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Négritude Musicology

POETRY, PERFORMANCE, AND STATECRAFT IN SENEGAL

Taking the previous chapter's concerns with how to bring music to text in a different direction, this chapter considers the impact of jazz and other Afro-diasporic music in mid-century Senegal. I begin where the last chapter ends, in the 1930s, with Léopold Sédar Senghor's movements between the land of his birth and France, where his most significant encounters with African diaspora writers and musicians began. The *idea* of popular black Atlantic music, and most specifically jazz and the blues, is remarkably central to his formulation of the essential characterstics of *l'âme noire*, the black soul. However, for Senghor, writings *about* music held more sway than live performance, and secondary musical texts, including music criticism, reportage, journalism, and imaginative literature most clearly shaped his ideas about diasporic music, and most especially, jazz. These interlocking textual apparatuses encompassed multiple forms of cultural criticism in an instance of stereomodernism that I call *Négritude musicology*. Senghor draws most heavily on early French musicological texts about jazz (including Goffin, Hodeir, and Vian) and African American literary celebrations (particularly the works of Claude McKay and James Weldon Johnson). Where the Dubes, Manye Maxeke, and Plaatje used music instrumentally to enact a unifying national identity, Senghor saw jazz in a broader context as an example par excellence of Négritude, his theory of black political aesthetics. Négritude, however, was not a uniformly embraced philosophy and while Senghor's wide readings about jazz as an African American popular music inflected his Négritude writings and state policy, there were those among his contemporaries in Senegal and beyond who challenged his views sharply. In this chapter I trace the development of Négritude musicology, and then analyze some of its contestations.

Taking up the three central concerns laid out in the introduction—solidarity, modernism, and media—I show how diasporic accounts of music's cultural and stylistic significance mediated Senghor's embrace of jazz as a sign of Négritude, allowing him to articulate parallels between African vernacular oral art forms and jazz as commensurable modern black forms. Highlighting common aesthetic characteristics in local Senegalese, more generalized African, and African American jazz musical practices, Senghor argued that these traits demonstrated the modernity of Africa and the legitimacy of musical art as a ground for Négritude's claim to a pan-racial black sensibility that stood in for solidarity. Critics as diverse as Adotevi, Towa, Soyinka, and others have famously questioned Senghorian Négritude's essentializing tendencies and its failures to challenge colonial logic sufficiently, so why return to what is by now an old, and effectively settled matter?[1] Attending to Senghor's ideas about music uncovers his epistemological approach to comparison and evidentiary argument, but also serves as an optic for how his claims about music elicited a set of contesting voices.[2] The value of Négritude lay as much in its provocations as in its proclamations, and struggles over meaning provided occasions for frank exchange necessary to building any solidarity worth its salt.

The Senghorian vision of Négritude was highly determined by an internationalism rooted not only in collective reading and social networks of Paris-based blacks and French enthusiasts of black cultural expression, but also in writings by African Americans who celebrated the seemingly transcendent qualities of jazz. However, the forms of recognition and misrecognition that jazz and other African American music elicited were sites of Relation in the Glissantian sense, moments that exposed stubborn opacities that could not be reduced to a hasty transparency. As Glissant writes in *Traité du Tout-Monde:*

> Je réclame pour tous le droit à l'*opacité*, qui n'est pas le renfermement.
>
> C'est pour réagir par là contre tant de réductions à la fausse clarté de modèles universels. . . .
>
> Que l'opacité . . . ne ferme pas sur l'obscurantisme ni l'apartheid, nous soit une fête, non une terreur. Que le droit à l'opacité, par où se préserverait au mieux le Divers et par où se renforcerait l'acceptation, veille, ô lampes! sur nos poétiques.
>
> [I reclaim for all the right to *opacity,* which is not to shut oneself away.
>
> It is thus in order to react against the endless reduction to a false clarity of universal models. . . . May opacity . . . not trap us within obscurantism nor apartheid, may it be for us a celebration, not a terror. May the right to opacity, by which the Diverse is best preserved and through which acceptance is reinforced, stand guard to our poetics, O lights!][3]

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[1] See Stanslav Adotevi, *Négritude et Négrologues* (Paris: Union Génerale d'Éditions, 1972); Marcien Towa, *Léopold Sédar Sénghor, Négritude ou servitude?* (Yaounde: Éditions CLE, 1971); Soyinka, "The Future of West African Writing," *4*:1 in *The Horn* (1960), 10–16 for rejoinders to Négritude.

[2] For a good overview of the current state of Négritude studies, see F. Abiola Irele's *The Négritude Moment: Explorations in Francophone African and Caribbean Literature and Thought* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2011), and Patrice Nganang's review in *Research in African Literatures* 43.3 (Fall 2012), 131–34.

[3] Glissant, Edouard. *Traité du Tout-Monde (Poétique IV).* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 29.

For Senghor, music was the universal language of Négritude. However, its opacity posed a challenge to many of Négritude's more universalizing gestures, and by parsing such gestures carefully and retracing the counterarguments elicited, we gain insight into the dialectical relationship between the forms of cultural opacity Glissant summons in his later writings and the claims to pan-racial understandings Senghor sought to arrive at via jazz. Too hasty a dismissal of Senghorian Négritude would miss the way it contributed to this dialectic.

My argument unfolds via a chronological reading of Senghor's poetry, prose, and speeches where he claims that jazz (often used interchangeably with the blues) was a quintessential example of *l'âme noire*—the black soul ontologically inseparable from Négritude. Senghor made such claims in academic and political circles that included few sustained personal ties with African Americans, and it was not until the World Festival of Negro Arts (*Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres*, hereafter FESMAN) in 1966 that these claims were tested by artists and academics from across the black world. The second part of the chapter considers how festival delegates, and African Americans in particular, contested Senghor's claims for jazz music. By 1966, I argue, the dominant musical metaphors of transnational solidarity had already shifted to other musical genres. There was less interest in whether Négritude had swing than in the kind of sonic challenge to universalist humanism uttered in Abbey Lincoln's siren call on the *We Insist!—Freedom Now Suite* (1960) album, or the heavy sweat of a collective black body politic summoned together by James Brown's *Live at the Apollo* (1962).

Négritude musicology drew on musical discourse by and about African American cultural workers, where *logos,* as both theoretical language and disciplinary method, was prioritized over material sound. Senghor's interests developed in parallel with a turn to popular and vernacular music in other Afro-diasporic sites—not only among Harlem Renaissance figures (notably Alain Locke, Harry T. Burleigh, Langston Hughes, and others) but also in the journalism, novels, and the magnus opus *La música en Cuba* of Alejo Carpentier.[4] Although Paul Gilroy has drawn attention to how music is freighted with the burden of racial authenticity in the late twentieth-century, writers in the 1920s and 1930s were already making such moves. Nonetheless, Gilroy's lament over the instrumentalization of music as "a cipher for racial authenticity" in *Small Acts* is remarkably resonant with Senghor's apparent stance on music as an index of blackness rather than as sonic pleasure in and for itself:

> Music, which was the centre of black vernacular culture for such a long time, has acquired a new place and a new significance.... Its non-representational

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[4] *La música en Cuba* was not published until 1946, but reflected years of archival work, as well as the influence of the Parisian milieu of the primitivist 1920s.

> qualities are being pressed into service to do an uncomplicated representational job. They are burdened with the task of conjuring up a utopia of racial authenticity that is everywhere denied but still sought nonetheless.[5]

Senghor's Négritude musicology drew on two sources: African American literary texts and early French musicology and journalism, and the seeming contradictions among these two streams gave rise to a highly complex (and at times, vexed) approach to representing jazz. African American writing about jazz was foremost, and the emblematic uses to which he puts jazz (often letting it stand in for *négro-americains*[6] and even for *l'âme nègre*), as well as examples of anachronism in his references reveal that music was a crucial means of condensing the black diaspora into a stable cultural monad.

Mercer Cook's essay "Afro-Americans in Senghor's Poetry," originally published in a 1976 collection for Senghor's seventieth birthday, outlines many of Senghor's jazz references[7] and building on Cook's work, it becomes clear that Senghor cited Alain Locke's writings about music, and literary representations by Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, and Sterling Brown more often than individual performers, recordings, or live performances. Strikingly, however, all the other musicological sources that Senghor turns to, and all but one of the jazz clubs he refers to, are European. The French music critic, Hughes Panassié is cited more extensively than any (African) American sources, and the prestige that Senghor assigns to jazz music mirrors the enthusiasm with which the metropole embraced visual and musical signs of blackness in the 1920s and 1930s.[8] Paradoxically, then, Senghor's adoption of jazz as a Négritude object par excellence was routed via the colonial metropole, and partially mediated through Paris-based writers responding to European and Euro-American high modernism's craze for all things *nègre*. This is not to diminish the significance of black cultural exchanges in the metropole. It is, by now, well known that Paris was an essential site for the spread of black international thought in the interwar period. Indeed, Senghor's earliest poems citing the blues date from his sojourn as a student in France, when he was first encountering fellow students from other parts of the black world. From these blues poems to comparisons between education policies and jazz aesthetics, from nods to black-cast musical films like *Green Pastures* (1936) to a poem cycle in the 1980s calling for gospel choir accompaniment, African American popular music figured prominently in Senghor's understanding of the creative energy of *l'âme noire*, the black soul, which, he maintained, lay at the foundation of Négritude.

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[5] Paul Gilroy, *Small Acts* (London/New York: Serpent's Tail, 1993), 5.

[6] Senghor's names for diasporans reflect his familiarity with the Nardal sisters. Paulette Nardal's writing in *Revue du Monde Noir* introduced terms that included Afro-Latin and Afro-French in the same period when Césaire, Damas, Senghor, and others were revalorizing *nègre* as a term to celebrate blackness by coining "Négritude." See Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora* on Nardal's translation work. See Jennifer Wilks, *Race, Gender and Comparative Black Modernism* and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Negritude Women,* [sic] for more on the Nardal sisters and their transatlantic work.

[7] Mercer Cook, "Afro-Americans in Senghor's Poetry," in *Critical Perspectives on Léopold Senghor*, edited by Janice Spleth (Washington, DC: Three Continents Press, 1990). Originally published in *Hommage à Léopold Sédar Senghor, homme de culture* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1976).

[8] Petrine Archer-Straw details this phenomenon elegantly in *Negrophilia: Avant Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000).

Despite the fact that we remember him as *le poète-président,* Senghor wrote far more prose than the other founders of the literary movement, Aimé Césaire and Léon Damas; his published essays and speeches fill five volumes (over two thousand pages) of *Liberté* in addition to his prolific poetic output. Jazz and related Black Atlantic musical practices were a constant reference point from the time he came to France in the late 1920s onward. However, the limited number of performers mentioned by name and the level of abstraction in his descriptions raise the question of how much Senghor actually listened to the music he so readily cited. Ironically, while Senghor advocated emotion, rhythm, and dance as core aspects of Négritude, he was, according to his biographers, a reserved person far more likely to attend solemn Mass on a Sunday morning than to take in a live music show on a Saturday night.[9] How did the proponent of a form of Négritude that celebrated the (neo-)traditionalist black soul (*âme noir*) sounded on the kora, the balaphon, and the sabar drum become so interested in jazz and other forms of popular music? This chapter poses a cheeky question: does Senghor's Négritude have swing? More to the point, what *did* jazz mean to Senghor? And how might the sometimes pedantic slow drag of the poet-president's theories on jazz as an exemplar of Négritude open up the "pocket," that essential ragged approach to the beat in a jazz ensemble, to think about transnational black solidarity as a dynamic relationship between the popular, the scholarly, and the belletristic?

The question of swing turns on whether Senghor imagined himself as a participant or an observer, a player or an audience member. Performance instructors and ethnomusicologists alike stress that to play jazz one must cultivate a good ear through active listening practices. Indeed, Mark Levine cautions in the introduction to *Jazz Piano,* one of the definitive texts for beginning keyboard improvisers:

> Nobody has ever learned to play jazz from a book only.... Listen to as much live and recorded jazz as you can, transcribe solos and song from records, and, in general, immerse yourself as much as possible in the world of JAZZ.[10]

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[9] Numerous biographies mention Senghor's introversion. See, for example, Janet Vaillant, *Black, French, and African: A Life of Léopold Sédar Senghor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1990).

[10] Mark Levine, *Jazz Piano* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music, 1989), ix.

Paul Berliner strikes a similar note in his magnum opus *Thinking in Jazz*, where he analyzes how jazz musicians develop formidable musical intelligence. Jazz musicians internalize the ins and outs of diatonic theory so thoroughly that they can make decisions based not only on the complex combinatorics of harmonic chord structures but also on a personalized aesthetic and a commitment to honing a shared language with their fellow improvisers. Berliner demonstrates how musicians learn from one another, often in seemingly informal settings that almost always involve listening together, whether to live performers or recordings.[11] While musicians may develop an interest in musicological approaches or written histories that supplement their practical and aural initiation into the history of this art form, listening is the primary mode for learning how and why "It Don't Mean a Thing if it Ain't Got That Swing." Lingering over the poet-president's writings and cultural policy alongside that of his critics elucidates what meaning(s) Senghor made of "ce que les Américains appellent *swing,*" as he gingerly puts it in his seminal essay "Ce que l'homme noir apporte[What the Black Man Offers]," and, in the process, opens new insights on the relation of Senghorian Négritude to other pan-African cultural expressions over the course of his long career.

