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**AFROAMERICKÁ HUDBA JIHU SPOJENÝCH STÁTŮ
AMERICKÝCH VE 20. STOLETÍ – BLUES A JAZZ**

Tomáš Vyhnálek

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Department of English

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**AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC OF THE SOUTHERN UNITED
STATES IN THE 20TH CENTURY – BLUES AND JAZZ**

Tomáš Vyhnálek

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracoval samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

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Tomáš Vyhnálek

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ABSTRACT

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The object of this undergraduate thesis is to analyse African American music of the Southern United States in the 20th century focusing on blues and jazz as they were the most important African American music genres to influence the development of music in America.

The thesis consists of two main parts. The first covers the roots of African American music since the arrival of slaves in America in the 17th century. The second part focuses on the 20th century music of African Americans and is further divided into two chapters called blues and jazz. The chapters cover the history, development and characteristics of blues and jazz as well as their subgenres. The conclusion at the end of the thesis summarizes the main findings of the work and why the distinctive African American music has also influenced the whole society of the United States of America.

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INTRODUCTION

Music is an organized system of sounds which influences people in different ways. According to rhythm and the choice of sounds the function and quality is determined. These features which appear in every song or a piece of music are essential for either positive or negative perception of music. They are also able to raise different feelings such as anger, sadness, sorrow, but on the other hand people might experience happiness or be relaxed when listening to music. From the beginning of human history, there has always been music in different forms and connected with different social traditions, however, the similarity of how people have used and perceived music in different times and on different places is substantial. This thesis is focused on the music, which is rather new as it began to exist in the 17th century, when a new nation consisting of immigrants appeared in the North of America. Therefore, musical life in the United States of America began rather late in comparison with Europe or Asia. Although there have been many musical genres in the history of the USA which have had its origin in Europe, as most of the people who came there in the past had their homes on the Old Continent, there was another group of people whose music influenced the music of the United States of America much more significantly than Europeans. These people, whose home was in Africa, were African slaves brought to America because of their strength and endurance to work on fields. The music of African people is close to human feelings and is more capable of further development than music of people from other places in the world. Africans are also sensitive and they use music to think, to express love and other human feelings. They are spontaneous and natural people. Africans are also very talented in dancing and playing musical instruments and they have entertained audience with these skills since the very beginning of their first appearance in America. Polívka (1949) describes their talent in his book. According to him, Africans were able to amuse the audience by different styles of playing musical instruments and dancing which was very popular with white Americans. Africans also appeared in hilarious performances as an entertainment for their owners (p. 107). All these characteristics have contributed to the music of the United States and have created the most popular music genres which are because of the African elements highly recognizable.

In my thesis I would like to focus on blues and jazz as they are the two most significant and famous African American music genres in the USA of the 20th century. However, the analysis of these genres would not be possible without explaining the roots and origin of African music.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The beginning of slavery in the United States of America has its origin in the year 1619 when the first Dutch ship arrived in Jamestown with twenty Africans. These people, who were brought to the New World in order to work there for their owners had to suffer in appalling conditions. Firstly, the area which they had to live in during the transport to America was only four or five feet wide and the height was not sufficient for an adult person to stand. Africans were often chained and spent many months on the journey to America. They were surrounded by dirt and many types of illnesses and diseases such as dysentery, which is the reason why they often fainted or died in faeces and vomit (Dorůžka, 1958, p. 4). According to Dorůžka (1958), the slave masters were not forced to sign any contract with Africans and the costs for one slave were lower than for a white bondservant (p. 4).

The social status of Africans forcibly brought to the United States was terrible. The owners often separated families and family members were sold in auctions to many different American slave owners (Polívka, 1949, p. 95). This situation occurred mainly in Virginia, the state in which slavery was most popular. At the end of the 17th century, around 2,000 Africans worked there. It seems to be the highest number of slaves among five states, which legalized slavery at that time. The number of Africans brought to the United States increased and from the 1680 to the end of the 18th century around four million Africans were brought to America. By the half of the 18th century, the percentage of Africans in Virginia, Maryland, Louisiana and Georgia was around 40 (Dorůžka, 1958, p. 5).

African slaves came from many different places in Africa. The first slaves who came to America at the beginning of the 17th century had their homes on the coast of West Africa mostly in Senegal and Gambia, which is the smallest country on the continent. Because of a complicated religious situation in Gambia, this state was attractive for European slave traders. Nevertheless, they could also buy slaves from rulers of other African provinces. However, there existed more areas where people from Europe could buy slaves. These were the Northern part of Africa near the river Congo and the Western coastline of Africa (Palmer, 1986, p. 28-29). We do not know much information about music in Africa performed in the time when the first slave traders brought Africans to the New World but the role of music among Africans seems to be the same today as it was centuries ago. Many travellers and adventurers who came to Africa in the 17th century described people who lived there likewise. African nations loved music, dancing and used music in many situations connected with everyday life. These were for example a birth of a child but also a funeral, songs were

sung when a new king was crowned, people danced during ceremonies celebrating harvest but also when men went to battle or returned from war. People in the West Africa sung songs not only during important occasions connected with significant events mentioned before. Several situations asked for other kinds of songs which helped people to cooperate when it was needed. This could be searching for raw materials, harvesting, working on markets or preparing food. Mostly men were involved in singing songs for cooperation and women sung during activities connected with family such as taking care of children (Southern, 1997, p. 4 – 7).

