

CARNIVALIZATION IN LANGSTON HUGHES'S
"ASK YOUR MAMA: TWELVE MOODS FOR JAZZ"

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Abstract

On the basis of Mikhail Bakhtin's account of carnivalization in literature, this paper interprets Langston Hughes's poem "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" as a carnivalized critique of racial segregation in American cities in the first half of the twentieth century and the failure of cultural citizenship. For this purpose, the cultural influences of the poem are characterized as the sources for the carnivalistic expressions in it and the contribution of these expressions to the construction of a carnivalistic point of view are analyzed. The paper concludes that the poem simultaneously denounces racial issues and exalts the vitality of African American culture as an advantage in the political confrontation against racism.

Key words: carnivalization, Langston Hughes, jazz, blues, The Dozens, twentieth century African American poetry

Resumen

Con base en la descripción de la carnavalización en la literatura de Mijaíl Bajtín, este estudio interpreta el poema "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" de Langston Huges como una crítica carnavalizada a la discriminación racial en las ciudades estadounidenses en la primera mitad del siglo XX y al fracaso de la ciudadanía cultural. Para ello, se caracterizan las influencias culturales del poema como fuentes para las expresiones carnavalescas y se analiza el aporte de estas expresiones a la construcción de un punto de vista carnavalesco. El estudio concluye que el poema denuncia problemáticas raciales y exalta la vitalidad de la cultura afroamericana como una ventaja en la confrontación política contra el racismo.

Palabras clave: carnavalización, Langston Hughes, jazz, blues, The Dozens, poesía afroamericana del siglo XX

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Introduction

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 constitutes a milestone in the history of African Americans' struggles to end segregation because it provided them with legal protection for their rights, which were progressively acquired after the abolition of slavery, from practices of racial segregation (Hasday, 2007). The years prior to the act were one of the most politically active years for African Americans. Demonstrations as big as the March on Washington were carried out and leaders, such as Martin Luther King Jr., became relevant political figures in the United States and worldwide. However, profound social changes in the organization of American society occurred for the Civil Rights Movement to unfold (Hasday, 2007). According to Rodgers (1998) and Hudlin (2004), some of these changes include the massive migrations of African Americans to the North, the emergence of middle class African Americans and the rise of African American culture to the mainstream. These changes led African Americans to gradually acquire political participation in American society and to develop strategies to exercise this participation, which resulted in the beginning of a nation-wide movement (Steward, 2007).

In 1961, in the midst of such changes and that political environment, Langston Hughes published "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz", an experimental poem that deals with the issues African Americans faced at the time. The present paper offers an interpretation of this poem from a sociocritical point of view based on Mikhail Bakhtin's account of carnivalization in literature. The main claim of the paper is that "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" is a carnivalized critique of racial segregation in American cities in the first half of the twentieth

century and the failure of cultural citizenship, one of the projects of political participation that emerged in the first half of the twentieth century.

Justification

Langston Hughes's "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" is one of the pieces that most originally addresses two of the major issues in the history of African American peoples in the post-war United States: the Civil Rights Movement and the rise of African American-based cultural products in the entertainment industry. The originality of the poem lies in the unique perspective it provides of these issues by means of the dialogue that occurs in the poem between African American political aspirations and African American cultural expressions. The piece simultaneously celebrates the value and diversity of African and African American culture and criticizes the racial hierarchies against which the Civil Rights Movement fought.

The two elements of the poem that allow for the integration of this celebration and this criticism in the poem are its witty social commentary on racial issues and its eclectic blend of different African American cultural expressions. In the first place, regarding the witty social commentary in the poem, it is important to highlight that it deals with a great variety of African American issues such as their political icons, their political consciousness, their access to culture, their celebrities, their lost heritage, their social and economic conditions, their history and memory, their status in society, among others. Criticism about these issues is expressed in the poem in a humoristic tone. The poem depicts the absurdities and the ironies present in racist ideologies and those present in African American life by means of mockery, satire and hyperbole. However, in the poem, these literary figures take the form of particular African American discursive forms. The title of the poem, for example, is taken from the catch phrase of an African American teenage verbal game called The Dozens. This catch phrase acquires a new satirical meaning in different parts of the poem. Likewise, the hyperboles mimic and reference

African American political discourses that express the political aspirations of these peoples such as Martin Luther King's notorious speech "I Have a Dream". Moreover, the musical annotations that accompany the poem also express the ironies of racist ideologies and African American life with the contrasting sounds that it features. Thus, what makes the social commentary of the poem witty is the political humoristic resignification of African American discursive forms.