Begin the "Bicephalous" Beguine

To foreground the intersections between artist and statesman, I begin with the speech that launched Senghor's political career. In September of 1937, Léopold Sédar Senghor made his first official speech in Senegal, presenting his vision of an education system adapted to the colonial context in a presentation entitled "Le Problème Culturel en A.O.F." before the Foyer France-Sénégal at the Chamber of Commerce in Dakar's Plateau district. He had published a review of René Maran's *Batouala* in the much-fabled l'*Étudiant noir* in 1935, but this speech, later published in *Liberté I,* marked Senghor's first officially invited address to the Dakar public. He began by confessing (rather disingenuously for Africa's first *agrégé*) that he was going to speak as a peasant from Sine—"*en paysan du Sine*"—and anchored his speech in the boldly twinned traditions "du bonhomme Socrate et de notre sage Kotye Barma" [of the fine fellow Socrates and our sage, Kotye Barma].[12] He would go on to argue that education ought to be adapted to reflect both the values of African civilization and the demands of assimilation imposed by colonialism, and jazz music served as a prototype of the balance to be struck between these two sets of interests.

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[11] Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1994).

[12] Léopold Sédar Senghor, "Le Problème Culturel en A.O.F.," in *Liberté I: Négritude et Humanisme* (Paris: Seuil, 1964), 11. An agrégé has passed a highly competitive exam to teach in France.

The first section of his discussion was framed as a debate over the meaning of "culture" between imagined interlocutors whose names marked them as representatives of a range of Senegalese ethnic groups. Beginning in this way reestablished his credibility and connection to local identities after ten years residing in France, but it also highlighted the problematic disparity in rights enjoyed by the African *citizens* from the urban Communes of Dakar, Rufisque, St-Louis, and Gorée and the marginalized African *subjects*, largely rural peasants from places like Sine across French West Africa. What these Africans shared, however, was the dilemma of assimilation:

> Que si nous voulons *survivre*, la nécessité d'une adaptation ne peut nous échapper: d'une *assimiliation*. Notre milieu n'est plus ouest-africain, il est aussi français, il est international; pour tout dire, il est *afro-français* [That if we wish to *survive*, the necessity of an adaptation cannot escape us, nor indeed of an *assimilation*. Our milieu is no longer strictly West African, it is also French, it is international: in sum, it is *Afro-French*].[13]

Senghor stressed the need to maintain an African cultural identity outside of French economic and political domination, a space of alterity, if not resistance. Given that he saw assimilation as inescapable, the question he posed concerned what sort of education would best fit the challenges of the day.

Senghor then turned to a more technical discussion of education and to a topic that might hardly be expected to launch a political career on the world stage: textbook selection. Calling for a bifurcated system that he rather awkwardly named *bicéphalisme* (two-mindedness), he voiced an expectation that the French would continue to expand the right to participate in governance to West Africans.[14] *Bicéphalisme* would encourage young West African urbanites to develop an acquaintance with local cultural and economic imperatives on the one hand and familiarity with the world of the French colonizers on the other, a description consonant with the idea of binaural hearing in stereophonics. While admittedly elitist, his statement that "L'élite est appellée à être exemple et intermédiaire [The elite is called to be an example and an intermediary]" urged his audience to consider what an education for future citizenship would involve.[15] His criticism of one well-known textbook hinged on the need to prepare for wider access to civil rights and responsibilities:

> le fameux *Mamadou et Bineta* fait merveille en brousse. Mais il n'est pas fait pour des élèves de Dakar: il ne leur parle pas de mille choses familières aux citadins.... [J'attends] le *Mamadou et Bineta* du Citoyen, et ce livre du Cours

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[13] Senghor, *Liberté I,* 14. Here Senghor adopts Nardal's term, "afro-français."

[14] At the time of Senghor's speech, the French colony of l'Afrique occidentale francaise (French West Africa) encompassed those territories that would become Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Benin.

[15] Senghor, *Liberté I*, 18.

> moyen qui groupera les meilleures pages des écrivains coloniaux, noirs comme blancs, et des écrivains métropolitains, les unes éclairant et complétant les autres. [the famous *Mamadou and Bineta* goes over marvellously in the bush. Yet it is not designed for the students of Dakar: it does not speak to them of a thousand things familiar to urbanites.... [I await] the *Mamadou and Bineta* of the Citizen, and that middle school textbook which will gather the best pages of colonial writers, black as well as white, along with metropolitan writers, complementing and shedding light on each other.][16]

According to this prescription of preparatory readings for citizenship, the reader was imagined as a *citadin*, not only an urban resident but also a civic being. It was this urban civic reader, after all, who would most need to maintain his or her bilingualism in the face of the dominance of French language instruction in the high schools, and was in need of a bulwark against the metropolitan cultural wave.

And it was precisely as an urban citizen that Senghor's imagined reader might find a relevant cultural resource in jazz and the other black diaspora expressions to which Senghor turned at the end of his speech. In proto-Négritude[17] terms "Les intellectuels ont mission de restaurer les *valeurs noires* dans leur vérité et leur excellence.... Par les Lettres surtout [Intellectuals have a mission to restore *black values* in their truth and their excellence.... Through Literature above all else]."[18] The forerunners for such a project were all from the diaspora—Haitian literature first of all, but also "négro-américaine, négro-espagnole, négro-portugaise." Yet he immediately undercut this agenda, deeming what he called "notre peuple" [our people] unready to launch a literature using the instrument of the French language, and suggested an intermediary step was necessary in the cultural vindication of "black values." The model for this step was jazz:

> Enfin, une telle littérature ne saurait exprimer toute notre âme. Il y a une certaine saveur, une certaine odeur, un certain accent, un certain timbre noir inexprimable à des instruments européens. Les inventeurs du *jazz-hot* l'ont compris, qui emploient la trompette bouchée et autres instruments bizarres à l'homme de la rue. [Finally, such a literature would not know how to express our whole soul. There is a certain flavour, a certain odor, a certain accent, a certain black timbre that cannot be expressed on European instruments. The inventors of hot jazz understood this, and they use the muted

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[16] Ibid., 16.

[17] Throughout the speech, Senghor uses a wide range of terms to identify black cultures, including "afro-francais" (18), "*valeurs noirs*" (19), "négro-americaine, négro-espagnole, négro-portugaise" (19); this variable terminology suggests that he was not yet committed to revindication and the more consistent use of the term "nègre," which became characteristic of his later thought.

[18] Senghor, *Liberté I*, 19.

> trumpet and other bizarre instruments appropriated from the man in the street.][19]

Jazz, for Senghor, captured something putatively unnameable and inexpressible (*inexprimable*), a "je-ne-sais-quoi" about blackness to which the *agrégé*[20] only gestured in the repeated "certain"; this inexpressible quality exceeded the scope of the linguistic and visual realms, yet engaged a range of other senses (hearing, smelling, tasting). Put differently, language was not up to the task of adequately conveying this supplementary blackness. It was, however, captured and conveyed in the very sound of hot jazz, the timbre of its instruments, rather than in its form, its lyrics, its sociocultural context. How striking that, in a speech so concerned with bilingualism, this supplementary blackness is not mediated by either a European or an African language but rather by *sound* —instrumentation, timbre and accent. Furthermore, it is the timbre of brass instruments, and specifically the declamatory tones of the trumpet, that are referenced here, and that would predominate in Senghor's references to jazz, not the plucked bass, percussive piano, or brushed drum set. This suggests that the function of jazz in Senghor's work was to herald a genius that is specifically *nègre* with fanfare. Négritude musicology was mining jazz for a set of metaphors and shared references that could tune local political challenges to the song of transnational black political solidarity.

Senghor quickly returned, however, to his speech's original theme, and here the traces of another project of bilingualism emerged in his choice of examples. "Le bilinguisme, précisément, permettrait une *expression intégrale* du *Nègre nouveau*—j'emploie le mot à dessein; il doit être restitué dans sa dignité [Bilingualism, precisely, will permit an *integral expression* of the *Nègre nouveau*—I employ the word intentionally: it must be restored to its dignity]."[21] The term "Nègre nouveau" was, of course, a translation of the "New Negro," which Senghor had first encountered among the community of black intellectuals introduced to him by the Nardal sisters and their bilingual French-English journal, *La Revue du Monde Noir*.[22] As Brent Hayes Edwards points out, "More than any other interwar periodical, *La Revue du Monde Noir* systematically strove to practice black internationalism as bilingualism, running English and French in parallel columns throughout every issue."[23] Thus, when Senghor presented bilingualism as a principle to be adopted in French West Africa, both the conceptual genealogy and the specific references to the New Negro movement attested to the impact the diaspora in black Paris had upon him.

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[19] Ibid.,19.

[20] Senghor was awarded the *agrégé* teaching qualification in 1935, the first black African to receive this French academic degree.

[21] Senghor, *Liberté I,* 19.

[22] Both Edwards (120) and Vaillant (91) describe the Nardal sisters as crucial in introducing Senghor to African American and Caribbean intellectuals in Paris.

[23] Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2003), 120.

The list of particular writers whose work he saw as models of this "integral expression" was also telling. If "Un Paul Laurence Dunbar, un Claude MacKay [*sic*], un Langston Hughes, un Sterling Brown ont fait, du patois négro-américain, d'un pauvre balbutiement d'esclaves déracinés, une merveille de beauté: *a thing of beauty* [a Paul Laurence Dunbar, a Claude McKay, a Langston Hughes, a Sterling Brown have made, of Negro American dialect, of the poor mumblings of deracinated slaves, *a thing of beauty*],"[24] they had all done so by crafting poetry constituted by its relation to black music, black speech, but most of all black *sound*. Whether in direct references to jazz music, or through the influence of these New Negro writers who themselves emulated music, Senghor came to assign a place of privilege to early jazz in his poetic, as well as prose oeuvre, casting it as a definitive example of Négritude as "l'ensemble des valeurs du monde noir [the ensemble of values of the black world]."

Although presumably composed during the same period as his entry into public service, Senghor's *Poèmes perdus* (or *Lost poems)* were first published in the 1990 Seuil edition of his complete works. Diaspora-derived music is repeatedly associated with the nostalgia, homesickness, melancholia, and alienation that haunted Senghor's own chosen exile. Senghor returned to Senegal in 1932 and again in 1937, but apart from these visits he was living in France, and the nostalgia that ran through these poems reflected his own experience of exile's *soleil noir.*[25]

In addition to referencing the eponymous poem by one of Senghor's favorite poets, Charles Baudelaire, "Spleen" plays on the two senses of the blues—a musical form and a melancholic mood. The stereomodernist influence of Langston Hughes, whose poetry Senghor memorized and recited, is apparent in the adherence to formal rhyming and rhythmic patterns, in the economy of diction, and in patterns of "repetition with a difference," which Samuel Floyd has shown to be a rhetorical signifying practice typical of blues musical forms.[26] Senghor was well aware of typical twelve-bar blues form (although his analysis focused more on the poetic than musical aspects of the form). In a 1950 lecture on "La poésie négro-américaine," he described the standard form of stanzas of

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[24] In choosing the English-language phrase "a thing of beauty," Senghor also invoked John Keats's poem "Endymion," and it's claim for beauty's staying power as a legitimizing gesture, an affirmation of the lasting aesthetic value of work by Dunbar and the other authors he mentioned.

[25] Vaillant notes: "Apparently Senghor suffered bleak periods throughout his life. He learned to recognize them and to remember that they would pass." (104). My phrasing here makes a nod not only to Julia Kristeva's powerful theorization of depression and melancholia, *Le soleil noir* (translated as *Black Sun*), but also to her thoughtful work on exile and literature in *Strangers to Ourselves*.

[26] See Samuel Floyd, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York: Oxford UP, 1996). Floyd expands on Henry Louis Gates's work on "signifyin[g]."

three lines, with an identical or slightly altered repetition of the first, and a third line that closes unexpectedly.[27] Given his clear exposé of blues form, the variations from blues form in "Spleen" may be taken as intentional poetic license. Each stanza is four lines long, and a diegetic stanza alternates with a chorus:

C'est un blues mélancolique,
Un blues nostalgique,
Un blues indolent
Et lent.[28]

It's a melancholy blues,
A nostalgic blues,
A slow, lazy
Blues.[29]

In "Spleen" the first two lines of the chorus present a synonymous and rhymed pair (mélancolique/nostalgique), which is elaborated in the final line, "Un blues indolent/et lent." While the line break before "et lent" serves to "worry the line," another practice of embellishment or elaboration typical of Afro-diasporic musical practice. As Stephen Henderson explains in his classic, *Understanding the New Black Poetry*, "worrying the line" is a "folk expression for the device of altering the pitch of a note in a given passage or for other kinds of ornamentation often associated with melismatic singing in the black tradition. A verbal parallel exists in which a word or phrase is broken up to allow for affective of didactic comment."[30]

Another of Senghor's early *Pòemes perdus,* "Émeute à Harlem" was written long before Senghor's first trip to New York (he did not travel there until 1950), and the Harlem imagined here is one he knew only through literature and the acquaintances he made through the Nardals and Louis Achille in Paris. The poem's opening lines suggest a joyous epiphany, whose juxtaposition with the title suggests a more revolutionary-minded lyric speaker than we have encountered so far:

Et je me suis réveillé un matin
De mon sommeil opiniâtre et muet,
Joyeux, aux sons d'un jazz aérien[31]

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[27] Senghor, *Liberté I,* 106.

[28] Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique* (Paris: Seiul, 1990), 348.

[29] Léopold Sédar Senghor, *The Collected Poetry*, trans. Melvin Dixon. (Charlottesville: U Virginia P, 1991), 241. (Hereafter cited as Dixon, *Collected Poetry.*) Note, Dixon often departs from Senghor's line-breaks.

[30] Stephen Henderson, *Understanding the New Black Poetry: Black Speech and Black Music as References.* (New York: Morrow, 1973), 41. Cheryl Wall's monograph *Worrying the Line: Black Women Writers, Lineage and Literary Tradition* (Durham: U North Carolina P, 2005) expands upon Henderson's definition.

[31] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 351.

