

Louis Armstrong and New Orleans at the turn of the 20th

5/18/17

New Orleans

- Louisiana Purchase, 1803: influx of immigrants, slaves. French, Creole, African, Jews, Chinese.
- Balls
 - 1840, 80 ballrooms in the city. (population 102,000)
 - Quadroon balls – “dens of iniquity,” interracial sex
 - “Strange sight: all the men white, all the women coloured or at least with African blood... Coloured women destined in a way by the law to concubinage. Incredible laxity of morals. Mothers, young girls, children at the ball. Yet another fatal consequence of slavery” (de Tocqueville)
 - City has a reputation for a love for dancing and music.
- *Placage*

Buddy Bolden (1877 - 1931)

- Non-musical family. Begins cornet at 17.
- “king” bolden. Innovations:
 - Personality, loudness, growls.
 - “first man of jazz”
- Alcoholic, difficult personality.
- Mental health problems, 1907 committed by his mother to asylum.
- Funky Butt Hall

Joe “King” Oliver (1881 - 1938)

- Riverside Blues – King Oliver solo
- Chimes Blues – 1923
 - First recorded solo of Louis Armstrong
 - Listen for influence of King Oliver
- Dipper mouth blues
 - Wah wah effect
 - Partial transcription
- From New Orleans, eventually arrives in Chicago, headlines his own group – calls Louis Armstrong to join.
- Crippling gum disease.

Louis Armstrong (1900 - 1971)

- Early musical education in church
 - Heterophony, rhythm, pitch bending
- Blues
- Parades
 - Second line
- No notation
- 1922 – joins Joe Oliver in Chicago
 - Chimes Blues, first recorded solo
- Thomas Brothers: “fixed and variable” as a retention from Africa (*Master of Modernism*, p. 6)
 - “even today it is rarely discussed in scholarly literature, and as a result the deep connections of Armstrong’s music to sub-Saharan Africa and to racially conditioned culture in the US have not been properly understood.”

Grove music on Louis's solo on Chimes

- **Transcription**
- “The two choruses of “Chimes Blues,” Armstrong’s first recorded solo, display a full, rich tone and contain the stylistic trademarks of a rip to a high note on a weak beat, the neighboring function of the raised second scale degree (d#) and an ascending triplet followed by a descending arpeggio (ex.1). Consisting of repeated arpeggios that suggest clarinet passage work (Harker, 2003, 143), the solo’s melodic redundancy is relieved harmonically and rhythmically by the passing diminished chord (f#–a–c) and metric displacement (quarter-note triplets across the bar line).”

Blues

- Somewhat anachronistic, but the form is there:
 - Sonny Terry, Old Jabo
 - AAB form
 - Call and response: African retention
- They do not just ‘express sadness,’ or ‘extinguish suffering.’
 - ‘idiom’s seductive power.’
 - ‘This continuum made it hard to say what, precisely, the difference was between speechlike blues and musically inspired talk.’
 - African tonal languages “mark the speaking end of the verbal-music continuum” (brothers, p 65)
 - “what you’d send to your son in trouble if he was on earth and you was in heaven.” (Sidney Bechet, quoted in Ake, p. 29)

Sanctified Church

- May Ann was raised Baptist, but brought her son up Sanctified
 - Social hierarchy: Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, AME Zion, then, at the bottom, Sanctified.
 - “the tradition that in many ways transmitted the core values of vernacular African American culture.”
- Sanctified Church practice

Marching bands and the second line

- Follow the parade,
- esp. in the case of funerals
- Faster on the way home
- Alan Toussaint's funeral
- Wynton Marsalis, 2nd line (at "dizzy's club coca cola")
- A dangerous practice, owing to the constant racial violence of turn of century New Orleans.
- Re-enacted funeral

New Orleans Caste system

- White, *gens de couleur libre*, or slave.
- French vs. British style of colonial power; french intermarry (British don't).
- Post civil war, backlash in the south against Reconstruction. Creoles who can pass move out of north New Orleans. Three part legal caste system replaced with black – or – white.

Creole vs. Uptown music pedagogy

- See David Ake reading; *code noir*.
 - See, esp. p. 20, Jelly Roll on *Lucia*
- Creole, mixed, higher on the social ladder, is characterized by European style pedagogy; solfege etc
- Sidney Bechet, “creole of color,” learns this way, but sneaks uptown to learn the blues. Still, frequently memorizes solos.
 - Records with Louis Armstrong in 1923
 - Red Onion Jazz Babies, with Louis Armstrong, “Terrible Blues”
- “In the repressive years of early Jim Crow, their control of this musical tradition received a special charge. Through musical technique, everyone could hear that *they were not black*.” (Brothers, p. 176)

Ragtime and ragtime

- **Sheet music**, (Joplin, Maple Leaf Rag, 1899) commodity vs. **ragtime as performane practice**, oral tradition
 - “There has been ragtime music in America ever since the Negro race has been here.” (Scott Joplin)
 - St. Louis vs. New Orleans
- “Huddling for survival” (WEB Du Bois) – rural to urban migration, influx of musical styles from rural African American population. **In rural environments, African practices are better preserved.**
- **“ragging” the tune**
- “both Ragtime, the popular genre, and ragtime, the uptown performance practice, derived from the plantation tradition of ragging a tune. Bu the connection to the plantations was much more direct for the New Orleanians. Among the implications of this line of analysis is this: early jazz in New Orleans may be the strongest, most vivid link we have to the plantation tradition of ragging the tune.” (brothers, 157)
- **“Fixed and variable” arrangement technique**

Tears (with Joe Oliver)

- Tears (1923)
- Louis plays along with the record
- Breaks transcriptions

Melodic strategy

- “The first chorus I plays the melody. The second chorus I plays the melody round the melody, and the third chorus I routines” (Sudhalter-Evans, *Bix, Man and Legend*, 192).

Hot Fives: Shift to the Soloist

- Savoy Blues
 - Transcription
- Big Butter and Egg Man (1926)
 - Solo
 - Transcription
- Struttin with some Barbecue (1927)
- Transcription
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More Hot Fives

- **West End Blues** (1928)
- **Transcription**
- **Weather Bird** (1928) – duet with Earl Fatha Hines

Sidney Bechet (1897-1957)

- Creole, but studied music of uptown as well.
- Anecdote about pedagogy
- China Boy

Armstrong's 2 modernisms

- Complexity and virtuosity of the trumpet solos
 - e.g. **saints go marching in**
 - For a black public
- Crooning
 - ‘the result of efforts to succeed in the mainstream market of white audiences.’
 - e.g. **Hello Dolly**

Debussy: *Children's Corner* and *Minstrel*

- *Children's Corner* (1908):
 - Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum
 - Fux, *Gradus ad Parnassum*
 - Jimbo's Lullaby
 - Elephant
 - Serenade of the Doll
 - *Chinoiserie*
 - The Snow is Dancing
 - The Little Shepherd
 - **Golliwogg's Cakewalk**
 - What is "golliwog?" what is "cakewalk?"
- *Preludes, Book I, No. 12: Minstrels*

Golliwogg

- Google image search