore, it is indispensable to avoid the danger of defining jazz-infused writing from fixed characteristics as an attempt to determine its structure from a single format. Jazz-infused writing denotes much more a way of conceiving writing than a set of techniques. I analyze the presence of the elements of jazz, blues, and samba in black writing from this point of view because not all the techniques considered to shape jazz-infused writing are present in every single text by the so-called jazz writers. The elements of these musical genres may range from music techniques to feelings and moods.

Music, as one of the main expressions of African-diasporic culture, pervades writing concerning both poetry and prose. Jazz novels and jazz poetry are examples of how black music intertwines with written activity. I choose to keep jazz and blues as genres that interconnect in the analysis of the historical and conceptual contexts of jazz literature and along the study of the authors' poetry. The study is also an attempt to investigate the interconnection between jazz and

blues with the Brazilian samba as diasporic musical expressions and their presences in African-diasporic writing. The presence of the genres in the writings by Clarke, Komunyakaa, and Pereira alternate in a similar manner to what Bolden has pointed out concerning the interweaving of jazz and blues. In the author's words: "My inclusion of jazz as blues expression is not an arbitrary maneuver. […], the blues comprise the very basis of jazz" (40). Blues and jazz intertwine with Clarke's, Komunyakaa's and Pereira's writings regarding jazz as an expression of the blues idiom. Moreover, Pereira's poetry intertwines with blues and samba as African-diasporic utterances. Establishing frontiers for the manifestation of the genres in the authors' writing is misleading because of the clear relation between jazz and blues. Nevertheless, because samba has developed in a diverse geographical, colonial, political, and cultural site, the particularities of the genre and its presence in Pereira's poetry are undeniable and possible to highlight. Furthermore, the presence of jazz and blues in Pereira's texts convey a transnational commonality in African-diasporic cultural expression.

Jazz and blues-infused writing and the presence of samba in poetry depict a manner of conceiving written expression of experience. It is writing that conveys a worldview, that is, how the poetic voice perceives itself as an individual and how this voice is perceived by others. Jazz, blues and samba-infused writings are black arts which encompass the emotions and feelings of the African diaspora that enable the accomplishment of beauty through writing and music. Jazz, blues and samba combined with writing disrupt silencing, erasure, and oblivion, bridging the gaps resulted from loss and separation caused by the Middle Passage. Moreover, protest, challenge, resistance, tradition, and "transnegression" pervade black poetry. In *The Black Atlantic*, Morrison states in an interview to Gilroy:

> The major things black art has to have are these: it must have the ability to use found objects, the appearance of using found things, and it must look effortless. It must look cool and easy. If it makes you sweat, you haven't done the work. You shouldn't be able to see the seams and stitches. I have wanted always to develop a way of writing that was irrevocably black. I don't have the resources of a musician but I thought that if it was truly black literature it would not be black because

> I was, it would not even be black because of its subject matter. It would be something intrinsic, indigenous, something in the way it was put together – the sentences, the structure, texture and tone – so that anyone who read it would realise. I use the analogy of music because you can range all over the world and it's still black… I don't imitate it, but I am informed by it. Sometimes I hear blues, sometimes spirituals or jazz and I've appropriated it. I've tried to reconstruct the texture of it in my writing – certain kinds of repetition – its profound simplicity… What has already happened with the music in the States, the literature will do one day and when that happens it's all over. (78)

Jazz, blues, and samba-infused writings do not require that the author be a musician. As Morrison declares, it is an appropriation; though a different type of appropriation. It regards the learning to apply techniques from a diverse black-diasporic cultural expression into another. It is not the relation between dominant culture and marginalized forms. Jazz, blues, and samba inform the poets with techniques: repetition, orality, musicality, jazz scat, syncopation, call and response, and rhythm. Black literature is not merely defined by the skin color of the author, but by the intrinsic characteristics of the writing: the way that sentences, structures, texture, and tone are interwoven. Jazz, blues, and samba writing is the specific way these elements are put together in specific contexts.

Jazz has inspirited either black or non-black writers. Nevertheless, in "Jazz and Other Arts," Hobsbawn affirms that the scope of works inspired by jazz or about jazz is not amazing or outstanding concerning the amount of production. Hobsbawn mentions names and works from the 1920's such as Debussy's *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, Ravel's *L'enfant et les Sortiléges*, and the piano concerts; Milhaud's *La Création du Monde*, and Stravisnky's *Histoire du Soldat*, and *Ragtime pour Onze Instruments*. Hobsbawn writes that there is an interest in the "exoticism[37]" to categorize the "post-1918"

[37] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam quote Phyllis Rose: "[e]xoticism solipsizes its object for the exoticist's pleasure, using the colonized "other" as an erotic fiction in order to reenchant the world" (21). "While racists are threatened by difference, the exoticist finds it amusing… Racism is like a poor kid who grew up needing someone to hurt. Exoticism grew up rich, and a little bored. The racist is hedged around by dangers, the exoticist by used-up toys" (21). The

concern of the French *avant-garde* with jazz. Krenek's *Jonny Spielt Auf* and Weill's music for Brecht depicts the German preoccupation with the "low-life," Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande*, and the like. Jazz is existent and persistent in the popular music in the United States, notably in musicals such as Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and Marc Blitzstein and Leonard Bernstein's *The Cradle will Rock*. Among the greatest contemporary composers, only Stravinsky has shown the presence of jazz in his music when he wrote *Ragtime* (191-2).

Hobsbawn writes that the list of jazz inspired literary production is not numerous. He adds that in the period before 1930 such list is unimportant except for the works of Cocteau. A few poets write verse inspired by jazz musicians and there are novels on jazz and musicians and other inspired jazz writings, for example, the ones from the Beat Generation with Jack Kerouac et alii. Hobsbawn argues that jazz-inspired writing in that period calls the attention to sociological studies but the same statement is not true about literary criticism (192-3). He points out that an important jazz inspired work in the same period is *The Daniel Jazz*, a short vocal work suitable for performance by schoolchildren, with music by Herbert Chappel and lyrics written by Vachel Lindsay.[38]

However, Hobsbawn makes a distinction when referring to black writers. He affirms that the presence of jazz is more "naturally"[39] evident among black poets, though not many authors are soundly jazz inspired. Langston Hughes writes verse that is blues. The poem: "O Gal's Cry for a Dying Lover" is an example:

> Hear de owl a-hootin', knowed somebody's 'bout to die.
> Hear de owl a-hootin', knowed somebody's 'bout to die.
> Put ma head un'neath de kiver, started to moan an' cry.
>
> Hound dwag's barkin', means he's gonna leave this world.

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exoticization of jazz by the French *avant garde* denotes the European gaze regarding black culture. It is a form of making jazz inferior in relation to the dominant culture for the sake of Eurocentric amusement. It denotes a mechanism of racism.

[38] Vachel Lindsay (1879-1931) was an American poet famous for his work as a traveling bard.

[39] The term is used by Hobsbawn. Though it may be considered problematic, I chose to transcribe it here to establish parallels among authors who write about jazz in poetry.

> Hound dwag's barkin', means he's gonna leave this world.
> O, Lawd have mercy on a po' black girl.
>
> Black an' ugly, but he sho' do treat me kind.
> I'm black an ugly, but he sho' do treat me kind.
> High-in-heaven Jesus, please don't take this man of mine. (1-9)

Hughes writes using the techniques of jazz and blues, such as repetition and triplets, being aware of these aspects as conveyors of the experience of black Americans. However, not all black authors of that time write in a similar manner. Jazz has produced at least two examples of precious literature: blues poetry and the experimentalism of "jive talk"[40] (194). The world of jazz is a rich terrain for word masters.

Hobsbawn states that "the blues is the greatest body of living folk poetry in the modern industrial world" (198-9). Most of the blues usually consists of five rhymed and stressed couplets, with the first line repeated, combined, altered and extended at will. Similarly to other instances of folk poetry, lines are made up of direct phrases, questions or claims, without embellishments. Consider the line in "Downhearted Blues which was composed by Lovie Austin[41] and Alberta Hunter,[42]sung by Bessie Smith[43]: "Got the world in a jug, the stopper's in my hand" (15). Or the lines in Billie Holiday's[44] "Fine and Mellow": "Love is just like a faucet, it turns off and on, / Love is just like a faucet, it turns off and on, / Sometimes when you think it's on, baby, it has turned off and gone" (25-7).

Hobsbawn affirms that "[t]he blues does not possess poetical forms because of the singers' wish to express themselves poetically. The singers are willing to convey what they have to say in the best possible way" (200). In the famous and traditional blues "Make me a Pallet," the voice of a poor prostitute in New Orleans is present. The

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[40] Jive talk, known as Harlem jive, is the argot of jazz, jazz jargon or jazz vernacular.
[41] Lovie Austin (1887-1972) was an American bandleader, session musician, composer, singer, and arranger.
[42] Alberta Hunter 1895 –1984) was an American blues singer and songwriter.
[43] Bessie Smith (1894 –1937) was an American blues singer, songwriter, known as "The Blues Empress." Smith was the most popular blues singer in the twenties and thirties in the twentieth century.
[44] Billie Holiday, born Eleanora Fagan Goth, (1915 –1959) , regarded as the greatest American jazz singer.

only technical effect is the repetition of phrases and lines that turns the content of the song pungent, and it is performed through the repetitive standard of everyday popular speech:

> Make me a pallet on your floor,
> Make me a pallet on your floor,
> Make me a pallet, baby, a pallet on your floor,
> So when you good girl comes she will never know.
> Make it very soft and low,
> Make it, babe very soft and low,
> Make it baby near your kitchen door,
> So when your good girl comes, she will never know
> I'll get up in the morning, and cook you a red hot meal,
> I'll get up in the morning and cook you a red hot meal,
> To show you, baby, I' appreciate what you done for me
> When you made me a pallet on your floor.
> Make it soft and low,
> Make it, baby, make it soft and low,
> If you feel like laying down, babe, with me on the floor,
> When your good girl comes home she will never know. (1-16)

Hobsbawn emphasizes that "the complex and sophisticated effect can be achieved simply from a small variation of words, rhythm, and context in repeated lines" (200-1). In a footnote, he adds that there are true rhymes in the song because the ending consonants are dropped in the English spoken in the South of the United States such as in "flo" – "do" – "know." The Blues have stanzas and poetic lines shaped in diverse forms and depict a reflection about life and death. The apparently simple poetic apparatus is in fact very efficient. It denotes a standpoint of life that must be expressed directly and applying as few tools as possible through such strategies (202-4). The scarcity of resources truly provides the blues with incredible power. Consider the lines in Joe Turner's[45] "Going Away Blues":

[45] Joe Turner (1911-1985) was an American blues singer.

I'm going away babe, just to wear you off my mind
I'm going away babe, just to wear you off my mind
If I stay around here, I'll be troubled all the time.
So help me honey, but I don't love you:
So help me honey, but I don't love you.
Well, I just don't like them funny old ways you do.
It's raining here, babe, storming on the sea:
Raining here, storming on the sea:
You mistreat a good man when you mistreat me.
I'm sorry, baby, sorry to my heart.
Sorry, baby, sorry to my heart.

We've been together so long, now we've got to part (1-12)

Hobsbawn argues that in most of the blues songs, the lyrics go straight to the point as much as the lyrical self perceives life, death, drinking, money or love. Usual assertions of the blues convey that men and women have to lead life as what it is like; if they are not able to do so they should die instead. Men and women laugh and cry simply because they are human beings, but the blues advice that it is not worth crying. The blues affirm that nothing is more worthwhile than helping oneself. Heaven is not a present subject and nor is God. On the contrary, in Smith's "Blue Spirit Blues" there is allusion to hell. The world of the blues is tragic just like the world of the low-paid workers and it is in this economically powerless environment that the blues is born (207).

The author adds that the blues idiom is not meant to convey the community salvation that is promoted by the unions and the churches. When such redemption is sung it is through hymns and gospel songs. Smith singing "Reckless Blues," a Rainey performing "See the Rider" or even Chippie Hill[46], singing "Trouble in my Mind," convey passion through flexibility and rhythmic vocal suspension. The author declares that the blues is an important literary achievement and the most relevant non-musical aspect of jazz (207).

[46] Bertha "Chippie"Hill (1905-1950) was an American blues and vaudeville singer known for recording with Louis Armstrong.

In the essay "Jazz Poetry/jazz-poetry/'jazz poetry'???" Barry Wallenstein introduces a historical and theoretical text concerning Sascha Feinstein and Komunyakaa's *The Jazz Poetry Anthology* and Charles O. Hartman's *Jazz Text*. Wallenstein reports that the anthology offers a vast selection according to what the editors consider "jazz poetry." In the author's analysis, a poem that alludes to jazz is not exactly jazz poetry unless it is woven with "jazz-like rhythm or the use of improvisation" (par. 2). However, the author points out the absence of some poets in the anthology (par. 3). The selection presented here corresponds to Walenstein's choices. His essay, however, does not bring the poems cited. Most of the poems were transcribed from websites of poetry diffusion that I indicate in the footnotes.

The poets, listed by Wallenstein, pertaining the first period of the production of jazz poetry are mostly non-blacks. The black authors' difficulties to publish in that period may have prevented the publishing of material produced by black jazz authors. In "What White Publishers Won't Print," Zora Neale Hurston asserts that the white dominant culture did not believe black people have higher intellectual abilities, such as producing literature that is worth publishing. By the time she wrote the essay, 1947, there was large disinterest in black literature. In Hurston's words: "[p]ublishing houses and theatrical promoters are in business to make money. They will sponsor anything that they believe will sell. (…). They know the skepticism in general about the complicated emotions in the minorities" (55). It is possible to affirm that the absence of published material from black jazz writers in that period stems from racism as a mechanism of exclusion. Thus, white jazz poets come first in the list of the anthology analyzed by Wallenstein.

He points out that Carl Sandburg's contemporary poetry is present in the beginning of the engagement with poetry and jazz (par 3). The lines in "Jazz Fantasia[47]," for instance, present the allusion to jazz instruments and set an evocative and sad mood: "Drum on your drums, batter on your banjoes,/ sob on the long cool winding saxophones./ Go to to it, O jazzmen" (1-3).

The author observes that Lindsay's wider involvement with jazz poetry is not in the anthology but he makes no comments on it (par 3). I add that though Lindsay considered jazz a decadent cultural

[47] Sandburg, Carl. "Jazz Fantasia." *All Poetry*. 23 Apr. 2017 <http://www.allpoetry.com>

expression, the poem "The Congo"[48] received praise from the literary criticism. The lines from the poem are read in the movie "Dead Poets Society" (1989) directed by Peter Weir: "Then I saw the Congo, creeping through the black/ cutting through the forest with a golden track" (13-14). The poem has a rhythmic structure based on African-American speech rhythms and jazz cadence. Lindsay himself considered his poetry as verse meant to be sung or chanted and criticism regards him as a founder of modern singing poetry. It is possible to affirm that the omission of his poetry in the anthology relates to the fact that Lindsay considered jazz as a representative of low culture and that he did not considered himself a jazz poet.

Mina Loy, the Modernist poet, is the first woman known to write about jazz in poetry. According to Wallenstein, Loy's "The Widow's Jazz"[49] is included. The scholar considers this poem by Loy more a curiosity than jazz poetry (par. 3). In the poem, Loy alludes to the jazz scene of Chicago with its jazz clubs and sounds: "The white flesh quakes to the negro soul,/ Chicago! Chicago!" (1-2). In addition, Wallenstein points out the absence of Nikki Giovanni. Giovanni's "A Poem for a Lady Whose Voice I Like"[50] evidences the presence of African-American vernacular, jazz rhythm and cadence:

> so she said: you ain't got no talent
> if you didn't have a face
> you wouldn't be nobody
> and she said: god created heaven and earth
> and all that's Black within them" (1-5).

The scholar highlights the absence of Beat Generation poet Ginsberg, who recorded with jazz and applied much more "jazz imagery and phrasing" than other Beat poets such as Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso and Kerouac (whose poems are present in the collection). Ginsberg's poem "Father Death Blues,"[51] evidences his engagement with jazz poetry:

> Hey Father Death, I'm flying home

[48] Lindsay, Vachel. "The Congo." *Poetry Foundation*. 27 Apr. 2017. <http://poetryfoundation.org>

[49]. Loy, Mina. "The Widow's Jazz." Modernist Aesthetics. 23 Apr. 2017, <http://modernistaesthetics.weebly.com>

[50] Giovanni, Nikki. ""A Poem for a Lady Whose Voice I Like." 23 Apr, 2017. *Poem Hunter* <http://poemhunter.com>

[51] Ginsberg, Allen. "Father Death Blues." 27 Apr. 2017. <http://poemhunter.com>

Hey poor man, you're all alone
Hey old daddy, I know where I'm going
Father Death, Don't cry any more
Mama's there, underneath the floor
Brother Death, please mind the store (1-6)

The lines depict death as the alternative for a hard and hopeless life, one of the themes of blues poetry. The rhymed verse in triplets, the African-American vernacular term "Mama," and the desolated lyrical self who declares knowing the path after death evidence the blues feeling.

Ferlinghetti's poem "I am Waiting"[52] has repetition as a tool to achieve dramatic effect:

I am waiting for my case to come up
and I am waiting
for a rebirth of wonder
and I am waiting
for someone to really discover America
and wail
and I am waiting
for the discovery
of a new symbolic western frontier
and I am waiting (1-10)

Ferlinghetti uses jazz poetry techniques to create a straightforward cry of protest.

Corso's poem "Requiem for "Bird' Parker Musician,"[53] is elegiac and celebrates one of the greatest jazz musicians of all times, Charlie Parker:

Third voice
yeah, by the time BIRD realized the fake
had come to goof
BIRD was about to split, when all of a sudden
the nowhere bird sunk its beady head
into the barrel of BIRD's horn
bugged, BIRD blew a long crazy note (20-26)

[52] Ferlinghetti, Lawrence. " I am Waiting." 27 Apr. 2017 <http://poemhunter.com>
[53] Corso, Gregory. ""Requiem for "Bird' Parker Musician." The Cambridge Companion to the Beats. Ed. Steven Belletto. New YorK: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 250.

Wallenstein reports the absence of the poetry by "The Last Poets"[54]; Raymond Patterson, who authored the "Elemental Blues"; Eugene Redmond, poet and editor of "Drum voices Revue"; or the saxophonist and poet Archie Sheep. He concludes that:

> The fact is, so many poets have been influenced by jazz that ten books easily could be assembled with the same title and with different poets each time. Perhaps this book might have been more appropriately called A Jazz Poetry Anthology, the indefinite article being more well-suited for this impressionistic and unsettled class of poetry (par. 3)

The poets included in the anthology, in great part, have written "closely and impressively with jazz" – Hughes, Kenneth Patchen, Kenneth Rexroth, Ferlinghetti, Kerouac, Amiri Baraka, Jayne Cortez, Ishmael Reed, and Sonia Sanchez. Wallenstein quotes the editors who state that the poets emphasized are the ones who "have tried to write about the music and to keep the musical rhythms without relying on a live combo to set the pulse" (par. 4). The anthology revisits the jazz's origins and provides a particular reading of jazz history with diverse musical stages across their own "poetic treatments."

It is possible to say that Baraka is a poet to be heard. The readings by the poet himself are full of the rhythmic experience of jazz, jive talk, jazz scat, repetition, and protest. Baraka's use of the oral tradition of black poetry is one of his most notable poetic characteristics. The poem "Incident"[55] evidences the rhythm of African-American speech of the jazz-infused writing: "He came back and shot. He shot him. When he came./ back, he shot, and he fell, stumbling, past the/ shadow wood, down, shot, dying, dead, to full halt." (1-3).

Kerouac's poem "Mexico City Blues"[56] is representative of jazz rhyme and rhythm. The lyrical self depicts disillusionment and hopelessness, questioning life meaning:

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[54] A group of poets and jazz musicians from Harlem considered the precursors of the hip hop movement.

[55] Baraka, Amiri. "Incident." *Poetry Foundation*. 27 Apr. 2017 <http://poetry foundation.org>

[56] Kerouac, Jack. "Mexico City Blues [113th Chorus]." 27 Apr. 2017. *Poem-a-day*. <http://poets.org>

Got up and dressed up
  and went out & got laid
Then died and got buried
  In a muffin in the grave,
Man –
  Yet everything is perfect,
Because it is empty,
Because it is perfect
  With emptiness,
Because it's not even happening. (1-10)

Reed's "Oakland Blues"[57] also presents death and loneliness as theme and uses repetition to highlight the feeling of desolation:

Reed's "Oakland Blues"[58] also presents death and loneliness as theme and uses repetition to highlight the feeling of desolation:
O, it's hard to come home, baby
To a house that's still and stark
O, it's hard to come home, baby
To a house that's still and stark
All I hear is myself
thinking
and footsteps in the dark (19-25)

The poets are crucial to the history of the connection between poetry and jazz. Furthermore, there are contemporary authors who also contribute to the understanding of what a jazz-poem is, such as Hayden Carruth, poet and author of *Sitting in: Selected Writings on Jazz, the Blues and Related Topics*. Wallenstein highlights that some poems are written with a greater feeling of improvisation. He cites Frank O'Hara's elegy to Billie Holiday "The Lady Day Died"[59] as one of the most splendid:

And I am sweating a lot by now and thinking of
Leaning on the john door in the 5 SPOT
While she whispered a song along the keyboard

[57] Reed, Ishmael. "Oakland Blues." *Poem Hunter*. 23 Apr. 2017. <http://poemhunter.com>
[58] Reed, Ishmael. "Oakland Blues." *Poem Hunter*. 23 Apr. 2017. <http://poemhunter.com>
[59] O'Hara, Frank. "The Lady Day Died." *Poetry Foundation*. 27 Apr. 2017. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/42657>

> To Mal Wadrom and everyone and I stopped breathing (26-9)

The scholar argues that Holiday's "Strange Fruit,[60]" is "based on a poem of the same title by Lewis Allen, or any number of great lyrics written to jazz music" (par. 6). The poem refers to lynching acts in the American South. Extremely violent racism segregated blacks after the Civil War. The metaphor of the strange fruit and the contrast between bucolic images and blood build powerful images:

> Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
> Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
> Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze,
> Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.
>
> Pastoral scene of the gallant south,
> The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,
> Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,
> Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.
>
> Here is fruit for the crows to pluck,
> For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,
> For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,
> Here is a strange and bitter crop. (1-12)

Wallenstein writes that some poems do not depict what jazz poetry is, in spite of the references to players, tunes, sets or albums. When a poem merely aims at adulatory and elegiac purposes -- about John Coltrane, Parker or Monk – it frequently becomes nostalgic, straightforward with no margin for open-ended interpretations, and lacks the "depth and power jazz suggests" (par. 7).

The author comments that the most powerful jazz poems in the anthology are the ones that do not allude to jazz musicians or location. Hughes played informally with Charles Mingus (poetry admirer and sometimes poet). Regardless of the collaboration on stage and in the recording studio, the poet's work voices jazz. Wallenstein quotes Hughes's remarks to the 1951 edition of *Montage of a Dream Deferred* when he comments that he "would often make [blues poems] in [his] head and sing [them] on the way to work" (par. 8). Wallenstein reports that the poet writes jazz poetry when performing with

[60] Meeropol, Abel. "Strange Fruit." *Genius*. 27 Apr. 2017. < https://genius.com/Abel-meeropol-bitter-fruit-annotated>

musicians, the rhythm of the players frequently improved a stanza or two in his poems. In Hughes's words, quoted by Wallenstein:

> In terms of current African-American popular music and the sources from which it has progressed – jazz, ragtime, swing, blues, boogie-woogie, and be-bop (…) this poem on contemporary Harlem, like be-bop, is marked by conflicting changes, sudden nuances, sharp and impudent interjections, broken rhythms, and sometimes the popular song, punctuated by riffs, runs, breaks, and distortions of the music of a community in transition. (par. 8)

Wallenstein notes that four poems included in the anthology – "Dream Boogie," "Jazzonia," "Morning After," and "The Weary Blues" -- express Hughes's internal feeling of music, poignancy, and yearning, as well as his talent to "play changes around his subtle themes." Wallenstein affirms that "The Weary Blues" commences with "a simple rhyme that sets up an expectation that Hughes slides away by the end of the stanza:" "Droning a drowsy syncopated tune, / Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon, / I heard a Negro play, / on Lennox avenue the other night" (1-4). The expected rhyme is present in the next stanza in an improbable way: "By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light / He did a lazy sway… /He did a lazy sway. (6-8) (Jazz Poetry/jazz-poetry/'jazz poetry'??? par.10)

Wallenstein observes that the anthology is interesting because of the specific contents and the encouragement of thought about the coalescence between the jazz and poetry. It brings questions about "boundaries" of jazz and poetry at an appropriate time of increasing interest in the subject. A trend in the current criticism approves orality over "literariness," along with the "movement of jazz poetry away from the deeply silent poem, the "fixed text," towards voiced performance – with room for improvisation" ("Jazz Poetry/jazz-poetry/'jazz poetry'???" par.10).