And I awoke one morning
From my stubborn, mute sleep,
Joyful for the sounds of jazz in the air[32]

The poem begins in mid-thought, like an anacrusis (upbeat), and the repetitions of nasal [m] and approximant [j] phonemes figure sleep's silent grip on the speaker. In the third line jazz erupts, the first word from outside a standard French lexicon, and awakens the speaker to recognize the "turpitudes/Sous le velours et la soie fine [turpitudes/Below the velvet and fine silk]" of a decadent exterior (presumably that of the capitalist West, although the poem leaves this vague "ils"/"leurs" without specification).[33] At first glance jazz seems entirely abstracted here, a passing reference, whose aerial qualities contrast sharply with the insistence on materiality, and specifically the bodily images that follow (gangrene, saliva, a feverish head, blood). However, the phonetics and rhythmic tension of the line "Joyeux, aux sons d'un jazz aérien [Joyful for the sounds of jazz in the air]" evoke jazz at the level of onomatopoeia. The fricative phonemes—[ʒ], [z] and [s]—mimic the innovation of brushes used on a drum set. By the end of the poem, nauseated by the stench of a gangrened world unmasked, the speaker's head has been converted into "Une usine à révoltes/Montée par de longs siècles de patience [A factory of revolts/Raised up by long centuries of patience]." He ends calling for "des chocs, des cris, du sang,/Des morts [shocks, and shouts, and blood,/And deaths]" and the return to an iambic rhythm suggests an echo of the third line and a parting evocation of jazz.

The title "Émeute [Uprising]" shares the same etymology as *émotion,* which Senghor (in)famously qualified as *nègre* in the oft-quoted statement: "L'émotion est nègre, comme la raison hellène [Emotion is negro, as reason is Greek]."[34] In light of the poem, Senghor's *émotion* registers not just as the English word "emotion," but as a reaction of protest to oppression privileging action rather than mere analysis. Senghor's statement about emotion and reason comes from his essay "Ce que l'homme noir apporte" [What the black man brings], which he contributed to a section entitled "Vers une harmonie [Towards a harmony]" in the 1939 edited collection *Homme de Couleur.* Senghor's essay proposes that blacks have a unique approach to religion, societal organization, and the arts, and draws on German ethnologist Leo Frobenius' idiosyncratic theory of the ties between plant life and emotional vigor to ground its controversial statement.[35] However, the essay is of particular interest here because it not only draws from a repertoire of diaspora sources, but also specifies what aspects of jazz Senghor sees in "*l'âme nègre* [the black soul]."

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[32] Dixon, *Collected Poetry,* 244.

[33] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 354.

[34] Senghor, *Liberté I,* 24.

[35] Césaire, Damas, and Senghor studied Frobenius's "Qu'est-ce que l'Afrique signifie pour nous?" from the 1936 French translation of Frobenius work, L'*Histoire de la civilization Africaine* well enough that Senghor claimed to know the text by heart.

"Ce que l'homme noir apporte" quotes French translations of Lewis Alexander, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, and Claude McKay, mentioning Jean Toomer and Alain Locke in footnotes as well as Lydia Cabrera's collection, *Contes nègres de Cuba,* (a French translation of a foundational text from the Hispanophone African diaspora), and the film *Verts Pâturages* (a subtitled version of the 1936 classic *Green Pastures*). All but one of the cited poems had been published in Locke's anthology, *The New Negro*, a text so influential that one might claim Locke edited the textbook for Négritude musicology.

In this essay, Senghor is more specific about what aspects of jazz he sees as most crucial. Senghor declares that the "force ordinatrice qui fait le style nègre est le *rythme* [determining force which defines the Negro style is *rhythm*]."[36] He notes in very general terms that the approach to rhythm in music as opposed to the plastic arts is exemplified by the fact that song in *le style nègre* is often accompanied by drums and no other instrumentation. However, it is to African American culture that Senghor turns in articulating what he purports to be the unique aspects of a black approach to rhythm:

> C'est ce que les Américains appellent *swing*. Caractérisé par la syncope, il est loin d'être mécanique. Il est fait de constance et de variété, de tyrannie et de fantaisie, d'attente et de surprise; ce qui explique que le Nègre puisse, pendant des heures, se plaire à la même phrase musicale, car elle n'est pas tout à fait la même. [It is what the Americans call *swing.* Characterized by syncopation, it is far from being mechanical. It is composed of constancy and variety; of tyranny and fantasy; of expectation and surprise; which is what explains how the Negro could, for hours on end, be able to take pleasure in the same musical phrase, for it is not altogether the same.][37]

The example he gives of iterations of the same musical phrase over several hours could not be further from the aesthetics of invention and improvisation key to jazz performance. Senghor's elastic use of the term "rhythm" leads him to examples that might otherwise seem contradictory, rendering the notion that "le Nègre était un être rythmique [the Negro was a rhythmic being]" so broad that it becomes virtually meaningless.

He is on less tenuous ground in his discussion of instrumentation, which he sees as not strictly a musical element, but which leads him to a striking comment on timbre:

> le Nègre a montré les ressources que l'on pouvait tirer de certains instruments ignorés jusque-là ou arbitrairement méprisés et cantonnés dans un

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[36] Senghor, *Liberté I*, 36.

[37] Ibid., 37.

> rôle subalterne. Tel fut le cas des instruments à percussion, dont le xylophone; tel est le cas du saxophone et des cuivres, trompette et trombone. Grâce à la netteté, à la vigeur, à la noblesse de leurs sonorités, ceux-ci étaient tout désignés pour rendre le *style nègre.* Grâce aussi à tous les effets de délicate douceur et de mystère qu'en ont tirés, depuis, les meilleurs 'hotistes.' [the Negro has demonstrated the resources upon which one can draw in certain instruments which were hitherto unknown or arbitrarily looked down upon and ghettoized in a subaltern role. Such was the case with percussion instruments, such as the xylophone; such is the case with the saxophone and brass instruments like the trumpet and trombone. Thanks to the cleanness, the vigor and the nobility of their sonorities, all these were well-suited to render the Negro style. Thanks also, to all the effects of delicate sweetness and of mystery which, since then, the very best of the hot jazz players, have been able to draw from their instruments.][38]

One of the innovations of the *style nègre* as sound per se, then, is to introduce a specific sonority that hot jazz artists know best how manipulate. Yet what unites these instruments' very different timbres is not merely the "cleanness, the vigor and the nobility" of their timbre, but the conversion of a hierarchizing critique into a positive value, not unlike the transformation of the racist overtones of the word *nègre* to the "Négritude" that Césaire had first announced four years previously. Senghor's bold claim here is that the reclamation of black dignity has a *sonic* quality.

Senghor's final point about jazz reveals the degree to which the music shapes his poetics rather than merely appearing at intervals as a referent:

> Hughes Panassié a mis en pleine lumière les apports nègres dans le *jazz hot,* dont le caractère fondamental est dans l'*interprétation.*... La valeur de l'interprétation est dans l'intonation, que Panassié définit: 'Non seulement la manière d'attaquer la note, mais encore la manière de la tenir, de l'abandonner, bref de lui donner toute son expression.' 'C'est, ajoute-t-il, l'expression, l'accent que l'exécutant imprime à chaque note, dans lequel il fait passer toute sa personnalité.' [Hughes Panassié has brought to light the black contributions to *hot jazz*, among which the fundamental characteristic emerges in *interpretation.*... The value of interpretation lies in its approach to intonation, which Panassié defines thus: "Not only the manner of attacking a note, but also the manner of holding and releasing it, in short, in giving it all its expressivity." "It is, he adds, the expressivity, the accent which the performer imprints on each note, in which he transmits his entire personality."] (my italics)[39]

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[38] Ibid., 37.

[39] Ibid., 38.

In other words, it is the material sound itself, the timbre, tuning, and articulation of a particular performer's sound rather than what pitches are played that commands Senghor's attention in Panassié's discussion.

The Shadow of a Smile

Sylvie Kandé has argued that jazz allows Senghor to find a resonance between his own alienation as a student from the colonies in Paris, and the originary displacement (to borrow Nahum Chandler's phrase) of the Middle Passage for diaspora blacks:

> Le poète inscrit répétitivement la nostalgie qui embrume son exil à Paris dans le cadre immense et tragique de l'exil collectif des Africains déportés puis mis en esclavage sur un sol étranger, double désastre dont témoigne indirectement le blues. [The poet repeatedly inscribes the nostalgia which fogs his exile in Paris within the immense and tragic framework of the collective exile of those Africans deported and then enslaved on foreign soil, a double disaster to which the blues bears indirect witness.][40]

She draws attention, in particular, to the poems "Joal"[41] and "Ndéssé ou 'Blues.' " While Kandé's interpretation is suggestive, we need to note that Senghor's exile is incommensurable in significant ways with the Middle Passage, and that if slavery figures in these poems at all only a careful reading can discern such references. In "Joal," Senghor's nostalgia is exacerbated by the mythic dimension in his childhood memories of his hometown, Joal. He fears that he will discover that his connection with traditions has eroded during his European sojourn, rendering him an orphan. It is not merely that he remembers, but that these memories open onto a collective identity rooted in an intimate knowledge of the genealogical history of his home. And these memories are anchored in sonic elements:

> Je me rappelle les festins funèbres fumant du sang des troupeaux égorgés
> Du bruit des querelles, des rhapsodies des griots.
> Je me rappelle les voix païennes rythmant le *Tantum Ergo*
> [I remember the funeral feasts blood smoking from the slaughtered beasts
> The noise of quarrels, the rhapsodies of griots
> I remember the pagan voices beating out the *Tantum Ego*][42]

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[40] Sylvie Kandé, "Jazz et Littérature francophone" *Mots Pluriels 13* (April, 2000), p. 6.http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/MotsPluriels/MP1300syk.html (accessed 6/24/11).

[41] "Joal" is analyzed in some detail in Barthélemy Kotchy's monograph, *La Correspondance des Arts dans la Poésie de Senghor.*

[42] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique*, 17.

He goes on to mention the choirs that sing at traditional wrestling matches known as *lamb,* and the cry of women in love. Yet these sounds are inaccessible, heard only within his own mind's ear.

> Je me rappelle, je me rappelle . . .
>
> Ma tête rythmant
> Quelle marche lasse le long des jours d'Europe où parfois
> Apparaît un jazz orphelin qui sanglote sanglote sanglote.
> [I remember, I remember . . .
>
> My head pounding
> Some languid march the length of European days or sometimes
> An orphaned bit of jazz which sobbed, sobbed, sobbed.][43]

The repeated phrase, "je me rappelle," running as a leitmotif throughout the poem, is also the rhythm in Senghor's head ["tête rythmant"] against which jazz's orphan sobs strike him as a new cross-rhythm. Why, we might ask, must this rhythm (for certainly the repetition of "sanglote" creates a new rhythm) register as an inconsolable sobbing? Whose loss is it marking? And what is its relation to Senghor's own nostalgic melancholia? I would argue that the triple iteration of "sanglote" against the dual iteration "je me rappelle" with which the stanza begins underscores a difference this poem does not gloss over. While Senghor makes no mention of his own family in these memories, the allusion to rhapsodic griots early in the poem contrasts with the orphan figure of jazz. Jazz, as a third term, external to his childhood memories and Hexagonal French patrimony, allows Senghor to work through his own homesickness. That this encounter with the diaspora is routed through Europe is also significant because it implicates Europe not merely as the site of a second-wave diaspora of colonial subjects migrating to the metropole, but also as originating the very "marche lasse [weary walk]," the long wandering that becomes what Édouard Glissant calls *errancy,* and jazz, as a diaspora music, is evoked as the poem's orphan.

The "Accompanied" Poems

Senghor introduced an important innovation to his poetry with *Hosties Noires* in 1948, annotating selected poems to be accompanied by musical instruments, whether these be koras, tama, or pipe organ.[44] In the *Chants pour*

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[43] Ibid., 18.

[44] Although there are numerous recordings of Léopold Senghor reciting his poems, none of the recorded poems with annotations for musical accompaniment include musical tracks in the recitations, to my knowledge. However, in a recording of his poem "Joal" included on *Entretiens avec*

Naett, originally published as a stand-alone volume in 1949, and later renamed "Chants pour Signare" when included in the collection *Nocturnes* (1961), this practice of annotating a musical accompaniment for the poems is extended: in fact, the "Chants de Signare" have no titles, and are thus most easily identified by their musical annotations. Historically, *signares* were women of mixed African and European ancestry who occupied positions of privilege in the Four Communes, particularly Saint Louis, as an intermediary elite between the colonizing French and the rest of the local population. In spite of their ambiguous position they continue to be a celebrated part of Senegalese history and culture, and many events in contemporary Dakar include two or three young women dressed in period costumes, including the pointed cloth hats that have become the trademark of the signares. Senghor's reasons for renaming the collection are unclear, but the decision did reflect his interest in "métissage" (inadequately translated as hybridity) as a way of thinking about cultural exchange. For Senghor, jazz was a musical example of métissage as his ideal metaphor for the relation between French and Senegalese cultures. A perfect example is found in his essay "De la liberté de *l'âme*, ou l'éloge du métissage" [On the liberty of the soul, or in praise of hybridity] published in *Liberté I*. He states:

> Notre vocation de colonisés est de surmonter les contradictions de la conjoncture, l'antinomie artificiellement dressée entre l'Afrique et l'Europe, notre hérédité et notre éducation. . . . Supériorité, parce que liberté, du *Métis,* qui choisit, où il veut, ce qu'il veut pour faire, des éléments réconciliés, une oeuvre exquise et forte. Mais n'est-ce pas, là, la vocation des élites et des grandes civilisations? . . .
>
> Trop assimilés et pas assez assimilés? Tel est exactement notre destin de métis culturels. C'est un rôle ingrat, difficile à tenir, c'est un rôle nécessaire si la conjoncture et l'Union française ont un sens.
>
> [Our calling as colonized people is to overcome the contradictions of conjuncture, the artificially maintained antinomy between Africa and Europe, our heritage and our education. . . . The appeal of the *hybrid* lies in his freedom, for he chooses where he will, what he will, in order to make an exquisite and compelling work out of the reconciled elements. Yet, is this not the calling of elites and of great civilizations? . . .