As for the eclectic cultural blend in the poem, the poem displays a great variety of African American cultural expression from different communities as well as African American-based cultural products and creates dialogues among them. These dialogues are made up of the intricate contrasts between different dialogues, narration and cultural references in the poem. For example, the voices of former African American slaves and the narrations of their migration to the city is contrasted with African French political chants and the voices of African Latinos in the Caribbean. These contrasts also take place in the music that accompanies the poem. In one part of the poem, the music suggested mixes the sounds of Latin American percussion with Blues and German Lieder, which became an African American cultural product with the popularity of African American lyrical singers such as Leontyne Price. Additionally, the contrast between the written text and the music in the side notes is another contrast that creates dialogues. Hence, what allows for this eclectic blend is the experimental form of the poem that melds narration, dialogues, stream of consciousness, musical annotations and cultural references that creates dialogues among these elements.

To sum up, the integration of the celebration of African American culture and its criticism of racial hierarchies gives the poem its original and unique perspective on the Civil

Rights Movement and the rise of African American-based cultural products in the entertainment industry. This original and unique perspective, in turn, is attained by two characteristic elements of the poem its witty social commentary and its blend of different African American cultural expressions. Given the dialogic and humoristic character of the poem along with its reference and inclusion of popular culture in the form of African American cultural expressions, the main objective of this study is to interpret the poem from a socio-critical approach based on Bakhtin's (1984) concept of carnivalization and the carnivalesque.

Main objective

The main objective of this study is to interpret Langston Hughes's "Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" as a carnivalized critique of racial segregation in American cities in the first half of the twentieth century and the failure of cultural citizenship.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives that will allow the achievement of the main objective are:

- to provide a succinct historical account of the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro and the racial segregation in the first half of the twentieth century
- to provide a definition of the carnivalesque sense of the world and carnivalization in literature
- to identify and characterize the African American cultural expressions that the poem includes and resignifies for its carnivalized criticism
- to analyze how the poem satirizes the ironies and contradictions of racist ideologies that legitimize segregation, as well as the failures of cultural citizenship
- to analyze how the poem allows for a dialogue between hegemonic culture and different African American cultural expressions
- to analyze how the music suggested to accompany the poem contributes to the carnivalesque criticism

Taking these objectives into account, the limitations of this study are explained as follows.

Limitations of the study

This study focuses on how Hughes uses the carnivalesque to criticize racial segregation and the project of cultural citizenship in post-war American cities. Other social issues depicted in the poem such as Pan Africanism, African American cultural identities or African American political consciousness are considered only as secondary issues to the extent they serve the interpretation. The concept of carnivalesque for this interpretation is defined on the basis of Bakhtin's (1984a) and Bakhtin's (1984b) account of carnivalization in literature. Although Bakhtin (1984a) proposes four categories to analyze carnivalization in literature, the fourth category, profanity, is not part of the analysis for the interpretation. Additionally, the African American cultural expressions that are analyzed are only those that contribute to the carnivalesque form. Other African American cultural expressions in the poem are considered only in relation to those. Finally, for the purposes of the interpretation, performances of the poem are not taken into account. The musical annotations on the side of the pages in the poem are interpreted as a musical score.

Having set the scope of the study as well as other relevant limitations, the studies on "Ask Your Mama" that present relevant interpretations, analysis and conclusions for this study are here referred to.

State of the art

As noted by Higgins (2009), one of the latest studies found in the search for bibliography for this paper, "Ask Your Mama" has been overlooked by the studies on Hughes's poetry and by the studies on post-war poetry alike. The papers on "Ask Your Mama" are certainly not numerous. However, they have addressed two outstanding elements in the poem in depth: its experimental form and its political meaning.