In the essay "Poetry and Jazz: A Twentieth-Century Wedding," Wallenstein reminds us of the ancient bond between poetry and music. Intonation, cadence, rhythm and lyricism have been tools of both. The music in the mind of the poet leads the metric and the feelings to be conveyed along the lines. The author argues that poets and musicians have a historical record of collaboration. Ancient minstrels, troubadours and trouveres used to weave words and music. Poets and

musicians created, and they still do so today, operas, tone poems, choral pieces, and diverse songs (par. 1).

According to him, jazz is widely a folk music and the poetry that comes out of it is traditionally folk poetry. The individual and personal expression of jazz poetry appeared only in the 1950's (par. 7). He writes that from the onset, jazz asserts poetic speech as well as song. This poetic element originated in the church services of blacks who worked in the plantations where the preacher was the one who had the gift of using words cleverly. The preacher moved from speech to poetry constantly, like in ancient times, and he was believed to have answered the Lord's invitation. During the services, the preacher called out the gospel and the congregation would sing in a fast tempo-response that connects religion and poetry (par. 8). He adds:

> Sometimes the talk that occurs in jazz, gospel or blues tune is indistinguishable from songs with similar themes, since this talk is carried afloat on the music. However, such jazz raps are in a world of their own, being without melody or any formal song structure. The word "rap" may best express this often improvised conversational kind of extinction. (par.9)

Improvisation is the essential element of jazz. It is the effect of creating "on the spur of the moment" and has conceptualized modern jazz (par. 9).

In *Directions Home: Approaches to African-Canadian Literature*, Clarke states that any authoritative work on African diasporic poetry must present song lyrics. In the essay "Bring Da Noise: The Poetics of Performance, Chez D'Bi Young and Oni Joseph," in the same book, the author asserts that "African-American collections sound the words of the spirituals and the blues, and nowadays rap. In the Caribbean, calypso, reggae, and dub command literary attention" (177). He adds that Derek Walcott, "a Caribbean laureate in Literature," celebrates calypso in his poems. For Clarke, respectable critics of Afro-Caribbean Literature should research libraries and bookshops as well as dancehalls and music stores.

Clarke states that the definitions of jazz poetry range from "emphasizing styles – such as phrasing or line breaks or stream-of-consciousness liberty – or just subject matter: a paean for saxophonist Charlie Parker, even if written in strict sonnet form, is a 'jazz poem'

according to this criterion" (193). Jazz was, in its origins, an instrumental music that is directly shaped by the sound of the African-American voice. The scholar refers to *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature* (1997) which explains that this music sounds similarly to "the jam-session-like talk and song from the Harlems of America and from its southern roads":

> In a real sense the sound of a jazz is that of the African-American voice scored as band music, with all of black talk's flair for story-telling as well as the dirty dozens, understatement as well as braggadocio, whispery romance as loud-talk menace, the exalted eloquence of a Martin Luther King and the spare dry poetry of a pool-hall boast or a jump-rope rhyme. (194)

Clarke explains the conception of jazz as molded by oral African-American culture. "[J]azz-directed writing accords the voice primacy." The musical genre is in dialogue with speech that gives it "force and flavor" (194). Singers enter the jazz act and with their voices, like Louis Armstrong, imitate instrumental sounds that reproduce vocal sounds. Clarke exemplifies the oral tradition of "the plantation blacks" and church services by quoting Frederick Ward's *Riverlisp*:

Rev. Mores come out of th pulpit walked up th ile an stood after Micah: 'Th Lord welcomes every soul in th Kingdom. And th Kingdom here on earth is th church. Let's hear you say amens.' (answered) 'You, young been a servant of His for our people with your Bible selling an all. Th community loves you as their own and what better than you as their own and what better than you show your people [Jews] what th Lord done tol and we here believes – that all th Messengers is one spirit and loves us cause we is one. (194)

Clarke observes that African-American slaves gave major importance to spoken arts, praised and gratified verbal impromptu. Translating adroitness in print is not an easy task. According to Clarke, Ward is aware of that and is creative in overcoming the obstacles to such writing. The writer finds a manner to adapt jazz techniques to the page. Clarke quotes Siva Vaidhyanatan to point out the techniques: "improvisation, syncopated rhythm, lyrics with such blues-influenced devices as call and response, repetition, and… the practice of signifying: thoughtful revision and repetition of another's work" (194).

Clarke concludes that by applying those devices the writer takes on an "archival-prophetic role," revisiting and reinventing "mass, vernacular fusions of orality and music and text."

The innovative process in recollecting African-American traditions of orality, music and text does not counteract contemporaneity and does not convey "any simple or simplistic" inconsistency regarding modernity and postmodernity. The "jazz-bard," as Clarke names Ward, emphasizes polyphony, weaving a "series of different speakers or voices" (195). Jazz displays a multiplicity of tones, rhythms, standpoints, and significations. Arthur Jafa, quoted by Clarke, explains this multiplicity as "polyventiality," that is, "multiple tones, multiple rhythms, multiple perspectives, multiple meanings, multiplicity" (195). In addition, the author quotes Eileen Southern who states that jazz band components use "collective improvisation" to grant these outcomes (195). The same effects can be achieved by a range of diverse speakers. An authentic jazz poet is concerned with "the music's interest in mixing culturally distinctive sounds." Jazz itself is multicultural and so is jazz influenced writing. I focus on jazz novel here to evidence another interplay between jazz and literature.So far, I have discussed the intricacies between jazz and literature in North America, but jazz improvisation is present in the Caribbean literary tradition as well.

Edward Kamau Brathwaite in the essay "Jazz and the West Indian Novel" points out that writing eloquently about the relations between music and literature is not an easy path. However, he considers that the correspondences between jazz and the folk oral traditions are easier to be evidenced than attempting to do the same with "more conscious products of the 'written' tradition." The connections between jazz improvisation and the artistic premeditation and "non-folk" models of the European canon, as well as the intellectual influences, "require qualifications and the kind of analysis which a study of the kind cannot properly attempt"(327). Brathwaite states "many folk forms, and those passages on West Indian (and other) literary works that grapple most closely with folk forms and folk experience, contain elements of improvisation" (327).

Instances of improvisation such as tone, rhythm and image can come together to provide an effect. The examples are found in some of the West Indian novels, such as Neville Dawes's *The Last Enchantment*. However, Brathwaite asserts that some West Indian authors present an initial "creolization" in their writing, and after moving to London, New York, or Montreal have problems with

expressing the deep roots of their creole and folk tradition (328). Improvisatory aspects in writing can be accomplished "through repetition of a theme – the jazz 'riff" – which is a collective answer that marks the final of a certain improvisation and the inception of the next" (329). According to Brathwaite, this is an aspect found in various folk literatures. The Jamaican folk tale "William Saves his Sweetheart" displays instances of improvisation that befall along "the description of the action and each improvisation is separated by a riff or chorus" (329).

Brathwaite states that jazz can be described as an "aesthetic model" which provides a "way of seeing, a critical tool." He suggests that the reasons why West Indian jazz novels are not really successful stem from the kind of orientation, paradigms, the attention we pay, and the attitude towards "West Indian material." Brathwaite asserts that the "jazz novel" is not supposed to be an epic. The genre depicts a "specific, clearly-defined, folk-type community, it will try to express the essence of this community through its form" (330). Concerned with the community as a whole, the jazz novel delivers the rhythms that are absorbed from the people. The characters are understood and seen as vital parts of the community and take their places in it. The novel has its meaning grounded on the struggles of the community; therefore, it does not convey the "Faustian conflicts of self-seeking knowledge or the Existentialist stoicism of alienation." The jazz novel is concerned with clarifying a certain community. Features of protest – and resistance -- are more appropriate to jazz than it is to waltz, for example.

In the essay "Shape and Tonal Equilibrium," Komunyakaa comments on jazz and its relation to poetry. The poet asserts that jazz unveils the mystery of emotion, the spiritual link to the places where it was born. In order to have a relation to jazz, a poem does not have to have an obvious jazz theme; however, it should display the complete spirit of improvisation of this music. He emphasizes that the African-American has resisted against exclusion and racism through nerve and astuteness. They have conceived their art from minimal resources. Music is a major matter in the black community because it is elaborated with identity. African-American music, impelled by the drum, was judged an immediate menace because it interweaved "cultural unity and communication." Consequently, in sites under the oppression of slave owners, playing the drum was marginalized as an outlaw practice. To counterbalance the loss of musical instruments, the enslaved ancestors used their bodies to make music: "by clapping their

hands and stomping their feet to maintain that unity of expression so important to their cultural heritage" (4).

Komunyakaa adds that American culture is permeated by the cultural resistance of the nights in Congo Square. The ancestors sabotaged the exclusion by simply dancing to maintain banned gods alive. The author writes:

> That they refused to become only an antithesis – lost and incomplete – is almost Hegelian. Our music allowed us to stay connected to our heritage, yet propels us into the future. Being in motivation, becoming – this is the mode of our creativity. The accent is on the positive even when the negative pervades. Our music became an argument with the odds, a nonverbal articulation of our pathos. (4)

He points out that even the blues cry is an assertion that creates possibilities beyond and out of the violation and commodification of the body. This music has been the bridge to the voyage back to the sources of African descendant cultural activity (4-5).

The author observes that jazz has been referred to as "America's classical music" (5). He laments that, recently, many middle-class African-Americans have labeled "jazz as the devil's music," adopting the condemnation that stemmed from the houses of prostitution of Storyville.[61] In order to gain acceptance by the dominant culture, second-class citizens can become "puritanical." Komunyakaa emphasizes that even among the artists of the Harlem Renaissance, Hughes was the only one to embody jazz and blues as major presences in the movement. Regarding African-American poetry, a great part of the poets -- including Claude McKay, Anne Spencer, and Countee Cullen, referred to "British Romantics such as Keats and Wordsworth." These poets were more interested in "New England transcendentalism" than the people's tradition that blues and jazz originated from. Or they related to the early black poetry that was informed by the spiritual (5).

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[61] Storyville, New Orleans, Louisiana was created to regulate prostitution and drugs. It was the red-light district from 1897 to 1917. Established by municipal regulation it did not legalize prostitution but it signified the area in New Orleans that was illegal to be in. The City Councilman, Alderman Sidney Story, wrote guidelines and legislation to control prostitution in the City of New Orleans.

Sterling Brown, Frank Marshal Davis, and Gwendolyn Brooks authored jazz and blues-infused poems during the post-renaissance period of the 1950's. Notwithstanding, Komunyakaa argues that "the first real synthesis of jazz and poetry originated with jazz/blues philosophers Larry Neal and Amiri Baraka or even with someone like Jayne Cortez, whose body of work is tied to jazz" (5). The author adds that African-American poets of the 1920s struggled for recognition just like Phyllis Wheatley[62] who had her writings considered "beneath critical response" by Thomas Jefferson. Until these days, African-American writing encounters denial and cancellation. It is the role of the African-American communities to acknowledge their own writers. Komunyakaa states that "[o]nly when the defense of this country depended on African-American participation did the economic and political climate change to allow for gradual acceptance" (6).

He argues that not many black American poets allowed the presence of jazz in their writings since the music was labeled as "low culture" produced by African descendants (7). The Village Vanguard, a jazz club in Greenwich Village in the 1930s, was the first site to reunite uptown artists and ghetto artists – musicians, actors, comedians, and poets. It was jazz which granted the site for disrupting taboos and it was also the apex activity that some artists experienced. Komunyakaa emphasizes that "Harlem dance and jazz clubs from the 1930's to the 1950's and rock'n' roll did the same much to the chagrin of the politicians" (7).

Along the 1960's, in the post-civil rights period, several African-Americans who were artists retied their cultural bonds. Juvenile black poets referred to Hughes and Frank Horne while young white authors related to Modernism and the American voice of inclusion. Komunyakaa points out:

> Indeed, jazz shaped the Beat aesthetic, but that movement had come a privileged route, too. To many, the Beat movement was nothing more than the latest minstrel show in town with the new Jim Crows and Zip Coons, another social club that admitted few women or African-Americans. Charlie Parker was their Buddha (7).

[62] In a footnote, African-Caribbean-Canadian poet Afua Cooper writes that Phillis Wheatley is the first black person in North America to write a book. Her work is entitled *Poems on Various Subjects: Religious and Moral*, published in England in 1773 (40).

The use of music in African-descendant writing unveils more than a tool for resistance and identity survival. In the essay "Langston Hughes + Poetry = The blues," Komunyakaa quotes Albert Murray who argues that the blues statement conveys an awareness of life that is assertive. Murray explains that the blues lyrics assert the confrontation of the absurd, the unhappy, and the catastrophic. The lines also depict the individual making the confrontation, his self-control, his perception of structure and style; as well as "his sense of humor, his sense of ambiguity and his sense of possibility." Hence, the existence of the blues tradition is an undeniable proof that the individuals who elaborated it reply to the adversities of the human condition not with despair and hysterics but with poetic astuteness and pragmatic insight (34).

In "Elaborations: A Blues Theory of African American Poetics", Bolden writes that African-American resistance poets, that is, blues poets, and blues musicians engage in "expressive acts of cultural resistance" (37). He explains that the phrase "resistance poets" usually describes colonized poets who are resistance movement activists. The author highlights that ""resistance poetry" refers to a poetry that demonstrates an identification with the repressed colonized culture by its revision of vernacular forms." Blues musicians and blues poets counteract misrepresentation using these vernacular forms to depict and to reply to black experiences in cultural styles that challenge canonical definitions of poetics "resisting ideological domination" (37). Resistance poets elaborate, from their specific traditions and experiences, new arrangements in order to confront their historical circumstance. It is possible to affirm that Morrison refers to these new methods when she refers to black writing as the use of "found objects," that is, recreating, re-elaborating, revisiting, and adapting tradition and experience in order to struggle against assimilation and misrepresentation.

Bolden states that blues poets, like resistance poets in any other colonized area, are aware of the annihilator effects of the erasure of a people's history and culture. He observes that many colonized peoples communicated through aural/oral cultures. Therefore, resistance poets are conscious of the effectiveness of music as a tool to oppose against colonizers (38). The author categorizes blues poetics as "a metaphor for a critical model of African American poetry." It is his attempt to avoid examining black poetic forms from a formalistic and nationalist standpoint, arguing that "blues music rejects simplistic binary oppositions" (38). An analysis of blues music requires expansion,

Bolden points out. Criticism that acknowledges marginalization should avoid limiting criticism to nationalism and favor internationalism. Thus, racism does not encompass colonization itself but one of its aspects. Internationalism enables criticism to recognize the importance of other "traditions of resistance and thereby participate in a universal struggle for liberation" (38).

Bolden's argument acknowledges the commonality of experiences in the African diaspora having music aligned with poetry as its main diffusion, a tool that provides internationalism and the possibility of interchange among diverse marginalized African-descendant cultures.

3.2 Jazz, blues, and samba in African-Brazilian Literature

> *Fosse um negro norte-americano, Cruz e Sousa tinha inventado o blues. Brasileiro, só lhe restou o verso, o soneto e a literatura para construir a expressão da sua pena*[63].
>
> *- Paulo Leminski*

The African diasporic practice of interweaving music and written poetics is present in African-Brazilian writing and Bolden's analysis of the blues poets' awareness regarding the effectiveness of music as a conveyor of resistance and tradition is existent in African-Brazilian literary activity. The interconnection between music and writing permeate diverse instances of Brazilian black poetry. The examples range from allusion to rhythms and musicians to the use of cadence, improvisation, rhythm, syncopation, and call and response verse. It is possible to affirm that the interconnection began with Caldas Barbosa in the nineteenth century. Besides being a musician, Barbosa was also a poet. Furthermore, the presence of music in the poetics by authors such as João da Cruz e Sousa (1863-98), Solano Trindade (1908-1973), Oliveira Ferreira Silveira (1941-2009), and Pereira (1963) evidences the intrinsic relation between the cultural expressions in African-Brazilian experience. Briefly, I introduce

[63] If he had been a black North-American, Cruz e Sousa would have invented the blues. As a Brazilian, only the verse, the sonnet, the literature were left for him to build the expression of his sorrow. Leminski, Paulo in *Vida: Cruz e Sousa, Bashô, Jesus, Trótski – 4 Biografias*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2013. 22.

textual evidence of the infusion of African diasporic rhythms in African-Brazilian writing. This infusion does not limit itself to African-Brazilian music such as samba, *lundus, maracatus*, *jongo*, and *candomblé* sacred hymns, but extends to jazz, blues, and African-Caribbean music as well.

The elements that may characterize samba as an African-descendant genre turn possible to pinpoint some similarities with blues and jazz regarding techniques and theme. As analyzed in the previous chapter, samba has its strongest mark in rhythm, more precisely, syncopation. However, rhythm does not reduce samba to rhythmic music. Lyrics convey meaningful aspects of the African-Brazilian experience and samba songwriters are word masters. Samba lyrics convey beauty -- that is the stem of the amalgamation of metaphoric language -- context in repeated lines, antiphony, and a reflection about life and death – which may be considered the "philosophy of samba." Samba is the African-Brazilian chronicle in lines that express everyday life and its typical characters and topics: the *malandro*, the female black beauty of the samba dancer, as well as events in the slums and hillsides of the big cities, the cost of living, lack of opportunities, racism, criminality, poverty and social exclusion. As an instance of the lyrics that combat and denounce racism, Jorge Aragão writes, in 1992, the samba entitled "Identidade[64]:"

> Se preto de alma branca pra você
> É o exemplo da dignidade
> Não nos ajuda só nos sofrer
> Nem resgata nossa identidade (11-14)

The line "[s]e preto de alma branca pra você (11) convey a racist phrase commonly spoken in Brazil. It is a naturalized way to refer to whiteness as a model of virtue and moral meaning. Blacks who wanted to be accepted in the dominant society should adopt white standards of behavior. Aragão's lyrics condemn the rejection of black culture in a country with black majority in terms of population and claim for legitimation of black identity.

[64] "Identity:" "If a black with a white soul / means the example of dignity to you / it does not help / only causes us to suffer / nor rescues our identity (11-14) Aragão, Jorge. "Chorando Estrelas" RGE,1992.

Aragão's creation encompasses the description of life in the slums and its social issues. In the samba "Malandro[65]," the songwriter delineates love and crime in the excluded communities and the emblematic figures of the *malandro* and the black female samba dancer.

Malandro
Eu ando querendo falar com você
Você tá sabendo que Zeca morreu
Por causa de brigas que teve com a lei
Malandro
eu sei que você nem se liga no fato
De ser capoeira moleque mulato
Perdido no mundo morrendo de amor
Malandro
Sou eu que falo em nome daquela
Que na passarela é porta-estandarte
E lá na favela tem nome de flor
Malandro
Só peço o favor que te tenhas cuidado
As coisas não andam tão bem pro teu lado
Assim você mata a Rosinha de dor (1-16)

The lines in the samba "Malandro" convey the advice of a narrator to the figure of the male character that risks his life gambling, seducing women, drinking, spending his nights at the pubs and exposed to crime, not necessarily involved with it. Most commonly, the *malandro* is a racial-mixed good- looking young man who is a night-life lover. He is frequently the target of jealous criminals, cheated husbands and racist police officers.

Chico Buarque de Hollanda's "O Meu Guri."[66] depict sorrow, deprivation and social exclusion. Hollanda is a well-known and acclaimed white composer who is famous for his polyphonic verse.

[65] *Malandro /* I address you / You know Zeca died / because of troubles with the law / Malandro / I know you don't care about the fact / of being *capoeira* brat mulatto / lost in the world dying of love / *Malandro* / I am the one who speaks to you on behalf of that / who in the catwalk is a banner holder dancer / and there in the slum has the name of a flower / *Malandro* / I just ask you to take care / bad business is about to come / Thus, you'll end up killing Rosie of pain. Aragão Jorge, "Verão." Ariola Bacarola, 1983

[66] Hollanda, Chico Buarque de. "O Meu Guri" 'My Kid.' "When he, young mister, was born my scion/ That was not the moment/ For him to be born/ He was born with a hunger face/ I even had no name to give him" (1-4). Hollanda, Chico Buarque de. "O Meu Guri" *Almanaque*. Universal Music Group, 1981.

The voice in the samba lyrics depicts the desolation of a poor teenage single mother living in a slum on a hillside of a big city. The teenage mother has to raise the child amidst criminality and famine without perceiving that the boy is involved with crime. In Hollanda's lines:

> Quando, seu moço, nasceu meu rebento
> Não era o momento dele rebentar
> Já foi nascendo com cara de fome
> E eu não tinha nem nome pra lhe dar (1-4)

The examples of samba lyrics are a vast source for the investigation regarding the depictions of African-Brazilian experience. Martinho da Vila writes about the difficulties that poor black young students face to enter college. The lyrics are ironic and criticize college fees in private institutions as well as the price of books in Brazil. In "O Pequeno Burguês,"[67] Vila declares:

> Felicidade
> Passei no vestibular
> Mas a faculdade
> Ela é particular

In spite of many Brazilians considering samba as entertaining music, a great part of the compositions convey protest and resistance modes. The interconnection with blues may have its beginning during the slavery period in the Americas and with the Middle Passage and it has examples in the early period of African-Brazilian literature.

In *Vida: Cruz e Sousa, Bashô, Jesus, Trótski – 4 Biografias*, Paulo Leminski writes that Cruz e Sousa – the greatest Brazilian symbolist poet -- transformed, through verse, his fate of suffering and deprivation into beauty and meaning. His poetry depicts overcoming the conflict caused by the antagonism of being a black man -- a synonym of slave labor -- and the accomplishment of possessing the "most sophisticated white repertoire of his time (the "Spirit")" (22). By the period of slavery, enslaved Africans suffered from a feeling of deep sorrow and nostalgia called *banzo*. It is possible to affirm that this feeling permeates Cruz e Sousa's poetry.

[67] Vila, Martinho da. "O Pequeno Burguês." 'The Small Burgeois.' "Hapiness/ I passed the entrance exam/ But the college/ It is private" Vila, Martinho da. "O Pequeno Burguês." *Martinho da Vila*. RCA, 1969.

Leminski compares *banzo* with the blues. *Banzo* was the historically situated feeling that black Brazilians experienced when subjugated as slaves. When a black slave had *banzo*, he would stop working; neither punishment nor torture would make him move. He had the desire to eat earth to die and return to Africa through death. Slaves with *banzo* were lost goods (22-3). The poet states that *banzar* (to have banzo) was an African pronunciation of the Portuguese *pensar* (to think). *Pensar*, for the black Brazilian, meant *banzar*, being sad until dying. A kind of sorrow that meant suicide (25).

Leminski investigates the difference between the African-Brazilian *banzo* from the African-American blues. The author points out that blues is a music genre and a black North-American experience concerning the feeling of sorrow and nostalgia. He interrogates if the blues has a wider meaning conveying a black American feeling with American meaning from the Americas (25). Sorrow is one of the feelings that permeates the artistic production of the African diaspora, the kind of sorrow resulting from separation, loss, exile, dispersion, exclusion, and deprivation. Also the sorrow that stems from disillusionment, love, jealousy, betrayal, abandonment, and gender inequality -- in the case of a female voice in the lyrics. Gender inequality is present in the works of Smith and Holiday in the U.S.A, and through the voices of samba interpreters such as Alcione, Dona Ivone Lara, and Leci Brandão in Brazil. The blues, as a feeling, and *banzo* are similar states of the soul that permeate African diasporic experience. In Cruz e Sousa's "Violões que Choram"[68] the feeling of pain and anxiety is evidenced:

> Que céu, que inferno, que profundo inferno,
> que ouros, que azuis, que lágrimas, que risos,
> quanto magoado sentimento eterno
> nesses ritmos trêmulos e indecisos... (65-8)

Trindade alludes to blues, samba, and *maracatus* in his poetry. He interweaves the cadence of rhythms of African origins with his verse. The poet's work is a turning point in black Brazilian poetry from the early 1930's to late 1940's. His verse unveils new modes of cultural expression that reverses stereotyping and standardization. The

[68] "Crying Guitars" "What a heaven, what a hell, what a deep hell/ what gold, what blue, what tears, what laughs/ how much hurt eternal feeling/ in these trembling and unsure rhythms" (65-8)

desire to reach marginalized cultures through poetry is fulfilled through the depiction of his own experience as a black individual interwoven with African-Brazilian music and political issues. Trindade proposes a project that goes beyond the struggle against racism and exclusion. The author's lines connect beauty and passion from an Afrocentric posture. The poem "Tristes Maracatus[69]" is an instance of sorrow, nostalgia and rhythm permeating poetry:

> Baticuns maracatuando
> Na minh'alma de moleque
> boneca negra na minha meninice
> de negro preto de São José (1-4)

Trindade alludes to blues in the poem "Canto da América[70]":

> Blues! swings! sambas! frevos!
> macumbas! jongos!
> Ritmos de angústias e de protestos,
> estão ferindo os meus ouvidos!...
> São gemidos seculares da humanidade
> ferida, (1-6)

The poet transmits the desire to unite the African diasporic struggle against racism through music.