Patrice Galbeau, 1977 (INA Mémoire Vive, 2006), a soundtrack plays the sound of children's voices, laughter, and other sounds associated with his hometown village in the background. For additional examples of Senghor's recitations, see Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Enregistrements Historiques* (Frémaux et Associés FA5136); Léopold Senghor, Jacques Rabemanjara, Tchicaya U Tam'si, *Négritude & Poésie—Les Grandes Voix Du Sud Vol. 1* (Frémaux et Associés FA5187), and the three-disque RFI set *Léopold Sédar Senghor: Les voix de l'écriture* (ARCL 33; 34 and 35). Interestingly, Langston Hughes also wrote copious musical annotations for his poem cycle *Ask Your Mama*, and recorded himself reciting the poems, but without the accompanying music alluded to in his text. See *Langston Hughes: The Black Verse (12 Moods for Jazz)* on Buddah Records BDS 2005 (1970).

> Too assimilated and not assimilated enough? That is exactly our destiny as cultural hybrids. It is an awkward role, difficult to maintain, yet a necessary role if the present moment and the French Union are to have any meaning.][45]

Clearly, by the mid-twentieth century, Senghor was convinced that creative, active projects drawing from both African and European traditions moved in a necessary political as well as aesthetic direction. Jazz music figures as the emblematic examplar of this cultural métissage in his thought.

Chant (*Pour orchestre de jazz)* is an intimate love-poem. It is also the most direct evocation of diaspora and the traumas of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Senghor's work. First published the year after his marriage to Ginette Eboué, the daughter of the Guyanese governor of Upper Volta (today's Burkina Faso), the poem was likely inspired by his new wife as well as his readings about the New World.[46] The poem's opening line seems at first to be simply a reminiscence of a childhood game, but may also be read as an evocation of the Middle Passage: "*Dans la nuit abyssale* en notre mère, nous jouions aux noyés t'en souvient-il? [Hidden in the abyss of night within our mother do you remember playing as if drowned],"[47] Unhomed by these early games, the poet wanders among various communities:

Aux sables du Levant à la Pointe-du-Sud, chez les Peuples-de-la-Mer-verte
Et chez les Peuples d'Outre-mer.
Et la conque au loin dans tes rêves c'était moi.

. . . .to the eastern sands,
To the southern point, among the People-of-the-Green-Sea
And among the Overseas People. And the distant conch
Sounding in your dreams was I.[48]

The distinctions between various articulated portions of the diaspora peel away in layers just as musics seem to overlay each other in the lines:

Contre l'épaule de la Nuit cubaine, si j'ai pleuré sur tes cheveux fanés!
Prêtresse du Vaudou en l'Île Ensorcelée, mais souviens-toi du victimaire
Aux yeux droits et froids de poignards. Sous l'ombrage lilial d'Amboise,
    poétesse
Tu m'as filé souvent des *blues*. Ah! la voix de lumière et son halo de sang!
Les ombres transparentes des chantres royaux pleuraient au son de la
    trompette.

Upon the shoulders of a Cuban night, [how I wept] on your faded hair!
Voudou Priestess on the Enchanted Island, do you remember your victim

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[45] Senghor, *Liberté I,* 103.

[46] They divorced in 1955, and Senghor married Colette Hubert, the French woman from Normandy who became Senegal's first first lady, and with whom he had a son, Philippe-Maguilen Senghor.

[47] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 188.

[48] Dixon, *Collected Poetry,* 129.

With eyes straight and cold as daggers? Woman poet, under the
  lily-white rage
Of Amboise, you often played me the blues. Ah! Voice of light
And its halo of blood! The transparent shadows of court singers
Cried at the trumpet's sound.

The explicit moves that allow the poet to shift from "la Nuit cubaine" to the Haitian "Île Ensorcelée" and then to an unnamed, abstract topos of transparent shadows are not revealed, but the soundtrack to these moves is prominent: the *blues* swell into a trumpet's cry. As in earlier examples and in Senghor's prose, the power of material sound to effect cultural work, particularly a rapprochement between diaspora and continent is highlighted.

(Autumn) In New York

In the 1956 collection *Éthiopiques,* all the poems include musical annotations, making this one of the most stereomodernist of all his collections. The tripartite poem "À New York," scored for "un orchestre de jazz: solo de trompette," is the most extended poetic expression of Senghor's interest in jazz. In the first section, the poet reacts to the architecture and population of New York as first intimidating and impressive, then alienating, efficient, yet lacking human warmth. The second section focuses on the poet's discovery of Harlem and his call to New York to listen to its "nocturnal heart." The final section reiterates this call in more exhortative tones, urging the city to not only open its eyes, but also its ears to a truth that can only be grasped aurally and inviting the reader to a rest the poet finds missing in New York's bustle. Each section of the poem relies on a sonic figure to crystallize its rhetoric, whether in the sirens of the first section, the trombones of the second, or the saxophone's laughter of the third.

The first section of the poem begins with an exclamation at the confusion and awe the poet first feels encountering the city: "New York! D'abord j'ai été confondu par ta beauté" [New York! At first I was bewildered by your beauty].[49] The tone quickly shifts to critical alienation in the cold and clinical environment. This contrast between the opening exclamation and the eventual tone of the first section gives the beginning an offbeat or syncopated feel, a diegetic rather than rhythmic anacrusis, and thus a translation of poetry into syncopation. The temporal experience of the visit to New York is brought to the fore, not merely in the poem's opening, but in the precision of the period that it takes for the poet to discover a new truth about the city:

Mais quinze jours sur les trottoirs chauves de Manhattan—
C'est au bout de la troisième semaine que vous saisit la fièvre en un

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[49] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 119, followed by Dixon, *Collected Poetry,* 87.

bond de jaguar
Quinze jours sans un puits ni pâturage, tous les oiseaux de l'air
Tombant soudains et morts sous les hautes cendres des terrasses.[50]

But two weeks on the naked sidewalks of Manhattan—
At the end of the third week the fever
Overtakes you with a jaguar's leap
Two weeks without well water or pasture all birds of the air
Fall suddenly dead under the high sooty terraces[51]

Along with this emphasis on the temporal, New York is reduced to a synecdoche of nylon legs, breasts with neither sweat nor scent, and howling sirens, highlighting a dichotomy between modern urban artifice and idyllic, timeless nature.

However, in the second section Senghor heralds an alternative modernity within New York, contrasting the hard cold lines of the opening with a millenarian vision proclaimed in a biblical lexicon and tone, a prophetic voice that emerges to trouble the modern(ist) version of historical time evoked in the first stanza:

Voici le temps des signes et des comptes
New York! or voici le temps de la manne et de l'hysope.
Il n'est que d'écouter les trombones de Dieu, ton coeur battre au rythme du sang ton sang.[52]

Now is the time for signs and reckoning, New York!
Now is the time of manna and hyssop.
You have only to listen to God's trombones, to your heart
Beating to the rhythm of blood, your blood.[53]

The foregrounding of temporality in shifts between a scriptural, seemingly timeless moment and New York's modern veneer poetically mirror the tension around the beat, or "playing in the pocket," so crucial to swing in jazz. Playing in the pocket allows different members of a rhythm section to play slightly before or slightly after the beat to create a pocket of time between the soundings of the beat to raise the rhythmic tension. "God's trombones"—"les trombones de Dieu"—in the third line also reveal the importance of the Harlem Renaissance to Senghor's literary imaginary, riffing on the title of James Weldon Johnson's collection of

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[50] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique*, 119.
[51] Dixon, *Collected Poetry*, 87.
[52] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique*, 120.
[53] Dixon, *Collected Poetry*, 88.

poetic sermons, *God's Trombones*, first published in 1927.[54] The prophetic tone is continued in the line: "J'ai vu dans Harlem bourdonnant de bruits de couleurs solennelles et d'odeurs flamboyantes" ["I saw Harlem teeming with sounds and ritual colors/And outrageous smells" in Dixon], using a past tense to present the image as a revealed truth (not unlike the tone of the book of Revelation in the Christian Bible). For Senghor, this revelation comes from the nocturnal spaces of Harlem, which sustain mangoes, rivulets of rum, and cotton flowers in the midst of the frosty city so alienating in the first section. Two motifs emerge: the rhythm of blood and the tom-tom. It is striking how these motifs parallel modernist Harlem Renaissance portrayals of Africa. Consider Countee Cullen's "Heritage," which begins famously, "What is Africa to me?" and continues with evocations of the drumbeat of dark "blood damned within." African American literary expression is a crucial intermediary through which music is refracted for Senghor.

The final stanza maintains the prophetic tone elaborated in the second, even proscribing what is required of New York for its "redemption," namely, to let the blood of its black culture enrich the city as a whole. The closing lines present a veritable *ars poetica* statement of Senghor's value for combining artistic media in a unitary cultural expression, perhaps indicating one reason for the prominence of jazz in his poetry, a literary exemplification of this uniting of creative energies:

> L'idée liée à l'acte l'oreille au coeur le signe au sens. . . .
> Mais il suffit d'ouvrir les yeux à l'arc-en-ciel d'Avril
> Et les oreilles, surtout les oreilles à Dieu qui d'un rire de saxophone créa le ciel et la terre en six jours.
> Et le septième jour, il dormit du grand sommeil nègre.[55]
>
> Idea links to action, the ear to the heart, sign to meaning . . .
>
> Just open your eyes to the April rainbow
> And your ears, especially your ears, to God
> Who in one burst of saxophone laughter
> Created heaven and earth in six days,
> And on the seventh slept a deep Negro sleep.[56]

The final line also exemplifies the strategy of taking an insulting stereotype of black people—here, laziness—and converting it into a positive value—the idea of Sabbath as sacred rest—much as Négritude made a positive value of the often derogatory term, *nègre*, as we have seen elsewhere in Senghor.

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[54] Senghor mentions Weldon in his 1950 lecture "La Poésie Négro-Américaine," noting that "Le Négro-américain a la tête épique. *Les Trompettes* [*sic*] *de Dieu* de James Weldon Johnson, poète et diplomate, sont le chef-d'oeuvre du genre et, dans ce recueil, particulièrement les *Sermons en vers.* [The American Negro has an epic imagination. *God's Trombones* by James Weldon Johnson, poet and diplomat, are masterpieces of the genre, and from this collection, especially the *Sermons in Verse*]" (*Liberté I,* 108–9).

[55] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique*, 121

[56] Dixon, *Collected Poetry*, 89

The collection *Éthiopiques* closes with a postface "Comme les lamantins vont boire à la source," [As the manatees will drink from the fount] which provides Senghor's most extended discussion in prose of his jazz poetics. Not surprisingly, given that all the poems in this volume begin with instructions for instrumental accompaniment, Senghor declares:

> La grande leçon que j'ai retenue de Marône, la poétesse de mon village, est que la poésie est chant sinon musique—et ce n'est pas là un cliché littéraire. Le poème est comme une partition de jazz, dont l'exécution est aussi importante que le texte. [The great lesson I learned from Marône, the woman poet of my village, is that poetry is song if not music—and that is not just a literary cliché. The poem is like a jazz score or chart, whose performance is as important as the text.][57]

Jazz is not merely an important recurring theme or referent in Senghor's poetry, but indeed its performance practice structures his very understanding of the relation between written and recited poetry. It is clear that while Senghor was concerned with formal questions of prosody such as meter and syllabification, he ultimately envisioned his poems as oral performances. However, the oral performance was a collaboration between reader and writer, just as a live jazz performance involves far more than the harmonic, rhythmic and melodic form of a piece. It is defined by the performer's decisions made in the moment, on the spot, in front of an audience. Senghor wrote that he "persiste à penser que le poème n'est accompli que s'il se fait chant, parole et musique en même temps [continues to think that the poem is not successful unless it works as song, speech and music at the same time]."[58] Just as a jazz chart was only a partial representation of the music, which could only be fully realized through an improvised performance, so the poem on the page was seen as a limited sketch of a collaborative stereomodernist event that Senghor imagined as being best illustrated through music. A fuller picture was projected in grand style in 1966.

La plus belle Africaine: Backstage at the World Festival of Negro Arts[59]

One of Senegal's most significant contributions to cultural pan-Africanism was hosting the Premier Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres (hereafter, FESMAN), held in Dakar from April 1–24, 1966, and began with a colloquium (from

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[57] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 172.

[58] Ibid., 173.

[59] "La plus belle africaine" was a song by Duke Ellington which he first recorded on the heels of his visit to Dakar, in July 1966, in a live performance at the Juan-les-Pins/Antibes Jazz Festival. The recording was released the following year on the appropriately named Verve album, *Soul Call.*

March 30 to April 8) which featured major artists and scholars discussing black expressive arts.[60] A coming-of-age party of sorts, the festival gathered together performing, plastic, and literary artists from thirty-seven nations on four continents for what would be a new chapter in Négritude musicology. The festival was unique as the first "*manifestation pan-nègre*" staged on the African continent, since previous gatherings—including Henry Sylvester Williams's Pan-African Conference of 1900, the Pan-African Congresses of the du Boisian tradition (1919–45), and the 1956 and 1959 Congresses for Writers and Artists organized by Présence Africaine—had all taken place in Europe and New York.[61] It was not only a scene of celebration and festivity, but also a forum for healthy and heated debate about what precisely Négritude meant, and to whom. As such, it may be read as a referendum on Senghor's version of Négritude.