In his article "News from Heaven: Vernacular Time in Langston Hughes's Ask Your Mama", Scanlon (2002) is concerned with the African American cultural expressions and African American vernacular speech that inspired the experimental poetical form of "Ask Your Mama" and, more specifically, with the adaptation of The Dozens, a particular discursive form of African American vernacular speech, to the poem. In order to highlight the importance of the study of these features of "Ask Your Mama", Scanlon (2002) contextualizes the influence of African American cultural expressions and African American vernacular speech patterns in Hughes's oeuvre. In the first place, Scanlon (2002) sets apart Hughes's experimentalism from that of the white Avant-garde artists. While white vanguardists' experimentalism is understood as a mere break away from western artistic traditions, Hughes's experimentalism should be understood as a break away from "(...) a dominant tradition in order to preserve and continue a marginalized one" (Scanlon, 2002, p. 48). Taking this into account, Hughes is both a poet that speaks from his community and for his community. He has a message for his community but also draws inspiration from his communal culture to convey that message. Thus, Hughes's reference to African American culture should be addressed keeping in mind the tension between political interest and poetic form.

Music and speech, the most important elements of African American culture from which Hughes draws his inspiration, can be explained considering such a tension. Regarding the inclusion of African American speech patterns in his poetry, Scanlon (2002) states that “He [Hughes] writes poetry in imitation of African-American speech patterns not only because those patterns make his poetry more authentic, but also to show that these patterns are already formally poetic” (p. 49). However, Hughes did not restrict himself to simply imitating. Rather, “(...) he establishes the poetic legitimacy of his community and its traditions precisely by elaborating on the distinctiveness of his own poetic authority” (Scanlon, 2002, p. 49). This means that Hughes not only included these speech patterns in his poems but also resignified them to enrich his poetic writing. Likewise, as for music, Scanlon (2002) writes: “African-American musical traditions continue to be a central resource, which he draws on for formal inspiration as much as ideological support” (p. 49.). To Scanlon (2002), music was not only an important aspect of African American culture at the time but also “(...) music offered Hughes a model for imagining the relation between his poetry and his community that placed equal emphasis on both of its two ostensibly dissimilar aspects, political interest and poetic form” (p. 48). Later, Scanlon (2002) states that “Using music as a model enables Hughes to imagine the relation between poetry and politics as a specifically temporal one” (p. 48).

Regarding the interpretation of the poem, Scanlon (2002) says about “Ask Your Mama” that “(...) the poem returns to the peculiar temporal predicament of a community whose political aspirations are still deferred, and ever more frustrated” (p. 49). To Scanlon (2002), inspired by T. S. Eliot’s idea of a historically catastrophic delay in “The Waste Land”, “Ask Your Mama” depicts the historical stasis of race relationships that began long ago with enslavement and that is

still present in the post-war American society. According to Scanlon (2002), "ASK YOUR MAMA is a poem about racial segregation in its broadest sense: its past, its present, its cultural and political effects and their persistence.

(...) Hughes continually breaks segregation down to its elements as a grotesque and nightmarish set of spatial practices horrifically efficacious in spite of their stark illogic and ultimate inability to control completely the geographical divisions they enforce. (p. 50)

As for *The Dozens*, Scanlon (2002) makes an extensive analysis of the meaning of them in the poem. First of all, Scanlon (2002) holds that, coming from the vernacular language, *The Dozens* are part of the cultural heritage that is acquired in the household. So, most of the social issues that are presented by means of *The Dozens* in the poem have to do with family relationships. According to Scanlon (2002), with the help of *The Dozens*, Hughes addresses "(...) the ironies inherent in white culture's profound and unacknowledged psychic dependence on blacks, ironies that express themselves in white naïveté" (p. 56). Almost every time the typical catchphrase of *The Dozens* comes up in the poem ("ask your mama"), it is a response to "(...) naïve attempts at cross-cultural understanding" (Scanlon, 2002, p. 57). In the poem, when whites ask African Americans questions about sexuality or family, the use of *The Dozens* discloses whites' naïveté by reminding them of issues such as miscegenation and the dependence of whites' households on black servants to maintain their internal structure.