Another African-Brazilian poet that interweaves music with written poetics is Oliveira Silveira. He is the Afro-*gaúcho*[71] writer that inscribes black tradition amalgamated with the experience of being black in the South of Brazil, a region known for the German, Italian, Russian, and Polish immigration. The poetic discourse in Silveira's lines is the protest against silencing and invisibility of the black culture in the *gaúcho* plains called "pampas." In the preface of *Oliveira Silveira: Obra Reunida*, Augusto writes that Silveira's poetry presents a commitment with his homeland and his verse denotes an Afro-*gaúcha* music. For Afro-*gaúcha* music I mean the fusion between African-descendant rhythms with typical Southern Brazilian music.

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[69] "Sad Maracatus:" "Beats performing maracatu/ in my infant soul/ Black doll in my childhood/of pitch black from San Joseph" (1-4).

[70] "Chant from America:" "Blues! swings! sambas! frevos! Macumbas! jongos!/ Rhythms of anguish and protests,/ are hurting my ears!.../ The chants of the humanity/ wounded," (1-4).

[71] *Gaúchos* are the people that were born in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state in Brazil. The *gaúcho* culture also relates to the culture with the same name in Argentina and Uruguay.

However, the lines do not convey only factual or regional aspects (20). Thus, Silveira refers to *rumba*, samba, *batuques* (in rhythmic and religious meanings), blues, and jazz. His verse stems from the *gaúcho* tradition interwoven with African heritage. Furthermore, Silveira depicts the presence of blues as a trace of the commonality of African-Brazilian and African-American experiences. The poem "Sinto às Vezes que Sou Uma Criança Sem Mãe" refers to the spiritual "Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child":

"É,
sinto às vezes que sou uma criança sem mãe
que vai pelo mundo à procura de quê?
de quem?[72] (1-4)

Another textual evidence is present in the poem "BANJO"

B a n j o
b l u e s
Q u e i x a s u r d a n o b o j o d a a l m a
t e m p e r a d a n a s c o r d a s d a v o z.
B l u e s a o
b a n j o.
Amigo tagarela, vamos rir... da sorte. (1-7)[73]"

Silveira connects the feeling of the African-Brazilian *banzo* with the African-American sorrow (the blues) of the cotton plantation and with the African-Caribbean sadness in the sugar cane plantation in the poem "*Banzo* em Flashback"[74]:

Amargo tempo de raízes
Arrancadas,

[72] Yes,/ Sometimes I feel like a motherless child/ who travels the world searching for what?/ for whom?" (1-4).
[73] Banjo, / blues/ deaf complaint in the bulge the soul/ seasoned in the vocal chords/ blues at/ the banjo./ Talkative friend, let us laugh… at the fortune.
[74] Bitter time of roots / torn away / sore time of placenta / assaulted / strange time of babies /spoiled:/ the ship our craddle / and the sea would rock us / Sugar cane plantations the Caribbean / Mississipi cotton fields:/ cotton white time, / hand dark time./ Bitter sugar from mills, / muddy gold from mines / - that is why Black Gold -/ bleeding from jerky houses / hemlock poison from coffee plantations:/ our hands and arms machines/ and the backs, carthorse/ or rock of muscle and flesh / where the whip gashes crack. (22)

dorido tempo de placenta
violada,
estranho tempo de bebês
mimados:
navio nosso berço
e o mar nos embalava.

Caribe canaviais,
Mississipi:
tempo branco de algodão,
tempo escuro de mão.

Amargo açúcar dos engenhos,
turvo ouro das minas
extraído por mãos turvas
-- é por isso Ouro Preto –
sangria das charqueadas,
cicuta dos cafezais:
nossas mãos e braços máquina
e as costas, carretão
ou rochedo de músculos e carne
onde estalam as vagas do látego. (1-22)

Trindade and Silveira refer to blues in different poems that form their poetic work. The awareness of the power of music in the African diasporic culture, as Bolden puts it, is a clear expression of the poets' desire to echo their voices of protest and resistance all over the Americas. Music is resistance that breaks the boundaries of language and geography. In spite of the commonality of the experiences that pervade African-diasporic cultures, diverse modes of resistance that stem from gender, class, and nationality oppose to essentialism and hegemonic postures. Different responses to oppression rescue and renew tradition transnationally.

Black resistance against racism addresses the black American model as the most successful movement around the world, and its leaders, such as Malcom X and Martin Luther King, have received praise and acknowledgement worldwide. However, studies like Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*, and Clarke's essays -- "Contesting a Model Blackness: A Meditation on African Canadian African Americanism, or the Structures of African-Canadianité," and "Must All Blackness be American? Locating Canada in 'Borden's Tightrope Time,' or Nationalizing Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*" – point out the diversity of black identities. In the *Black Atlantic*, for instance, Gilroy

investigates the construction of African-Caribbean diasporic identity in the United Kingdom (81). Gilroy observes that black settlement in the country dates back many centuries and is an ongoing process. However, modern black communities are recent in the country beginning in the post-World War II period. These communities unite more by the experience of dislocation than by the memories of slavery and plantation society. He explains that the effects of racism alone could not forge the synthesis of a single black British culture:

> Thus the role of external meanings around blackness, drawn in particular from black America, became important in the elaboration of a connective culture which drew these different "national" groups together into a new pattern that was not ethnically marked in the way that their Caribbean cultural inheritances had been (82).

Gilroy acknowledges the presence of black American culture in the formation of black UK identity as a coalition force.

In "Contesting a Model Blackness: A Meditation on African-Canadian African-Americanism, or the structures of African-Canadianité," Clarke states that African-American patterns are present in African-Canadian culture. Notwithstanding, there are alterations that adapt the black American patterns to the African-Canadian experience. He notes that black Canadian identity does not simply mirror African-American cultural meanings (28). Black America adopts a hegemonic attitude towards African-Canada. In fact, African- America has contributed to shape black diasporic culture in the Americas as a whole. Nevertheless, African-Canadian artists and intellectuals insist on pointing out distinct identities observing that African-American intellectuals have annexed black Canadian culture. Moreover, the white dominant culture in Canada perceives black Canadians as visible minorities; which denotes the silencing of this social group and the insistence of the white majority on denying the past of slavery and current racial discrimination. Clarke writes that a great part of the historical accounts of the colonization in Canada do not refer to legalized slavery causing people to believe in a Canadian past of equal opportunities (35). In his essay, Clarke points out the difference between African-Canadian and African-American identities highlighting that the former is not simply a derivative from the latter. The author argues that

African-Canadian identity is not merely dualistic, that is, it does not refer to being or not being African-American oriented.

In spite of the commonality of experiences, it is not possible to consider African-Brazilian identity a sub-product of African-Americanism. In fact, African-Brazilian identity has dialogued with African-American culture through diverse cultural expressions and political activism. The Civil Rights movement inspired many of the black resistance movements in Brazil. The interchange between the African-American and African-Brazilian culture is not a recent event. In the beginning, the slave trade enabled cultural intercommunication from African descendant Brazil to black U.S.A and vice-versa.

Interchange between black Brazilian and black American music is frequent. Vianna reports that the "Oito Batutas," a musical group that Pixinguinha participated in, began to play jazz after their *tournée* in Paris in 1922. The anti-Americanist and nationalist criticism accused Pixinguinha of being biased by North-American music, neocolonialism, cultural imperialism, and multinationalization of Brazilian culture (117). The jazz singer, Sarah Vaughan, collaborated with Milton Nascimento in the album "O Som Brasileiro de Sarah Vaughan" in 1978. The examples are many and these are only two of the most important. Furthermore, the African-American poet Nathaniel Mackey has displayed his admiration for the Brazilian singer Elis Regina in a poem entitled "Falso Brilhante." In the poem, the lyric voice speaks from the glass lid of her coffin:

> My self-embrace
> a rickety crib I serenade
> myself inside…
> And I'm singing all the songs that made me a
> star, my arms like wings as though
> they were not quite my own anymore… (20-3)

In "Chamados e Respostas: Diálogos da Negritude em Textos Afro-brasileiros e Afro-americanos," Álvaro Luiz Hattnher writes that it is possible to affirm that some of the first expressions of African-American culture in the U.S.A. stems from the presence of African-Brazilians. Dutch colonizers, who founded New Amsterdam -- today's New York -- brought black slaves from Brazil. These black Brazilians occupied, after freed, an area where today's Greenwich Village is. According to Hattnher the term "negro" may have had its origins from the Portuguese *negro* (312).

The author states that, in spite of the small number of studies, the cultural relations between African-Americans and African-Brazilians, are present in different ways: from the African-Americans who came to Brazil in the search for a "racial paradise,"[75] to diplomatic quarrels between the U.S.A and Brazil regarding the occupation of the Amazon by black American population[76]. Hattnher affirms that one of the methodological hindrances for the study about the interchange between black America and black Brazil is the difference of the amount of black American and back Brazilian literary productions. He points out that the disparity has its origins from the socio-economic situation of blacks in the two countries. Thus, the comparative analyses, so far, have originated from Brazilian texts by black authors in relation to the African-American literary activity (312-3).

The current comparative study highlights the commonality of the experiences in the African-diasporic cultural activity through the specific expression in poetic texts interwoven with elements from jazz, blues, and samba. This chapter analyzed the occurrence of the intertextuality of the three musical genres encompassing the diversity of the expression concerning transnationality. This transnational movement may occur in different moments in history and take more than one direction, which disrupts the hegemonic posture that American blackness may depict. The multi-directional movement of the interchanges between African-diasporic cultures denote the diversity of the expressive modes of resistance.

[75] It is a study on comparative race relations and presents writings from notable black personalities such as E.R. James and W.E.B. Dubois. The online abstract points out that in the early twenties, Brazil had a popular image of a "tropical utopia for people of color, and it was looked upon as a beacon of hope by African-Americans." Black writers offered notable reports of this utopia until the middle of the twentieth century. The civil rights movements and black militancy in the U.S.A began to challenge the myth and finally rejected when black American began to see the untold truths about white Brazilian dominant society and the dangers for black people in Brazil. Hellwig, D.J. Ed. *African-American Reflections on Brazil's Racial Paradise.* Philadephia: Temple University Press, 1992. (2015) April 22 2017 <http://temple.edu/tempress/tiles/722_reg.html>

[76] Luz, Nícia Vilela. *A Amazônia para os Negros Americanos: As Origens de uma Controvérsia Internacional*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Saga, 1968.

CHAPTER IV
KOMUNYAKAA, CLARKE, AND PEREIRA: JAZZ, BLUES, AND SAMBA INFUSED WRITINGS

4.1. Contextualizing the African Diasporic Literature

It was a long period of discussion around some issues concerning black literature. There was debate about the existence of a black literature and discussions around the legitimation of black writing as

literature. Moreover, there was an effort to prove black experience was human experience. Because of the need to prove the existence of a kind of literature that would convey black experience, African diasporic scholars and writers made efforts to highlight specific characteristics to label a text as black literature. It was a necessary endeavor in order to establish black literature while confronting the literary canon with diverse instances of black writing. However, an essentialist perspective regarding black writing sometimes permeates criticism and acceptance of the texts as legitimate representatives of black literature.

As far as this study is concerned, Clarke's, Komunyakaa's, and Pereira's poetry challenges theories in relation to what African diasporic discourse should claim, encompass, depict and convey in literary activity. My point here is that the authors' writings may not respond to the primary question concerning "where is the black person's voice in the text?" in an apparent, evident way. Beyond the poets' skin color and experiences in their African-descendant communities, this study attempts to point out the presence of music in their works and the elements of the blues, jazz, and samba in their poetry. However, in the significant content of their lines, the poets may unveil unexpected and diverse approaches to the expression and use of the musical elements along with other signifiers of African diasporic cultures in poetic discourse. Because of such particularities, it is crucial that a discussion on the main theories of African-descendant literature opens the path to the analyses of the poets' lines. I shall begin with a contextualization about the main trends in Afro-American Literature; then I proceed with a contextualization and critical analysis of Komunyakaa's poetry. Next, I introduce the current studies on Afro-Canadian context of literary criticism and the studies on Clarke's poetry. Finally, I shall present the current literary criticism on Afro-Brazilian Literature and the writings about Pereira.

In the introduction to *African American Literary Theory: A Reader*, Winston Napier writes that African Americans have political empowerment and reform as their main concerns. African Americans reshaped conventional perceptions of inequality and race with a general search for "social acceptance and participation." In Napier's words: "[t]he development of their artistic culture should be understood as deriving significantly from this reformative spirit, and accordingly, as regulated by a need to engage expressive culture as a form of protest" (1). The preoccupation with reform permeated the reverse of negative symbols and stereotyping as well as the awareness of the existence of a real black experience. Therefore, the value of black literature was in its

capacity to convey positive self-portraying and the assertion of black humanity amidst adversity.

In "Between a Failure and A New Creation (Re)reading Yusef Komunyakaa's "The Beast & the Burden" in the Light of Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic," Katarzyna Jakubiak writes that since the beginning of African-American literary and cultural criticism as discipline, the matter of "essence" of the black experience has divided scholars, authors, and critics. The author points out that in the 1920s and 1930s, W.E. DuBois's "Criteria of Negro Art," Langston Hughes's "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," and Zora Neale Hurston's "Characteristics of Negro Expression" promoted essentialism in essays that pointed out specific traits in black literature. She highlights that "(…) they emphasize the uniqueness of the black perception of reality, stress the originality of black creativeness, promote a belief in the "beauty of blackness," and reprove their fellow black writers for setting the white standards at the apex of their artistic aspiration" (865). Napier adds that Hughes and Hurston wrote essays that approached topics of "ideal literary themes, cultural identity and intellectual responsibility and created the canon upon which academic literary critics and theorists would later build" (2). The essayists had the common perception of literature as a vehicle to promote the reconstruction of African Americans social identities. Jakubiak reports that in response to this perspective on black literature, writer Richard Wright observes that black authors cannot achieve literary autonomy if their writing continues apart from the experience of the white majority. She explains that Wright's statement points out that "only through integration with the American scene and the relating of black experience to the larger experience of the working class will black writers manage to fulfill "their roles"" (865).

In "Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature", Houston A.Baker, Jr. defines the concept of "generational shift" as "an ideologically motivated movement overseen by young or newly-emergent intellectuals who are dedicated to refuting the work of their intellectual predecessors and to establish a new framework of intellectual inquiry" (179). The force that moves the "generational shift" is the feeling that a new generation brings everything new being born with them. The past is not meaningful, relevant, or existent. The rupture with the past is a "new paradigm" that encompasses "a new set of guiding assumptions that unifies the intellectual community" (179-180). He writes that there are varied manners to describe the changes that permeated Afro-American literary

criticism from the early twentieth century until the date of the publication of the essay in 1981 (179).

Jakubiak asserts that Baker considered Wright's approach to Afro-American literature as "integrationist," and this approach became the prevailing paradigm of criticism of Afro-American cultural expression in the 1950s ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 865). Baker writes that the editors of the anthology *The Negro Caravan*, Sterling Brown and Ulysses Lee, were responsible for the popularity of the integrationist paradigm. Brown and Lee asserted that "black" and "white" literatures should be analyzed by "a single standard of criticism" (qtd. in Jakubiaki 865).

Jakubiak adds that with the Black Arts Movement, as a "generational shift," a change from the integrationist to the essentialist criticism occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. She explains that critics such as Larry Neal, Addison Gayle, Stephen Henderson, and Houston Baker (at the beginning of his writing career) affirmed that black literature should separate from the "dominant white aesthetic" because of particularities such as "their essential disparity of experience" (865). Neal, Gayle, and Henderson promoted the "metaphysical concept of blackness," which in the words of Baker means not "a theoretical reification, but a reality accessible only to those who can 'imagine' in uniquely black ways" (Generational Shifts 190). Moreover, Jakubiaki explains that Henderson's theory of "saturation" became one of the most singular theories of the Black Arts Movement. The theory states that a critic can gauge the presence of "blackness" in a particular text in the same way that "a hydrometer can measure atmospheric humidity" ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 866).

Black Arts essentialism still permeates contemporary criticism. In "Locating a Text: Implications of Afrocentric Theory," Molefi Kete Asante asserts the acceptance of the existence of elements that help locate a text as African-American literature. His theory affirms the occurrence of an essential, Pan-African experience. The elements that may point out the presence of the Pan-African self are "language, attitude, and direction." He claims that these elements can appear alone or in combination. In Asante's words: "[w]riters are fundamentally committed to the principle of expression; one cannot express one's self without leaving some insignia. From the writer's own textual expression the Afrocentric critic is able to ascertain the cultural and intellectual address of the author" (par.12).

Furthermore, Asante describes two types of writing that fail to depict blackness: "the decapitated text" and the "lynched text" (pars. 13-

4). He explains that a "decapitated text" is the writing that does not convey the cultural and historical experiences of the author; a "lynched text" is the one in which the dominant culture permeates the writing with its tropes and figures. These two types, in Asante's theory, denote that the authors "removed or have been removed themselves" from the principles of blackness because of the devastating extent that prevented legitimacy of African-American writing in general cultural terms (par. 12). Asante's theory is essentialist because it does not take into account the contact among diverse cultures and the exchanges that may occur, though he observes that "decapitated texts" and "lynched texts" are the result of asymmetrical cultural contacts. In fact, Asante appears to underestimate the question of individuality and originality of the black creator when he points out that the author cannot write out of a certain "insignia." Furthermore, the author appears to underestimate the open-ended characteristics of every text.

Jakubiak comments that the division between essentialists and anti-essentialists establishes the main point of debate in contemporary criticism of African-American literature. She adds that it is more difficult to demarcate the frontiers between specific expressions nowadays than it was for Baker to elicit the boundaries between successive "generational shifts" in his 1981 essay (866). She writes that the most influential critics in African-American literature since 1980, Baker and Henry Louis Gates, write criticism based on the post-structuralist postulates by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. Jakubiak highlights that post-structuralism is, by formal statement of meaning, anti-essentialist. In her words:

Since the basic premise of post-structuralist theories is that meaning is never completely ascertainable, the belief in a fixed essence of a literary or cultural text would defy the main goal of post-structuralist interpretations: the exploration of the effects of the plurality of meanings. ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 866)

A critic of the racial essentialism of Black Arts, Gates's "Preface to Blackness: Text and Pretext," refutes the notion of literature as a "repository for ideas" and a "cultural artifact" affirming that:

It is not, of course, that literature is unrelated to culture, to other disciplines, or even to other arts; it is not that words and usage somehow exist in a vacuum or that the literary work of art occupies an ideal or reified, privileged status, the province of some elite cult of culture.It is just that the literary work of art is a system of signs that may be decoded with various methods, all of which assume the fundamental unity of form and content and all of which demand close reading. (251-2)

It is possible to infer, from the author's postulate that literature, in a post-structuralist perspective, conveys various significations that encompass broader meanings beyond mirroring a historical and cultural event. Examining literature from a set of prescriptive guidelines constrains the innumerous possibilities of interpretation through close reading. The possibilities may permeate social, historical, political, psychological, cultural, racial, and gender analysis.

Furthermore, Gates criticizes the employment of race and structure as critical premises. He argues that this critical category views race and language as impressions of "Blackness" defining it "as an entity, rather than as metaphor or sign" ("Preface to Blackness"161). He concludes his essay affirming that "black literature is a verbal art like other verbal arts. "Blackness" is not a material object or an event but a metaphor; it does not have an essence as such but is defined by a network of relations that form a particular aesthetic unity" ("Preface to Blackness" 162). At the end of the essay, Gates highlights the need to pay attention to "the nature of black figurative language, to the nature of black narrative forms, to the history and theory of Afro-American literary criticism, to the fundamental unity and form of content, and to the arbitrary relations between the sign and its referent" ("Preface to Blackness" 163). Finally, he points out that it is necessary to consider the origin of intertextuality as the "nonthematic matter by which texts – poems and novels – respond to other texts."

In *The Signifying Monkey*, Gates argues that the figure of the "Signifyin(g) Monkey" in Afro-American culture and its correlate mythical characters Esu-Elegbara in Nigeria, Exú in Brazil, Echú Elegua in Cuba, Papa Legba in Haiti, and Papa La Bas in in the United States are the myths of foundation in African-descendant cultures. The myths depict "the trope of tropes" that provide the understanding of the plurality of meanings in Afro-American texts and explores the intertextuality between them (5). The figure of the "Signifying Monkey" and the correlatives in Africa and the Americas reveal characteristics that are present in black literature. Briefly, I summarize the notion about the myth of Esu and its parallel with Afro-American criticism. According to Gates, each version of Esu denotes the messenger and the interpreter of the gods, the one who carries the desires of humans to the gods. The master of styles, Esu is the keeper of the intersections, the one who knows the languages and can write and read the Ifa, the sacred texts of divination of the Yoruba people that the African deities use to convey their messages through codes inscribed in palm nuts. Esu is the figure that connects "truth with understanding, the

sacred with the profane, text with interpretation, the word (*as* a form of the verb *to be*) that links a subject with its predicate (*The Signifying Monkey* 5-6).

According to Gates, the mythical figures of Esu and the "Signifying Monkey" are important to theory in three related ways. First, they play roles in myths that serve as important points for black theory about formal language use. Writing and reading connect directly with Esu, whereas speaking and the oral discourse relate to the myth of the Signifying Monkey. The great opposition between the oral and the written modes of narration depicts the search for a voice in literature in so many black texts (26). Second, he argues that tradition determines the function of the figurative in the myths of Esu and the Monkey. The myths enable the expression of both figurative and ambiguous. Gates explains that, in this sense, the literal and the figurative interconnect in a relation of "Signifyin(g)," "the myths and the figurative "Signified upon by the real and literal, just as the vernacular tradition Signifies upon the tradition of letters, and as figures of writing and inscription are registered, paradoxically, in an oral literature" (26). The third conclusion refers to the myths of Esu and the Monkey as figures of "indeterminacy of interpretation," remarks Gates. The vernacular tradition considers indeterminacy "as an unavoidable aspect of acts of interpretation" (26).

Gates's premise of "indeterminacy of interpretation" will be useful in the analysis of the poetry by Komunyakaa, Clarke, and Pereira. Moreover, Gates's notion of intertextuality among Afro-American texts serves the purpose of evidencing intertextuality in the poems by the authors discussed in this work. Such intertextuality ranges far beyond literal discourses on blackness or essentialist postures towards being black in a white dominant culture. Intertextuality permeates the presence of music in poetry and amalgamates with the poetical lyrical self of each of the poets. Gates's criticism is useful concerning the parameters of intertextuality that his theory provides when writing about Afro-American and Afro-Brazilian poetry and music. The figures of Esu and the "Signifying Monkey" may help establish connections with the African diasporic expressions in the Americas. Moreover, Baker provides useful principles to establish interconnections between African diasporic discourse.

In the introduction to *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature*, Baker reveals his shift in perspective concerning black writing. He writes that, in the aforementioned book, he begins to perceive "language (the code) "speaking" the subject" (9-10). In spite of

the former idea, Baker, just like Gates considers literature from a "more inclusively expressive perspective." Baker points out that it is crucial to locate a trope that enables the appropriate characterization of Afro-American cultural expressions. Baker argues that the trope is the metaphor of the blues and the figure of a black blues singer at a railway junction translating his experiences into song (11-12). He writes that Afro-American culture is a sophisticated, reflexive venture, which has its proper depiction in the blues understood as "matrix" (12). The image of the railway junction is the depiction of the singer at this junction transforming the experiences of an oppressive landscape into rhythmic song. The movement at the junction is constant and has a multi-directional characteristic; therefore, its inhabitants are always traveling in a boundless network. The junction is the way-station of the blues and it possesses many forms and takes many directions and it serves as the spot for departures and arrivals (14-15). The junction is the delineation of the amalgam that appears to be always in progress in Afro-American culture; the trope where work songs, field hollers, sacred harmonies, proverbial wisdom, folk philosophy, political comments, elegiac lament and more combine.