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC BEFORE THE 20TH CENTURY

People from Africa began to adapt their culture to the culture of their slave masters on ships, which transported them from their homes in Africa to America. According to this fact, the probable beginning of exchanging ideas about music was in the half of the 17th century. As Nettle (1976) describes in his book, African American music has its origin in cruel conditions in which Africans were brought to the United States and also in the situation they had to confront there. It was for example fighting for their rights, pride, dignity and place in this new land they were brought into. According to this fact, there is a difference between music of white immigrants who arrived in America in the 17th century and music of slaves which was mostly about preserving their African culture among their society in so called New World (p. 88-89).

The culture of Americans and African Americans has collaterally existed since the beginning of slavery. African slaves were forced to adapt their former lifestyle to the new one connected with a dominant white population. Sometimes the musical traditions of these two groups overlapped. For example ballads existed among both African and American societies and the source of religious music was also the same. Scholars are not sure to what extend Christian music tradition influenced Africans' view of religion (Zástěra, 2001, p. 56).

However, Christianity played a significant role among African slaves, which could seem to be strange because of the fact that they had to work for their Christian masters. In reality, Christianity was very close to Africans. On one hand slaves believed that after death they would be brought to heaven which seemed to be a salvation after the cruel life they lived. Christianity also helped them to bear the moral obligation of long-hour work on plantations. On the other hand this religion forced slaves to be obedient to their masters. It can be seen that Christianity, which was based on equality among people on earth, was

contrary to slavery (Dorůžka, 1958, p. 11 – 12). However, Africans had their own way of worship services. It often had a form of secret meetings in the woods after a long day on plantation during the night or at weekends in the morning when their masters slept longer hours.

The very first music style of African slaves in America has its roots in the Christian background. As the Africans began to believe in salvation and Christianity, first folksongs called spirituals originated. Appel and Hemphill (2006) state in their book:

The development of spirituals resulted from an exchange of musical styles between the races in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when many African Americans converted to Christianity. Spirituals offered biblical stories as metaphors for liberation, offered hope for a better life, and helped preserve African cultural memory. For over two centuries, the hymns of English composer Issac Watts (1674 – 1748) were particularly popular among African Americans, and these hymns served as the improvisational basis for the development of spirituals. (p. 30)

This music style often resembled old Scottish and English folksongs, which had similar melodies. Africans in America modified these songs in order to adapt them according to African traditions. This music genre often resembled Africans' poor situation in America and appeared to be a protest against living in white people's society. Spirituals were often improvised and sung on religious services. According to Southern (1997), there were two views on black spirituals among white clergymen. Many of them wanted Africans to quit singing their versions of hymns, however, the others had a different opinion. They encouraged Africans to sing their own improvised version of religious songs which were often admired (p. 181).

In the second half of the 19th century, African Americans first captured attention of white public because of a tour of a small choir singing spirituals throughout America and Europe. These African Americans were no longer considered as slaves, they were intellectuals and artists with proper education who studied at the first black university founded in 1866. As spirituals were sung in Europe, this music genre began to adapt to European conditions. Because spirituals were sung in concert halls rather by fewer people or one person than by many people together, they lost their exoticism created by African slaves in America on plantations (Dorůžka, 1958, p. 16).

However, the subject of African Americans' songs was not only Jesus Christ, Christianity, salvation or religion in general. It is natural for people to sweeten hard situations in life, which for slaves was the never-ending work at fields. The means they used to dulcify their hard work were work songs, which not only eased the pain but also synchronised slaves' working pace and coordination.

As Dorůžka (1958) explains in his book, work songs were sung more often than spirituals. However, not much is known about work songs of black people in America. It is certain that these songs helped to increase work performance. The rhythm was monotonous and resembled the work of slaves. (p. 18). The typical form of work songs was "call and response". Appel and Hemphill (2006) describe the form as follows. "A lead singer acting as foreman sang a lyric to direct the work, then workers answered and performed the required task" (p. 30). It means that a person with the greatest voice sang a verse and other people would respond by singing the same verse together. Work songs were not only in favour of slaves because they helped them during work but also in favour of slave masters because of the fact, that these songs forced slaves to be obedient to their owners in a similar way as spirituals and to work hard. The significance and importance of work songs is described by Eileen Southern (1997) in her book:

Singing accompanied all kinds of work, whether it consisted of picking cotton, threshing rice, stripping tobacco, harvesting sugar cane, or simply doing the endless small jobs on the plantation, such as clearing away the underbrush or repairing fences. Music served the double function of alleviating the monotony of the work. (p. 161)

During the 19th century when slaves sang spirituals and work songs, white Americans began to notice how African people enjoyed music and dancing. Many slave owners liked the magic of Africans' spirituals and work songs and wanted to share their experience with black music with other Americans, mostly their friends. As Dorůžka (1958) describes in his book, Americans even wanted their slaves to perform theatrical performances to other people to entertain them during weekend evenings. Slaves not only performed theatrical shows, they also competed mostly in dancing competitions in which they could win a dessert (p. 20). Eileen Southern (1997) adds that "slaves frequently were called upon to entertain masters at the big house, particularly when there were quests" and that "sometimes, no more was

requested than a song to dispel the tedium of the moment”, but “a slave might be expected to perform serious music”. (p. 175).

According to this fact, African music started to be more and more popular not only among African slaves, but also among white Americans. This led to musical performances and a genre which originated among slaves and white Americans in the South of the United States of America called Minstrelsy.