Other family issues that are exclusive to African American culture are the figurative and literal "(...) ruptures that racism effects in the black family" (p. 58). The literal ruptures are those produced by different African American periods of migration that dissolved families, such as the slave trade and migration to the cities. The figurative ruptures are dramatized in the poem by the

scene of a child whose mother does not have the money to buy him tickets for the movies. In words of Scanlon (2002), the questions of the child to his mother in this scene “(...) connect the pressures on the family with the white appropriation of black expressive culture and the enmeshment of that culture in an economic system that keeps it a distance from its own community” (p. 59.) Thus, in a similar vein to family disintegration, white appropriation of African American culture is a hindrance to the transmission of African American culture to new generations.

Another study that addresses the experimental form of the poem with its inclusion of different cultural elements and its political significance is Higgins’s (2009) “How Long Must We Wait? Langston Hughes’s Cryptic Collage”. The main point in Higgins’s study is that “Ask Your Mama” has a cryptic collage form that allowed Hughes to make a social critique of music and politics with the caution that the Cold War paranoia demanded. Huggins calls it a cryptic collage because the complex interplay of different voices and intertextuality that is present throughout the poem relies entirely on the cultural knowledge of the audience. This way, the collage presumes the common knowledge of a specific audience that, in this case, is the urban black audience, and provides Hughes with a greater critical freedom. Additionally, according to Higgins (2009), Hughes’s use of collage allowed him to “(...) fully incorporate his own ideals about the importance of black popular music in his work” (p. 6). Specifically, Higgins (2009) highlights Hughes’s inspiration on hard bop: “Hughes attraction for hard bop derived from the retention of the inventiveness of bebop while allowing for the influence of older forms such as gospel and blues” (p. 8). This means that Hughes used hard bop as a basis for his culturally

diverse musical collage in the cues for the music because he saw the versatility to do so in the genre.

Higgins (2009) interprets the poem as "(...) a mediation on music and politics, and the politics of black music, as well as the larger issue of black celebrities in the entertainment industry and their impact on racial integration" (p. 14). Two of the major critiques that Higgins (2009) identifies in the poem are that:

The government appears as a collaborator with the industry to substitute the success of a few privileged black Africans for the pressing needs of the masses who were marching in the Civil Rights movement to acquire equal opportunities in the nation (p. 11)

and that "(...) an increase in the number of African American celebrities need not mean a significant advance in Civil Rights" (p. 15). In the same vein, Higgins (2009) states that the poem also deals with the problem of the exploitation of black musicians by the music industry as well as with "(...) the question of the efficacy of protest in art, as opposed to direct political action (...)" (p. 15). This problem is stressed in the poem by the contrast between African American celebrities being representative in the commercial world and not being authentic in the cultural one. In general terms, "(...) in *Ask Your Mama* there is a clear consideration of the contrast between the lives of those in the entertainment world and those in the front lines of political struggle" (Huggins, 2009, p. 15).

Two other important points in Huggins's (2009) essay are those regarding the political meaning of "Hesitation Blues" as a *leitmotif* in the poem and The Dozens. For Huggins (2009), Hughes uses the music of "Hesitation Blues" "(...) in order to explicate the poetic assertion that blacks are losing patience with white America's slow response to its public protests" (p. 12).

This meaning is reinforced by the references to the leaders of new governments in Africa. Furthermore, Huggins (2009) interprets the use of The Dozens in the poem as an aggressive but comical response by African Americans to national cruelty and white paranoia. According to Huggins (2009) citing Saul (2003)¹, The Dozens serve as “a peculiar form of insult where you laughed off your enemy’s worst fears” (p. 12).

Miller (1992) also links the experimental form of the poem to its political meaning in his article “Framing and Framed Languages in Hughes’s *Ask Your Mama: 12 Moods for Jazz*”. This author interprets “Ask Your Mama” as a criticism of the determinism of structuralist and materialist accounts of African-American history by depicting the contrast between history and individual consciousness. In Miller’s (1992) words, “What interests Hughes is the psychological process of Black American memory and history. He occupies himself at once (...) with both the vertical space of modern consciousness and the horizontal space of social record” (p. 4). In the poem, the contrast between consciousness and history is presented, according to Miller (1992), by the agreements and contradictions between “(...) the verbal script (the framed language at the center of the page) [which] discloses the voice of the personal narrator who retells history, [and] the musical marginalia (the outer frames) [that] provide the sonorous complement of a communal narrative” (p. 3). Miller (1992) interprets the personal voice as “(...) the imperative experimentation of the ever-imperfect and independent artist (...)” (p. 3), and the musical marginalia as “(...) the authenticating memory of the Black masses (...)” (p. 3). The relation between the verbal language and the music suggests the assessment of different issues such as