It is possible to state that the trope Baker suggests may parallel with the figures of Esu and the Signifying Monkey because it denotes indeterminacy of interpretation and the crossroads, the point at which texts intertwine. The blues matrix, like the character of the "Signifyin(g) Monkey," delineates the primary postulate of post-structuralism: the notion of meaning and identity as an ongoing flux, infused by transitory and multiple directions. Moreover, Baker's metaphor illustrates the absence of a fixed racial self, an Afro-American subject; and points out the existence of the language and its flow of signification, "speaking the de-centered subject" (*The Blues, Ideology* 9).

Gates's and Baker's theories receive criticism, even though the authors base their studies on black experience and locate their tropes on Afro-American culture. However, in "The Black Canon: Reconstructing Black American Literary Criticism," critic Joyce A. Joyce points out that Gates's and Baker's theoretical apparatus are almost exclusively the white scholars' tools, that is, theories of white male critics: Derrida, Foucault, Geoffrey Hartman , Paul de Man, and Fredric Jameson (293-6). Joyce criticizes Gates and Baker because of their "esoteric" theoretical language and rejection of blackness and that both Gates and Baker as poststructuralist critics have written in a language system that depicts a worldview that communicates to a small, isolated audience (293-4).

In "The Crisis in Black American Literary Criticism and the Post Modern Cures of Houston A. Baker, Jr., and Henry Louis Gates, Jr," Sandra Adell questions whether it is feasible to "derive a valid, *integral* 'black text of criticism or ideology from borrowed or appropriated forms" (525). In "The Race for Theory," Barbara Christian endorses Adell's statement when she affirms that the focus on literary critical theory is as hegemonic as the world it attempts to attack. She argues that the language theory "mystifies rather than clarifies our condition, making it possible for a few people who know that particular language to control the critical scene" (283). However, Gates's theory highlights the need of the development of an original and afrocentric principle to the studies of African American Literature. It appears that Christian's claims for clarification denotes the demand for a principle that does not take into account the indeterminacy of interpretation postulated by poststructuralists.

It is possible to affirm that the discussion about Afro-American literary criticism happens in terms of essentialism versus anti-essentialism. Essentialism in terms of prescribing the role of the black author, for example, and anti-essentialism indicating the indeterminacy of interpretation and the possibility to write without the burden of being the spokesperson of the black community through literary production. However, in the last decades, the frontiers between the two currents have merged. Adell, Christian, and Joyce have adopted standpoints that derive from essentialist views, though their criticism attacks prescriptive modes of expression concerning language, which is an anti-essentialist claim. Jakubiaki comments that the twentieth century question "[c]an the 'white man's standards be used to express the black experience?" has been transformed into the contemporary form of essentialism by the interrogation "[c]an the 'white man's standard be used to interpret the black experience?" ("The Beast & Burden 867). The author points out that Adell's, Christian's, and Joyce's critique of Baker and Gates states that their views are simplified, once it does not consider diversity concerning gender and class. Jakubiaki parallels Adell's, Christian's, and Joyce's essays with Edward Said's and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's postcolonial theory that states clear anti-essentialist postulates ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 867-8).

In her seminal essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," Spivak emphasizes that the "the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably heterogeneous" and the "true" subaltern group identity (…) is its difference" (290-2). Gates's and Baker's anti-essentialist theories fail to be really anti-essentialist when their principle do not acknowledge race,

gender, and class differences and disregard the heterogeneity that is present in every social group. It is possible to affirm that because of the absence of references concerning gender and class that Gates and Baker receive most criticism. Thus, in postcolonial theory, blackness depicts an open signifier, which is permeated by class, gender, ethnicity, and nationality.

Jakubiaki asserts that the anti-essentialism posture of some of post-colonial scholars does not encompass difference. Nevertheless, the author argues that Ann DuCille's essay "Postcolonialism and Afrocentricity: Discourse and Dat Course," is an analysis that instigates interconnections between the theories of African-American studies, postcoloniality, and Afrocentricity. DuCille comments: "[w]here Afrocentricity is culturally exclusive and self-centered, postcoloniality is intellectually elastic and decentered (…). Where the one is 'unembarassingly black' (...) the other is 'black' only by default – default of being non-white" (qtd. in Jakubiaki 868). Jakubiaki observes that DuCille concludes her article analyzing passages by DuBois and Said in an attempt to "bridge the gap between essentialism and anti-essentialism" ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 868). Because of the forces that conducted imperialism through colonialism, the constant dislocation (forced or voluntary) created "contact zones" that transformed people in a manner that nowadays it is not possible to affirm that one is simply or purely one thing. The theory proposed by Gilroy attempts to reconcile Afro-American literary criticism and postcolonial studies.

Gilroy's theory, introduced in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Black Consciousness*, received criticism regarding the presence of essentialist postures in his text. However, the theory presented in the book aims at clarifying the complication among the disciplines that focus on post-slavery and postcoloniality. In spite of leaving black Latin American cultures out of the discussion, Gilroy reveals and points out the interconnections and the interchange between African-Caribbean, African-British, and African-American cultures, suggesting the bridging of gaps between African-American and postcolonial theories. Aiming at proposing an anti-essentialist theory, the author advocates the study of African diasporic cultures in the Caribbean, the U.S.A, and Britain in the light of the Black Atlantic theory.

Gilroy explains his theory with the following statement:

The specificity of the modern political and cultural formation I want to call the Black Atlantic can be defined, on one level, through this desire to transcend both the structures of the nation state and the constraints of

ethnicity and national particularity. These desires are relevant to understanding political organizing and cultural criticism. They have always sat uneasily alongside strategic choices forced on black movements and individuals embedded in national political cultures and nation states in America, the Caribbean, and Europe (19).

The Black Atlantic is a theory on cultural exchange, open to diverse presences that help form it, and favors the possibility of dialogue between non-Western and Western cultures. It considers the commonality of experiences regarding the past of slavery and the memory of racial terror. Memory evokes the concept of tradition, which is in the center of the debate between essentialists and non-essentialists. However, Gilroy does not refer to tradition as a set of conservative utterances. Jakubiaki declares that the call for tradition leads Afrocentrists to embrace Gates's and Baker's poststructural studies ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 868).

In "The Crisis in Black American Literary Criticism and the Post Modern Cures of Houston A. Baker, Jr., and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.," Adell concludes her criticism pointing out that Gates and Baker failed to emancipate Afro-American literature from the hegemony of Eurocentric standards. However, she points out that both studies depict nostalgia in terms of acknowledging tradition. In Adell's words:

> For to summon a tradition, for example, by reconstructing it, is to search for an authority, that of the tradition itself. Such an enterprise, even as it pits two or more traditions against each other, or even as it attempts to fuse traditions, is inherently conservative. Something is always conserved; something always remains the Same. (538)

Gates's *Signifying Monkey* and Baker's *Blues, Ideology and Afro-American Literature* receive criticism that indicates the absence of displaying original, emancipatory, anti-essentialist statements in their works. Adell's critique seems to refute tradition understood as a system of maintaining the "Same." Nevertheless, Gilroy proposes a diverse standpoint on tradition that originates from a new conception of modernity. He asserts that black intellectuals have attempted at rewriting modernity regarding "diaspora space and its dynamics of differentiation" (*The Black Atlantic* 197).

For Gilroy, despite differences in relation to the teleology of black emancipation, DuBois, Frederic Douglass, and Wright had the same

understanding regarding the fragmentation of the modern world along directions formed by "racial conflict and could accommodate non-synchronous, heterocultural modes of social life in close proximity." He explains that black intellectuals' conceptualize modernity in different periods founded on the catastrophic rupture of the Middle Passage. Furthermore, the subsequent acculturation and terror that came after the catastrophe and the counterculture of struggle for "freedom, citizenship, and autonomy that developed after it among slaves and their descendants" indicate the conceptions of modernity in the "Black Atlantic" (*The Black Atlantic* 197).

He writes that temporality and history are present in ritualized ways that develop communities of sentiment and interpretation. He offers an argument for this view:

> The manner in which different sets of ideas about the relationship of past and present, living and dead, traditional and modern coexist and conflict is another point to the problems with modernity that I have tried to suspend while using the concept heuristically and testing it against the content of its black countercultures. I have probably reached the point at which this conflict over modernity can no longer be held outside my text. The redefinition of tradition (…) also requires a shift in understanding modernity. To put it another way, it matters a great deal whether modern racial slavery is identified as a repository in which the consciousness of traditional culture could be secreted and condensed into ever more potent forms or seen alternatively as the site of premodern tradition's most comprehensive erasure. (*The Black Atlantic* 198)

Slavery forced blacks to enter modernity. Modern black politics is aware of the fact that diaspora disrupted the linear temporality and inevitably enforces the necessity to view space and time as relational in their articulation with the racial being, claims Gilroy (198). The interconnection "between tradition, modernity, temporality, and social memory" identifies new beginnings and new modes of recollection. The complexity of this reflection relies on the fact that the new beginning is intertwined with memories of the past that has to be constantly revisited in order to bridge the gaps that the forced dislocation caused. Tradition,

in African diasporic cultures, is a revisiting of the past and constant adaptation to the present, creating and recreating present and projecting future sometimes from minimal resources.

Jakubiaki observes that Gilroy's theory does not advocate conservatism. For the author, his view of tradition is neither the lost past as opposition to modernity, nor a "culture of compensation," which aims at renewing access to the past ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 869). Gilroy uses Amiri Baraka's statement to re-conceptualize tradition as "living memory of the "changing same" (*The Black Atlantic* 198). For Gilroy, the "changing same" conveys the paradigm of the Black Atlantic as "a non-traditional tradition, an irreducibly modern, ex-centric, unstable, and asymmetrical cultural ensemble that cannot be apprehended through the Manichean logic of binary coding" (*The Black Atlantic* 198). Gilroy suggests the image of the ship, quoted in the first chapter of the current dissertation, to illustrate the idea of the "changing same" (*The Black Atlantic*16-7). The image of the ship parallels with Baker's "railway junction," correlating Gilroy's Black Atlantic and Baker's blues matrix as tropes of "[c]onstant transformation, crossing, multiplicity, and multidirectionality – in other words, a quality of being in a ceaseless flux" (*Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature* 7).

Nevertheless, Jakubiaki comments that Gilroy's ships move transnationally, going beyond nationality and ethnicity, whereas Baker's blues matrix concerns intersections in the African-American cultural site. She adds that the image of ships depicts gradual rather than abrupt and complete transformation. In the author's analysis, Gilroy's Black Atlantic emphasizes "the hybrid character of post-colonial and post-slavery identities viewing the black identity as hybrid, which is neither a failure nor a new creation but an old creation in constant remaking" ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 869).

Gilroy's discussion on hybridity in black cultural activity is present in the third chapter of *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Music has occupied a central position in Afro-American criticism. The blues, jazz, spirituals, gospel, and folk tales have been integral part of the argument between essentialists and anti-essentialists. Critics of the Black Arts Movement stress the importance of music in black experience. Gilroy highlights the significance of music as the essential element for the connectedness of the communities of the Black Atlantic. Notwithstanding, he stresses that "the histories of borrowing, displacement, transformation, and continual reinscription that the musical culture encloses are a living legacy that should not be reified in the primary symbol of the diaspora and then employed as an

alternative to the recurrent appeal of fixity ad rootedness" (102). The author considers music as the black tradition itself which is transformed by means of "transnational structures of circulation and intercultural exchange" though remaining the "changing same" (87). For Jakubiaki, Gilroy's theory with emphasis on hybridity may help elucidate the possibilities of interpretation of texts in which easy classifications of blackness are not possible to pinpoint at first sight. It is feasible to affirm that Komunyakaa's writings are among these texts ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 870).

4.2. Komunyakaa's jazz-infused and war poetry

> *I left America because I doubted my ability to survive the fury of the color problem here (Sometimes I still do) I wanted to prevent myself from becoming merely a Negro; or even, merely a Negro writer. I wanted to find out in what way the specialness of my experience could be made to connect me with other people instead of dividing me from them. I was as isolated from Negroes as I was from whites, which is what happens when a Negro begins, at bottom, to believe what white people say about him.*
>
> -- *James Baldwin*

Theory on Afro-American literary criticism and the possible interconnections with Gilroy's Black Atlantic theory provide elucidative perspectives that may contribute to the reading of Komunyakaa's texts, as well as Clarke's and Pereira's. Moreover, I bring the author's comments on his own work as a way to give visibility to the poet's impressions about the creative process he employs in his poetics. Komunyakaa's production is vast and diversified; thus, in the current work, I focus primarily on the presence of music and improvisation in his literature; secondly, on the experience of racism in southern U.S.; and finally, on the poetry he writes on Vietnam War as memories and reflections from the time he was serving.

Jakubiaki writes that the notion of hybridity in the Black Atlantic musical expression is particularly important for the study of Komunyakaa's poetry because musical forms infuse his verse. She

writes that the majority of the poems in Komunyakaa's collections display direct references to jazz and blues, speak to particular musicians, enclose excerpts from blues or jazz songs, give an account of musical performances, or emulate blues and jazz structures ("Between a Failure and A New Creation" 871). Jazz and blues are hybrid forms that stem from the contacts among diverse ethnic groups and the dominant culture. It is possible to say that hybridity is an ongoing process that continues as long as the cultural interchange occurs. Jazz is a progressive art in constant transformation. It is not just simple assimilation or acculturation; jazz receives, accommodates, and even embraces other musical genres and inspirits other arts as well.

In the essay "Shape and Tonal Equilibrium," Komunyakaa ascribes his poetic inspirations to jazz. In his own words: "[i]t has the one thing that gives symmetry – shape and tonal equilibrium – to my poetry" (7). He reports that in the early 1970s, while listening to Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, and John Coltrane, he did not notice, at first, how the music was pervading his poetry. He just loved the sound of jazz, as it was part of his life as an endless source to the images on his mind. He declares:

> The music signaled a kind of freedom and that's what I internalized. Jazz allowed me to make vivid excursions into my creative universe. More than what Villon or Ginsberg taught me. I learned from jazz that I could write anything into a poem. The music played off irony and from this I grasped the dynamics of insinuation. Jazz projects tonal insinuations. Discovering this, I now had access to an expanded spectrum of emotions and a palette of linguistic colors that only enhanced the awareness that my intellectual pursuits provided. (5-6)

Nevertheless, he refuses categorizations and labeling. In the same essay, he declares: "I resist being conveniently stereotyped as a jazz poet. I write about whatever captures my imagination, anything that touches me with significance: philosophy, psychology, nature, culture, folklore, history, sex, science, concerns from the gut level to the arcane. And yes, jazz as a necessary balm, moves through all these aspects of our daily lives" (5).

Besides direct references to music, Komunyakaa's poetry has a dynamics of imagery that mimics the "logic of musical compositions,"

remarks Jakubiaki. In *Jazz Poetry: From 1920s to the Present*, Sascha Feinstein comments that Komunyakaa has the skill to connect dissimilar notions and pictures that equate to the abilities of jazz musicians: "[l]ike Monk's use of dissonance and silence, Komunyakaa offers imagery that seems too large to visualize while giving the reader the space to think, respond" (170).

In "Yusef Komunyakaa's Blues: The Postmodern Music of *Neon Vernacular*," Keith Leonard writes that Komunyakaa's *Neon Vernacular: New and Selected Poems* is a selection of poetry that indicates that "the most important and fundamental component of jazz music and of his own poetics is the individual artist's improvisational expression of a fundamental human loneliness lingering beneath black skin" (825). Leonard's assertion stresses the importance of the creative mind over the musical form and the tradition it comes from. The isolation stems from the operations of racism. Komunyakaa's writing refutes established ideas about absolute racial difference regarding the Anglo-American and the African-American literary studies. Furthermore, Leonard's statement suggests thinking deeply about feelings and thoughts from another perspective on the "logic of identity politics" that permeates criticism. He comments that Komunyakaa's verse suggests that the isolation and subsequent loneliness caused by social exclusion and racism, provide examples of "a universal human condition of existential isolation and a necessity for self-expression." He adds that Komunyakaa's claim goes beyond the need of transcending difference; it is the expressive necessity that is perceptible in distinctive cultural forms (825).

It may appear that such perspective on Komunyakaa's posture, concerning isolation and loneliness that stems from racism -- but not exclusively from it -- is veiling the perception of racial conflicts and their consequences. Some of the current racial relations criticism may characterize it a denial of the damages of racial barriers that racism builds against non-whites. However, Komunyakaa's approach to African-American identity and jazz poetics offers a distinctive and new alternative for using African-American music in poetic artistry. A new creation does not despise tradition, but revisits it and recreates it. Komunyakaa's verse has addressed war, race, guilt, redemption, and world mythologies. Furthermore, he is an author who has neither despaired nor denied his cultural inheritance.

In "Race, Human Empathy, and negative Capability: The Poetry of Yusef Komunyakaa," Angela Salas writes that innovative authors such as James Baldwin, Robert Hayden, Rita Dove, and Gwendolyn

Brooks have all received compliments for being the spokespersons for their race rather than as individual artists whose "subjectivity was and is informed, but not determined by that race" (34). In Salas's words:

> Whether reading about German history, Greek mythology, homosexuality, or the burdens of parenthood, many readers still seek a convenient monolithic "African-American" perspective from African-American authors. It is precisely this expectation that made Baldwin despair and (…) deny both his heritage and his family. (34)

Some readers search for sociological and anthropological material when reading black literature instead of looking for originality and creativity. In the search for an authenticity of blackness inscribed in writing, the singularity of poet or text is underestimated in terms such as language and form.

Leonard states that the improvisational instances of Afro-American music are the public manifestations of "Afro-American individual's common human agency to define and to validate him or herself through personalized, idiosyncratic versions of the received cultural forms and discourses that might otherwise isolate the person in a world without absolute meaning"(826). He asserts that improvisation permits the individual to expect to earn the connection with others who experience the same feeling of isolation. In Leonard's words:

> Neither exclusively ethnic cultural self-definition nor an erasure of difference, improvisation in Komunyakaa's verse is a postmodern introspective practice that rewrites the social discourses that create and justify exclusion, including, but not limited to racism, making it the defining activity of the mind. Improvisation therefore becomes the defining process of all human identity. (826)

The complexity of the Afro-American culture and identity turns it a "complex, reflexive enterprise," as Baker puts it. It is possible to affirm that Komunyakaa creates his verse inside what Baker defines as "the matrix as blues," conceiving the matrix as a point of endless "input and output," a network of converging, a productive movement (*Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature* 3).

Leonard highlights that Komunyakaa's procedure defies the notion in Afro-American literary and cultural studies that ethnic affirmation needs declaration entirely upon difference, avoiding the trap of proposing that the primary ideal of the artist is to affirm a presumed universal that stands out patterns of cultural homogeneity. He adds that Komunyakaa's use of jazz in his poetry is so unconventional that most of the studies about his literature neglect such aspect. Leonard writes that Komunyakaa bases his practice on the belief that a jazz poem does not need to "have an overt jazz theme as such but need only to embrace the whole improvisational spirit of jazz" (826).

Moreover, Leonard writes that the literary art envisages Afro-American music as a set of forms and practices that serve exclusively the African-American self-conceptualization and political assertion situated on an original set of cultural norms. Music certainly is the vehicle of diverse ethnic expression, cultural authority, and resistance against racist discourse by means of "improvisational discursive revision." However, in Komunyakaa's work, whose "emphasis is on the individual psyche rather than cultural performance or communal heritage," the authority of music serves to point out the "most fundamental components of a shared human consciousness" (826).

Komunyakaa uses music as a shared creativity more than a shared social condition. He declares in a 1992 interview that his African-American contemporary poets were no longer producing "service literature." These creators were not seeking for approval and legitimization as human beings capable of writing, "but were instead producing a more introspective poetry" that contradicts racism with the complexity of the poet's internal life rather than with protest of social inequalities" (Komunyakaa qtd. in Leonard 826). Leonard affirms that in order to understand Komunyakaa's poetry it is necessary to consider that the commonality of the cultural selfhood and shared humanity have its origin from the complex emotional individuality embodied in "improvisational expressive forms as that combination constructs and gives substance to so-called transcendent ideals and / or communal values" (829).

It is possible to affirm that Komunyakaa's poetics reverses the essentialist norm of an expression that mirrors protest and denouncement that favors the voice of the collectivity. The author is not consciously taking over the role of a spokesperson to represent the needs of a community, or a literature that is unmistakably black. However, because it is introspective and complex, it disrupts the expectations of a discourse that embodies protest. The complexity of an emotional

individuality meets the commonality of a shared humanity, shared human values through improvisational techniques, which is characteristic of jazz experience.

Leonard argues that a jazz-blues aesthetic permeates *Neon Vernacular*, the most important of Komunyakaa's volume. The aesthetic renders ethnicity not as political commitment or a total distinctive cultural legacy but as a singular "individual's psychological, emotional, and cultural experience realized in expressive form" (829-830). The collection presents explicitly jazz-inspired poems that demonstrate the importance of music in Komunyakaa's creative process as he declares in an e-mail message[77] commenting on the presence of music in his writing: "[y]es, the music remains the foundation of the spirit of my life, work, and philosophy (…). The "anti-essentialist approach" sounds provocative and fruitful. In fact, that truly captures the conceit of progressive jazz as a democratic art."

According to William M. Ramsey, in *Dien Cai Dau*, Komunyakaa wrote about long repressed recollections of the Vietnam War that he took fourteen years to write about. Ramsey affirms that Komunyakaa had entered the war doubting its righteous purpose and, arriving there, the resemblances of the Vietnamese landscape, with rich vegetation and sharecroppers, to the American South, increased his distrust. He empathized with the Vietnamese peasants; consequently, he could not hate them and face them in an impersonal way. His awareness of the parallels between the black American South and the Vietnamese peasants made him feel more ambivalent towards American presence in that country (par. 10).

In "Vietnam and the "Voice Within:" Yusef Komunyakaa's *Dien Cai Dau*," Kevin Stein observes that "[t]he haunting locale of (…) Komunyakaa's [war poems] is as much as the domain of the human heart and mind as the jungles of Southeast Asia." Stein reports that in an interview the poet states that the book was "a way of dealing with the images inside [his] head, (…) a means to put in order a private history that exists as much outside history as within it" (Komunyakaa qtd. in Stein 90). In the book, the poet constructs a dialogic structure in which he conducts a dialogue between shared history and more personal narratives of the ones who participated in these events (90).

In an interview to Muna Asali, in *Blue Notes: Essays, Interviews, and Commentaries*, Komunyakaa emphasizes that he resists the idea of

[77] Komunyakaa, Yusef. "Re: Doctoral Dissertation – UFSC –Brazil" E-mail to Maristela Campos. 26 May 2017.

ghettoization as an author. Asali comments that in *Dien Cai Dau*, his poems focus on the experiences of a single black soldier, and not on the experiences of a group of black soldiers. Nevertheless, there is achievement of a careful balance of self and community in a literary ambiance. Komunyakaa states that the ghettoization is inflicted upon certain people and that artists endeavor to traverse. However, he affirms that he is aware of that certain issues cannot be erased:

> But we cannot crawl out of our skin, even when we try toile to ourselves or say that race doesn't matter, that art and artists are color blind, which is no more than an empty, delinquent illusion. This illusion has nothing to do with art or artists, though many of us would like to history on its nose and erase hundreds of years of social and cultural oppression. (76)

Dien Cai Dau offers the perspective of those left out from renowned poetry collections by Vietnam vets. As Stein claims, called the forgotten "fact" of the war, black Americans who fought there were often omitted from the accounts. He writes that "Komunyakaa creates a soldier's history of Vietnam from an African-American perspective, and not surprisingly, our view of what it was to be an American in Vietnam, particularly a Black American, alters considerably" (90). He argues that Komunyakaa relies on the media we commonly relate to the war's communal experience – music, television, drama, and film – to disclose how these devices were differently perceived by white and African-American soldiers. Moreover, possibly because of the marginalization, Komunyakaa is conscious of the disparity between the history recorded and the history one directly experiences (90).

The poem "Hanoi Hannah" is about Hannah, a Vietnamese radio announcer whose task was to undermine the morale of the American troops, inducing homesickness by playing American music and reminding them of women left in the U.S.A:

> Ray Charles! His voice
> Calls from waist-high grass,
> & we duck behind gray sandbags.
> "Hello, Soul Brothers. Yeah,
> Georgia's also on my mind"
> [……]
> It's Saturday night in the States.