In America, the first minstrel shows, as minstrelsy performances were called, appeared at the beginning of the 19th century, however, they have their origin in England. These shows were performed at the end of the 18th century there by a white man in a costume of a black slave. According to Appel and Hemphill (2006), minstrelsy “was the first indigenous American theatrical and popular music genre. This genre helped shape the blues as well as twentieth-century American music theatre” (p. 35). Their definition continues and describes this genre and its performers. They say that “in minstrelsy, white actors performed in blackface, a makeup style in which the face was darkened with burnt cork and exaggerated facial features such as large lips and big eyes were drawn” (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 35).

From the definition it is obvious that minstrel shows were in 1820s, at the beginning of their existence, performed by white Americans. The main theme of minstrelsy, which became most popular in the half of the 19th century, were a life of African American slaves on plantation and those living in a city. Many actors imitated their stereotypes. This fact is proven by Southern (1997), who writes in her book the following:

Two basic types of slaves impersonations were developed: one in caricature of the plantation slave with his ragged clothes and thick dialect; the other portraying the city slave, the dandy dressed in the latest fashion, who boasted of his exploits among ladies. The former was referred to as Jim Crow and the latter, as Zip Coon. (p. 89)

The resemblance with slave life was also visible because of musical instruments, which were typical of people working on fields. Southern (1997) explains these were “Ethiopian instruments – banjos, tambourines, fiddles and bone castanets” (p. 92). Southern (1997) also describes how minstrelsy shows were composed:

In its established form, the minstrelsy show consisted of three parts: the first contained songs and jokes; the second, called the olio, comprised a variety of

specialty acts and ensemble numbers. Typically, the performance concluded with a “walk around finale,” an act in which some of the performers sang and danced up front (on the stage) and the remainder of the company gave support from the back. (p. 92)

At the beginning of minstrelsy, performers of these shows were white Americans, however, around 1840s first groups and individuals could be seen on stages in the South of the United States. White Americans were not accustomed to see a real black person on stage, but it is said that African Americans were much better performers. According to Appel and Hemphill (2006) “dancer William Henry Lane (“Master Juba”) was one of the first African Americans to tour and perform with white minstrel groups, and his work reflected traditional African American performance style” (p. 37).

From what was said it is obvious, that there surely was a conflict between African American values and values of white Americans when performing minstrelsy shows. On one hand, these shows were created to imitate and ridicule the culture and the way of life of African Americans, which could be considered racist, however, despite this fact, African Americans also performed minstrel shows. The reason is that it was an opportunity for African Americans to become more important for the society they lived in. Nevertheless, “minstrels in the nineteenth century established unfortunate stereotypes of black men” (Southern, 1997, p. 96).

Apparently, minstrel shows were domain of white Americans. This is also the reason why the most famous performer was a white actor Thomas Dartmouth Rice. He was born in 1808 in New York City. Rice performed on stages pretending to be a black man named “Jim Crow”. Rice, who was given a nickname “Daddy Rice” by his audience, was inspired by a man who performed an entertaining dance while singing about labour. Rice’s performances were an immediate success among white Americans. However, there were many other performing groups, entertainers and composers, but only Thomas Rice is rightfully called “Father of American Minstrelsy” (Southern, 1997 p. 90-92). Starr and Waterman (2007) describes the character of Jim Crow as follows:

“Daddy” Rice’s Jim Crow character spoke and sang in dialect based on white rural characters (such as the Kentucky rifleman Davy Crockett) and partly on the variety of black and Creole dialects heard by Rice as a youngster growing up by the Seventh Ward docks. The Jim Crow character used this hybrid dialect – neither black nor

white but something in between – to make fun of pretentious politicians and social elites, introducing a satirical subtext that Rice’s high-class targets found threatening. (p. 13)

The name “Jim Crow” was later in the 20th century used for discriminative and segregation laws. These laws divided society into the society of superior white population and subordinate population of African Americans.

After slavery was abolished in 1865 by the president Abraham Lincoln, African Americans began to have more and more opportunities among society, which favoured white people of the United States. Music of African Americans commenced to enter the mass culture and in the last decade of the 19th century a new music genre called ragtime was developed. Based on minstrel shows, which parodied music and life of African Americans, ragtime represented the first music style to enter popular music in all of the United States’ regions. Starr and Waterman (2007) describe that “the word “ragtime” derives from the African American term “to rag”, meaning to enliven a piece of music by shifting melodic accents onto the offbeats (a technique known as syncopation)” (p. 18). They also add that “some young white Americans associated themselves with ragtime to rebel against the cultural conservatism of their parents and other authority figures” (p. 18).

This statement proves that ragtime was not only a matter of African Americans, but an object of interest of their former slave masters as well. However, African Americans were authors of majority of ragtime songs (Zástěra, 2001, p. 84).

The original musical instrument associated with ragtime was banjo as it was one of the main musical instruments of African Americans on plantations, nevertheless, now free and independent, African Americans also began to play the piano. “As slaves, black musicians had little access to the piano, of course, but after freedom they displayed a marked predilection for keyboard instruments” (Southern, 1997, p. 314). It is obvious that pianos were very expensive and many African Americans could not afford one. It was not unusual for musicians to practise on small organs, which their families purchased on lifetime loans. (Southern, 1997, p. 314)

To imagine how a ragtime song sounded, Eileen Southern (1997) provides us an explanation. She observed that “the ragtime song was characterized by a regular, straightforward bass and a lightly syncopated melody. Frequently, the syncopation was

confined to the vocal line, the piano providing an “um-pah um-pah” accompaniment based chiefly on simple harmonic progression” (p. 319).