¹ Saul, S. (2003) *Freedom Is, Freedom Ain't: Jazz and the Making of the Sixties*. Cambridge: Harvard U P.

religious humanism, free speech, assimilation, nationalism, racism, integration, Pan-Africanism and poverty. "The claim for excellence or reconsideration rests upon the dialectic between the verbal and the musical languages" (Miller, 1992, p. 7). Specifically, in the case of contradiction, Miller (1992) states that contradiction allows for the collective formation of irony.

Some specific social claims that Miller (1992) identifies in "Ask Your Mama" are the ever-present racism that fostered many forms of segregation throughout American history in spite of the success of African American celebrities, the repressed consciousness of the African American middle-class and the claim that the emergence of that African American middle-class does not close the political distances between races. Furthermore, Miller (1992) also identifies three forms of criticism of materialist history. In the first place, Miller (1992) states that the poem depicts situations where racial prejudices persist even with African Americans having better material conditions. This means that material changes hardly modify racial thought or human relationships to assure community. In the second place, Miller (1992) highlights Hughes's claim in "IS IT TRUE?" to resist the alienation of hegemonic history by the retrieval of the unrecorded memory of the African peoples. In the third place, according to Miller (1992), the poem does not have a historical or chronological coherence since it shifts from past to present and to aspirations for the future –Miller (1992) actually highlights the skillful imagery of vision, aspiration and wonder for social progress that Hughes presents throughout the poem. Instead, history is a non-linear process and the narrative of the poem "(...) depends on the unity which consciousness imposes upon psychological association" (Miller, 1992, p. 8). Thus, Miller (1992) states that Hughes "(...) wanted to balance the tension between an objective American history

and a Pan-African identity on the one hand, and a subjective meaning of African American culture on the other" (p. 12).

The last two studies have a different approach to the poem. Although they also trace Hughes's cultural influences for his poetic writing to certain African American cultural expressions, the authors of the following two papers interpret the political meaning of the poem not just as a criticism but as an affirmation of the cultural power of African American peoples. In his essay "The Riffs, Runs, Breaks, and Distortions of the Music of a Community in Transition: Redefining African American Modernism and the Jazz Aesthetic in Langston Hughes' Montage of a Dream Deferred and Ask Your Mama", Lenz (2003) is concerned with how the last two major poems of Hughes's oeuvre ("Montage of a Dream Deferred" and "Ask Your Mama") depict the culture of Harlem. The culture of Harlem was, according to Lenz (2003), a new street or ghetto culture with its own new urban verbal and performative rituals along with new Black urban communal spaces in the streets, all of which reflect the common feelings and dreams as well as the common frustration of the Harlemites. In the case of "Ask Your Mama", Lenz (2003) interprets the poem as a depiction of Harlem's black community within "(...) the transnational, global context of the postcolonial world, of the fight of the (former) colonies of European empires for independence and its interrelations with the fight against racism and oppression in the United States" (p. 278). The poem resituates Harlem's black community not only from the perspective of its poetic form but also by means of the integration of different traditions of African American music, African diasporic music and world music in the poem. Lenz (2003) highlights the innovative relation between music and poetry that Hughes portrays in the poem: "Hughes creates a new kind of call-and-response pattern, or dynamics, between poetry and music

that recognizes them as separate, independent voices but stages their interplay as one of common sounds as well as jarring contrasts, discontinuities, and silences” (p. 279).