> Guess what your woman's doing tonight.
> I think I'll let Tina Turner
> tell you, you homesick GIs." (1-17)

Stein writes that Hanna's tactics are predictable and the poem might easily become a cliché if Komunyakaa did not take a different direction presenting a "black American's perspective on psychological warfare strategies that accentuate racial division" (100). Hannah uses Ray Charles and Tina Turner to attract black soldiers and then releases a "cynical punch line" while imitating African-American vernacular:

> You know you're dead men,
> don't you? you're dead
> as King today in Memphis"
> [……..]
> "Soul brothers, what you dying for?" (20-7)

The lines address the African-American soldiers' ambiguous position in the war, fighting for a nation that does not provide them with real citizenship. They know the dead King in Memphis is not Elvis, but Martin Luther King, Jr, assassinated by a white man. The question "Soul brothers, what you dying for?" reminds Muhammad Ali's reply when asked about his reason, other than religious, for not fighting in Vietnam: "No Viet Cong ever called me *nigger*."

Stein declares that in his poetic procedure, Komunyakaa blends real history and his inner response to historical events, and then refines both with his artistic sensibility. The result is a diverse type of history that makes use of exterior historical events to create an internal, aestheticized history colored with "personal values and interpretations" (92). As Stein has noted: "[i]t is less a book "against the Vietnam War, the claimed purpose of much poetry published during the War, and more a book *about* the War and the experiences it held for soldiers and innocents alike" (92). In some of the poems, present and past seem to merge.

Stein writes that Komunyakaa interweave easy assumptions about the war, collected from film and music, and frustrates expectations. For instance, in the movie "Good Morning, Vietnam" (1987), music is a unifying force, linking the troops in a shared cultural heritage. However, Komunyakaa's African-American experience illustrates the incident in "Tu Do Street" where music is the dividing line:

Music divides the evening.
I close my eyes and I can see
men drawing lines in the dust.
America pushes through the membrane
of mist & smoke, & I'm a small boy
again in Bogalusa. White Only
signs & Hank Snow. But tonight
I walk into a place where bar girls
fade like tropical birds. When
I order a beer, the mama-san
behind the counter acts as if she
can't understand, while her eyes
skirt each white face, as Hank Williams
calls from the psychedelic jukebox

Here music divides just like the lines drawn in the dust by the men. Past and present melt and the speaker is pulled back to Bogalusa, Komunyakaa's hometown in Southern America. The scene renders the color line of the South with the "White Only signs" (6-7). Back to present, the experience of exclusion is repeated in the refusal of the "mama-san' to serve the speaker as if she could not understand his order while her eyes starred at the white people at the pub. The line "(…) as Hank Williams / calls from the psychedelic jukebox" is another evidence of music as a dividing line because Williams is a white American country musician (13-4). On the other hand, music makes the dividing lines between present and past more fluid, as narrative moves in a similar way to jazz improvisations. The parallels between Vietnam and Southern U.S. range from landscape to socio-political implications, and even moral and ethical issues. Komunyakaa's imagery is comparable to filmic technique that displays scenes directed by his artistry. Finally, the lines in the poem: "[t]here's more than a nation / inside us, as black & white / soldiers touch the same lovers" (27-9) render the scene of an understanding of a shared humanity that, for the American combatants, is deeper than skin color. The speaker perceives a humanity that goes beyond the limits of nation. The tunnels in the poem are the figurative terms for the tunnels the Vietnamese used to ferry supplies and disappear, and into which many American soldiers ventured and never returned. The shared humanity is only understood at the exact moment of death. Even though Komunyakaa rejects labeling and ghettoization, his writing is powerful in terms of echoing community demands. In "Shape and Tonal Equilibrium," Komunyakaa acknowledges the importance of music in his life; notwithstanding, he

rejects categorization: "As an African-American poet, however, I resist being conveniently stereotyped as a jazz poet" (5). The presence of music in his writing is a natural process for him, but he does not summarize his creative possibilities to this presence. He perceives jazz as a necessary balm that permeates all the aspects of human's daily lives from philosophy, psychology, nature, culture, folklore, history, sex, and science. Other poems in *Neon Vernacular: New and Select Poems*, attest the presence of jazz and blues in his poetry such as "Elegy for Telonious," "Fog Galleon," "Copacetic Mingus," and "February in Sydney."

4.3. Clarke's Blues and Jazz Use

The history of the formation of black communities interconnects with the struggle for freedom in the U.S.A. I elicited some of the relevant historical events for the formation of African-Canada in the second chapter. As a dynamic process, Blackness in Canada is a complex diversity. Blacks from various cultural backgrounds, language, and ethnicities live in different parts of the nation. In "Contesting a Model Blackness: A Meditation on African-Canadian Americanism or the Structures of African Canadianité," Clarke uses the term African-Canadianité to refer to "[…] a constant self-questioning of the grounds of identity." Though Negritude and Pan-Africanism are also important to many African-Canadians, the author highlights that the term African-Canadianité marks the heterogeneity of the African-Canadian community (47-8).Thus, the model of blackness proposed by African-American culture suffers transformation and constant adaptation to the multi-faceted African-Canadianité. (47-8).

The interchanges between African-American and African-Canadian identities have been discussed in the third chapter. The similarities between the social sites in which African-Canadian and African-American identities are circumscribed enable interconnection. The commonality of the experiences of racial exclusion approximate both cultures. Clarke points out that African-Canadians look up to black America as a site of "self-conscious construction of a civilization" under oppression. He states that "(…) [f]or African-Canadians, African-America signifies resistance, vitality, joy, "nation," community, grace, art, pride, clout, spirituality, and soul. It is a cluster of attractive qualities that we crave for ourselves" (39). The African-American presence in the

Black Atlantic culture is a reality that stems from the importance of historical movements towards freedom and equality that inspired blackness in diverse African-descendant nations. The pervasiveness of African-American culture in African diasporic contexts is undeniable and sometimes serves as a connecting force because it also presents communal traces with other African-descendant experiences.

Clarke asserts that African-Canadian identity is not merely dualistic, that is, it does not simply denote to be or not to be African-American oriented. African Canadian identity is divided into many features and it is possible to say that a few know what blackness is in Canada: "(…) forty-three percent do not identify themselves as blacks on Canadian census documents" (41). Some African-descendants refer primarily to borders of ethnicity and homeland. Thus, Jamaicans may consider themselves British and some Haitians call themselves French. Therefore, these people are counted as people of European origins. African-Canadian writers depict the conflicting identity in terms of ambiguity, confusion, and anxiety in relation to racial identity. It is possible to affirm that some of the aspects of African-Canadian literature is the commitment with African-Canadian identity, the legitimacy of its cultural expression, and nationalization of black experience.

In "Africville, an Imagined Community", Maureen Moynagh indicates how race and nation permeate recent African-Nova Scotian literature and arts. According to Moynagh, Africville is a cultural site whose belonging delineates resistance against "disavowal, exclusion and displacement" (15).In spite that nationalism may appear an old-fashioned system, the endurance of practices of racism, violence and relations of power require resistance with nationalist characteristics. Moynagh argues that the invention of Africville emerges from the necessity to create a site of resistance against modern capitalism and racial discourse. As an imagined community, Africville is a romanticized depiction of African-Nova Scotian rural life. African-Nova Scotian portrayals of Africville frame Africadian nationalism. Moynagh points out that delineations of this cultural site began in the 1970s with Frederick Ward's *Riverlisp: Black Memories*, a short novel written in Black English. Other literary forms such as poetry, film, drama, painting, museum exhibits, fiction, and essays denote the anti-modernism images that highlight rural and pre-industrial life.

Geographically speaking, Africville locates on the periphery of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Settled in 1805, it began as a rural community, indeed. Nevertheless, urbanization began to besiege the site and exclude

it from the white economic interest. This black community was left out from the process of modernization during the twentieth century. Contemporary African-Nova Scotian authors depict the history of modernization and the dispossession of rural inhabitants by modern urban industrialists.

African- Canadian literature and the importance of Clarke's poetics has been the scope of my research since my master's degree that I concluded in 2009. The study here revisits my thesis— *"What We Desire is African:" Intertextuality in Clarke's and Trindade's Poetry*— in what is pertinent to the discussion of Clarke's blues and jazz-infused writings as well as my published essay "What We Desire is African: Intertextuality of Diaspora and Negritude in George Elliott Clarke's and Solano Trindade's Poetry."

Born in Windsor, Nova Scotia, Clarke is the Africadian poet with multiple voices. His writing guides the reader through a visit of African-descendant tradition. His work is a commitment with negotiation of cultural space, and legitimacy of African-Canadian, more particularly African-Nova Scotian culture. His writings interweave history, political rhetoric, and polyphony, which reflect the cultural diversity of black experience in Canada. He writes about an African-Canadian past and denounces events of racism, violent exclusion and past of slavery. His poetry presents intertextuality with canonical writers from the classical period to romanticism to high modernism such as Shakespeare, Shelley, Milton, Chaucer, Eliot, and Yeats; inspirations from Derek Walcott, Amiri Baraka, Ezra Pound, and Wallace Stevens link intertextually to his practice. However, the canonical nuances act along with the emergence of voices given to the Africadian community in Halifax. In the introduction to *Blues and Bliss: The Poetry of George Elliott Clarke*, Jon Paul Fiorentino writes that while reading poems, in front of his community, from his first collection, *Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues*, Clarke was interrupted mercilessly. The audience rejected his reading of poetry that lacked performance and language in a way that could speak to this audience. Fiorentino writes that Clarke's solution was to find a polyphonic language for his poetry from *Whyllah Falls* to the most recent of his publications of poems to combine "abstract, intellectual, and specific literary content with a home place vernacular. These poems are meant to be sung as well to thrive on the page" (xii).
Clarke's poetry collection *Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues* is spiritually based on African-Nova Scotian history. The collection has imagery and speaks about the struggle of the community against the representatives of urban development. In "Campbell Road Church," the

opposition between the attractive images of natural beauty and the ghostly modern urban site depicts the loss of rural Africville as the loss of the promise land: At negro point. Some forget sleep

> To catch the fire-and-brimstone sun
> rise all gold-glory
> over a turquoise harbor
> of half-sunken, rusted ships
> when it was easy to worship
> benin bronze dawns,
> to call "hosanna" to archangel gulls…
> but none do now.
> rather, an ancient, CN porter lusts for Africville,
> shabby shacktown of,
> shattered glasses and promises,
> rats rusting like a girl's loose dress
> he rages to recall the gutting death of his genealogy,
> to protest his home slaughter
> by butcher bulldozers
> and city planner's molesting statistics
>
> at negro point some forget sleep,
> sang "oh freedom over me",
> heard mournful trains cry like blizzards
> along blues Bedford basin…
> none do now. (1-23)

The moment of worshipping nature peacefully is interrupted by the perception conveyed in the line "but none do now" (9). Modern urbanization devastates the dream of freedom transforming the site into numbers which feed the industrialists' greed: "rather, an ancient, CN porter lusts for Africville" / [. . .] and city planners molesting statistics". (10-18)

Clarke uses the blues as an essential part of the creative process in writing. In "Some Aspects of Blues Use in George Elliott Clarke's *Whyllah* Falls," Thomas argues that the poetry collection portrays the very tiring work and survival of a people in nineteen thirty-five, a year when blues figures as Ida Cox, Bessie Smith, and Ma Rainey were successful in spite of the Depression. The struggle for keeping folk wisdom and cultural tradition is interwoven with music and music making by some of the characters. Thomas states that a "blues impulse" leads the work putting the vernacular form in juxtaposition with the

European and Euro-American canonical tradition, from which the poet often gathers inspiration (70-71). *Whyllah Falls* is a work of hybrid characteristics that involves language use, literary genres, poetic diction, and mimesis. To enjoy the literary piece, one may need to be familiar with the blues, improvisations of jazz, spirituals, and the black folk church hymns. Moreover, I highlight the gender relations that are a frequent issue in the blues thematic of the 1920s and 1930s and, as it could not be otherwise, is rendered in *Whyllah Falls*.

Thomas emphasizes that Clarke applies the blues in diverse manners. When interwoven with poetry in traditional and cultural ways, the blues, in Clarke's text, serves as a momentary relief and distraction from suffering. The scholar comments that "[w]hen employed thus, the blues functions as a sort of cultural shorthand, as metaphors that infuse the text with chronicles and the exorcism of pain" (71). Clarke's poetry has conveyed the author's fascination with the poetics of African-American vernacular forms – particularly the blues and spirituals which are present in his first collection of poems, *Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues*. Clarke inscribes the rituals of African Baptist churches along with the blues to portray the frustration caused by "forces and beliefs" that threaten the African-Canadian experience. In the introduction to *Whylah Falls*, Clarke states that the blues provides African descendants scattered along North America with psychological solidarity addressing their concerns (72). The "blues impulse" is present in the very beginning of the preface where Clarke manifests the intricacy of the combination between the blues and the written text. The poet writes:

> *Whylah Falls* was born in the blues, the philosophy of the *cry*. Indeed, I was trying to find the emotion of song, to rediscover the Four Muses – Eros, Death, Intellect and Spirit. I attempt to worry the line, each verse line, like a blues guitarist using a piece of glass to alter notes. You see, you have to understand improvisation, how a standard reference can become something else. (xi)

Clarke's improvisation is the expression of his community tradition redefined through his writing as the "living memory of the changing same," to borrow from Gilroy (198).

In the poem "Look Homeward Exile," Clarke narrates the double exile of the African Nova Scotian, first from Africa and then from the United States. The lines present reference to musical instruments as conveyors of culture and the train as means of transport which could be used in the journey towards freedom in Canada escaping from slavery in the United States through the Underground Railroad. "Look Homeward, Exile" describes the path of travail and pain to which the poems that follow are a response. The narrative in this poem evokes other communities in the African diaspora to which the blues are survival, ritual, resistance, social and psychological history and art expressed in song and poetry:

Look Homeward, Exile

I can still see that soil crimsoned by butchered
Hog and imbrued with rye, lye, and homely
Spirituals everybody must know,
Still dream of folks who broke or cracked like shale:
Pushkin, who twisted his hands in boxing,
Marrocco, who ran girls like dogs and got stabbed,
Lavinia, her teeth decayed to black stumps,
Her lovemaking still in demand, spitting
Black phlegm – her pension after twenty towns,
And Toof, suckled on anger that no Baptist
Church could contain, who let wrinkled Eely
Seed her moist womb when she was just thirteen.
And the tyrant sun that reared from barbed-wire
Spewed flame that charred the idiot crops
To Depression, and hurt my Granddaddy
To bottle after bottle of sweet death,
His dream beaten to one, tremendous pulp,
Until his heart seized, choked; his love gave out.
But Beauty survived, secreted
In freight trains snorting in their pens, in babes
Whose faces were coal-black mirrors, in strange
Strummers who plucked Ghanaian banjos, hummed
Blind blues – precise, ornate, rich needlepoint
In sermons scorched with sulphur and brimstone,
And in my love's dark, orient skin that smelled
Like orange peels and tasted like rum, good God!
I remember my Creator in the old ways:

> I sit in taverns and stare at my fists;
> I knead earth into bread, spell water into wine.
> Still, nothing warms my wintry exile – neither
> Prayers nor fine love, neither votes nor hard drink:
> For nothing heals those saints felled in green beds,
> Whose loves are smashed by just one word or glance
> Or pain – a screw jammed in thick, straining wood (1-34).

A poem of lines of beauty, pain and desolation, "Look Homeward Exile" is an instance of the situation faced by blacks right after the emancipation. Angela Davis in "I Used To Be Your Sweet Mama: Ideology, Sexuality, And Domesticity," writes that during slavery, spirituals helped build a community infused with the imagination of a better life retelling old Testament's narratives about Hebrew people's struggles against pharaoh's oppressions that transgressed the slave system and encouraged its abolition. Davis asserts that the spirituals built the hopes of blacks slaves in religious aspects (7). After emancipation, a vast disillusionment followed, when economic and political liberation seemed more unreachable than ever. Blues, then, created a discourse that rendered freedom in more attainable and immediate terms. While there were no differences concerning political and economic rights in relation to life under slavery and after abolition, there were distinctions between the slaves' personal status and during the post-Civil War period. Davis lists three major aspects in which emancipation altered their personal lives:

> (1)There was no longer a proscription on free individual travel; (2) education was now a realizable goal for individual men and women; (3) sexuality could be explored freely by individuals who now could enter into autonomously chosen personal relationships. The new blues consciousness was shaped by and gave expression to at least two of these three transformations: travel and sexuality. In both male and female blues, travel and sexuality are ubiquitous themes, handled both separately and together. (8)

Davis comments that the blues, thus, "were condemned as the Devil's music:" because it situated a serious menace to religious postures and

patriarchal hegemony. While male ministers were becoming a professional caste, women blues singer were becoming professional artists and attracting large public at revival-like audiences (8-9). However, the autonomy and independence of black female characters in *Whyllah Falls* seems underestimated.

Thomas argues that in *Whyllah Falls* there are dramatic love conflicts between Shelley Clemence and Xavier Zachary, in Selah's travails (especially in the poem "Jordantown Blues"), in Aramantha and Pablo's involvement and in the narrator's apology to the black women whose beauty has been disparaged by black men. Thomas comments that Clarke applies this "phylogenic" characteristic of the blues to *Whyllah Falls* depicting a dialogic between male/female sexes displaying a story about frustrated unions with the blues personae searching for comfort in lovers. Part of the story of the blues consists of this dialogue (75). However, Davis, offers different perspectives concerning black feminism during Bessie Smith's era. She argues that the women's blues dialogue is not a dialogue between equals and it is not necessarily seeking for solace. Frequently, it is a discourse of female self-assertion and independence and the establishment of sexual freedom and autonomy. The female blues discourse depicted the disbelief in white bourgeois aspirations of marriage and motherhood, as well as romanticized love. In Davis's words: "[i]n 252 songs recorded by Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey, there are only four – all by Bessie Smith -- that refer to marriage within a relatively neutral context or in a way that takes the marital relationship for granted" (13). The lyrics in "Young Woman' Blues," one of Smith's own compositions, the protagonist is simply not interested in marriage. Smith's performance offers a self-confident sense of female independence and open embrace of sexual pleasure:

> No time to marry, no time to settle down
> I'm a young woman and ain't done runnin' round.
> I ain't no high yella, I'm a deep killer brown
> TI ain't gonna marry, ain't gon' settlee down
> I'm gon' drink good moonshine and run these browns down
> See that long lonesome road, Lord, you know it's gotta end
> I'm a good woman and I can get plenty of men

Whyllah Falls mirrors patriarchal roles concerning love and sexuality in that society. As such, it has the potential to instigate questioning on

gender roles. In spite of being contemporaneous of Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith and Ida Cox, none of the black female characters in *Whyllah Falls* depict love and sexuality as in the women's blues renderings that often contradicted mainstream ideological assumptions regarding women and being in love. Furthermore, there is no depiction of lesbian relationships as Smith also advocated and sang. On the contrary, female characters in *Whyllah Falls* suffer from disillusionment, despair, domestic violence, abuse, abandonment, harassment without showing protesting attitudes. The poem "Jordantown Blues" illustrates this:

> At Jordantown, Selah practices love –
> Hot apple pie, country and western woe,
> Lash of the man away all night,
> Whip of the man at work all day
> Fists of the man drunk to dumbness, (1-5)

Her unresponsiveness is present in the end of the poem, when it appears that in his deathbed, her mate is about to leave her free to love herself: "[f]or Jesus comes for him through the rooftop, / Leaving Selah to practise love alone." (17-18). My argument is that although many women suffered from domestic violence in silence, Smith, Cox, and Rainey were spokespeople of female resistance and independence. Most of black women had to work in order to survive and many could provide for their own, sometimes earning more than black men did. Moreover, because traveling was free to every men and women, black men traveled in search for jobs; consequently black women lived independently. Moreover, according to Davis, even when Smith sang blues that alluded to domestic violence, it was in order to "rescue the issue from the silent realm of private sphere and reconstruct it as public problem" (32). In Clarke's lines, there is no depiction of this female behavior concerning black women's experiences in *Whyllah Falls*. On the other hand, other instances of black female roles are present in African-American literature. Morrison's words illustrate this argument:

> (…) modern life begins with slavery… From a women's point of view, in terms of confronting the problems of where the world is now, black women had to deal with post-modern problems in the nineteenth century and earlier. These things had to be addressed by black people a long time ago: certain kinds of dissolution, the loss and the

> need to reconstruct certain kinds of stability (qtd. in Gilroy 220).

Black female characters such as Hurston's Janie, Morrison's Seth and Alice Walker's Shug Avery are instances that oppose to traditional depiction of female roles.

Clarke's delineation of female characters has received criticism for depicting, and consequently, helping perpetuate traditional feminine roles. Fiorentino comments that because most of the poetic narrative of *Whyllah Falls* is realized through the voice of Xavier, Clarke's poetics indulges in a constant male gaze. He asserts that as a depiction of Africville, the poetic narrative in *Whyllah Falls* is not open to diverse realizations ("Blackening English: The Polyphonic Poetics of George Elliott Clarke" 6). The character Selah seems to have her female role and condition of lover harmed by infertility. Clarke's male gaze pervades the poem "In the Field:" "Selah glares at me / impatiently, not seeing / the apples blossoms" (1-3). In "The Argument," Selah's rejection of the rose signifier may denote her impossibility to affirm her feminine status as capable of having children: "When she finds her / bedroom, she places pine branches in her dresser to perfume / her clothes that otherwise would smell of roses" (3-5). In the poem "How long love can go wrong?," her pain and sorrow result from the fact that she does not have a womb: "You could never dream / my womb is gone, / hollowed by scalps / and Casanova cancer. (5-8). Clarke's *Whyllah Falls* succeeds in using traditional blues to depict African rural Canada but does not succeed in a polyphonic construction of female voices.

Thomas indicates that an entire section of *Whyllah Falls*, "The Witness of Selah," improvises on and sometimes imitates traditional blues. It revisits and adds fresh lyrics to the blues theme of frustrated or abandoned love, X and Selah, and borrow heavily from the traditional symbols of youth and unfettered reality" (75). According to Thomas, "To Selah" is a blues song that blends Clarke's metaphors with echoes of the Renaissance Elizabethan conceit where high art and folk art meet. Thomas terms this kind of language as "courtship blues," conventional rhymes used to win the beloved's affection:

> The butter moon is white
> Sorta like your eyes;
> The butter moon is bright, sugah,
> Kinda like your eyes.
> And it melts like I melt for you

While it coasts ‘cross the sky. (1-6)

“The Symposium” is an instance of a blues dialogue that goes in a different direction. The speaker Cora advises Missy through a reflection on Cora’s own previous experiences as a black woman. The female speaker offers a feminist standpoint of black heterosexual relationship. The poem brings up the voice of an experienced black woman concerning female assertion and gender relations. It is the advice of a black woman telling another not to accept abuse or domestic violence just like the women’s blues songs of that time preached. In “Blackening English: The Polyphonic Poetics of George Elliott Clarke,” Fiorentino writes that the line “[j]ust sit back, relax and be black” (37) may depict a lyrical internal dialogue constructed with home-place vernacular (2).

Missy, you gotta lie to get a good man. And after you gets
him, you gotta be set to hurt him to hold him, so help my
Chucky! ‘Cos if you don’t or won’t or can’t, you’re gonna be
stepped on, pushed ‘round, walked out on, beat up on,
cheated on, worked like a black fool, and cast out your own
house. (6-11)

Besides the blues, jazz also inspirits Clarke’s poetry. In the jazz opera *Québécité*, Clarke interweaves sound and cultural performance. Set in Quebec city, Clarke’s libretto published as *Québécité: a Jazz Fantasia in Three Cantos*, sings the story of two multicultural couples – Laxmi Bharati and Ovide Rimbaud, and Malcom States and Colette Chan through the musical score composed by D.D. Jackson. In “Oui, Let’s Scat: Listening to Multi-Vocality in George Elliott Clarke’s Jazz Opera Québecité,” Katherine McLeod argues that in *Quebécité*, the characters’ “loves are thwarted and recovered as they negotiate familial, personal and cultural prejudices” (188). Bharati, Rimbaud, States, and Chan deal with differences that may be related or not to dissonance. The characters “negotiate cultural identifications” in visual and acoustic atmospheres which address differences.

McLeod states that “*Québécité* “exemplifies the ways in which sound offers a medium through which to redefine understandings of multicultural and multivocal improvisations” (188). The music is

predominantly harmonious jazz. However, moments of dissonance reply to events of cultural dissonance among characters. She quotes Ajay Heble's book *Landing on the Wrong Note*, in which he attempts to "postulate theory of musical dissonance as social practice" (191). The study focuses on the discursive community that frames our perception of sound as inaccurate, or sounds (and, broadly cultural practices) that can be conceived as "out of tune" determined by conventional modes of "coherence and judgment." McLeod quotes Heble who affirms that "playing out of tune" permits the self to be reconstructed. Heble investigates the role that "dissonant jazz played for subordinated social groups struggling to achieve control over the ways in which their identities have been constructed, framed and interpreted" (191).