The festival was held under the aegis of the Senegalese state, and Senghor, as head of state, was the sponsoring figurehead of the event, although two other people, Alioune Diop and Souleymane Sidibé, also played lead roles. Alioune Diop of Présence Africaine and the Société Africaine de Culture was credited with initiating the festival,[62] which was, in some senses, a sequel to the 1956 and 1959 conferences. Souleymane Sidibé, Commissaire National du Festival, bore the responsibility of representing the festival organizers to the public. His efforts were rewarded after its closure with Senegal's highest honor, a decoration as a Commander of the National Order. However, the festival had multiple authors and sponsors (whose larger geopolitical manoeuvers reflected the Cold War tensions of the day). The wide range of filmic, journalistic, and critical texts it inspired reflected the polyphony and even dissonance of divergent agendas. Preceding the festival, a Colloquium on the Function and Significance of Black Art in the Life of the People and For the People (to cite its full title) gathered scholars of literature, the visual and performing arts, and anthropology together. As I discuss in more detail further below, the Colloquium was a historic opportunity for dialogue, a live forum or agora where actual encounters between black subjects brought abstracted versions of Négritude into productive crisis. Attendees debated and performed alternate approaches to pan-Africanism, laying open before the local as well as international audience

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[60] A number of recent works have addressed FESMAN and its relation to other pan-African festivals and Senegalese politics. Among these, see Anthony J. Ratcliff *Liberation at the end of a pen: Writing Pan-African Politics of Struggle*, diss. U Mass, Amherst, 2009; Elizabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics and the Avant-Garde in Senegal, 1960–1995* (Durham: Duke UP, 2004); and Tracy D. Snipe, *Arts and Politics in Senegal: 1960–1996* (Trenton: Africa World Press: 1998).

[61] The Congress of Black Writers and Artists which the journal *Présence Africaine* convened in Paris in 1956 and again in Rome in 1959 were important precedents, and Alioune Diop, the editor of the journal and a key organizer of the congresses, was also an essential figure in bringing FESMAN to life.

[62] Senghor's hommage to Diop appeared in a commemorative edition of the journal *Ethiopiques* 24 (1980) following Diop's death.

tensions between a state-sponsored, top-down approach and more organic approaches to solidarity and identity. Many texts generated by the festival—film, news and magazine reportage, official reports, and memorabilia—were evaluative, adding to the range of views the colloquium elicited.

When preparations first began, Senghor announced that the festival would present "an illustration and no longer a theoretical exposition, it [was to] constitute a definite action, a positive contribution to the construction of a civilization based on universal values."[63] As stated at the first meeting of the planning body responsible for the event, the Association Sénégalaise du Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres:

> Cette manifestation se propose comme objectifs
>
> - de parvenir à une meillure compréhension internationale et interraciale
>
> - d'affirmer la contribution des Artistes et Ecrivains noirs aux grands courants universels de pensée
>
> - de permettre aux artistes noirs de tous les horizons de confronter les résultats de leurs recherches
>
> [This event proposes the following objectives:
>
> - to arrive at a better international and interracial understanding
>
> - to affirm the contribution of black artists and writers to the great universal currents of thought
>
> - to permit black artists from all backgrounds to come face to face with the fruit of their research.][64]

In addition to Senegalese governmental support, UNESCO and France were among the major sponsors of the event. The colloquium was opened, tellingly, by the writer André Malraux, then French Minister of Culture, and his comments situated the festival as an expression of a modernist binarism, pitting a stable and seemingly unchanging "patrimoine artistique de l'Afrique [artistic patrimony of Africa]" against a more dynamic spirit of "création vivante [living creation]." The opposing yet complementary logic of these two elements structured Malraux's entire speech, but was particularly striking in his proposal that Africa had two musics: one born of the despair of plantation slavery in the Americas (spirituals) and the other, jazz, whose rhythm and originality he saw as essential characteristics:

> Là l'Afrique a inventé; . . .
>
> En somme, le jazz est parti d'éléments mélodiques européens ou américains, à partir desquels l'Afrique a retrouvé son âme. Plus exactement, a trouvé une âme qu'elle n'avait pas autrefois, car c'est peut-être son âme

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[63] "Message From President Senghor to the Senegalese People [First World Festival of Negro Arts]," bilingual official government publication (Dakar, 1963).

[64] Amadou Racine Ndiaye, "Communication du sécrétaire d'état" (Dakar, Feb. 1963).

> désespérée qu'expriment les blues, mais ce n'est pas son âme d'autrefois qu'exprime le jazz, qu'elle a vraiment inventé.
>
> [There, Africa has invented . . .
>
> In sum, jazz took off from European or American melodic elements, from which point Africa rediscovered its soul. To be exact, discovered a soul which she did not have in ancient times, for it is perhaps her despairing soul which expresses itself in the blues, but it is not her ancient soul which jazz expresses, but one she has truly invented].[65]

The elision of Africa and the black cultures of the United States was wholly unmarked in his speech, and resulted in the odd implicit suggestion that Africa had no music of its own to speak of.

Malraux situated his discussion of global black music within a context of a French censure of American race relations and human rights by associating one strand of musical creativity (the spirituals) with the specific protests of enslaved Africans along the banks of the Mississippi. In fact, his comments that jazz was not so much Africa's rediscovered soul but a discovery of a soul that she did not possess before further served to distance jazz from the cultural patrimony of Africa, and rather to situate it on the other side of the dichotomy he opened with, as a marker of a contemporary and emerging African modernity, its living creation.

Paying careful attention to Malraux's comments should not imply that his perspective as a guest in Senegal served to define the terms on which jazz figured in the festival. Rather, his speech demonstrates the degree to which jazz was already an overdetermined signifier in rhetorics that had little to do with the music itself, and much to do with the role of the state (and indeed states) in defining and promoting "Culture." Another telling indicator of the work jazz was to do at the festival is found in an article by Lamine Diakhaté[66] included in the official program entitled "Artistes du monde noir." Of the eleven artists featured, only three were continental Africans: Habib Benglia of Mali, Facelli Kanté of Guinée, and Miriam Makeba of South Africa. The others were: Josephine Baker, Marian Anderson, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Katherine Dunham, Mahalia Jackson, Maria d'Apparecida/ Samba du Brésil. Given that Diakhaté's article was appearing in 1966, it is striking that the representatives of jazz were Armstrong, Ellington, Fitzgerald, and, arguably, Josephine Baker, all of whom had been in the international spotlight for at least three decades. If "jazz" was to occupy pride of place at the festival it was clearly the polished big-band jazz of the Ellington orchestra, who appeared as representatives of the American delegation to the festival, not the

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[65] André Malraux, "Discours de M. André Malraux à l'Ouverture du Colloque" in L'*Unité Africaine.* Dakar: 196 (7 April, 1966), 1.

[66] Diakhaté was a jazz afficionado whose black cosmpolitanism later bore fruit in his novel *Chalys d'Harlem.*

bebop sound of Charlie Parker or Dizzy Gillespie, much less the iconoclastic free jazz of the so-called October Revolution of 1964.

Although, as I began by noting, FESMAN provided an important forum for critique as well as celebration of Négritude's principles, it was not the first occasion when skeptics had aired their reservations about Négritude. One of the earliest and best-known critiques of Leopold Senghor's approach was the young Wole Soyinka's declaration that Négritude was an "invalid doctrine." Soyinka's oft-repeated quip at the 1962 African Writers' Conference noted that tigers, rather than announcing their *tigritude,* simply pounce, but he had first articulated the thought in slightly different terms in a 1960 essay:

> The duiker will not paint "duiker" on his beautiful back to proclaim his duikeritude; you'll know him by his elegant leap. The less self-conscious the African is, and the more innately his individual qualities appear in his writing, the more seriously he will be taken as an artist of exciting dignity.[67]

While it may be true that a duiker need not proclaim its *duikeritude,* its status as a member of the antelope family and its relation to another species, say, the elk, might be more complex than the young Soyinka allowed. In other words, Soyinka's comments do not engage fully with the international scope of the *poète-président*'s vision of *l'âme nègre* [the black soul], nor with the ways that blacks in locales on and beyond the African continent might seek to forge solidarity and build upon differences.

While FESMAN was in fact one of the great successes of Senghorian Négritude, staging *l'âme nègre* [black soul] exposed complex power relations within an international context of decolonization and the Cold War. It also made it clear that in such a context the potential of large-scale, state-sponsored events like the festival to materialize transnational solidarity was limited. FESMAN spawned many international arts festivals, and these, too, might be considered challenges to Négritude as cultural policity. These included the 1969 Algiers Pan-African Festival, which pointedly invited the Maghreb nations that Senghor's festival had excluded and featured far more radical African American participants; the biannual Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO); the 1977 and 2010 versions of FESMAN (Nigeria's FESTAC and Dakar's FESMAN III, respectively); and Ghana's biannual PANAFEST, to name but a few. These festivals contribute significantly to the tourism and national budgets of developing African nations, and thus the pan-African festival is a cultural medium that concerns Négritude musicology not only in coming to grips with the styles of performance, but also with the context and conditions of possibility for such events. The tensions between national prestige and international goodwill often bound up in funding problems complicate reading such events as expressions of transnational black solidarity; however, it is these very material constraints that reveal the limits of imagined and improvised community. Such limits were reflected in the fact that, with primarily government funding, representatives of the invited nations were unlikely to depart too far or too stridely from their government's agenda or official diplomatic position. As a result, the debates over aesthetics bore the additional weight of displaced political discourses. Therefore, debates about comparative black aesthetics became a sort of referendum on various forms of transnational black solidarity.

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[67] Soyinka's essay, "The Future of West African Writing," which argued that Chinua Achebe rather than Senghor should be seen as initiating truly African literature, originally appeared in the Nigerian literary journal *The Horn* 4:1 (1960), 10–16. *The Horn* was not widely circulated but it has since been cited by scholars, including Bernth Lindfors (see especially "The Early Writings of Wole Soyinka" in *Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka*, Lyn Rienner Publications, 1990), Martin Banham, and Obiajuru Maduakor. For a fine contextualization of Soyinka's statement, see Maduakor "Wole Soyinka as Literary Critic" in *Research on Wole Soyinka*, ed. Lindfors and Gibbs (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1993).

The call in Senghor's poetry to hear not only the voice of the West African kora, but also the wawa-muted trumpet enunciating a reclaimed sense of honor and resistance reflected Senghor's pan-African commitments. On the other hand, many African Americans among the festival's interdisciplinary, international, and intergenerational participants questioned the logic of Senghor's Négritude musicology, both at the colloquium and in other informal settings during the festival. William Greaves, the African American filmmaker, produced a film for the United States Information Agency, *The World Festival of Negro Arts,* which not only conveys the energy of the festival and colloquium but also presents its own complex reading of the two events, couched within the Cold War politics that determined its funding. A number of other African American artists in attendance, including Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, Katherine Dunham, and Hoyt Fuller documented the event. Tellingly, a number of African Americans attending the festival posed their challenges to Senghor's schematic interpretation of jazz as synechdoche for African America and exemplar of Négritude in musicological terms. Thus it is worth lingering here to consider in more detail what we can learn from these African American accounts of the festival, particularly in relation to the Senegalese versions.

As one of the most comprehensive documents of the festival, William Greaves's film, *The World Festival of Negro Arts*,[68] presents a montage of black-and-white shots featuring Ellington, the Alvin Ailey Company, and the Leonard de Paur Chorus among a range of primarily dance performances and footage shot in the art exhibition spaces, colloquium, and informal outdoor spaces of Dakar, with largely nonsynchronized sound. The film Greaves wrote

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[68] *World Festival of Negro Arts,* directed by William Greaves, 1966.

and directed was funded by the United States Information Agency, which had originally commissioned a five-minute news clip.[69] The expanded project

> proved the most popular U.S.I.A. film in Africa for the following decade. U.S.I.A. films were prohibited at the time (and until recently) from distribution in the United States. Although such [continent-to-diaspora] links could have been radicalizing for African Americans, this affirmation was more likely to serve a conservative agenda when presented to Africans—in suggesting greater identity with the United States and, by implication, with its Vietnam-era policies.[70]

Both because of its reception in Africa and as a filmic text, the film deserves a fuller analysis than I have space for here, so my comments are confined to the complicated nature of the relationship of jazz and Négritude as Senghor articulated it and Greaves's film as a counterpoint to that vision.

The black-and-white format underscored Greaves's intention to "put together an effective and comprehensive record of the event" to capture the historic nature of an event which his film already laced with nostalgia.[71] The self-conscious making of history was also in continuity with Senegalese publicity produced for the festival. The Senegalese national archives are, rightfully, a source of pride for its citizens and a badge of bureaucratic modernity, and the Festival has two sets of its own files in Dakar. In addition to minutes from meetings at every stage of the planning process, the documentation includes copies of stamps, postcards, programs, posters, commemorative printed fabric bearing the festival logo, and architectural plans that represent at every level of scale the inscription of Négritude into the historical record. If the traditions of African peoples on the continent and in the diaspora were the object of performances, it was the performance of national and transnational modernity that is the object of these acts of documentation. The fact that these plans were realized in the event of the festival and in the construction of infrastructure, including the Théâtre Daniel Sorano and Musée Dynamique (now the seat of the court of appeals in Dakar), vividly demonstrates the power of representation and the scalar imagination.

Greaves's film opens with a shot of Langston Hughes on the beach in Dakar watching fishermen in a pirogue with traditional Senegalese drumming, balafong playing, and unaccompanied choral song as the sound track. A single voice narrates the whole film, beginning with a recitation of Hughes's poem "I've Known Rivers," which the poet himself read in his Colloquium presentation and which Senghor had quoted in his 1939 essay "Ce que l'homme noir

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[69] Adam Knee and Charles Musser, "William Greaves: Documentary Film-Making, and the African American Experience," in *Film Quarterly* 4:3 (Spring 1992).