Lenz (2003) also mentions a series of recurrent issues in the poem regarding the internationalization of African American struggles. In the first place, Lenz (2003) states that:

The poetic voice often is very angry about the betrayals of the promises of the American Dream and full of frustration, rage, and contempt for the racist whites, but also the weak “liberals”, in the U.S., and the European colonial powers. (p. 280)

Furthermore, the author also refers to the deferral of African American aspirations for social progress as a common theme in both “Montage of a Dream Deferred” and “Ask Your Mama”. In the second place, according to Lenz (2003), Hughes stresses the import role that black American cultural and political icons play in the affirmation of the strength and performative power of the black community in a world dominated by whites. In the third place, for Lenz (2003) Hughes presents the fight for civil and social rights as “(...) a worldwide struggle for liberation that has taken different forms, pursued different ideological positions, and has produced very different political leaders (...)” (p. 280). In the fourth place, Lenz (2003) also states that the poem deals with the topic of a new modern, postmodern and postcolonial black literature. “He [Hughes] dramatizes the mutually critical and enabling engagement of writers in the intercultural dynamics and dialectics of black (...) cultures and communities in a postmodern, postcolonial world in transition” (Lenz, 2003, p. 281). Lastly, Lenz (2003) alludes to the syncretistic character of the poem in terms of religion. All these issues are encompassed by Lenz (2003) in Hughes’ ambition of creating a “(...) new kind of post-modernist, post-colonial art (...) that transcends national borders as well as the limits of cultural nationalism” (p. 279).

Similarly, Lowney's (2012) essay "Jazz, Black Transnationalism, and the Political Aesthetics of Langston Hughes's Ask Your Mama" is concerned with "(...) how the jazz form of *Ask Your Mama* enacts the challenge of developing a progressive black transnationalist public" (p. 564). In this vein, Lowney (2012) interprets "Ask Your Mama" as a call for Pan-African integration and international struggle for freedom. This interpretation is based on a series of historical developments in the late 1950's and the early 1960's: "(...) the rise of anticolonial liberation movements in Africa and the Caribbean, the accelerating movement of African American civil rights in the United States, and the growth of jazz as an increasingly international, and increasingly politicized, medium of expression" (Lowney, 2012, p. 565). According to Lowney's (2012) historical account of the latter historical developments, the government of the United States at the time promoted jazz as an expression of American democracy, nationalism and race equality whose quality was universal and race-transcending. However, that view of jazz contrasted with the fact that the government relied entirely on African American musicians and on African Americans' perceptions of the cultural meaning of jazz. For African Americans, the promotion of jazz was, in part, a platform for the enhancement of "transnational formations of pan-African and Third World solidarity" (Lowney, 2012, p. 567). Also, "The national promotion of jazz as an American democratic form of expression contrasted with black musicians' experience of jazz as deeply embedded in African American history and cultural practices, including the experience of segregation" (Lowney, 2012, p. 567). Because of this contrast and African Americans' aspirations for social mobility, freedom and civil rights, they saw the increasing success of jazz as African progress. Furthermore, according to Lowney (2012), Hughes himself in such a context "(...) stressed the cross-cultural appeal of jazz (...)

based more on a diasporic consciousness of the evolution of music (sic) rather than on national promotion of jazz as the embodiment of American democracy” (p. 568). Taking into account these perceptions on the prominent internationalization of jazz, Lowney (2012) asserts that “In this context, jazz plays an explicitly political role in expressing the revolutionary desire for black liberation in the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean, in contrast to US Cold War propaganda (...)” (p. 565).

Within this context, Lowney (2012) analyzes the different forms in which the poem suggests this call for Pan-African integration and international struggle and the role of jazz in it. First of all, there are many instances throughout the poem where Hughes merges the struggles of African Americans for freedom and civil rights with those of the Africans in the Caribbean and Africa in the same narrative, giving the impression of a shared history and a shared struggle. Likewise, African American cultural and political icons are depicted as having the same political influence as African political leaders of the Caribbean and Africa. Regarding jazz and the use of musical cues by Hughes, Lowney (2012) highlights the musical blend that Hughes proposes for the poem, a musical blend that mixes a variety of African musical traditions. In line with Lowney (2012), these elements of the poem allow it to challenge cultural hierarchies, setting the different African cultures and struggles at the same level, as well as to challenge racial stereotypes that inform certain views of African culture. According to Lowney (2012) there are two ways in which the poem challenges racially cultural stereotypes. On the one hand, “Hughes accentuates the absurdities of setting cultural parameters for black music throughout *Ask Your Mama* (...)” (Lowney, 2012, p. 571). On the other hand, “Hughes expands his readers’ awareness of African

diasporic history while challenging the reductive binaries that structure Jim Crow racism” (Lowney, 2012, 579).