Jackson' score for *Québécité* is made up of ornate jazz. The hybrid performance of jazz opera provides music balanced with "melodic love scenes with dissonant wails of character's voices fighting against the politics and prejudices that prevent them from musically fulfilling their desires" ("Oui, Let's Scat: Listening to Multi-Vocality in George Elliott Clarke's Jazz Opera Québecité 190). As textual evidence, Colette and Malcolm meet while the delicate sound of their duet accompanies them:

> Lushly, a dewed light falls,
> blushing branches.
> It clears what doubts had pressed down leaves
> and lets kissed lips –
> lilacs, lilies, tlips –
> flourish,
> lushly flourish. (28)

According to McLeod, the music of this pair alters drastically at the end of Act II, when Colette lets Malcolm know about her parents' disapproval of their love. The music transforms with anger which results in his leaving of the café, La Revolution Tranquille, with the utterance, "[w]e'll put our silver instruments / And our sable music. Away! / This ain't no time for innocence" (71).

Furthermore, MacLeod states that *Québecité*, as a libretto and a jazz opera, is particularly interesting as a performative nuance of cultural identities (194). Imagery for La Revolution Tranquille illustrates Clarke's stage portrayal of the jazz café as adorned with posters of symbolic figures of both jazz and politics, as if reminding the reader that politics and music are unseparable:

> On the walls appear early 1960s-era posters of (your choice among) Martin Luther King, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Ho Chi Minh, Rene Lavesque, Fidel Castro, Oscar Peterson, Lili St. Cyr, John Coltrane, Golda Meir, Miles Davis, James Brown, Indira Gandhi, Ella Fitzgerald, Jean Lesage, Buffy Saint-Marie, Portia White (photographed by Karsh), Josephine Baker, Adrienne Clarkson, Malcom X, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Oliver Jones, Leonard Cohen, Bruce Lee, Ravi Shankar, Astrud Gilberto, Genevieve Bujold, Nancy Kwan, and Jawaharlal Nehru. The bar is Warhol retro, with chrome fixtures and brass fixtures, and marble frills, soft-lit. (23)

McLeod observes that even though these images are depicted as posters, they bring to mind the acoustic effect of a "listening-list." Thus, the reader can imagine what La Revolution Tranquille would sound like. The libretto has a wealth of images that engage with the acoustic space of the text and its performance (194-5). The posters displayed on the walls depict political statements, assertion of identity and ethnic belonging of the characters. La Revolution Tranquile renders the multicultural Canada, with its diverse cultural groups and the hybrid genre of jazz denotes the amalgamating sound that harmonizes difference as dissonance. In "Canto I – Scene IV" of *Québécité*, Clarke inscribes the mosaic of jazz culture:

> Jazz is indelible rainbow *aquarelles*;
> Jazz is nights fallen open like a dress – and just as sweet;
> Jazz is saxes stroked like violins, pianos beat like drums;
> Jazz is the *vice-versa* of Vice and Virtue;
> Jazz is multi-Aboriginal-Semitic-Afro-Asian-Caucasian;
> Jazz is fried pigtails, mango, and *Tabasco*-splashed curry;
> Jazz is Lana Ogilvie in a Jean-Michel Basquiat;
> Jazz is Chinese motifs in blues with black motives;

> Jazz is deluxe, diabolical, champagne-vodka martinis.
> Jazz is the human right to Pleasure and Bauhaus-curvaceous Joy (36)

In her essay on *Québécité*, McLeod proposes listening to the jazz opera that emphasizes "how sound foregrounds the complexity of its attempt to embody multiculturalism" (193). Because of the impossibility to listen to the piece, many gaps in the current analysis may have occurred. During the study of *Québécité*, a feeling of scarcity of resources to enable a wider understanding of his work was frequent. Clarke's jazz opera requires a polyphonic listening in different languages, musical genres, and cultures to provide a less fragmented analysis. Other instances of the use of blues and jazz in Clarke's poetry are present in *Black, Blue, and Red,* as well as in *Illuminated Verses*.

4.4. Black Brazilian / African-Brazilian Literary criticism

The debate about essentialist / non-essentialism postures concerning African-American criticism is also pertinent to Black-Brazilian / African-Brazilian literatures. Moreover, the search for legitimization of this specific writing inside Brazilian literature is still a current pursuit. The poet Ferreira Gullar stated in an article in *Folha de São Paulo* that the contribution of the African descendants to Brazilian culture refers to music, dance, and Carnival. He argues that slaves that came to Brazil did not produce literary activity; therefore, Cruz e Sousa, Machado de Assis, and Lima Barreto inherited European literary standards and because of that, their skin color could not be the only feature taken into account when looking at their writing as black literature. Recently black writer Carolina de Jesus, received posthumous homage from the *Academia Carioca de Letras*. One of the members of the *Academia*, Professor Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, questioned the literary talent of Jesus stating that her book *Quarto de Despejo* is not a literary work. The book is a diary about the harsh life of Jesus in the slums of São Paulo collecting waste paper for recycling. In an article in *O Globo*, Cleo Guimarães and Maria Fortuna report the conflict created by Proença between intellectuals and artists about his declaration. If a

diary is not literature, so *The Diary of Anne Frank*, travel writings, or similar works are not either.

It is possible to parallel it with the one that African-American literature also faced in the search for legitimization of African-American writing. Another discussion is in terms of naming the writing of African descendants in Brazil as black Brazilian writing or African-Brazilian writing, a discussion that I consider unnecessary to the scope of the current work. I will focus on the current literary criticism on African-Brazilian writing. I choose to use the term along the chapter because I used the terms African-American and African-Canadian literature previously and because of the transnational perspective of the study. In "Negociação e Conflito na Construção das Poéticas Brasileiras Contemporâneas," Pereira writes that the scene of the Brazilian Poetry, after periods such as the formal-technical vanguard (*Concretismo*, *Poema Processo*), the social engagement (*Violão de Rua*), and the diction poetry-life / life-poetry (Marginal Poetry), has transformed towards the opening of the dominant standards to diverse poetic expressions of groups and individualities (15).

Pereira observes that this new configuration of Brazilian poetry has to do with the need to originate new understandings regarding the social and aesthetical changes instead of a retaliation of the canon. He notes that a "map" of Brazilian poetics, from the seventies on, unveils an intense movement of ideological and aesthetical perspectives that legitimized the most varied processes of creation. Because of the possible fragmentation of the literary canon, the affinity between poets and their tendencies did not originate groups, but competences for a dialogue that embraced divergences. Pereira comments that, even in a situation of transition, and reorganization of procedures, poetry seemed to perform a role of "promise and maturation" of the forthcoming period. During this transformation of Brazilian poetry into "something else," African-Brazilian poetry began to articulate from the lines of certain authors, altering the scene of Brazilian contemporaneous literature (16). In "Transnegressão," Augusto asserts that the current period of African-Brazilian literary activity is another form of expression of this transformation occurring in Brazilian poetry. He comments that intersection and transit between diverse language forms increase fast. From these intersections, inventive authors with autonomous creation propose alternative poetical discourses. However, Augusto declares that relativeness of autonomy because every text relates to social context.

Pereira points out that the poetry of an African-Brazilian expression had its predecessors as Domingos Caldas Barbosa, Luís Gama, Cruz e Sousa, Lino Guedes, and Solano Trindade, as some instances. In the seventies, there was the organization of black groups of writers such as *Cadernos Negros* (1978) and *Quilombhoje* (1980), both in São Paulo, and *Negrícia: Poesia e Arte de Crioulo*, in Rio de Janeiro. Besides that, activities to share and diffuse procedures took place in Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, and Bahia. The authors of African-Brazilian poetry and marginal poetry shared, in a certain way, some of their productions in the seventies and the eighties (16-7).

In the eighties, the artists of the *Centro Popular de Cultura* opposed the dominant delineations of cultural identity but did not include African-descendants in the formation of Brazilian identity. Furthermore, the political currents of the left did not acknowledge the interference of the ethnic conflicts in social relations. Pereira writes that, in this sense, the belief in the inexistence of a racial conflict in Brazil increased in opposition to the situation in Africa, where the struggle of the black population against the regimes that subjugates them aggravated. Pereira points out that the discourse that celebrated fraternity and the struggle for freedom in Brazil did not provide African-Brazilians with space for presenting their specific needs. African-Brazilian identity demanded a reversing of the Eurocentric perspective on African-Brazilian culture that stereotyped and subjugated blacks, the depiction of a lyrical voice in writing that assumed a black identity, the narration of history from an African-descendant standpoint, and the listening to the black female voices (20).

The African-Brazilian artistic and cultural production remained disconnected from the current aesthetics, claims Pereira. The African-Brazilian experience did not permeate the dominant poetics of the sixties, seventies, and eighties in Brazil, almost exclusively black authors and artists treated these questions (22). He adds that such process originated a fissure of the engaged rhetoric that, on one hand, supported the poetry inserted into class struggle issues (*Práxis, Violão de Rua*), and on the other hand, the poetry that concerned the same issues but enclosed anti-racist matters (*Quilombhoje* and *Negrícia*) (22-3). Considering the expansion of this fissure, motivated by the self-criticism of left-wing poets -- whose acknowledgement of failure of some of the leftist practices consequently altered the direction of their poetics -- and by the activism of individuals and groups --who, on the other hand, invested on a politically engaged discourse to depict African-descendant identity-- it is possible to locate the "formation of a

poetical and theoretical corpus whose agents, among other tasks, have taken the responsibility to elaborate a "paideuma" for Black and / or African Brazilian Literature" (23).

Pereira writes that there is a debate, in the academy and outside it, and even between poets and editors, about the social meaning of literature and the autonomy of the poetical creation. The supporters of the social meaning of literature affirm that the latter lack political consciousness concerning African-descendants' lives; on the other hand, the supporters of the autonomy of the poetical creation state that the poetical discourse has its own rules of structure, and it loses its "artistic appeal if reduced to an immediate communicative action" (23-4). Furthermore, discussions regarding the aesthetical value of the works produced by African-descendants and their contact with vanguard and post-vanguard experiments have become a kind of outrage against the authenticity of the politically engaged message (24).

Pereira adds that the innovative feature of cultural studies has helped to understand that the center and the margin discourses do not ignore each other as much as before and that the connections between literature and society have become more complex. He writes that authors (African-descendants or not), critics, and audience should not limit their attention to the surface of events or works. Literature stems from an atmosphere of crossings, fissures, and aesthetical and cultural estrangements and, therefore, is ideologically permeated. In such a context, on the contrary, a "simple" discourse originates not as the rejection of the complex aesthetical and social relations, but from the ability to re-create them through provocative poetics of sensibility and intelligence (24).

This is an ambivalent process because, on the one hand, there is the necessity to acknowledge the African-descendant experience, and on the other, the concern about not limiting literary creation to a single *leitmotiv*, that is, the African-descendant themes, remarks Pereira (29). He reports that Zilá Bernd, Eduardo de Assis Duarte, and Florentina Souza are some of the scholars and critics that highlight the propositions regarding the assertion of identity of the African-Brazilians without ignoring other ideological references that permeate Brazilian society. Pereira points out that Bernd and Duarte point out the necessity to include themes such as "denaturalization" of the connections between skin color and identity, and the revision of the concept of national identity (29). In "Quilombo de Palavras," Souza writes that the African-Brazilian literature is "like a space for, among other purposes, interfering in various power and representation institutions," besides

"structuring and exploring the possibilities of creating meanings and connections, rescuing history and tradition of African origins, that is, to take over the system of production of meaning and images" (9).

Pereira's, Bernd's, Duarte's, and Souza's theoretical propositions indicate that African-Brazilian literature is not a prescription of rules approaching aspects regarding black subjects. As Pereira has noted, this literature presents:

> [I]ntersectional points with other literary collections such as the perception of the text as a critical and self-critical place, modern rejection to absolute values (the rejection of the perception of the national identity as a cohesive unit), and finally the practice of literature as a work in progress furnished with possibilities to frame meanings and connections (30).

It is possible to affirm that such connections point out the increasing literary activity by black female authors in Brazil and the, small, but meaningful acknowledgment of their production. Ana Maria Gonçalves, Miriam Alves, Conceição Evaristo, Cristiane Sobral, Alzira Rufino, Eliane Marques are among the black female writers that have resisted marginalization and gained attention from criticism and audience. The revisiting of the oral tradition of African-Brazilian culture is present in contemporaneous literary discourse giving visibility to the expressions of young slam and rap poets from big cities in Brazil organized in groups of reading and composing individual and collective poetry, and in African-descendant performances.

Pereira claims that African-Brazilian literature is the poetics of political activism that also delineates the characteristics of a creative text, including the free association of ideas and the search for new expressive forms (32). He acknowledges that the dialogue between history and poetry founds and justifies the political engagement as a way of turning visible the African-descendant experience. Thus, the political meaning of the engagement provides this literature with relevance in a "moment of assertion of the African-Brazilian specificity (in ethnic, psychological, historical, and social terms)." Nevertheless, Pereira emphasizes that such thought, if taken into essentialist terms, may provide the possibility of the appearance of self-centered aesthetical references, which can be used as medias of political regimes. He concludes that an "antidote against this possibility is in recognizing the

relativism of the literary practices a way to insert into the framing poetics of identities other social and aesthetical claims, beyond their own self-assertion" (32).

4.5. Pereira's Samba-blues

Pereira's literary work has been studied carefully in Brazil and abroad. Born in Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, his poetical work evidences his eclectic choices with rhymed text and free verse. Pereira's posture in relation to African-Brazilian literature makes it clear that he does not advocate essentialist conceptions of this literary activity. Aware of the political and historical context in which African-Brazilian culture develops, Pereira points out the dangers of essentialist positions in a country with a recent past of dictatorship. Nevertheless, elements of the African-diasporic culture are present in his poetry and he constantly revisits African-descendant tradition.

Among the scholars that have written about Pereira's poetics, I choose to base the current study on the analyses by Maria José Somerlate Barbosa, Agustoni, and Adélcio de Souza Cruz in dialogue with Gates, Baker, and Gilroy. Barbosa writes that Pereira interweaves "elements of concrete poetry, free association of ideas, and the use of surrealist techniques." She observes that the style, structure, and theme vary in his poetry. His thematic choice ranges from the world and other literatures to the Brazilian popular culture and its greatness. His Portuguese-Brazilian literary background echoes in his poetry that dialogues with the poetics of other Brazilian writers such as the literary engineering of João Cabral de Melo Neto, the irony of Machado de Assis, and the humor of Carlos Drummond de Andrade. He also experiments with the linguistic dislocations of Manuel Bandeira, and the sagacity of vocabulary of Guimarães Rosa. Barbosa adds that there is a constant reference to the body: skin, bones, skeletons, and other parts of the human anatomy that take part in his celebration of life and death. Similar to Bandeira and Drummond, Pereira inscribes the transience of the body, rendering it as a locus for learning and celebrating love (31-2).

However, Barbosa writes that in an interview in 1996, while she tried to locate the similarities between Pereira's poetics and other canonical authors, the poet himself seemed more interested in highlighting the fissures and dissonances and emphasizing the differences, because for him, poetry originates from the "fissure space" (32). It is possible to affirm that Pereira's position in relation to the parallel of his poetics with other canonical authors has the purpose to assert the originality of his work and the necessity to legitimate African-Brazilian literature as an original and creative activity. Criticism may establish parallels with the canon, and because of the hybrid characteristic of modern cultures it is completely acceptable that such interconnections occur. Nevertheless, the African-American discussion about the differences of interpretation concerning an African-descendant writing turns the attempt to point out the echoes of canonical texts in Pereira's writing just one of the many possibilities of rendering his poetics.

Barbosa observes that Pereira points out the originality of poetics and the relation between his poetry and anthropological research that connects him to his African ancestry. She writes that Pereira's greatest concern is to evidence his insurgent poetry that goes beyond the Portuguese-Brazilian literary tradition because it also connects with the African diaspora and other writings (33). She quotes the line of the poem "Sumidouro" in which the persona affirms: "(…) danço independente nos joelhos do mundo[78]**"** evidencing that the poet chooses to locate his poetry in frontiers where dissonant and dissident voices challenge the conceit of homogeneity of national cultures and literatures, and cannibalize the so-called "literary tradition." She concludes that Pereira questions the past as an "aesthetic precedent" and reconfigures it as an "interconnection space" of enunciation, recreating and renegotiating with the historical-cultural present. In his texts, both Brazilian culture and history form a palimpsest of diverse peoples and mosaic of citations from many origins, establishing a "poetics of transnationality" (33).

It is possible to interpret Pereira's poetical procedure from Gilroy's ships conception that depicts a transnational dislocation, with Baker's "blues matrix" that delineates crossroads, and Gates's "Signifyin(g) Monkey" and Esu that move between two worlds and renders interpretation as a never-ending process. The "Sygnifyin(g) Monkey unveils the point at which texts intertwine and Baker's "blues

[78] "I dance independently on the world knees" (1)

matrix" reveals identity as an ongoing flow that is transitory and multiple. Pereira's "interconnection space" parallels with Gilroy's Black Atlantic theory as a modern political and cultural formation that transcends the limits of the nation state and the specificities of ethnicity, nationality and tradition as a revisiting of the past adding new forms and significations.

From Pereira's vast and diversified work, *Zeosório Blues* is the poetry collection that presents instances of the connection between poetry and music. In the collection, there are references to the blues, jazz, and samba. Lines such as in the poem "Rio de Janeiro:" "que a música pode ser a vida / e isto é muito sério[79]" (1-2) highlight the relevance of music to his life. In *Blue Note: Entrevista Imaginada*, an interview by Fabiano Moreira, Pereira claims that the blues, jazz, and, samba are present in his texts because they are music above all. He asserts that he enjoys many rhythms especially the ones produced by people from African descendant communities. In these places, music performs the role of social practice and not only an event in celebrations.

In *O Atlântico Em Movimento: Signos da Diáspora Africana na Poesia Contemporânea de Língua Portuguesa*, Agustoni states that Pereira's writing encompasses hybridization with other aesthetic models that do not share the same cultural site of origin concerning diaspora. She refers to the presence of the blues in Pereira's poetry as one of these aesthetic models (70). In *Blue Note*, Pereira declares the evident and "loud" presence of the blues in *Zeosório Blues*, besides the delineation of *samba de gafieira* in the poem "O Velho Cose e Macera," and samba in the poem "Ô Lapassi." He reports that *Zeosório* expresses his interest in recording some experiences that the blues depicts pretty well: the expression of being in a dead-end and sing because there is no way out. Pereira affirms that he does not understand such experience as the final period of the existence, but a possibility to "macerate it in order to digest it and find another corner." He states that this is one of the aspects of his poetry he is still trying to develop like "an [o]rpheus in the street, bewildered and lucid" (*Blue Note* 61).

Pereira relies on Roberto Muggiati's definitions of the blues to convey the feelings in *Zeosório*. Used in 1550, the phrase "to look blue" meant suffering from fear, anxiety, sadness or depression. During the post-Elizabethan era, from 1616 on, the expression "blues devils" named evil spirits. To summarize, the "blues devils" began to convey a

[79] "for music can be life and / that is serious business" (1-2)

state of nervous breakdown. In 1822, the word blues (plural form) begins to refer to hallucination from *delirium tremens*. Then, in the 1830s and 1840s, the meaning of the term alters and begins to describe someone who was upset. Finally, from 1860 on, it began to include unhappiness and sorrow as one of its meanings (Muggiati qtd. in Pereira 61). According to the meanings of the word, Pereira observes that it is possible to interpret *Zeosório Blues* and the blues itself as the deepest sorrow. He states that *Zeosório Blues* is a book of miseries, in which the miserable has not forgotten his humanity because he understands his situation as not the art of fate but the consequence of others' greed and of his own mistakes (*Blue Note* 61).

In *Zeosório Blues* there is evidence of elegiac poems that quote blues figures. Pereira's poetical themes concerning life, death, the transience of the body, and his anthropological research about the African descendant culture, originated an essay that he wrote in 1992 about the *excelências*, highly dramatic funeral dirges. During his research, Pereira collected information about funerals and their rituals and he noted that something that upset people was a tombstone without an inscription. For these populations, the deceased should not disappear entirely from the social life and an inscription should provide his permanence and evidence the respect from family and friends.

While Pereira was writing *Zeosório Blues*, he read the news about Bessie Smith's grave that remained without inscription in Philadelphia. Smith died in 1937 and her grave had no identification until 1970 when Janis Joplin, John Hammond and Juanita Smith paid five hundred dollars for a headstone engraved with the inscription "Bessie Smith, 1894-1937. The greatest blues singer in the world will never stop singing" (*Blue Note* 62). Pereira has concluded that a message on a headstone conveys the connection between living and dead. Its absence denotes more than an act of carelessness; it may reflect a political act especially when the attitudes of the deceased challenged political or social status pointing out alternatives that were opposed to the pre-established paradigms. During the colonial oppression, it was usual to decapitate the rebellious and sprinkle the land where they lived with salt. Modern societies express indifference with minorities and excluded in general turning them invisible. (*Blue Note* 63).

Pereira adds that both Smith and Joplin sang the despair and gave voice to the excluded. Both singers sang the blues in order not to go mad and although they had never seen each other, they had solidarity bonds.

Pereira declares that this is the context of the poems "Cartas De Janis a Bessie[80]," and "Cartas De Bessie a Janis:"

CARTAS
DE JANIS A BESSIE
A gente não tem o que quer.
Queria ser de rua.
Usar filtros de ontem.
Não explicar as ranhuras.
Não importa falar
que amei.
Amor é a guinada.
O dia preferido não vem.
Olho fotos de infância
e sinto a angústia
de quem é feliz.
[.....]
Mas não adianta
sofrer.
[.....]
As coisas continuam
em quem passou por elas.
E nem dá pra viajar
Fora da eternidade.
A gente não tem o que quer. (1-26)

The lines evidence the blues mood and the poetical voice denotes someone who feels the burden of hopelessness, disbelief, and disempowerment. The poem opens and closes with the same line "A gente não tem o que quer" which may convey the feeling someone has after a whole life of exclusion and vulnerability (1) (26). "Não importa falar / que amei / Amor é a guinada" may convey the power love exercises over the life of the speaker as a force that may alter direction completely regardless the speaker's will (6-8). The speaker voices the nostalgic feeling towards past when one's eyes perceived life from a different standpoint, and the idyllic return to a past that portrays happiness: "Usar filtros de ontem."/ (…) / "Olho fotos de infância / e

[80] "LETTERS"/ FROM JANIS TO BESSIE / One does not have what one wants. / I wanted to be from the streets. / To use filters from yesterday. / Not to explain the scratches. / it does not matter to say / that I loved / Love is the turning point. / The favorite day does not come / I look at childhood pictures / and feel the anxiety / of someone who is happy […] / Bu it is not worth suffering / […] / things continue / in those who've been through them. / And it is not possible to travel / outside eternity. / We do not have what we want. (1-26)

sinto a angústia / de quem é feliz" (4-12). The reality inscribed in the lines that close the poem, strengthens the feeling of incapacity to do anything, leaving the speaker with the only opportunity of change that is left: "E nem dá pra viajar / fora da eternidade" (24-5). The "letter" aims at sharing the feeling in the search for commonality, fraternity, and solidarity. The phrase "a gente," commonly delineates the sense of common experiences, social and cultural belonging. The commonality in the poem may relate to an assumed common perception of the blues as in Ralph Ellison's sense of giving shape to "the chaos of living" (190). Nevertheless, the poem "Cartas de Bessie a Janis[81]" renders an assertive reply to a desolate voice:

CARTAS
DE BESSIE A JANIS
Amar a música
leva ao amor dos músicos
Precisei deles para ver como os felinos
São tranquilos.
[……..]
Outro remédio
é tomar o ônibus.
Dizer ao vizinho
morrer não é elegante.
[.....]
Isso não é morrer.
É falir como as fábricas
que deixam raiva
nos operários.
Eu sou uma fábrica.
Eu sou uma operária.
Sinto a necessária
raiva para viver. (1-27)

[81] "LETTERS" / FROM BESSIE TO JANIS / Being in love with music / leads to love musicians / I needed them / to see how felines / are peaceful. / […] / Another remedy / is to take the bus. / To tell the neighbor / dying is not elegant. / […] / That's not dying. / It is to go bankrupt like factories / that leave anger / in the workers. / I am a factory. / I am a woman worker. / I feel the necessary / anger to live. (1-27).

In the initial lines, the speaker regards the presence of music as a conveyor of love, transformation, and peace-making.