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Blues

The Delta blues

The first music genre of African American people of the Southern United States which is connected with the 20th century is blues. It has its roots in the American Civil War fought during the years 1861 – 1865. As many music genres before, blues resulted, as well as for example spirituals, from sorrow and sadness but also from desires of African American community. Nowadays blues is known as the very first music genre created completely among African Americans without any influence of other genres of music of white Americans.

Blues has many features and characteristics resembling spirituals, which can be proven by Eileen Southern (1997) in her book. She states that “many spirituals convey to listeners the same feeling of rootlessness and misery as the blues” (p. 333). Another important similar attribute of blues and spirituals, which appeared also in work songs, was so called “call and response” form of music.

It is obvious that blues as well as spirituals originated from the general desire for freedom as well as from mixed feelings of despair and hope for better future of African minority in the USA. However, the origin of blues is discussed by many scholars these days. On one hand, they agree on the fact blues originated among African American experience and that the South was the place where this music genre first appeared. On the other hand, they cannot agree on the particular region of the South where blues first appeared. One opinion is blues was formed at the delta of the Mississippi river where many plantations existed before slavery was abolished. Another opinion is that blues developed in the East of Texas (Zástěra, 2001, p. 89). However, blues appeared in both areas where many performers began to sing blues during social events. The themes were frequently connected with sexuality and often ironic and humorous songs contained promises for better future when an unpleasant situation occurred in life. Nevertheless, “from the time of its origin the blues was generally associated with the lowly-received with warmth in the brothels and saloons of the red-light district, but generally rejected by “respectable,” church-going people (Southern, 1997, p. 333).

The performers of the first blues songs were called songsters. According to Appel and Hemphill (2006), songsters “played instruments and sang an eclectic and multicultural songs, social songs, ballads, minstrel songs, and eventually the blues” (p. 39). These performers played the guitar and by their style of playing the basic structure of blues songs was created. They add that “many legendary blues performers were born and grew up in the Delta” (p. 40).

To imagine how a blues song was formed by songsters, Eileen Southern presents us two examples in her book.

“I thought I heard that K.C. whistle blow, I thought I heard that K.C. whistle blow,
oh, I thought I heard that K.C. whistle blow.

Blow lak’ she never blow befo’, blow lak’ she never blow befo’, lawd, she blow
lak’ she never blew befo’.

Wish to God some ole train would run, eish to God some ole train would run, carry
me back where I come frum.” (p. 335)

Another example is a later form of a blues song.

“Woke up this morning, feeling sad and blue, Woke up this morning, feeling sad
and blue, didn’t have nobody to tell my troubles to.

I’ve got the blues, but I’m too darn mean to cry, I’ve got the blues, but I’m too darn
mean to cry, before I’d cry I’d rather lay down and die.” (p. 335)

She provides an explanation of the lyrics. Southern (1997) claims that “in the early blues, the three lines often had identical texts, in later forms two identical lines are followed by a contrasting statement” (p. 335). These two examples show that blues songs often consisted of three stanzas with the pattern “AAB” and the form was “call and response”. This one of the most important feature is obvious from the two identical lines.

To imagine the melody of blues songs, Southern (1997) also provides a description. She claims that “the blues melody derives from an altered scale in which the third, fifth, seventh, and occasionally the sixth degrees are treated ambiguously, sometimes being lowered and at other times sung at the natural pitch levels of the major scale” (p. 336).

From all of these descriptions the Delta blues songs seem to be simple and many white Americans tried to play songs of the Delta blues, however they were not successful.

The reason is that a performer had to understand many delicate details such as timing, change of voice and other techniques that only African American people living in Mississippi Delta were able to understand (Palmer, 1986, p. 23).

The songs of this genre, which white musicians were not capable of performing, were frequently accompanied by the guitar. It was the most famous and the most important musical instrument connected with the Delta blues. The guitar helped a performer to emphasize thoughts and express his feelings to audience and because audience and performers had similar experience in life as all of them were African Americans, performances were often very deep and intimate events for both participating sides.

Blues revolution

Before 1914, blues music contained many rural signs, however, between 1914 and 1920 this music genre disposed of it and became more cultivated. It also managed to be known in big cities. The reason for blues to broaden its influence in the United States was definitely a new means of distributing music. In 1920, first phonograph records appeared and blues was suddenly able to reach a wider audience. During 1919 and 1920 gramophone recordings were considered to be the most effective means of how to introduce blues to public. The recordings had various forms, because African Americans demanded primitive blues forms from the beginning of existence of the genre as well as its modern version of sophisticated blues music.

The first blues record ever recorded was According to Appel and Hemphill (2006) Mamie Smith's "Crazy Blues". They state in their book that "the first blues record did not appear until 1920. When the tune sold 75,000 copies in its first month, the era of recorded blues begun" (p. 40). However, recordings of African American artists were labelled as so called "race records". It was not until 1948 when this category of music was renamed from the racist name to more acceptable for African American artists by Billboard magazine to "rhythm and blues". (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 40). Songs of Mamie Smith, who did not come from the Southern part of the United States, were very similar to the blues of the South by their passion, emotions and style they were sung. By this imitation of the Southern blues, Mamie Smith gained popularity also among people in the South.