[70] Ibid., 17.

[71] Ibid., 16.

apporte." It is thus an effective text for evoking the link between diasporic blacks and Africa, not only for its content, but also, such uses of the poem were already familiar. The film's narration is remarkable for its prophetic tone, in part an effect of the off-screen, stage-perfect enunciation of Greaves's Actor's Studio-trained voice, but also because of the diction and rhetorical structure of the narration. The poem so aptly captures the agenda of the film that we might not immediately recognize how remarkable it is that a text about Négritude's most important historical event begins not with a poem by Senghor nor, for that matter, with a reading from Césaire or Damas. Instead Hughes is the focus. This reads two ways: first, as an extension of black international literary connections beyond Négritude proper to include the New Negro movement and beyond (just as Senghor had hoped, although to different ends), and second, as an indication that the film was designed to present an American and specifically State Department perspective.

The opening intertitle "World Festival of Negro Arts" is accompanied by an abrupt change in the soundtrack music to a solo trumpet obbligato line against an orchestral and drum ostinato rhythm, whose tension will continue to mount throughout the sequence. The question "Who am I?" is repeated throughout the film, and its response ranges from named individual artists to entire nations or even transnational regional cultures. With the exception of Senghor and Emperor Haile Selassie, the only named individuals are African Americans or other Westerners. Thus, the narration "What is my name? My name is Duke Ellington, Langston Hughes, Marpessa Dawn" accompanies close-ups of each of these artists viewing works in an exhibition space, while the next lines "What is my name? My name is Benin, Ethiopia, Monomatapa" narrate a cut to a Benin brass statuary. Greaves reproduces the long-troubled dynamics in African visual arts between the so-called "primitive" (whose creators remain nameless) and the contemporary (in which circuits of celebrity play an important role). As Sally Price incisively points out in her critique of "Anonymity and Timelessness" in *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, "many accounts of Primitive Art, both popular and scholarly continue to insist that aesthetic choices are governed exclusively by the tyrannical power of custom."[72] Greaves seems to fall into this pattern. However, both the next frame and the soundtrack behind this sequence offer a complicating factor. "My name is Africa. Gather round me" plays over a cut to Ellington, Hughes, and Dawn bent in conversation and fascination over an example of Ethiopian calligraphy in a cabinet, and then a close-up of Ellington, as the narration continues "Gather round, my writers, musicians, artists, for we have many moments of creativity and history to share. Moments in which we shall tell the world who I am." Strikingly, it is not until close-ups of Hughes, Ellington, and Brazilian

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[72] Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1989), 58.

singer Marpessa Dawn along with shots of ancient African art pieces have been shown that we are introduced to the *poète-président*, with the shot accompanied by Greaves's narration "Let the poet who also bears my name, Leopold Senghor, president of Senegal, let he [*sic*] and his countrymen provide a place at this festival for all who seek to know me." Perhaps more surprising is the close up of flags swinging high above the outdoor musical performance. The long close-up on the American flag that precedes shots of the Senegalese and other flags (although not of the French flag in spite of the significant subsidy the French were providing) is one of the clearest indications that this film was to serve as a tool of U.S. Cold War propaganda.

The images then suddenly appear to become synchronized with the music that has been playing in the soundtrack thus far as the camera pans from Ellington on stage to his trumpet player, orchestra, and then audience. However, viewing these shots closely, it is clear that the trumpeter is playing far more notes and Ellington is swinging bodily to a different rhythmic feel than the Iberian-tinged orchestral music playing in the background. The ostinato rhythm, declarative melodic lines of the trumpet, and antiphonal instrumentation of the music playing behind this scene serve to create a monumental effect, which, I would suggest, is congruent with the history-making impulse discussed above. Nevertheless, by featuring a recognizable jazz ensemble in these opening visual images, Greaves seems to endorse Senghor's often unmediated insertion of jazz as an exemplar for the black creative spirit. This could be read as undoing the kinds of binaries that posit the individual modern artist/creator as the antithesis of traditional/ancient nameless, collective, ethnically determined, implicitly male craftsman and suggesting the need for an alternative modernism to reconcile the two in each discrete historical moment or work.

This is not to suggest that the film reads as mere propaganda nor that it definitively works out the often contradictory agendas on display. Rather, it is to suggest that the presence of Ellington's music in the film complicates the binaries of tradition and modernity upon which discourses of black (particularly African) authenticity so often turn. The fact that Ellington himself rejected the label "jazz" and insisted that all worthwhile music was "beyond category" further complicates my point, although the timbre and soaring melodic contours of the trumpet solo emphasize connections to Senghor's valuation of music. The poem "À New York" (discussed earlier), for example, was explicitly for *solo trompette et orchestre du jazz*, and creative interpretation was the aspect of a jazz approach to text that Senghor drew attention to in the postface to *Ethiopiques.*

As the film continues, dance rather than instrumental music is most prominently featured. Troupes from Ethiopia, Zambia, Brazil, Gabon, and many other nations displayed their national art forms. Francesca Castaldi's 2006 study, *Choreographies of African Identities: Négritude, Dance, and the National*

Ballet of Senegal, demonstrates that the world-famous Guinean National Ballet under Keita Fodeba was not an isolated example of national arts policy under Sekou Touré but part of a common regional impulse to use embodied performance as a vehicle of cultural and national pride. An important Cold War counterpoint to Greaves's film, the Soviet newsreel production *African Rhythmus*, includes even more dance footage, and the rich color film brings an immediacy to the events where Greave's black-and-white footage lends an archival feel.[73] The Russian narration guides viewers through numerous Dakar neighborhoods into which the festival's events spilled over in outdoor performances, and emphasizes the event's significance as a "reunification" of peoples severed by colonization. Among the performers featured in *African Rhythmus* but not in Greaves's film are Josephine Baker and Moune de Rivel (who became important to Senegalese and other African readers through her regular advice column in the magazine *Bingo,* discussed more fully in the following chapter). The U.S. sent the Alvin Ailey dance troupe, and Greaves's final shot in the film captures Alvin Ailey himself waving goodbye to the crowd at Dakar's airport, as if to close with an assertion of the continuity in aesthetic vision between African and African American artists.

On reason for the prominence of dance may well have been that the dancer and anthropologist Katherine Dunham played a major role in the earliest planning phases of the festival through her involvement with the *Société Africaine de Culture*. Dunham already had significant connections to Senegal, having been invited by Senghor himself to train the National Ballet of Senegal after he met her in Paris. She was in a unique position, as both an appointee of the head of the Senegalese state and of the U.S. State Department. Her Janus-headed role allowed her to broker between two different agendas, and to speak frankly as a trusted insider to multiple audiences. In Dakar, she replaced Mercer Cook, the American Ambassador to Senegal at the time, as a jury member for the Anglophone literary prize committee.[74] She was also responsible for the "comité d'analyse des spectacles" (a group that included Jean Rouch and Marpessa Dawn, among others)[75] and presented both a regular paper and a retrospective closing address at the Colloquium, before the festival itself was fully underway.

Her address was the first official summation of an African American perspective on the festival and it likely shaped how other festival attendees perceived the event. Earlier that week, in her Colloquium paper, Dunham had stressed her intention to "speak freely, whatever the consequence," even if what she had to say was "not in absolute conformity with the conclusions of [her]associates on this colloquium."[76] In other words, critique rather than celebration was her priority. The substance of her presentation called for "depth learning" in training African performing artists and urged artists to maintain control of their works (through copyright and fair payment), and her argument drew on jazz as an example—to be avoided:

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[73] A copy of *African Rhythmus* is held in the New York African Film Festival collection, and was screened at the 39th African Literature Association Conference in Charleston, SC on March 21, 2013.

[74] Archives Nationales du Senegal Fonds sur le FESMAN. "Liste des Participants"

[75] "Catherine DUNHAM et le comité d'analyse des spectacles ont porté des appreciations," *Dakar Matin*, May 2, 1966, 3.

> As one example, there is scarcely a form of music today to which the New World Negro of African provenience has not contributed. Some of this influence has been through the natural process of diffusion, some through independent invention, but unfortunately much has been pure commercial exploitation. I think of the great wave of American jazz from which the world will never be free, and I think of the limited opportunity for commercial benefit to the creators themselves.[77]

The contrast between the ways in which Dunham and Senghor saw jazz as exemplary of the black condition could not be more marked. For Dunham, the material conditions of the production of the art form were key, where, as we have seen already, for Senghor, jazz seemed to exist as a platonic ideal unrelated to the labor of musicians.

However, the friendship between Dunham and Senghor and her close involvement in the festival preparations reflected their shared sense that what mattered about the Festival Mondial des Arts Nègres was that it was making history:

> the beauty of the city and its people, the combined sophistication and primitiveness of the spectacle of Gorée staged by Jean Mazel to the poetry of an old friend, Jean Brierre; the treasures of the dynamic museum, this gathering together in the colloquium of specialists, friends, and intellectuals from all over the world; the brilliant opening at the Daniel Sorano Theater by the Nigerian players in a remarkable production of Wole Soyinka; and the elegance of the audience of the inauguration itself—these things alone would make this occasion a history-making event.[78]

The elements she noted include evocations of the interpersonal aspects of the festival experience otherwise unlikely to have entered the written historical record—"the beauty of the city and its people"; "this gathering together in the colloquium of specialists, friends and intellectuals from all over the world" and "the elegance of the audience of the inauguration itself." Along with these

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[76] *1er Festival mondial des Arts nègres: Dakar, 1–24 avril 1966: Colloque. I, Fonction et signification de l'Art nègre dans la vie du peuple et pour le peuple (30 mars–8 avril)*, Festival mondial des Arts nègres (1966; Dakar), *Présence Africaine*, 1967, 473.

[77] Ibid., 474.

[78] VèVè Clark, and Sarah E. Johnson, eds., *Kaiso! Writings by and about Katherine Dunham* (Madison: U Wisconsin P, 2005), 412.

personal notes, she highlighted the large-scale events in historic, monumental structures, including the spectacle at Gorée and Césaire and Soyinka's plays staged at the newly built state-of-the-art Théâtre Daniel Sorano.

The Gorée spectacle that Dunham refers to was a *son et lumière* show, a series of narrated live tableaux scenes staged on the island of Gorée off the coast of Dakar. The *son et lumière* genre is a uniquely French creation, combining stereophonic sound engineering with dramatic lighting effects in a postdusk evening show. Most often installed at significant historical sites, *son et lumière* shows fully exploit the technologies of visual projection and sonic amplification, producing a monumentalizing effect very much in sync with the dynamics of FESMAN. This effect tends toward the sublime, in terms of both scale and alienation effects. As such, the *son et lumière* show was emblematic of the festival's approach to representing black history and culture as an overwhelming, monadic, and inescapable whole. Under spectacular lighting, and projected through powerful speakers, Négritude seemed greater than the sum of its parts.

The script was by Jean Brierre, a Haitian poet who had emigrated to Senegal. It portrayed Gorée's involvement in the slave trade as well as its subsequent role as one of the four Communes in the colony of French West Africa whose residents were entitled to French citizenship. By definition, a *son et lumière* show is in situ, *on location* and, in the Spectacle Féerique at Gorée, many of the structures on the island, which had historically been used to house kidnapped Africans before they were launched on the long journey to the Americas or to Europe, took on the role of *lieux de mémoire* for the members of the audience.[79] French and Senegalese army servicemen as well as residents of the island participated in the production's cast of over three hundred, and the show was performed nightly throughout the month of April 1966 with recorded soundtracks that ranged from eighteenth-century harpsichord music (reflecting the Orientalist fashion of the time) to African American spirituals. The program notes state that "L'éloignement du navire négrier est évoqué par la 'Marche des galères turques' de Lulli, dont tambourins et hautbois semblent s'évanouir progressivement dans la nuit océane [The slave ship's departure is evoked by the 'March of the Turkish Ceremony' by Lully, whose tambourines and oboes seem to disappear gradually into the night ocean.]"

Even more remarkable, given the importance of metaphors of stereo systems to this study, are the terms in which the program notes discuss the abolition of slavery. The fourth tableau is captioned "Par la stéréophonie parviennent d'Europe, d'Amérique et d'Afrique la clameur et les échos de l'émancipation de l'univers [Through the stereophony linking Europe, America and Africa, come the clamor for and echoes of emancipation]."[80] In other words, Brierre imagines the space between Africa and the diaspora as an acoustic space, where the very circulation of sonic traces, the stereophony of the trans-Atlantic triangle, contributes to the amplification of black claims on freedom. A clearer example of stereomodernism as medium becoming message is difficult to imagine.

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[79] For more on the concept of "lieux de mémoire" (sites of memory) see Pierre Nora's seminal article, which has appeared in numerous publications, including "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire" in *Representations,* 26 (Spring 1989), 7–24.

It is also worth noting that spirituals were chosen to signify the experience of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its abolition. In a sense, African American music stood in for "diaspora" in spite of the great diversity of destinations and subsequent cultural expressions at which the descendants of those launched from Gorée arrived. The program notes describe the music for the final tableau thusly:

> La sonnerie aux morts précède le panégyrique des héros de la Négritude dont le sacrifice n'a pas été vain. Il nous revient en effet sous forme d'un immense chant d'action de grâces, repris dans toutes les dimensions de la stéréophonie: "God is marvellous"… Dieu est merveilleux. L'enregistrement aussi est merveilleux, réalisé sur le vif par le Back Home Choir dans la Baptist Church de New York, illustration émouvante entre toutes de la contribution de la Négritude à la civilisation de l'universel. [The taps for the dead precedes a panegyric of heroes of Négritude whose sacrifice has not been in vain. It comes back to us in fact in the form of an immense chorus of acts of grace, taken up in all its dimensions by the stereophony: "God is marvelous." The recording is also marvellous, made live by the Back Home Choir in the Baptist Church of New York, a moving illustration of the contribution of Négritude to civilisation and to the universal].[81]

Dunham's discussion of the *son et lumière* show at Gorée gives an indication of just how significant heritage sites associated with the slave trade were for many diasporic Africans, and it is striking that the *son et lumière* was not featured at all in Greaves's documentary. U.S. State Department film editors likely saw any reference to the trans-Atlantic slave trade as working against their aims of promoting a positive and sympathetic image of U.S. race relations and emphasizing a cultural bond between African Americans and continental Africans.