The persona conveys the resilient personality of Smith as it has been portrayed in biographical reports and academic researches as Davis's "I Used to be Your Sweet Mama: Ideology, Sexuality, and Domesticity." The attitude towards death not as the end of a life of suffering and sorrow, but more like an inelegant way to escape from problems, provide the poem with a bit of irony. The speaker defines death as bankruptcy, an act that has consequences and may harm others, in order to call attention to the fact that we are responsible for our deaths as much as for our lives: "Isso não é morrer / É falir como as fábricas / que deixam raiva / nos operários" (20-3). Death therefore is neither the solution, nor the erasure of an existence because anger is the legacy left.The persona evidences empathy with social struggles through identification with the individual "Eu sou uma operária" and the community "Eu sou uma fábrica" (113). Finally, the speaker reveals strength and resilience motivated by anger as an impulse to resist and refute quitting: "Eu sinto a necessária / raiva para viver" (26-7).

Agustoni highlights the relevance of the process Pereira applies to his poetics from diverse conceptualizations of the blues, regarding the universe and the history the term conveys, by interweaving his text with this background somehow present, consciously or not, in collective practices. She argues that the blues in *Zeosório Blues* is important not only because of the explicit reproduction of the rhythm, but because it creates a canvas that suggests a collective delineation of the socio-cultural context where the blues developed. Agustoni has concluded that the poet does not limit himself to create poems as musical scores, and expand the field of dialogue weaving connections with the diasporic universe of the Black Atlantic, whose one of the most known rhythms is the blues (71-2).

Cruz names the poetical strategy applied by Pereira as "samba-blues" (1). Cruz points out that Pereira has been weaving his work with the African-Brazilian tradition of the brotherhoods[82], with a large experience as a researcher in the field of Social Sciences. In Pereira's writing, African-Brazilian identities and memory are aesthetically expressed (1-2). The term "samba-blues," coined by Cruz, denotes a poetical strategy originated from the hybrid scene of the African-

[82] Brotherhoods are catholic fraternities organized to shelter black people's religiosity during slavery because blacks were not allowed to enter churches. The brotherhoods worshipped Our Lady of Rosary.

Brazilian culture as inserted in the African diaspora. The scholar asserts that in *Zeosório Blues*, it is possible to notice a game of sounds from alliteration to assonance in several metric divisions. Curiously, the bass tones of the drums from the samba and the bass guitar from the blues do not rule the rhythm. Treble tones are more evident: the beat of the sticks near the center of the cymbals from the blues and the *tamborim* regarding samba. The result that Cruz points out is the use of alliterations and assonances in the opposition between open and closed sounds. Pereira ingeniously inscribes words and rhythm that escapes from obvious rhymes because it disrupts the expectation of a certain sound (3).

Leda Maria Martins observes that there are differences between African and Western music: the rhythmic quality, the melodic diversity, the antiphon, the percussion devices, the lyrical narrative, the functional feature of the expression, and the obliquity[83] (123-25). The melodic diversity permits the change of the meaning of a word by simply altering its tone in certain African idioms. Cruz states that Pereira seems to apply such characteristic to the poems by amalgamating samba and blues. The antiphon denotes counterpoint and improvisation when one voice suggests the topic and other voices reply simultaneously or individually (4).

Improvisation becomes one of the most important features for the survival and spread of African-descendant music. The antiphon, in its turn, depicts the "lyrical self" that is translated into a collective voice, though the "self" is a circumstantial depiction which never takes over the place of the collectivity. Cruz comments that the poetical strength of Pereira relies on the fact that his poems denote the functional characteristic of art in the African tradition. Although the function may not be totally explicit, Pereira's poems present resonances of such heritage (4). The poem "Preceito[84]", is an instance of improvisation and intertextuality with another semiotic fields, as Agustoni puts it. The first line is the same as the first verse in Luiz Melodia's blues "Estácio Holly Estácio[85]." Both song and poem have unusual rhythmic division and, if

[83] By obliquity, Cruz refers to one characteristic of African music in which "sinchronicity and accentuation are suggested or implied, that is, musical notes are not directly attacked.

[84] "Precept" / If someone wants to kill me / take off the shoelaces of love. / We are not the first farmhouse / but your dear family. / That eats Sunday for lunch / and turns misery inside out. / The fire harasses us / and does eat at our table. / Unless your eagerness / is another provision. / If someone wants to kill me / of love, dance harshness. / Nothing here is done without rhythm. (1-13)

[85] Melodia, Luiz. "Estácio Holly Estácio." *Pérola Negra*, Philips, 1973.

the reader has listened to the song, it is impossible to avoid the melody and harmony to echo along the reading of the poem. Pereira achieves an unexpected synchrony with the song, which seems that the assonance and obliquity in both song and poem harmonize consciously and intentionally.

PRECEITO
Se alguém quer matar-me
tire os cadarços do amor.
Não somos a primeira sede
mas sua cara família.
A que almoça o domingo
e vira a miséria pelo avesso.
O incêndio nos assedia
e não come em nossa mesa
A menos que sua ânsia
seja outro mantimento.
Se alguém quer matar-me
de amor, dance a aspereza.
Nada aqui se faz sem ritmo. (1-13)

Cruz argues that the term *preceito* originates from *poemas de preceito* that are the lyrics of the hymns of the religious ceremonies of brotherhoods. He writes that *preceito* is one of the technical procedures that Pereira applies to his poetics. The procedure stems from the *cantopoema*, a term coined by Pereira to study the texts of the *Congados*,[86] categorizing them as a literary corpus. A sophisticated elaboration of language, sound arrangements, and the creative characteristic of the individuals form the literature of the *Congados*. Because lyrics and melody are of great relevance, part of the discourses created for the religious ceremonies also permeate the everyday practices (2). Cruz states that *cantopoemas* are present in Pereira's poetics in certain aspects. *Cantopoemas* carry the primary elements of what the West considers poetry, an aesthetic activity that puts word and singing together. Pereira's poems display the traces of this ancestral singing. Cruz has concluded that *preceito* is the refined writing of words and rhythms, not always given by the expected rhyme that may not happen (2). This is one of the elements that mark Pereira's poetical identity.

[86] Congados is an African descendant religious ritual of syncretic characteristics.

In the poem "Caros Ouvintes," Pereira narrates the melancholic topics which are common in the blues and in the samba—*dor de cotovelo*[87]— which conveys the suffering from unfulfilled love promises. The reader is invited to hear the lines – as listening to a radio broadcast -- by the vocative expression "Caros Ouvintes[88]." The radio announcer performs the lyrical self who cannot stand loss and suffering any longer and the chaos of private life. Saturday becomes a cruel day, the blade in the air and the gas may depict the despair of the suicidal act in a neighborhood that may be the Harlem or the slums in Brazil or South Africa or wherever the black population suffers deprivation. The voice on the radio turns personal agony into acknowledged pain through the neighborhood:

CAROS OUVINTES
Amor se termina sábado
é como notícia de rádio.
Ganha seus episódios
circulando pelo bairro.

A dor em si aumentada
pune sem elegância.
Cada estilete ou tiro
Fere mais duramente.

Lágrima que desça
traz resumido oceano.
A música preferida
áspera não se dança.

E há sempre alguém
Rosto limpo braços nus.
Que abre o gás respira
até não respirar mais.

O terror sem monstros

[87] *Samba dor de cotovelo* is a sub-genre of the samba that conveys disillusionment, suffering and unfulfilled love promises.
[88] "Dear Listeners" / Love is broken up on Saturday / it is like radio news. / It gains its episodes / circulating through the neighborhood. / Pain in itself increased / punishes inelegantly. / Every stiletto or shot / hurts harders. / Tear that falls / brings summarized ocean. / The favorite song / rough is not danced. / There is always someone / clean face naked arms. / That opens the gas breathes / until he breathes no more. / Terror with no monsters / in the glass only water. / Solution dissolved / until nothing is thought. / Love is broken up on Saturday / it is like radio news. / Its blade hovers / the sky when it is May. (1-24).

No copo apenas água.
A solução dissolvida
até não se pensar nada.

Amor se termina sábado
É como notícia de rádio.
Paira com sua lâmina
de céu quando maio. (1-24)

Despair, sadness, and suicide are the themes of this poem. The topics may be present in both samba and the blues and are commonly written about in the creative process of such musical genres. The lines are short and pungent and depict a response to the dramatic situation through suicide. In both poems, the lines convey the individual painful voice inside a collective site of oppression and exclusion. The poem moves from personal to communal through the lyrical self that embodies vicissitudes of the human condition.

Because of the scope of the current study, I focused on the presence of musical elements in Pereira's poetry. However, the power of his poetic discourse deserves further and deeper analysis regarding the plurality of poetical meanings that his writing produces. Unfortunately, the diversity of dialects, dictions, and rhythms that his poetry contains were underestimated in my research. However, the presence of music in Pereira's poetry is a recent study with few texts delineating this correlation between his text and musical textuality and prosody. The study is an attempt to recreate signification from my analysis and academic experience.

CHAPTER V
A COMPARATIVE READING OF KOMUNYAKAA'S, CLARKE'S, AND PEREIRA'S POETRY

5.1. Intertextuality

Since the beginning of my graduate studies, I have searched for evidencing intertextuality between cultures in the African Diaspora, more specifically, concerning poetical discourse. Being aware of the dangers of falling into essentialist approaches, an investigation on the similarities and differences between the expressions of black cultures has been a challenge. The middle passage enforced the formation of diverse modes of resistance against racism at different times and place

Moreover, in a post-colonial perspective, the questions of gender, social class, and nationality also require careful observation. However, the commonality of the experience of the racial terror and the hybridity of the African diasporic cultures form the common ground that unites African-descendant people in the Americas. In this context, music is a unifying force that transcends the frontiers of ethnicity, language, and nation. From this perspective, I discuss the intertextuality of Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's poetical discourse having the elements of jazz, blues, and samba as a bridge that connects their creative universes as the flow of an intersection or crossroad.

In "Methodology for the Human Sciences," Mikhail M. Bakhtin writes that a text lives dependent upon the contact with another text (context). The contact between text and context provide a certain text with dialogue. He emphasizes that:

> [T]his contact is a dialogic contact between texts (utterances) and not a mechanical contact of "oppositions," which is possible only within a single text (and not between a text and context) among abstract elements (signs between a text), and is necessary only for the first stages (understanding formal definition, but not contextual meaning). Behind this contact is a contact of personalities and not of things (at the extreme). If we transform dialogue into one continuous text, that is, erase the division between voices (changing of speaking subjects), which is possible at the extreme (Hegel's monological dialetic), then the deep seated (infinite) contextual meaning disappears (we reach the bottom, reach a standstill). (162)

In Bakhtin's theory, understanding is an interconnection between the text and its context. Texts are not isolated units: therefore cannot be taken separately. If Bakhtin affirms that "each word (each sign) of the text exceeds its limits;" consequently, comparative analyses like the current work are justified by the correlation of a given text with other texts. According to Bakhtin, it is possible to reach understanding as relation with other texts and reinterpretation, in a new context (in the reader's context, in a contemporary context, and in a future one) (161).

In "Uma Ponte Sobre o Atlântico: Poesia de Autores Negros Angolanos, Brasileiros e Norte-Americanos em uma Perspectiva

Comparativa Triangular," Hattnher states that a literary work exists within the relationship with a determined context and the connection the context may have with diverse systems (14). Intertextuality conveys not only the contact between text and context. Texts that individuals bring with themselves also pervade the interpretation of what is intertextual (17). In an intertextuality approach, the text has no final period, intertextual events give texts a dynamical characteristic and allow the continuity of meaning. He adds that the construction of texts through other texts occurs because of the mediation of intertextuality. Social events and practices of discourse pervade the construction; therefore; texts delineate social practices and discourse (20). As a result, considered relevant elements of discourse, texts are not mere representatives of social practices. Practices of discourse rely on each other in an institution as well as in society.

In *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault argues that the margins of a book have no clear definition. Title, first lines, period, and cover delimit and particularize the book. However, a system of references to other writings permeate the book and it is not possible to point out the "unity" of a book because it is "variable and relative." Emanating from a "complex field of discourses," the unity cannot sustain itself (26). Foucault highlights the diffusion of events of discourse: its immediacy and its possibility to be repeated, known, altered, erased, or even veiled and hidden in books are crucial to evidence its occurrences (28).

Bakhtin and Foucault theories point out the dynamic feature of interpretation as a continuing process. Moreover, in Gates's postulate, Ifa, the sacred texts of divination, is the metaphor for the text itself, while Esu, the god of indeterminacy, governs the interpretive system; he is the god of interpretation because he is the metaphor for the "open-endedness of every literary text," claims Gates (*The Signifying Monkey* 25). Ifa depicts completion; on the other hand, Esu leads the process of never-ending revelation, permeated by multiplicity (25-6).

In the "Black Atlantic" conception of black cultures in the African diaspora, difference is not a binary notion. Gilroy's perception of the image of the "ships," microsystems of cultural hybridity, denotes many lanes that can move both in a parallel or intersect. In the same manner, transience marks Baker's "blues matrix" that depicts the image of the bluesman at the railroad junction transforming harsh experiences caused by oppression into rhythmic song. Barker argues that "the "X" of crossing roadbeds signals the multi-directionality of the juncture and is simply a single instance in a boundless network that redoubles and circles, makes sidings and ladders, forms Y's and branches (…)" (*Blues*,

Ideology, and Afro-American Literature: A Vernacular Theory 14). The blues artist is at this intersection echoing multiple experiences. Komunyakaa, Clarke, and Pereira are jazz, blues, and samba artists that amalgamate rhythm with words in an intertextual and intersectional poetical discourse.

5.2. The elements of jazz, blues, and samba in Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's poetry

The cultural sites in the African diaspora, where Komunyakaa, Clarke, and Pereira base their creative processes, present characteristics that point out intertextuality. Their texts are meaningful not only by themselves but achieve wider signification when related to other African diasporic arts and Euro-descendant craft. I mean, their texts are hybrid and muticultural, anti-essentialist and post-modern, revise and improvise from tradition. I will begin from the point where it is possible to locate explicit references to jazz, blues, and samba in their poetry. The first aspect of jazz, blues, and samba infused writings that I want to evidence in the poets' lines is the one that alludes directly to jazz, blues, and samba figures. These allusions can refer to famous musicians with elegiac purposes, cite the genres and lines from standard compositions, or depict anonymous typical characters of jazz, blues and samba cultural scenes.

Komunyakaa's poem "Elegy for Thelonious," as the title reveals, is an elegiac poem to honor the jazz pianist Thelonious Monk's memory. The poem is full of references to jazz music and places considered symbols of the jazz culture. The call-and-response line "Thelonious is dead" (5) accentuates the atmosphere of mourning and beauty:

"Elegy for Thelonious"
Damn the snow
Its senseless beauty
pours a hard light
through the hemlock.
Thelonious is dead. Winter
drifts in the hourglass;
notes pour from the brain cup.
Damn the alley cat
wailing a muted dirge

off Lenox Ave.
Thelonious is dead.
Tonight's lazy rhapsody of shadows
swaying to blue vertigo
& metaphysical funk.
Black tees in the wind.
Crepuscule with Nelly
Plays inside the bowed head.
"Dig the Man Ray of piano!"
O Satisfaction
hot fingers blow
on those white rib keys.
Comin on the Hudson.
Monk's Dream
The ghost of bebop
From 52nd Street,
Footprints in the snow.
Damn February.
Let's go to Minton's
& play "modern malice"
till daybreak. Lord,
there's Thelonious
wearing that old funky hat
pulled down over his eyes. (1-33)

The speaker experiments mixed emotions that result from the perception of the beauty of snow on a sad day (2). The lines "Damn the snow […] / Damn the alley cat […] / Damn February" denote anger and revolt, the unacceptance of loss (1-8-27). "*Coming to Hudson"* and "*Monk's Dream*," and "*Crepuscule with Nelly*," are references to Monk's musical creation; the latter a composition dedicated to his wife. The spirituality of the gospel is present in "O Satisfaction" and the evocative "Lord," suggesting a church choir singing a dirge (19-30). The long vowel "O" is another jazz element called groove that is present in the spirituals and the blues as well.

The references point out important sites for Afro-Americans. "Lenox Ave." or Malcom X Boulevard is a street with hot jazz places in New York. Langston Hughes called this street "Harlem's heartbeat." Considered jazz shrines, these places featured the greatest jazz musicians of all times, including Monk (16). Similarly, "Minton's" is a club considered a legend of the jazz where bebop was born in the 1940s (28). The lines of the poem trace Monk's trajectory in the jazz scene using polyphony to interweave musicality with poetry. It is possible to

say that Komunyakaa's lines achieve a polyphonic characteristic, synchronizing writing and music. "Elegy for Thelonious" has lines that denote departure, absence, and farewell:

> [……..]
> drifts in the hour glass;
> [……]
> The ghost of bebop
> [……..]
> Footprints in the snow
> [……..]
> there's Thelonious
> wearing that old funky hat
> pulled down over his eyes. (6-33)

Gloomy imagery displays the lament for the death of an artist: "Tonight's a lazy rhapsody of shadows / swaying to blue vertigo/ […] / Black trees in the wind" (12-15). Komunyakaa's inventiveness using image and sound give the poem the necessary atmosphere of mourning the theme requires.

References to jazz culture permeate Clarke's poetry. He writes the poem "Blue" to define his concept of "blue" within the context of plurality and complexity. In "Blues and Bliss: Negotiating the Polyphony of George Elliott Clarke," Fiorentino asserts that the notion of "blue" concerns the "African-Canadian experience (as opposed to Africadian in *Whyllah Falls*)" (xvi). He asserts that the texts transcends ethnicity and "performs complex, perverse juxtapositions: Steven's triumphant "The Man with the Blue Guitar" is referenced here alongside the image of the "genre nigger, (…) angry nigger." Fiorentino explains that Clarke conveys "the weight of poetic history: the "historical presence (Steven's canonical text) and the historical absence (Clarke's genre/ angry nigger)." The poem can be read as "elegiac longing for an African Canadian / Acadian history and mourning of the history that has been lost and or put under erasure" (xvi). References to jazz and the blues figures are in the lines that follow:

> [……..]
> Blue is Duke Ellington recording *Indigoes* while reading
> *Gold Indigoes*
> [……]
> Blue is secular, worldly, mundane, global, vulgar, popular
> plebian, and folksy

> Blue is Bessie Smith's murder, still unsolved, though her
> murderer's dead
> Blue is John Coltrane – immortal Coltrane – recording *Blue Trane*
> […….]
> Blue is Chet Baker trying to cop *Blue Moon* after Miles Davis
> has snookered it
> […….] (12-31).

Clarke juxtaposes Ellington's *Indigo* with his own creation *Gold Indigos*. Ellington's album was released in 1958. Clarke's book is a poetry collection whose characteristic highlights the presence of polyphony and multiculturalism in Canada (12).

Chet Baker and Miles Davis were great jazz trumpeters. The line suggests that Baker does not achieve the same mastery as Davis when playing *Blue Moon*, a jazz classic (31). Continuing with allusions, Clarke cites Smith and the fatal accident that took her life in 1937. The accident was not clarified and at least two different versions of it appeared. The line suggests that the murderer's death does not close the case and does not provide justice. The line. The verse "Blue is a hole in a bucket the Atlantic can't fill" illustrates this argument (16). The blank spaces involving Smith's death may compare to the fact that African diasporic history is often a one-side account; the real events are veiled, erased, and omitted in the past as in the present. The middle passage caused African diasporic history fissures and erasures that require reparation. Smith's death depicts all the untold murder the middle passage and slavery caused and the rupture in African descendant history.

Remarks about jazz, blues, and samba cultures reveal the relation between Pereira's poetry and music. In his lines, emblematic characters from the samba and jazz scene, allusion to places, such as the city of Rio de Janeiro and New Orleans, along with [/] references to blues and jazz, weave the poetical process Cruz named "samba-blues" (1). In Pereira's lines, Baker's concept of "blues matrix" acquires a transnational characteristic (11). In his lines, the three musical genres and their respective cultural matrixes intersect. Pereira's "samba-blues" is an example of a transnational "railroad junction," an intersection where – applying Gilroy's terms -- "ships" circulate with "ideas" and "key cultural political artifacts" (4).

In *Zeosório Blues*, the section "Ô Lapassi & Outros Ritmos de Ouvido" features poems that interweave the three genres. The poem "o

trompetista engole[89],” cites “Dixie[90],” a New Orleans trumpet style and a widely known jazz piece. Written in New York in 1859 as *Dixie's Land*, “Dixie” is the battle song of the Confederate States. The author, Daniel Emmet became upset because the song turned into the “Confederate National Anthem.” “Dixie” was Abraham Lincoln's favorite song. Dixieland[91] is a type of jazz music played by a small band. It has a strong, happy rhythm, and the musicians take turns playing individually as well. The style began in the Southern U.S. at the end of the nineteenth century and it is still popular, mainly in New Orleans. The most popular Dixieland song is “When the Saints Go Marching In.” From the citation of two references to jazz, Pereira opens path for an interpretation from a “blues matrix” or “Black Atlantic” perspective:

o trompetista engole
a contraluz
no cubículo o som
evola como um
papiro
é Dixie a canção
que sabemos
o trompetista ausente
faz suar nossas axilas (1-9)

The trumpeter is anonymous in the poem. The lines observe the musician's importance. The trumpeter's suggested absence evokes a escape in music that moves the audience “faz suar nossas axilas” (9). “É Dixie a canção / que sabemos” refers to an assumed commonality that may evidence the awareness of the social condition of blacks in the Americas; an assertion that may be interpreted as: black people know it. In the same section of *Zeosório Blues*, the scene alters from New Orleans's Dixie to “Rio de Janeiro[92]” and the samba experience:

---

[89] “the trumpeter swallows” the trumpeter swallows / the counter light / in the cubicle sound / unfurls like a/ payrus / the song is Dixie / we know / the absent trumpeter / makes our armpits sweat. (1-9)

[90] “Dixie.” *Oxford Guide to British and American Culture*: *For Learners of English*.

[91] “Dixieland.” *Oxford Guide to British and American Culture*: *For Learners of English*.

[92] Poem “Rio de Janeiro” / that music can be life and that is serious business / The music of the seasons lasts in the shoes / and the truth of samba is experience / of a poorly lighted street: on Saturdays a / good dancer is closer to death / than a star lighted above a hotel. / A composer does not make samba for tourists / and life does not seem to him the scoop / that the capitalist thought for the *surdo*. (1-10).

que a música pode ser a vida e
isto é muito sério
A música das estações perdura nos sapatos
e a verdade de um samba é a experiência
de uma rua mal iluminada: aos sábados um
bom dançarino está mais próximo da morte
que uma estrela acesa sobre um hotel.
Um compositor não samba para turistas
e a vida não lhes parece o furo
que o capitalista pensou para o surdo (1-10)

The lines convey the belief in the importance that music has in the experience of African-Brazilians, or in Brazilian culture in general, depicting the meaning of life itself. Music denoted as life itself juxtaposed with the profit that the phonographic industry gains from the commodification of samba is a protest against the transformation of the genre into market products and touristic attraction. Pereira uses the condition of anonymity to call attention to the fact that everyday tragic events involve human beings of great importance to Brazilian culture.

Mirroring jazz, blues, and samba structures through writing is another feature that is present in Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's poetry. It is possible to analyze the poems by means of the process suggested by Meta Du Ewa Jones that uses the terms "textuality," "prosody," and "orality" to elicit the presence of jazz elements in poetry. The terms refer to a variety of literary, social, and theoretical meanings. In "Jazz Prosodies: Orality and Textuality," Jones writes that "textuality, with its emphasis on the structure of written forms of language," indicate that jazz-infused poems have visual and graphic elements of the formal structure of jazz in their own construction. By "prosody" the author means "its traditional use in poetics in accompaniment with the term scansion, which involves calculating the rhythmic units -- metrical or not – in a given poetical text" (68). However, Jones makes a comment about Feinstein and Komunyakaa's introduction to the *Jazz Poetry Anthology* who state that jazz poetry can be defined as "standard poetic sensibilities," and the patterns of a prosody that convey syncopated rhythms and meter. While she agrees with Feinstein and Komunyakaa's observation, she emphasizes that jazz poetry is a too dynamic process to be subjected to conventional meter (68). The same statement is valid for samba poetry, or more specifically, for "samba-blues." The creation, arrangement, and performance of jazz poetry require to consider alternative ways of interpreting framing elements.