Classic blues

In the 1920s many female blues performers regarded as the followers of Mamie Smith appeared. This occurred situation created a new style of blues called classic blues.

Among women performing on stage with musical accompaniment, the most famous was Bessie Smith known as “The Empress of the Blues”. During her career, the popularity of blues significantly increased and by her own popularity she influenced many other performers. Her music was characteristic of her voice and the fact that she was able to communicate through her songs with audience as no one else before. Despite her popularity her life however was not a happy one. Bessie spent a significant amount of money on expensive commodities, alcohol and drugs. She died at the age of 34. During her rather short life, her “expressive style and phrasing influenced musicians of many styles, including jazz, gospel, and R & B” (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 43).

Not only African American women as Mamie Smith and Bessie Smith gained popularity during 1920’s. Men were also included in shaping the form of the Southern popular blues music. However, the genre of blues performed by men called rural blues was in contrast to classical blues.

Rural blues

Rural blues, which was the name of blues genre sung by men, began to be known by performer named Blind Lemon Jefferson. However, Charley Patton and Robert Johnson also significantly influenced the image of blues in the 1920’s. Rural blues shaped the form of the whole blues genre and was also the most influential for genres which appeared after blues in the 20th century. According to Zástěra (2001), this genre differs from classical or urban blues because men who performed rural blues songs played the guitar. It is sometimes called downhome blues for its similarity to the old places and country sides that African American audience always imagined while listening to it no matter in which city or town in the USA it was performed. This music always resembled the place of their origin, which was the American South (p. 97). Rural blues also referred to African American’s modest background, however, the word “rural” may be confusing while this music genre was mainly performed in towns and cities.

Eileen Southern (1997) explains that “the former band consisted of fiddles, banjos, guitars, mandolins, and string basses; the latter, of ordinary crockery jugs, banjos, harmonicas, mandolins, toy instruments called kazoos, and household washboards” (p. 374). It is obvious that the variety of musical instruments was huge and also uncommon in some cases. She also describes the style of the genre as moaning or groaning where the melodies resembled lamenting. Performers were able to play these unusual melodies by techniques

they invented. It was for example by using the edge of a knife or a bottle to play the guitar. Performers also used their fingers to clap the guitar and imitated things from real life or animals by their voice. All these techniques created music typical of Mississippi Delta differing from other areas of the United States (Southern, 1997, p. 376).

The first recordings of rural blues appeared in 1924 when Daddy Stovepipe recorded two of his songs as well as Papa Charlie Jackson, who accompanied himself with the guitar on his recordings. Performers of this genre were not very popular until 1926, when the first successful rural blues performer recorded “Black Snake Moan” record. It was by a virtuoso guitarist Blind Lemon Jefferson. He was born in Texas and despite the fact he was blind and not very attractive, Jefferson was able to attract attention of women. His distinctive style consisted of relaxed voice which distinguished Jefferson from other singers in Mississippi area. During his life, Blind Lemon Jefferson recorded over one hundred recordings. The majority of rural blues recordings were created during the years 1924 and 1929. The reason was mostly because the Great Depression significantly influenced the economy of the USA and many of the recording companies were not able to continue their work after 1929 (Southern, 1997, p. 377).

New development of the blues – electric blues

During the 1930’s there was a significant evolution in blues music as well as other genres connected with blues. The radio broadcasting was invented, which caused African American music to reach a wider audience. Performers were able to play live music on the radio, which was new experience for listeners as well as for singers. By the 1940s, new radio stations and programmes for African American audience began to exist. The popular station was KFFA, which introduced blues singers from Mississippi Delta. Another significant change in music was an electric guitar, which began to be used solo unlike an acoustic guitar. One of the biggest advantages of the electric guitar was the ability to increase volume and change the style of the sound produced by an amplifier (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 47 – 48).

The invention of an electric guitar created more modern electric blues. The origin of electric blues is connected with Muddy Waters who began to be known in 1940 by playing an amplified guitar. The sound of the electric instrument was not favourable for clubs which were accustomed to a different softer sound, however, the raw and heavy sound of Walker’s electric guitar was essential for later music genres such as rock, heavy metal or grunge.

Muddy Walker is also considered to be the founder of Chicago blues famous for its electric sound and many later performers of this genre respected Muddy Walker for being the pioneer of this music. One of them was T-Bone Walker, who mixed old blues traditions as an acoustic guitar and new modern sound of an electric guitar. During his performances, Walker showed the audience unusual moves “including splits and picking up a table with his teeth” (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 50). Because of the spectacular style of his shows, Walker soon became a blues legend who even performed in the best club in California. He developed around 50 new sounds for an electric guitar during the 1940s when he travelled around the United States.

However, the most famous bluesman of this era was Riley B. King, more known as B. B. King. He was the most famous and respected blues, gospel and jazz performer of all times who influenced many later artists. Appel and Hemphill (2006) state in their book that he has “never been accepted by the blues purists” and that he “could never be a real jazz musician”. They add that he does not “sing gospel well enough to be considered a gospel singer” (p. 51). It is obvious that B. B. King blended those three genres together and was not focused only on one of them.

The popularity of blues began to decline during the 1950s and 1960s nevertheless new music styles such as rock and roll or rock were greatly influenced by blues. Many new music bands even in England in the 1960s were influenced by the music of B.B. King, Muddy Waters or T-Bone walker.