Dunham's address is a study in inscribing the kind of historic solidarity she saw the festival facilitating; she stresses "that no man with an honest mission walks alone."[82] She traced the importance of various diaspora figures in the development of her own thinking, beginning with the leader of the festival's Haitian delegation Dr. Price-Mars. Her discourse made her personal relationships with public touchstone figures of black internationalism public and thus allowed her listeners to participate in networks she had already woven. More than simply doing the affective labor of reinforcing intellectual hospitality, she modeled an innovative, living historiography when she singled out her friends and collaborators in the audience:

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[80] *Spectacle féérique de Gorée,* Program notes, (Paris: A. Rousseau, 1966), 21.

[81] Ibid., 22.

[82] Clark and Johnson, *Kaiso!,* 413.

> I see Louis Achille [a key figure in the group of young black intellectuals Senghor had spent time with germinating "Négritude" in the 1930s] here and am carried back to Martinique where his father took over from Price-Mars and acquainted me with the tiny island and what was left of song, ritual, and dance.... And Gbeho, a musicologist from Ghana, reminded me the other day that his entire company of dancers and musicians sat through matinée and evening shows in London, staying between shows to exchange drum rhythms with our Haitian and Cuban and Brazilian drummers.[83]

One also sees this commitment to entering the workings of diaspora thinking (rather than merely its final declarations and manifestations) into the historical record in her references to discussions sparked by the Colloquium. The two extracts from her address illustrate my point:

> The other day, in a Colloquium discussion the question as to whether the advisability of separating dance and music into sacred and secular as I have done in *Dances of Haiti* was hanging in a state of immobile suspension.[84]
>
> During our very interesting committee sessions it occurred to me that there was among certain of the participants a kind of mistrust, a *méfiance* at the likelihood of a reversal to the traditional, or I should say more specifically, to a nostalgia of the traditional that might serve to inhibit "modernization," and I have put *modernization* in quotes.[85]

In both of these extracts, not only does Dunham give an account of a conversation, a dialogue, but she actually draws attention to the tensions involved. She is confident in what her friend, "psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan used to call... the 'diffused optimism' of the Negro race" and in the fact that, for her, contentious discussions mark value and productive criticism, rather than any failure of Négritude or black international solidarity. Dunham's account was largely celebratory and, in mapping out her own development through studies and collaborations with Caribbeans and Africans, minimized a larger-scale African American thread which jazz might have been a part of.

One caveat is that in her role as head of the "comité d'analyse des spectacles," she gave a press conference appraisal of a number of performances, which, although extremely cursory, highlighted Trinidad and Tobago's "Eblouissant ensemble d'orchestre"[86] [Astonishing orchestral ensemble]. This steel-band's performance of "The Girl from Ipanema" was captured, if only briefly, in William Greaves's documentary. The band's music plays behind footage of smartly dressed dignitaries demonstrating the "elegance of the audience of the inauguration itself" in animated conversation during a cocktail hour, and continues playing as the shot cuts to their onstage performance. The very fact that "The Girl from Ipanema" was the Trinidadian vehicle of success is evidence of multiple waves of diasporic exchange at work. The 1962 bossa nova by Vincius de Moraes and Antonio Carols Jobim "Garota de Ipanema" became well known after the international success of Jewish American jazz saxophonist Stan Getz's collaboration with Brazilians João Gilberto and Astrud Gilberto's 1963 version, on their album *Getz/Gilberto*. As an African American woman commenting on a successful Trinidadian steel band adaptation of a Brazilian song in an African newspaper Dunham magnificently embodied the will to recognize and elaborate upon cultural affinities at work in such pan-African impulses as Négritude.

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[83] Ibid., 414.

[84] Ibid., 415.

[85] Ibid., 416.

[86] "Catherine DUNHAM et le comité d'analyse des spectacles ont porté des appreciations," *Dakar-Matin*, 2 Mai 1966, 3.

Another prominent figure at the Colloquium was Langston Hughes, who had deeply influenced Senghor's poetic representations of jazz and blues. His Colloquium presentation, "Black Writers in a Troubled World," was a remarkable articulation[87] of how the African American literary scene had developed since the days of Senghor's enthusiastic readings of New Negro writers. Hughes used the occasion to describe what he saw as generational splits among African American writers, noting his own unease with the "obscene" vision of LeRoi Jones while comparing it to earlier writers' no less sharp critiques of racism. He suggested that some of Jones's strategies reflected his youth, a time when "one's thinking is unclear—and one's ability to analyze this world about one is uncertain" and then proposed that this dilemma might parallel what African writers faced "not in terms of race and color, but I would think, perhaps in terms of folk life or urban thinking, regional tongues or European, tribalism or educated-ism, the basic roots or the new young branches."[88] His paper, as a whole, entertained this larger problematic, teasing out to what degree African and African American literary challenges were comparable.

Hughes's deftly diplomatic presentation did not so much question Négritude as revise it. He stopped short of calling Senghor's set of references (such as in the apparent dismissal of any postwar innovations of musical style) anachronistic, but his critique was implicit when he proposed an African American alternative to Négritude, a word that summed up both the popular black

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[87] I use this term in the sense that Brent Hayes Edwards, elaborating Stuart Hall's 1980 essay "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance," employs the term. Edwards writes: "Articulation here functions as a concept-metaphor that allows us to think relations of 'difference within unity,' non-naturalizable relations of linkage between disparate societal elements" (2001: 59).

[88] *Colloque, Présence Africaine,* 507

contemporary music of the day and African American disposition in the sense Bourdieu uses, *soul:*

> Négritude, as I have garnered from Senegal's distinguished poet, Léopold Sédar Senghor, has its roots deep in the beauty of the black people—in what the younger writers and musicians in America call "soul," which I would define in this way: *Soul* is a synthesis of the essence of Negro folk art redistilled—particularly the old music and its flavor, the ancient basic beat out of Africa, the folk rhymes and Ashanti stories—expressed in contemporary ways so definitely and emotionally colored with the old, that it gives a distinctly "Negro" flavor to today's music, painting or writing—or even to merely personal attitudes and daily conversation. *Soul* is contemporary Harlem's *Négritude,* revealing to the Negro people and the world the beauty within themselves.[89]

Hughes's word choice effectively called for a renewal in Négritude musicology, indirectly demonstrating that Senghor's views on jazz were out of date. Beyond the question of diction, his point was that just as the music of the day had changed considerably since the first articulations of Négritude—after all, Motown records had been founded in 1960—so too, *contemporary* folk (or in today's parlance, *vernacular*) cultures must animate any theory of black identity. Also implicit in the word "folk" was a critique of elitism that we also see in Duke Ellington's reflections.

Duke Ellington was perhaps the most high-profile member of the American delegation, and his band's appearance was sponsored by the U.S. State Department. By 1966, the State Department had a decade-long relationship with various jazz artists, who were deployed to counter one of the most damaging critiques of the U.S. circulating in the Cold War context, the shameful history of racial persecution that demonstrated the failures of American democracy. Penny von Eschen's rich work on the Jazz Ambassadors program notes the ironies often revealed in the reactions of performers who were accorded honor and dignity abroad as representatives of a country that still denied them basic civil and human rights.[90] Ellington certainly experienced some of these contradictions. He later published reflections on his experiences at the festival in a chapter of his autobiography, *Music is My Mistress,* entitled "Dakar Journal, 1966." His account highlights a fault line between the official and the informal registers of the festival:

> We get the usual diplomatic applause from the diplomatic corps down front, but the cats in the bleachers really dig it. You can see them rocking back

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[89] Ibid., 508.

[90] Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up The World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004).

> there while we play. When we are finished, they shout approval and dash for backstage, where they hug and embrace us, some of them with tears in their eyes. It is acceptance at the highest level, and it gives us a once in a lifetime feeling of having truly broken through to our brothers.[91]

For many among both the band and the audience, jazz at FESMAN represented a visceral connection between continent and diaspora that was highly valued and longed for and that exceeded the more academic and state-authored parameters outlined in the opening colloquium.

One of the sharpest critiques of the statist (and specifically U.S.) agenda FESMAN served came from Hoyt W. Fuller, who not only covered the festival for *Ebony* magazine but also wrote more pointedly about it in his 1971 memoir, *Journey to Africa.* Fuller's *Ebony* article largely sought to convey the scope of the festival to a readership that largely had no experience of travel to Africa but also unmasked a number of contradictions that were edited out of other accounts in both literal and figurative acts of diplomacy:

> [T]he absence of the most exciting of America's black intellectuals—people like John O. Killens, LeRoi Jones, Ossie Davis and James Baldwin—genuinely puzzled Africans and Europeans alike. "You sent us Langston Hughes, and we love him," a bi-lingual Senegalese actor complained, "but where are your younger writers?" . . . There was nothing but praise for Duke Ellington and his orchestra and the Alvin Ailey Dancers, but many felt [that several other acts featuring black performers of classical music were not appropriate to the festival's stated goals]. Painter Amadou Yoro Ba, a jazz *aficionado,* asked why musicians like Miles Davis and Thelonius Monk did not come to Dakar, and half of Senegal seemed to have assumed that Harry Belafonte should have been present.[92]

Fuller went on to note that, for Senegal, the festival was not merely a celebration of culture but also an effort to "stave off economic collapse" and encourage tourism, particularly among African Americans. These observations seem to have been borne out by more recent pan-African festivals such as PANAFEST[93] in Ghana and the third edition of FESMAN held in 2010 in Senegal. Whether any of these events was an economic success is open to debate, but lies beyond the scope of this study.

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[91] Edward Kennedy Ellington, *Music Is My Mistress* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973), 338.

[92] Hoyt W. Fuller, "World Festival of Negro Arts: Senegal Fete Illustrates Philosophy of 'Negritude,'"[sic] in *Ebony 21*:9 (July 1966), 102.

[93] Since its inception in 1992, the "Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival" has taken place every two years. Originally conceived as a theater festival by Ghanaian pioneering teacher and author Efua Sutherland, the festival has grown into a wide-ranging arts and culture celebration that Caribbean, African American, and Afro-European participants support in growing numbers.

Fuller's account in *Journey to Africa* centered less on the performances themselves and more on the ways U.S. government agents had actively worked to minimize the festival's potential for launching a more political pan-Africanism:

> One of these days, the full, awful story of the American secret service's role in the First World Festival of Negro Arts at Dakar in 1966 will be told, stripping of honor certain esteemed Black Americans who lent their prestige to the effort to hold to the barest minimum the political impact of that unprecedented event. As it was, the American Society of African Culture's relationship with the CIA was revealed following the Festival, throwing into full relief the role of AMSAC and its white "friends" in planning American participation in the Festival. It was a sorry affair.[94]

Fuller's perspective excavates a dimension of the festival apt to be obscured in officially archived documentation of the festival, which was produced and collected by the Senegalese state and by entities sympathetic to Senghor's perspective. As Ann Laura Stoler shows in *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense,* we can learn as much about the values determining selection and inclusion on the part of documenting officials as we can from the documents themselves.[95] An event like FESMAN, in the longue-durée, becomes part of a national history, even if originally a transnational event, and thus the texts it produces are sorted through selectively by the archival machinery of that state. Looking through the Dakar archives, one will not find Fuller's accounts, and this is only partly because they appeared only in the U.S. press. The textuality of a transnational event, the way in which it generates reportage and memoir among authors of numerous nationalities, poses specific challenges to the scholar interested in tracing diaspora networks, and omissions such as the Fuller accounts indicate how local and transnational interests and historiographical priorities may diverge. I return to this question of archives in more detail in the sixth chapter.

A sideline drama that played out over Soviet participation in the festival adds depth to Fuller's critique. The USSR, not to be excluded from the tremendous opportunity for public diplomacy that the festival offered, sent both their noted poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko and several journalists. However, pointing out that the USSR had little if any black culture to speak of, Senghor asked Yevtushenko to wait until after the festival to read. Langston Hughes's biographer, Arnold Rampersad, points out that Hughes and Greaves, however, seized the opportunity to become well acquainted with Yevtushenko, spending much of their free time on the docked Soviet ship. Rampersad quotes Greaves:

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[94] Hoyt Fuller, *Journey to Africa* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1971), 92.

[95] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2010).

> "We used to ride around in Yevtushenko's limousine," Bill Greaves recalled, "drinking pretty heavily and having a lot of fun." "Whatever the Russians expected in the way of rivalry," U.S. Ambassador Mercer Cook recalled, "never developed. Langston wouldn't allow it. He and Yevtushenko seemed to be arm in arm every time I saw them together."[96]

Furthermore, the Soviet film *African Rhythmus* includes footage of Yevtushenko and Senghor meeting in Senghor's presidential offices, suggesting that shared poetic interests overrode national and geopolitical differences. In other words, as incisive as Fuller's critique may be, the relationship between ideology and personal interaction was a complex one, and while U.S. government funding may well have acted as a censoring mechanism, many of the African American artists who traveled to Dakar were savvy and independent-minded enough to improvise alternatives to the strictures of state policy.

