

a new less obvious form or was wiped out altogether. (The famous wood sculpture of the Yoruba could not possibly have fallen into an area less responsive to its beauties than colonial America. The artifact was, like any other material manifestation of pure African culture, doomed. It is strange to realize that even in the realm of so-called high culture, Western highbrows have only in this century begun to think of African, Pre-Columbian, and Egyptian art, as well as the art of other pre-literate and/or "primitive" cultures, as art rather than archaeology. Of course, nowadays, it is a must in the home of any Westerner who pays homage to the arts to include in his collection of *objets d'art* at least a few African, Egyptian, and Pre-Columbian pieces.)

* Only religion (and magic) and the arts were not completely submerged by Euro-American concepts. Music, dance, religion, do not have artifacts as their end products, so they were saved. These nonmaterial aspects of the African's culture were almost impossible to eradicate. And these are the most apparent legacies of the African past, even to the contemporary black American. But to merely point out that blues, jazz, and the Negro's adaptation of the Christian religion all rely heavily on African culture takes no great amount of original thinking. How these activities derive from that culture is what remains important.

3 / African Slaves / American Slaves: Their Music

This whole chapter details v. African music; also, central to vocal lyrics

It is a comparatively short period of history that passes between the time, when Richard Francis Burton could say of African music that "it is monotonous to a degree, yet they delight in it," or when H. E. Krehbiel could ask (1914), "Why savages who have never developed a musical or other art should be supposed to have more refined aesthetic sensibilities than the peoples who have cultivated music for centuries, passes my poor powers of understanding . . ." ¹ until the time (1920) when a great mass of white Americans are dancing a West African (Ashanti) ancestor dance they know as the "Charleston."

Jazz is commonly thought to have begun around the turn of the century, but the music's jazz derived from are much older. Blues is the parent of all legitimate jazz, and it is impossible to say exactly how old blues is—certainly no older than the presence of Negroes in the United States. It is a native American music, the product of the black man in this country: or to put it more exactly the way I have come to think about it, blues could not exist if the African captives had not become American captives.

¹ H. E. Krehbiel, *Afro-American Folksongs* (New York, G. Schirmer, 1914), p. 73.