Jazz

Jazz is probably the most important and the most significant music genre influenced by blues. The origin of the name jazz is not clear. One scholar says “that the word jazz represented a corruption of “razz,” the name of a Negro band active in New Orleans about 1905” (Southern, 1997, p. 365). However it is unlikely. It is more probable that the word originated in 1912 when “the press began referring to the white dance bands that flourished in the large cities as Jazz Bands” (Southern, 1997, p. 365). Although the exact origin is unknown, the first appearance of jazz as a music genre dates back to 1900 when it began to form around New Orleans, a city in the Southern state of the United States named Louisiana. This music genre is regarded as original and typical American. However, many foreign cultures influenced the shape of jazz as we know it.

New Orleans has a special geographical location near the Caribbean area, which is the reason why it was influenced by France and Spain, but these countries were not the only two which culturally enriched this area. In the 19th century there were also influences from Irish, German and Italian people living around New Orleans. This was the reason New Orleans was able to absorb many different music habits and traditions (Zástěra, 2001, p. 99). One of the most influential group was called Creoles, an educated group of people whose fathers were French or Spanish. They were educated in traditional music. According to this fact, New Orleans' mixture of people from around the world was crucial for creating extraordinary music conditions which were uncommon for other cities in the United States. Since the beginning of foreign immigration to New Orleans in the 19th century, the city was full of music and events connected with it. Many carnivals and balls were held there. Music was everywhere and was played throughout the whole city. The pioneers of jazz were African Americans, however, this music genre does not have any connection with music in Africa. It fully developed in the United States where descendants of African slaves mixed from their cultural sources a new music style (Zástěra, 2001, p. 100). In contrast to blues which reminded the origin of African Americans, jazz resembled an atmosphere of freedom and big cities.

Eileen Southern (1997) describes in her book that "jazz is a vocally oriented music; its players replace the voice with their instruments but try to recreate the voice's singing style and blues notes" (p. 367). Appel and Hemphill (2006) also describe jazz in their book, jazz is mostly about improvisation, which has led to an always original performance. Jazz improvisation includes musical instruments but also performers voice (p. 59). It results to a very individual style of each performer which varies in melody or harmony changed by the mood of the composer. It is not unusual that a performer also cooperates with the audience. The key feature of jazz however is syncopation, which is an element in music when the rhythm is not regular. This is the reason why jazz includes many unusual rhythmical combinations. Jazz music is also typical of pauses which occur frequently. On one hand the melody is simple and sentimental without inventiveness, on the other hand many musical instruments are involved (Polívka, 1949, p. 112 - 115). Despite similar characteristics, many different subgenres of jazz appeared during the 20th century.

Classic jazz

The first musician to be considered as a jazz performer is Charles Bolden, also known as Buddy Bolden. During the years 1885 and 1907 Bolden began to form classical jazz as

we know it today using his musical instruments such as trumpet or cornet. Although he was not much known among white audience, Afro Americans considered him a legend. Bolden performed in parks and bars rhythms and melodies which were not characteristic of any other music genre. This creativity was an impulse for the birth of Jazz. Bolden's inspiration stem from New Orleans' musical diversity. At the end of the 19th century, Bolden established a band, however, there exist no recordings of their work. In fact, the first jazz recordings ever recorded were made by white musicians named ODJB, which stands for Original Dixieland Jazz Band (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 64).

Another composer who contributed to the development of jazz was Jelly Roll Morton. Morton is mostly known for creating standards for jazz bands and combining many other music styles while creating the first real theory of jazz music. Morton was also the first jazz musician to note his music in his jazz arrangement Jelly Roll Blues. This fact is supported by Eileen Southern (1997) in her book. She claims that "Jelly Roll Morton is regarded by some scholars as the first true jazz composer in that he was probably the first to write down his jazz arrangements in musical notation" (p. 382).

If Jelly Roll Morton is recognized as the first great jazz composer, Luis Armstrong is probably the best jazz soloist and an icon of all times and as Appel and Hemphill (2006) describe in their book, "his playing, singing, and outlook on life and art shaped the direction of jazz as a unique expression of American culture" (p. 66). As many other jazzmen in this era, Armstrong began to perform on the streets of New Orleans, the city he was born in. Despite the fact he came from the South of the United States, his life led him to different places such as Chicago or New York. The first one is significant for Armstrong's life because of joining the band of King Oliver and recording of his first work after the First World War there. However, he moved to New York in 1924 where he began to perform with Fletcher Henderson and by 1930 Armstrong was famous throughout the United States. While in New York, Armstrong recorded music with blues singer Bessie Smith and when he returned to Chicago in 1925, his fame was enormous.

At that time, Chicago became the centre of jazz music, however, many jazz bands were inspired by groups from New Orleans and in spite the fact jazz was originally music of African Americans many white Americans began to perform jazz (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 68). Although this situation occurred, jazz remained the music of African Americans. White Americans, however, innovated this genre and adapted it to their own

needs. The most significant white jazz performer of the 1920s was Bix Beiderbecke, who differed from Armstrong by playing more linear and less aggressive melody.