The ideological tenor of Fuller's accounts takes on another dimension when considered in relation to a second text William Greaves composed about his FESMAN experience, an article for the N.A.A.C.P.'s *Crisis* magazine. The article distinguished between those aspects of Négritude that had, since Sartre's *Orphée Noire,* been seen as an antiracist racism and "[t]he Festival's overriding mood…that of interracial harmony."[97] His list of reasons why there had not been more diverse African American participation in the festival did highlight some of the problematic aspects of the State Department's involvement (in selecting artists as well as in appointing as chair of the American organizing committee a white woman, Virginia Inness-Brown, whose race was deemed to demonstrate a lack of interest or commitment for a *pan-African* dimension to the festival). However, the list was also so eclectic as to preclude reading any clear political statement, indicating the diversity of preoccupations for African American artists at the time, which ranged from getting paid (which, as Dunham's presentation underscored not an entirely a-political concern) to getting civil rights. Like the figures discussed above, Greaves also made an indirect point that, while jazz was an important part of the African American cultural storehouse, it was not received as the most dynamic dimension of the diasporic contribution to Négritude in Dakar in 1966. However, unlike Hughes, he argued that the essential element, "soul," should be understood in its universal rather than vernacular sense. His point was about jazz *dance,* but it is no less relevant:

> The Alvin Ailey Company was a roaring smash hit, and this is particularly interesting because in outer form there was little in their performance

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[96] Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes: Volume II: 1941–1967, I Dream a World* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988), 401.

[97] William Greaves, "The First World Festival of Negro Arts: An Afro-American View," in *Crisis Magazine 73*:6 (June–July 1966), 312.

> reminiscent of the dance of Africa or even American Jazz. They relied on modern dance forms, on excellent, but westernized, choreography to convey their "Négritude." . . . The Ailey Company, working with non-African styles, demonstrated that Négritude does not necessarily rely on external form to reveal itself, that, it can be a state of consciousness which reflects itself in many ways. Some Afro-Americans call that state "soul." . . . The Ailey Company was successful partly because of their skill, but also because "soul" veritably cascaded from them out over the footlights.
>
> There is a tendency among some Negro intellectuals to view soul as the private property of the black man—a ludicrous notion. Soul is the necessary ingredient of all great art.[98]

Greaves's priority in the article was to demonstrate that the arts at the festival met this universal criterion for "great art," which, strikingly, coincides with Senghor's oft-repeated assertion that Négritude was a form of humanism and its goal was to ensure that the black contribution to a universal human cultural patrimony was recognized.

While my discussion thus far has focused on African American responses to Senghor's interpretation of jazz, FESMAN also provided an occasion for other voices to join this debate, and the presence of Southern Africans involved in antiapartheid and liberation struggles was a key hallmark of the event. One such attendee at the festival was the South African poet and ANC cadre, Keorapetse "Bra Willie" Kgositsile, who would go on to become his nation's poet laureate exactly fifty years later. Kgositsile had been sent into exile by the ANC leadership in 1962, and was based in the U.S. by the time of the festival, where his studies at Langston Hughes's alma mater, Lincoln University, and involvement with many leading figures of the Black Arts Movement made him a living embodiment of many of the ideals of the 1966 festival. In contrast with the abstracted function of jazz in Senghor's Négritude philosophy, Kgositsile's jazz poetry was often anchored by detailed engagements with specific musicians and recordings, as well as conversations with other writers. Synesthesia in Kgositsile's poetry reflects an intersensory concatenation of the modes of sense perception, particularly vision and hearing, and thus performs a solidarity among the senses that can be read as an aesthetic parallel of the search for solidarity between Black Americans and South Africans in exile. Sound experienced through multiple sensory modalities figures intimacy between the senses, a metaphor for pan-African Relation through embodied experience. Alex Weheliye has shown eloquently the unique ways that black experience leaves its trace in distinctive sensory patterns, taking double consciousness as a paradigm for a feeling of two-ness,

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[98] Ibid., 312.

not only in terms of cultural identity, but also in terms of perceptive capacity. He writes:

> In the end, double consciousness does not so much critique as *gift* (poison and bless) the disembodiment of vision and by extension the human in modernity in its excavation and amplification of aural materiality, the "tremulous treble and darkening bass" (*Souls,* 215) veiled by scopic racial formation, as it throws phono-optics into the mix of the phonographic grooves of sonic Afro-modernity.[99]

While Weheliye's observations are largely confined to black diasporic experience, this notion of linking Du Boisian double consciousness with disembodied vision and amplified aural capacity is generative in interpreting Kgositsile's work. For Kgositsile, the disconnection from homeland and the disarticulation of apartheid's extreme segregationist policies, along with his experiences living under U.S. Jim Crow and everyday racism, gives rise to a vision of radical cohesion, a convergence of senses figuring the possibility of a healed and healing Afro-modernity that I have described in more detail elsewhere.[100]

The 1966 Dakar festival led to one of Kgositsile's earliest publications, a set of three poems, alongside French translations by Mauritian poet Edouard Maunick, which appeared in *Présence Africaine* in 1967, prefaced by Maunick's interview of the South African during the 1966 festival.[101] The Sharpeville massacre of 1960, the continuing repressions of the National Party government and the jailing of leaders including Mandela in 1964 lent particular urgency to *Présence Africaine*'s interest in the South African situation. This interview reveals how Kgositsile's very presence was essential to the work he did in linking geographically dispersed black intellectual communities. It is telling that, in spite of differences Kgositsile himself articulated with Senghor's Négritude aesthetic, Maunick would present the poems as "hosties noires," echoing the title of Senghor's 1948 poetry collection in an attempt to bring Francophone and Anglophone African worlds in closer intimacy. While neither the 1967 interview nor the poems address Senghorian Négritude directly, Kgositsile's forthright invocations of black diasporic music's capacity to amplify a rebuke of injustices and to mobilize collective determination to effect change must have registered a distinctively oppositional stance far more abstracted if not missing in Senghor's own approach to music.

Of the three poems published, "Manifesto" makes the most direct reference to black American music and literature. The poem is a song of mourning

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[99] Alexander G. Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2005), 44–45.

[100] Tsitsi Jaji, "Sound Effects: Synaesthesia as Purposeful Distortion in Keorapetse Kgositsile's Poetry" in *Comparative Literature Studies* 46.2 (2009), 287–310.

[101] Edouard J. Maunick, "Une voix vivante de l'Afrique du sud: William Kgositsile" in *Présence Africaine* 62:2 (1967): 177–81.

for Malcolm X (killed in 1965) and Patrice Lumumba (killed in 1961), and a vow to continue resistance alongside Mandela. Kgositsile uses references to black diasporic music to link geographically separate topoi, and historically distinct temporalities, projecting a performance of simultaneity that enacts pan-African solidarity and draws on the past as a resource for present struggles. The poem's first reference to music rewrites the African American spiritual, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord" as "(Were[102] you there when/They killed Lumumba/Were you there when/They killed Brother Malcolm)."[103] This rewording is a significant and productive distortion on two levels. First, the semantic shift from the original line to the references to Lumumba and Malcolm X reroute devotional religious energy toward the political. And second, a musical value is diverted into the poetic text through the transcription of the African American performance practice of "worrying the line," or embellishing a melodic contour through melisma and other musical ornamentation.[104]

Shifting focus from the contemporary to the historical, the poem condemns slavery, announcing an intention "To defy the devils who traded in the human Spirit/For Black cargoes and material superprofits/We emerge to sing a Song of Fire with Rolland."[105] This last line references a poem by Rolland Snellings (later Askia Touré), "The Song of Fire," which draws on a range of religious traditions to indict American imperialism in Vietnam and nuclear proliferation in a chorus of Third-Worldist claims upon transcendent justice. Although dominated by Judeo-Christian eschatological imagery of fire and brimstone, Snellings's poem also invokes the Yoruba war-god Shango, Congolese drumming, Buddhist monastic garb, and a vision of Allah wielding a "flaming sword" of justice. The scope of Kgositsile's "Manifesto" is more restricted, however it takes up Snellings's gesture of extending a Christian framework to a broader sphere by moving from a sacred repertoire of spirituals[106] to the secular, indexed in Kgositsile's final line, "Change is gonna come!" which cites the 1964 Sam Cooke hit song that galvanized listeners involved in the civil rights movement. The contrasting temporal orientations of the two musical references shift from an orientation toward the past ("Were you there?") toward an orientation toward the future ("Change is gonna come!"). By bringing the sacred and secular repertoires together, Kgositsile casts the lyric present as bearing a specific "ethicopolitical" charge, which, while colored by religious language, is oriented toward political action. Michael Hanchard has argued that

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[102] The English version in *Présence Africaine* reads "Where you there," but since the French translation reads "Etais-tu là," it is clear this is an editorial error.

[103] Keorapetse Kgositsile, "Manifesto," trans. Edouard Maunick, in *Présence Africaine* 62:2 (1967): 182.

[104] *Melisma* is a musical term that refers to singing multiple pitches in a musical phrase while using the same vowel sound.

[105] Kgositsile, "Manifesto," trans. Maunick, in *Présence Africaine,* 183.

[106] Kgositsile's reference also reverberates with an earlier articulation of an African American aesthetic. Alain Locke in his 1925 essay "Negro Spirituals" (*New Negro*, 207) discusses a performance by Roland Hayes (1887-1977) of "God's Goin' to Set Dis Worl' on Fire." The trope of a millenarian redemptive fire figures repeatedly in the African American spirituals tradition, and as a vernacular source black writers of several generations turned to. In citing Snellings, Kgositsile also cites a historical African American literary practice of versioning spirituals.

> Religion provides the language for impending confrontation, but the spaces for confrontation were and are plantation societies, tenements, cities, rural areas, and nations—in short, any site where racial prejudice, socioeconomic exploitation, and violence are combined.[107]

For Hanchard, this use of the eschatological is one of the markers of Afro-modernity's specific deployments of time in relation to liberation movements, where the language of transcendence is harnessed in the service of concrete, immanent struggle. Kgositsile's poem uses music to render this millenarian liberation project accessible in the here and now while drawing on the considerable force of spiritually based discourses of freedom in African American tradition. Yet a spiritual orientation toward change is not sufficient, rather the embodied and public spaces of the street and dance floor stand in for the secular, political change Cooke ushers in. It is through his musical citations that Kgositsile collocates a millenarian future orientation and an urgent political investment in the present, enacting a simultaneity, which in the very act of enunciating "Change is gonna come," commits to the embodied present in which change is always coming into being. However significantly Kgostsile's and Senghor's aesthetic and poetic values differ, this notion of a permanent embodied present that is itself the scene of a change coming into being, change *à venir*, is an important note of consonance. Remembering the moments where their paths converged, along with those of the other festival visitors discussed here is important if we are to understand the history of the stereomodernist impulses toward solidarity that animated the festival as also perpetually renewed, always summoning change to come.

In a Sentimental Mood

Some fifteen years after the festival, Senghor's composed a poem, "Élégie pour Philippe-Maguilen Senghor," which indicates that the idea of jazz continued to be an important imaginative and affective touchstone for his work. The poem, a tribute to his son who was killed in an automobile accident in 1981, is dedicated to Colette, Philippe-Maguilen's mother, and scored for jazz orchestra and polyphonic choir. Although it treats this most intimate moment of loss, the conflations between his personal life, his son's life as a Senegalese métis, and the historical African American diaspora in this poem are bracing, and, just as in the more public-voiced "Élégie pour Martin Luther King," jazz serves largely as a synecdoche for African American culture in this poem. Take the lines:

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[107] Michael Hanchard, "Afro Modernity: Temporality, Politics, and the African Diaspora," in *Alternative Modernities*, ed. Dilip Gaonkar (Durham: Duke UP, 2001), 285.

Mais déjà tu le réclamais, cet enfant de l'amour, pour racheter notre peuple
    insoumis
Comme si trois cents ans de Traite ne t'avaient pas suffi, ô terrible Dieu
    d'Abraham![108]

But you have reclaimed him already,
This child of love, to redeem your unsubdued people
As if three hundred years of the slave trade wasn't enough
For you, O terrifying God of Abraham![109]

These lines indicate the extent to which Senghor's affective imagination allows him to connect his personal grief to that more public and long-standing sorrow occasioned by the slave trade. However, this empathy also raises a significant question as to whether such forms of loss can ever be commensurable. Attending to the second ensemble, the polyphonic choir gives an additional and necessary insight into his intention, for polyphony allows for simultaneity of different registers, rather than implying equivalence. The poet recalls the nick-names he and his wife shared for their son, "mon petit Maure/Mon Bengali, comme nous t'appelions [My little Moor, My Bengali, as we used to call you]"[110] and hints that the capacity for friendship across racial and cultural lines that they treasured in their son also motivate the metaphors of polyphony that run through the poem. Given that the musical references are primarily to the African American spiritual "Steal Away to Jesus," it would appear that the "jazz" referred to in the subtitle is in fact standing in for a much broader repertoire of shared black musics. In other words, "jazz" signifies more as an idea of musical unity forged out of diverse elements, and as a blues-derived form of solace in sorrow than as a specific sonic reference or intertext in this particular poem. Faced with the tragedy of a son's death, the neat borders of Senghor's Négritude musicology dissolve, and music is called upon to do what it does best when "words don't go there" . . . resonate.[111]

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[108] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 295.

[109] Dixon, *Collected Poetry,* 208.

[110] Senghor, *Oeuvre Poétique,* 298.

[111] Nathaniel Mackey recalls: "Charles Lloyd once remarked, regarding the source of music, "Words don't go there." Music wants us to know that truths are variable, that one included." The saying has entered a shared musical lingua franca among many interdisciplinary scholars of African American popular music, most especially Charles Rowell and Fred Moten. See Mackey, "Statement for Breaking Ice" in *Callaloo* 23.2. (2000), 717, citing Mackey's piece in *Breaking Ice: An Anthology of Contemporary African-American Fiction*, ed. Terry McMillan (New York: Penguin Books, 1990).