These elements combined with marks of orality of the African-descendant literature form processes of creation that refute easy classification. Concerning orality, Jones points out that sound and speech are the main points in her use of the term "orality" while examining the jazz presence in African-American texts. She criticizes scholarship that too often describes orality in African-American literature as linked to the notion of the "vernacular" as the mechanism of authentication of black literature. Instances of orature that are not apparent in origin or form are considered less authentic (68). Regarding African-Brazilian poetry, such authenticating pattern is not applicable, because so far, there is not an acknowledged study about the formation of an African-Brazilian vernacular, with its own grammar and lexis, as in African-American Vernacular English.

Jones writes that the Beats' jazz poetry tried to reproduce the rhythms and phrasing of black music inscribing them on the printed page. She argues that "[t]his attempted notation of sounds suggests that in translations of jazz into poetry, graphic and sonic innovation can go hand in hand" (71). Komunyakaa's use of the elements, as observed previously, escapes the obvious and explicit. In the poem "Copacetic Mingus," jazz expresses its presence through rhythm, syncopation, and repetition:

> […….]
> But tonight we're both a long ways
> from the Mile High City,
> 1973. Here in New Orleans
> years below sea level,
> I listen to *Pithecanthropus*
> *erectus*: Up & down under
> & over, every which way –
> thump, thump, dada – ah, yes.
> Wood heavy with tenderness,
> Mingus fingers the loom
> Gone on Segovia,
> Dogging the raw strings
> unawaxed with rosin.
> Hyperbolic bass line. Oh, no!
> Hard love, it's hard love. (13-27)

An elegy to jazz composer and bassist Charles Mingus, the poem is rhythmic, syncopated and onomatopoeic: "thump, thump, dada –ah yes" (20). The construct of imagery in Komunyakaa's lines depict the

movement of the bassist: "I listen to *Pithecanthropus* / *erectus*: Up & down under / & over, every which way --" (17-9). Orality is expressed in the vocative line: "Hyperbolic bass line. Oh no!" and in the repetition: "Hard love, it's hard love" (26-7). In this poem, Komunyakaa does not use the African-American vernacular to inscribe orature. It is possible to affirm that Komunyakaa composes the poem similar to a jazz musician, improvising in front of the audience.

Clarke uses blues elements in his poetry similarly to a blues musician. Thomas writes that many blues ballads emphasize the protagonist's sexual exploits and attributes. In "King Bee Blues," Clarke inscribes a celebratory tone; nevertheless the boasting is at the expense of women whose "pollen" "King Bee" finds great pleasure in (76). The song Blues" in its entirety:

I'm an old king bee, honey,
Buzzin' from flower to flower.
I'm an old king bee, sweets,
Hummin' from flower to flower.
Women got good pollen;
I got some every hour.

There's Lily in the valley
And sweet honeysuckle Rose too;
There's Lily in the valley
And sweet honeysuckle Rose too.
And thre's pretty black-eyed Susan,
Perfect as the night is blues.

You don't have to trust
A single, black word I say.
You don't have to trust
A single, black word I say.
But don't be surprised
If I sting your flower today. (1-18)

is not about love and commitment, but about having different involvement with different women. The term "sting" renders collecting pollen, but also the swelling and pain that usually result from it. In this case, suffering that a woman may face because of love. I cite "King Bee

This poem, from *Whyllah Falls,* revisits the tradition of blues ballads in repetition, rhyme and theme. The rhymes follow an A – B – A - B – C – B pattern. C lines function as adding detail to the poetic

narrative of this ballad of boasting and celebration of male behavior. Clarke's use of the pattern of rhymes concern the Mississippi Delta Blues tradition.

Regarding tradition, Pereira's use of almost fixed metric in "Passeios[93] c/ Langston Hughes," denotes the explicit presence of the blues rhymes:

PASSEIOS
C/ LANGSTOHN HUGHES
Bom que fuligem prefira
carros a nossas cartas.
Possamos olhar na fila
duas mulheres e vê-las.

Possamos olhar de fora
entender nossas pupilas.
Quem sabe não é agora
nossa mudança da ilha.

Se olharmos da cozinha
delas e de nossa casa.
Quiçá a ideia de família
seja maior se vária. (1-12)

The two first stanzas keep the A – B – A – C rhyme standard emulating blues patterns. The poem suggests transnationality and commonality, pointing out "família" as a wider concept (11). "Cartas" and "mudanças" depict movement (2-8). The speaker suggests observing two women in a line and comparing their kitchens and his own, so the idea of a larger family is related to the diversity of kitchens. This is the point in the poem where the rhyme is broken, interrupting the pattern to suggest the change in perspective, the rupture of standards: "Se olharmos da cozinha / delas e da nossa casa. / Quiçá a ideia de família / seja maior se vária." (9-12). It is the point where the poet improvises to provoke the necessary opening for new standpoints. The notion of "família" may expand into a variety of modes: transcending the limits of nation, ethnicity, class, age, language, and gender.

[93] STROLLS WITH LANGSTOHN HUGHES / It is good that soot prefers / cars to our letters./ May we look in the line / Two women and see them, / May we look from outside / understand our irises. / Who knows that is the time / to our move from the island. / If we look from kitchen / theirs and from our house. / Who knows the idea of family / be greater than vary.

Improvisation has permitted African diasporic cultures to understand and give meaning to modernity and tradition, sometimes from minimal resources. It enables African-diasporic memory to bridge the gaps and fissures caused by the racial terror of the middle passage and of the violent exclusion in the west. Improvisation also permeates Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's poetry and has allowed the three poets to revisit and recreate African-diasporic tradition regarding jazz, blues, or "samba-blues." Improvisation permits samba to receive and accommodate jazz and blues experiences into African-Brazilian artistry, enabling African-American musical expression to amalgamate and acquire meaning into a different postcolonial site. Black identity is a constant exercise of reception, accommodation, revision, isolation, resistance, and self-assertion that requires improvisation. It is necessary to remind that in jazz experience, improvisation is the musician's individual performance that searches for and encounters response in the audience. This experience may also be found in poetry.

5.3. Diaspora consciousness: isolation and exile

Another important common feature in the three poets' writings is the sense of displacement, exile, and isolation. Leonard writes that Komunyakaa's "February in Sydney" is set in Sydney, Australia, where the poet lived for a while. The poet uses the site rendering the atmosphere of isolation of the African-American speaker. By recalling Dexter Gordon performing "April in Paris" and the film *Round Midnight* to suggest the similarity of the atmospheres in the U.S.A and in Sydney to the reader, the speaker of the poem relives a recurring, archetypal experience of racism (830):

February in Sydney

Dexter Gordon's tenor sax
Plays "April in Paris"
Inside my head all the way back
on the bus from Double Bay.
Round Midnight, the '50s,
cool cobblestone streets
resound footsteps of Bebop
musicians with whiskey-laced voices

from a boundless dream in French.
Bud, Prez, Webster, & The Hawk.
their names run together riffs.
Painful gods jive talk through
Bloodstained reeds & shiny brass
where music is an anesthetic.
Unreadable faces from the human void
Float like torn pages across the bus
windows. An old anger drips into my throat,
& I try thinking something good,
letting the precious bad
settle to the salty bottom.
Another scene keeps repeating itself:
I emerge from the dark theatre,
passing a woman who grabs her red purse
& hugs it to her like a heart attack.
Tremolo. Dexter comes back to rest
behind my eyelids. A loneliness
lingers like a silver needle
under my black skin,
as I try to feel how it is
to scream for help through a horn. (1-30)

The lines "another scene keeps repeating itself: / I emerge from a dark theatre, / passing a woman who grabs her red purse / & hugs it to her like a heart attack" (21-4) depict an actual and recurrent racist scene. The racist event functions as an emblem of the commonality of the racial experience in the African diaspora and as the universality of oppressive and alienating discourse. Music serves as a compensation for the rage that oppression causes, aligning the speaker's mind with the sounds of : "musicians with whisky-laced voices / from a boundless dream in French. / Bud, Prez, Webster, & The Hawk, / their names run together riffs" (8-11). While listening to these musicians, the speaker unites to a community that shares the experience of racial exclusion. The musicians turn into gods that also suffered and have music as anesthesia to the pain: "Painful gods jive talk through / bloodstained reeds & shiny brass /where music is an anesthetic." (12-4).

Leonard comments that in "February in Sydney," as in most of Komunyaka's poetry, a familiar racist event functions as a "challenge to personal as well as cultural meaning, creating an existential as well as a

social angst" (831). The lines "[u]nreadable faces from the human void / float like torn pages across the bus / windows. / An old anger drips into my throat," (15-7) render the absence of empathy, the social isolation, the lack of solidarity and belonging, the feeling of exile that is conveyed in the unexpressive faces floating as if the speaker belonged nowhere. The old anger is a heritage, the ancestors' anger that arose from the middle passage.

Furthermore, Leonard adds that the lines "Dexter Gordon's tenor sax / plays "April in Paris" / inside my head all the way back / on the bus from Double Bay" (1-4) evidence that the speaker does not have much in the outside world to rely on, including the ideals of community related to African-American music. Desolation becomes more evident in the lines: "[a] loneliness /lingers like a silver needle" (26-7) even with Gordon's solo on his mind. (831). The speaker attempts to feel how it is to scream for help through a horn, and though he succeeds, the imagined and silent cry is primarily a cry for help for himself and not a cry for help for the community. Leonard points out that the poem should be read as an "internal monologue that 'improvises' a sense of self in order to defend the psyche against inimical cultural meanings, an act of expression analogous to Gordon's solo, which is also internally directed before or while being directed outward" (831-2). The feeling of isolation is depicted in a great number of instances in African-descendant artistry. Jazz and blues poetics serve as a consolation for the ethnicity categorized as minority in white dominant sites.

In "Watercolor for Negro Expatriates in France" Clarke makes use of a jazz poetics that renders ethnicity in terms of cultural heritage, emotional and cultural experience. Alluding to jazz and blues figures such as Josephine Baker (13), Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith (97), and Leadbelly (17), the poem delineates a transnational characteristic referring to blackness (9) and *Négritude* (74), moving from the U.S.A (18) to Europe (31) and Ethiopia (98). Clarke depicts scenes of exile and social isolation and the constraints of racial segregation. Music provides the sense of belonging and communal understanding of the social condition imposed upon black people: "You have heard Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith / You need no passports" (92-3). The poem renders parallels of the racial terror between different places and times: "Have you ever seen postcards / of Alabama or Auschwitz, / Mussolini or Mississippi?" (61-3). These histories present common threads concerning racial terror. Moreover, the device of addressing "you" particularizes individual histories, suggesting the poet's close relation to

them. In the poem, improvisation bridges the experience of black identity in diverse geographical and cultural sites:

What are calendars to you?
And, indeed, what are atlases?
Time is cool jazz in Bretagne,
You, hidden in berets or eccentric scarves,
Somewhere over the rainbow –
Where you are tin-men requiring hearts,
Lion-men demanding courage,
Scare-crow men needing minds all your own
After Du Bois made blackness respectable.
Geography is brown girls in Paris
In the spring by the restless Seine
Flowing like blood in chic, African colonies;
Josephine Baker on your bebop phonographs
in the lonely, brave, old rented rooms;
Gallic wines shocking you out of yourselves,
leaving you as abandoned
as obsolete locomotives whimpering Leadbelly blues
in lonesome Shantytown, U.S.A.
What are borders / frontiers to you?

[…….]
all black people not residing in Africa
are kidnap victims.
After all, how can you be an expatriate
of a country that was
never yours?
[…….]

Perhaps I suffer aphasia
I know not how to talk to you.
I send you greeting from *Afrique*
And spirituals from catholic *Négritude*
[……...]
And your senses inexplicably
Homing in on gorgeous Ethiopia,
while Roman rumours of war
fly you home. (1-100)

The lines convey dislocation, exile, and displacement, issues that permeate diasporic consciousness, more specifically, African diasporic consciousness. The lines of the poem may depict the *Négritude* students from the French colonies of the West Indies that lived in France in thethirties: "Time is cool jazz in Bretagne, / you hidden in berets or eccentric scarves." Or as in the lines: "Geography is brown girls in Paris / in the spring by the restless Seine." Clarke's lines "Krupp thunderclouds, / and, in other places, by Americans /who remind you, that you are niggers" (26-8) depicts Du Bois's double consciousness and Fanon's statement: "*Wherever he goes, the Negro remains a Negro*" (173) (author's emphasis). However, the poem is a cry of resistance against the internalization of a subaltern racial identity imposed by hegemonic power relations: "after all, how can you be an expatriate /of a country that was / never yours?" (53). The poem delineates the diasporic black condition and resistance through music as an important thread of commonality of the African diaspora.

Jazz, blues, and samba are musical genres that may depict resistance, but also existential dilemmas. By means of these genres, community is possible to the isolated, introspective jazz, blues, or samba consciousness. In Pereira's "Nova Orleans[94]," the persona is not distanced from the social condition expressed in the lines. The blues poet begins asserting the function of music as a tool of resistance to social barriers in a city with a large black population known as the city of jazz and blues.

The difficulties faced in everyday life are denoted in the line "[a]rde para resistir ao não e revelar-se" (5) The line displays the anxiety of the artist to convey the beauty of an art which is underestimated by invisibility and marginalization of black people's culture and tradition. The poem ends with the statement that highlights the redemptive presence of the blues as a spiritual healer: "Percebe o mundo e seu absurdo: só um blue / É justo e completo como um abraço" (7-8).

NOVA ORLEANS
Como um canto transpõe a hipocrisia

A vida sabe o revés de uma tentativa

[94] NEW ORLEANS / how a chant transcends hypocrisy / Life knows the misfortune of an attempt/ but the voice fire softens solitude / and the fear of an intolerant country. / Sears to resists against no and reveals itself / the soul that deeper inside despair / perceives the world and its absurd: on the blues / is fair and flawless like an embrace.

mas o incêndio da voz atenua a solidão
E o medo de um país incompreensivo.
Arde para resistir ao não e revelar-se
A alma que mais dentro do desespero
Percebe o mundo e seu absurdo: só um blue
É justo e completo como um abraço (1-7)

The poem depicts displacement and isolation caused by social exclusion: "mas o incêndio da voz atenua a solidão" (3). The line refers to the U.S.A. as a country where inequality oppresses, silences, and invisibilizes minorities: "e o medo de um país incompreensivo" (4). The speaker does not identify the type of exclusion. However, the power of music against hypocrisy is asserted. In the poem, the blues is the force that organizes chaos and embraces difference fairly and thoroughly. The study of the presence of elements of jazz and blues in African-Brazilian poetry is a newborn category, not many writings are available. In *Blue Note*, Pereira points out it is a poetic line that he is still trying to develop (61). However, the current study has evidenced the intertextuality of the musical genres in Pereira's poetry as one of his poetical identities.

Komunyakaa's, Clarke's, and Pereira's lines delineate perceptions of jazz, blues, and samba consciousness that echo collectively and are responded by an implied audience. The poems depict purposes and communal values of jazz, blues and samba. In the poems analysed comparatively, the speaker leads the reader to identify with historical and social communities beyond the connections of shared social identities and experiences Thus, musical textuality becomes communal relatedness enabling mellifluous and momentary consolation from suffering.

FINAL REMARKS

The history of diaspora is permeated by commonality of experiences concerning sagas of survival, resistance against racism, and exclusion. Art is one of the most important tools of resistance. The investigation proposed in the current work has led me to find more similarities concerning musical expression and the interconnections with writing in the African diaspora that I initially supposed. Although the expression of the authors studied occurs in different languages and nationalities, the elements of jazz, blues, and samba amalgamate through musical language, transcending barriers of nations, cultural sites, and idioms.

The Atlantic, in the perspective of the current research, is not a geographical site only. The middle passage altered the direction of history in the west and the Atlantic became a trope of dislocation and cultural transformation. The Black Atlantic, African diaspora, and the middle passage, as studied here, are physical, cultural, and symbolic territories that inform the cultural expression of African-descendants in the Americas. Instability, tension, separation, dislocation, dispersion, isolation, and the feeling of loss and exile permeate the several forms of cultural expression concerning these sites; but imagination and creation reorganize activity. In order to elucidate these conceptions, I based the study on European, Afro-descendant, Asian, and Latin-American scholars.

In the discussion proposed in chapter I, Foucault's theory on race and racism evidenced the dynamic characteristic of the discourses that serve the dominant groups. The technology of biopower in modern society is present in institutionalized practices of racism inserted in the mechanisms of the state. In opposition to these practices, oppressed groups create different modes of resistance and struggle through alternatives that rebuild and appropriate territories for survival as individuals and as peoples. This mode of resistance enabled the construction of sites as *Praça Onze*, Congo Square, Africville, and the Underground Railroad. The study focused on the positive assertion regarding diasporic cultures: music and poetry as instances of the western activity that evidence African heritage flowing through the construct of cultural identity.

The amalgamation of different populations contributed to the formation of black diasporic culture. Hybridization and racial mixing in "contact zones," in Pratt's terms, helped frame the musical conception during slavery and in the periods after the abolition up to the present in an ongoing process. Because of the urgent need to communicate in a racially hostile environment with scarce resources, blacks used orality,

created music, musical instruments, and their own vernaculars. The separation of the middle passage and diaspora did not prevent blacks from maintaining collective imagination of Africa as motherland or as trope of idyllic return. These elements frame part of the poetics of resistance in the African diasporic artistry.

As poetics of resistance, jazz, blues, and samba have endured battles for recognition and legitimation, and then, have resisted against cultural appropriation. In the site of popular culture, black popular culture has been marginalized, appropriated and assimilated. Being elements of black popular culture, jazz, blues, and samba form discourses that protest and resist, revisit and alter tradition, in the past as in the present, and enable different perspectives. Music is crucial for the survival of blacks because it has a privileged position before hostile conditions, from the prohibition of writing in the slave period to the constraints of language differences. Notwithstanding, jazz, blues, and samba have been appropriated by the white dominant culture as passive forms of entertainment mainly because of mass media and commodification. Acknowledgement and identification may lead to appropriation as well; however, appropriation is also a mechanism of social control when it turns cultural modes of resistance into obscure and commodified objects disarticulating its original characteristic of resistance and cultural meanings. This kind of appropriation is subordinated to cultural imperialism.

Jazz, blues, and samba as poetics of resistance perform innovation, originality and transgression. As marginalized forms in the past, they were tools of counter-narratives that opposed to hegemonic standards. Initiating movement and change, jazz, blues, and samba have established themselves as poetics of counterculture. Jazz, blues, and samba infused poetry conceive form and language in a manner that turns cultural, racial, and gender issues visible, dynamic, and legitimized. In this way, jazz, blues, and samba have a social and political function.

In the second chapter, I carried on an interdisciplinary research that demanded the aid of Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, Sociology, and History. I investigated the historical events that made the outbreak of the rhythms possible and provided them with permanence. I pinpointed the sequence of events that consolidated jazz, blues, and samba as black aesthetics. The history of the three genres depicts a scenario of resistance and resilience, transforming pain into beauty. 1900 was the approximate year when blues appeared in the Mississippi Delta, the time when jazz became acknowledged music, and when *Praça Onze* became the place where inhabitants from *Mangueira*,

Estácio, and other Rio de Janeiro slums converged. From the work songs, the spirituals, the Mississippi Delta blues, the jazz in Congo Square, the spirituals of African Baptist Churches in Nova Scotia, work songs in coffee and sugar plantations in Brazil, *lundus, modinhas, maxixes, ranchos*, to samba, traces of intertextual references appeared along the study. Jazz and blues interweave constantly, being difficult to define the limits between the two. Blues is the cradle of jazz. Jazz and blues have been collaborators over the years, and references to each of the genres alternated along the study. Samba is the African-Brazilian music that is open to accommodate blues and jazz idioms in their orality and performance.

Orality and performance are present in African-descendant cultures because of the importance of voice and body in the African tradition of the *griots*. Blues singers are similar to traditional *griots* in their ability to use voice and musical instruments to transmit African-descendant tradition. Poets that take over the role of spokespersons to maintain tradition and master language as a strategy against silencing and erasure are heirs of the *griots* culture.

The study presented characteristics of blues and jazz idioms; however, theoreticians have warned about the fact that describing the genres through any pattern is not sufficient. Instrumentation, synthesis, hybridization, metaphors, rhyme, melodies, stanzaic patterns, and antiphony shape blues idiom. Jazz structure may enclose all the blues characteristics along with scat, improvisation, riff, performance, dissonance, and repetition. Syncopation is the common characteristic of the three genres that evidences intertextuality. In jazz, as well as in samba, the syncopation (the missing beat) leads the listener to fill up the silence (emptiness) with body movement: swinging, claps, stomp, dance. The appeal of the syncopation leads the listener to complete the absence of the beat with the dynamics of the body. The body that moves at the samba syncopation is the same that slavery assaulted and oppression has controlled up to the present. At different moments in history, the body has been the only cultural capital of black people.

In chapter III, I investigated the interconnection between jazz, blues, and samba with writing. Because literature has been considered an element of high culture, jazz literature had its first publications by white authors in the U.S.A. African-American writers as well as Afro-Brazilians have had to struggle against disavowal about their literary production. Jazz and blues-infused writing and the presence of samba in poetry depict a manner of conceiving black arts, encompassing the emotions and feelings of the African diaspora that enable the

accomplishment of beauty through writing interwoven with musical elements. Jazz has inspired writers and other artists as well as blues and samba.

In spite of asserting the importance of music in his life and work, Komunyakaa rejects being conveniently categorized as a jazz poet. Clarke affirms the presence and relevance of blues and jazz in his writing, especially in *Whyllah Falls* and his jazz opera *Québécité*. In his essay "Frederick Ward: Writing as Jazz," he asserts that "[i]n the popular perception of popular cultures, every black writer is, at birth, swaddled in sheet music, and begins to sing even before he or she can speak" (190). Pereira also acknowledges the pervasiveness of music, the African-descendant music in Brazil, as well as blues in his writing, a poetic process that Cruz named "samba-blues." Afro-Brazilians Trindade, Silveira, and Xavier; Afro-Canadians Afua Copper, Lillian Allen, and Ward, Afro-Americans Morrison, Baraka, Ellison, Giovanni, Hughes and others attest a tradition of interweaving music and writing in African-descendant literature. The current investigation aimed at contributing to the analysis of the transnational characteristic of this tradition.

The reception of jazz and blues in African-Brazilian music and poetry is not mere imitation or mirroring. The commonality of experiences, feelings, and moods permits the accommodation of blues and jazz expression in African-Brazilian poetic discourse. *Banzo* and blues were born in the traumatic experience of loss, separation, dislocation, disempowerment, violence, silencing, disavowal, dehumanizing, and murder. Criticism may consider the presence of Afro-American culture in Afro-Canadian and Afro-Brazilian identity a product of the hegemonic posture of the American culture. I argue that the present study has evidenced that the African-diasporic culture has constructed a countercultural site that enables transnational interchanges based on the commonality of experiences. Jazz, blues, and samba revisit and reinvent tradition through improvisational techniques. The rhythms are multicultural and transnational.

In chapter IV, I analyzed each poet's work and the context surrounding their creation. As a starting point, I researched current criticism on Afro-American, Afro-Brazilian, and Afro-Canadian literary criticism. The debate about Afro-descendant literature occurs in terms of essentialist and anti-essentialist approaches. It is not possible for a writer to create detached from the social atmosphere where he/she is inserted because there is no neutrality in language. Certain traces concerning identity politics shape writing. Komunyakaa's poetry reveals racial

conflicts in a provocative manner, especially in his poems about the Vietnam war, and he affirms that contemporaneous black authors are no longer providing "service literature." Clarke declares he writes poetry that speaks to his Africadian community in terms of language and performance. Pereira, as an anthropologist, connects his research rescuing African-descendant tradition in his poetry. It is possible to affirm that these authors create poetics of resistance because their writing is provocative, innovative, assert identity politics, and inscribe transgression. Improvisation is a common element in the poetics of the three authors. It is a device that permits the African-diasporic consciousness to bridge the gaps that the traumatic experience of the middle passage caused. It allows the reconstruction of tradition. The transformation of the old forms into something new through adaptation and renewal.

Black female depiction in literature still requires deeper analysis. A comparative study on the presence of black female figures such as Ma Rainey, Ida Cox, and Bessie Smith with the Afro-Brazilian samba singers Alcione, Leci Brandão, and Elza Soares can be an elucidative investigation about the leadership of black females in their communities.

The current study consolidated my knowledge about black literature in terms of criticism. The dissertation has contributed to provide visibility to African-Brazilian literary scholarship and African-Canadian writing in Brazil. It is a contribution to comparative studies on African-descendant literatures and on the critical studies of the three poets. The study presents possibilities of other readings of Pereira abroad, studies of the interconnections between poetry and music, and further readings of Clarke and Komunyakaa in Brazil.

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