Swing

Another important city for development of jazz was New York where a new style of jazz originated in the 1930s. The definition of swing is provided by Starr and Waterman (2007) in their book. “The word swing derives from African American English. First used as a verb for the fluid”. They add that “the term was used by extension to refer to an emotional state characterized by a sense of freedom, vitality, and enjoyment” (p. 22). Swing is unlike jazz more elegant and optimistic while jazz is more aggressive and wild. The reason for this is the end of the prohibition in the United States in 1932 which promised more optimistic future for people by Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal reforming economy after the Great Depression. In other words, people did not understand jazz as much as before the economic decline, however, the audience included all social classes.

Swing era differs from jazz not only in melody and elegant style, but also in the size of bands. Swing is typical of big bands which performed in large dance halls and ballrooms while classic jazz performers’ groups were rather small. The difference was significant also in the number of musical instruments. Traditional jazz band consisted of a trumpet, a clarinet, a trombone, a piano, a bass, a drum kit and a guitar. However, big swing bands contained four trumpets, three or five wind instruments such as flutes or clarinets and also a piano, a bass, drums and a guitar (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 74).

During the era of swing, there existed three significant swing bands lasting from 1935, which was the year swing first appeared, to 1942. These swing big bands were similar to blues bands and their songs had seemingly the same pattern. This pattern is known from Tin Pan Alley songs, a music publisher from New York, which recorded songs “with 12-bar structure, three-chord pattern, blue notes, and call-and-response patterns” (Starr and Waterman, 2007, p. 25). Most of the swing songs written according to this pattern were made in New York, Chicago or New Orleans, however, Kansas City developed its own significant swing style, which was connected with parts of music repeated in patterns called riffs played on the piano. According to Appel and Hemphill (2006), riff is “a short melodic phrase stated in forceful terms, usually contained in the first few bars of a piece” (p. 77). It is also considered to be a background for improvisation.

Many scholars consider swing to be the first African American music genre crossing the boundaries of race and gender, because not only African Americans played an important part in making swing music and not only men were allowed to perform. In fact, there existed many swing bands in which only women appeared or bands consisted of national minorities such as Asians, Chicano communities or Latin people. This situation occurred at the beginning of the Second World War according to the fact that men of all ages had to go on the battlefields of the war, so the importance of women in music significantly increased. Typical bands where only women appeared were for example “Ina Ray Hutton and the Melodears” or “International Sweethearts of Rhythm” (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 79-80).

Modern forms of jazz

The era of modern jazz originated at the end of 1940 and has existed until today. There are many music forms included, which differ significantly from jazz performed in the first half of the 20th century. The main difference in the new development of jazz is the orientation on art rather than mainstream, which creates diverse jazz music styles very different from each other.

Modern jazz styles, which continued to last for almost fifty years, began with bebop. This subgenre of modern jazz was significant for performing in small rooms such as night clubs or bars where African American jazzmen played music that was in most cases improvised and artistic. They used small variety of musical instruments typically bass, piano or drums, however, there were also wind instruments included. These were especially horns, which in most cases repeated a melody. The main characteristic of bebop was fast tempo of songs. As Eileen Southern (1997) describes in her book, “the musicians generally experimented with creating something more challenging and exhilarating than the jazz currently in vogue” (p. 487). This music was no longer, as for example swing, meant to be played for dancing, it was rather played for listening. According to Appel and Hemphill (2006), there are two views on how bebop was developed. The first point of view explains that performers needed a different way to show their feelings, however, other scholars say the development was a natural process (p. 248). The most influential person of bebop was Charlie Parker, who is considered to be the second most important performer after Armstrong to influence jazz as the whole genre.

In the 1950s bebop was followed by a relatively different style called cool jazz, which was easier to perform because artists did not have to be so much skilled in playing the musical instruments. The reason was its slower tempo and softer melodies. Cool jazz was unlike bebop easier to listen and the audience could expect how the song would continue. In other words, cool jazz was less artistic and less improvisational (Southern, 1997, p. 492). Miles Davis, an African American creator of cool jazz, mixed in this genre characteristic features of different styles and used electronic instruments besides his typical musical instrument, a trumpet. He is considered to be the most influential artist after bebop, who brought to the world of music modal jazz, which is defined by Appel and Hemphill (2006) in their book as “a style of improvisation based on the exploration of one scale for an extended period of time” (p. 251). However, more significant for the history of jazz music than modal jazz was free jazz.

This modern form of jazz was introduced by some music historians in the 1950s but the main development occurred during the early years of the 1960s. This period of time was typical for the civil rights movement and for African American’s fight for equality in the USA. The social conditions distinctively influenced the development of jazz as the whole music style while performers wanted to cross boundaries and experiment with music. A significant feature of free jazz was improvisation, which it was based on, and many musicians representing free jazz placed a great emphasis on “rhythmic freedom and emotional intensity” (Southern, 1997, p. 494) while the inspiration by blues was visible in songs of free jazz singers as it was full of harmony. The same characteristics are seen in hard bop and funky jazz as they originated during the same time, however, hard bop and funky jazz involved elements of soul and gospel, which is not typical for free jazz. A standard band was rather small and the form of melodies was not strictly fixed. Some performers composed complex songs full of details, however, melodies of other composers were not so much sophisticated. In other words, free jazz, although not a very popular subgenre of jazz, showed the audience that music does not have to have boundaries and limits in melody, structure or harmony and that one music style is able to have several forms (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 256-257).

In the 1960s and 1970s free jazz was seen as a genre which wanted to return African American music to the beginning of its existence in the USA. This fact is proven by Eileen Southern (1997) in her book. The musicians used components of old African American music which slaves used to ease their pain on fields (p. 495). The significance of

improvisation, which is typical of this genre, also appeared in former African American music styles for example spirituals.

The year 1970 was not only an important milestone for free jazz and other styles, it was a year when rather new music style rock, which appeared mostly in the late 1960s, began to mix with jazz music to create jazz-rock also known as fusion. The first attempts to blend rock and jazz, however, came to existence in the 1960s. Because this decade was significant for the development of rock, many jazz-orientated musicians wanted to maintain the connection with rock culture as it was typical for younger generation and to continue playing jazz. The name “jazz-rock” indicates the presence of rock in jazz, nevertheless jazz was also mixed with different music genres such as rhythm ‘n’ blues, folk music and popular music. Early stages of fusion were connected with musical experiments and electronic musical instruments. Many music critics disagreed with using electronic musical instruments in this genre because the sound was rather aggressive, which was not seen positively in connection with jazz. This revolution in form of using not only acoustic musical instruments was possible because of the synthesizer, which was invented around the same time as jazz-rock or fusion was developed. The main advantage of the synthesizer was its variability and possibilities how to create music. The basic usage of the synthesizer was to add various sounds into a song separately and independently in a studio. The sounds were for example sounds of nature or musical instruments. This created a whole new dimension of making music, which now appeared different than ever before. The synthesizer has a form of a musical keyboard and as Eileen Southern (1997) describes, “the ‘70s saw the rise of the “keyboardist,” for almost without exception, pianists now played a variety of both acoustic and electronic instruments – electronic pianos, organs, synthesizers, and, in some instances, specially constructed keyboards” (p. 500). From this statement and from the fact this genre was a mixture of funk, rock, Latin or jazz it is obvious, that fusion was typical for freedom of expressing music. Although fusion, an aggressive form of amplified jazz music, dominated the 1970s, new much calmer smooth jazz appeared at the end of that decade. However, it did not become as popular as fusion.

Contemporary jazz music

Today’s jazz music is not so much revolutionary in its development as it was common in the second half of the 20th century although it still is developing significantly. However, there exist some important features of modern jazz, such as a combination of electronic dance music and jazz, which is known as acid jazz. The fact is, that Latin jazz

became more popular. Latin jazz is the result of the influence of Cuban music which first appeared in the 1980s and as Appel and Hemphill (2006) it is a “hybrid of hard-bop improvisation, Afro-Caribbean instruments and rhythms, and rock, funk, and classical music” (p. 264). This definition is mostly created because of the music of the Cuban group Irakere, which influenced many American performers. Acid jazz was a hybrid of hip-hop and jazz which was developed in the 1990s and because of the connection of a modern music genre and an old one, younger generation was able to experience older music, in this case jazz, and listen to it although in a rather different form.

Another characteristic of contemporary jazz music is that from the 1990s women became to be more important for jazz and appeared frequently on stages. One of them was Maria Schneider, whose songs were very original pieces of jazz music. However, many other women preferred different jazz forms such as Figarova, who “for example, stood out with her fusion of classical technique and hard-swinging contemporary jazz” (Appel and Hemphill, 2006, p. 265).

Not every interpreter of contemporary jazz music wanted to follow the new development of jazz. Some of them wanted to continue creating jazz which would resemble the original form of this genre. It was partly a reason for the existence of neoclassical jazz in the 1980s. Performers of neoclassical jazz were not satisfied with new styles of jazz so they developed a genre focusing more on the original early jazz of New Orleans. They also wanted to preserve the legacy of performers before them such as Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington.

CONCLUSION

African American music has influenced not only music of the United States of America but also its inhabitants and position of African Americans in society. As it has developed from the beginning of slavery until today, it has influenced all social classes of American people which is visible until today. Although music of white Americans and Africans has mixed together, there has always been a certain conflict between them. During the 20th century, music of African Americans was a symbol of their fight for independence, rights and equality which we are able to see in the form of songs. However, blues as well as jazz, would not have existed if there had not been African stubbornness, pride, musical talent or determination and maybe fearlessness to be a free and independent community. The reality is that both of these music genres originated in the South of the United States, where the majority of Africans were concentrated. Their music has developed from simple songs sung on fields during work to ease slaves' pain to sophisticated masterpieces of African American artists.

The main purpose of my thesis was to analyse jazz and blues as these African American genres were the most significant music styles which were important not only for development of music of African American community in the United States but they also determined the community's social rights and position in society. It is also obvious that blues and jazz influenced not only other African American music genres such as gospel, soul, rhythm & blues or even modern hip hop, it influenced music of white Americans as well.

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SHRNUTÍ

Předmětem bakalářské práce je analýza afroamerické hudby jihu Spojených států amerických ve 20. století se zaměřením na blues a jazz jakožto nejdůležitějších afroamerických hudebních žánrů, které ovlivnily vývoj hudby v Americe.

Práce se skládá ze dvou hlavních částí. První se zabývá kořeny afroamerické hudby od příchodu otroků do Ameriky v 17. století. Druhá část se zaměřuje na afroamerickou hudbu 20. století a je dále rozdělena do dvou kapitol, které se nazývají Blues a Jazz. Tyto kapitoly zahrnují historii, vývoj a charakteristiku blues a jazzu a také jejich podžánrů. Závěr na konci práce shrnuje hlavní poznatky a důvod, proč typická afroamerická hudba ovlivnila celou společnost Spojených států amerických.