The different studies presented have some common threads. Firstly, whether the political statement in “Ask Your Mama” is an affirmation of African American communities or a critique of American society; all of them agree on the strong link between the experimental form of the poem and its political significance. Secondly, in all the studies, the unique blend of African American cultural influences is considered to be a unique celebration and resignification of African American traditions and cultural expressions. Finally, most of the studies interpret the poem as communal expression of a people that is undergoing a period of crisis and change. The findings in all these studies are assessed from the perspective of Bakhtin’s (1984a) and (1984b) account of the carnivalesque sense of the world and carnivalization in literature.

Theoretical framework

The carnivalesque sense of the world and carnivalization in literature

In his work *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Bakhtin (1984a) explains that, from the Greco-Roman period to the Renaissance, the cultural folk traditions of the carnival type had a tremendous influence in different literary genres. This influence determined some of the themes and contents of different works in those genres and, most importantly, shaped a particular carnivalesque sense of the world. The different festivities of the carnival type that constitute an important part of European folk culture:

(...) worked out an entire language of symbolic concretely sensuous forms –from large and complex mass actions to individual carnivalistic gestures. This language, in a differentiated and even (as in any language) articulate way, gave expression to a unified (but complex) carnival sense of the world, permeating all its forms. This language cannot be translated in any full or adequate way into verbal language, and much less into a language of abstract concepts, but it is amenable to certain transposition into a language of artistic images that has something in common with its concretely sensuous nature; that is, it can be transposed into the language of literature (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 122)

Bakhtin (1984a) calls such transposition of the language of carnival into the language of literature the carnivalization of literature. In the same way, literature that was influenced (directly or through certain links) by any variant of carnivalistic folklore is called carnivalized literature. Although, according to Bakhtin (1984a), the direct influence of carnival started declining after the Renaissance, its influence on the history of literature continued through the influence of already carnivalized literary works on other works.

Bakhtin (1984a) highlights that the most important influence of carnival in literature was the transposition of the carnivalesque sense of the world to literary expression since it determined the basic features of genres and placed image and word in a special relationship with

reality. That special relation to reality and, in general, the carnival sense of the world have their origins in the carnivalistic life of the European peoples. Bakhtin (1984a) asserts that carnivals were neither contemplated nor performed. Rather, they were lived by the people so that that carnival became the people's second life. In *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin (1984b) describes the carnival life as a non-official way life that was freed from any established order. Norms, prohibitions, hierarchies, established truths, and religious, political and moral values were suspended during the carnival. The carnival was an affirmation of freedom, community, equality and abundance. Because of this, Bakhtin (1984a) states that the carnival created a reversed life or a reversed world. However, to the people of the carnival, these were not abstract concepts that were proclaimed: they were experienced. As stated by Bakhtin (1984b), the carnival also had a universal character. Nothing and no one could be excluded from the carnivalistic life. All the members of a society, from the king to the peasants, took part in the carnival and any truth or value could not escape from the carnival.

According to Bakhtin (1984b), the freedom from official life and the universality of the carnival allowed for an attitude of joyful relativity towards reality. On the one hand, the carnival has an ambivalent and relativizing nature. The carnival is the celebration of change and crisis. Its ambivalent and relativizing character lies in that it shows that everything established can change but it does not focus only on negating the previous order or affirming the new one. The carnival displays a constant and dynamic logic of negation and affirmation, of death and renewal, without settling on any of the sides of this dichotomy. On the other hand, the carnival is based on laughter. This laughter enables the expression of change, of that ambivalent and relativizing movement between negation and affirmation, since it embodies the free, ambivalent and

universal nature of the carnival. Although, at first, the carnival laughter is directed towards authority figures, the carnival laughter is not an isolated reaction to a comic event:

Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people (...) it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity (...) this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time, mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of carnival (Bakhtin, 1984b, pp. 11-12).

Furthermore, Bakhtin (1984a) presents four categories in which the carnivalesque sense of the world (the overall effect of joyful relativity attitude of the carnival) can be analyzed. The first, and the most important, category is the free and familiar contact among people. Due to the suspension of social hierarchies and every form of inequality among people of the carnival, all the distant relations that make up the official social order become close and familiar relationships from which a new mode of interrelationship between individuals completely freed from authority emerge.

The second category of the carnivalesque sense of the world is eccentricity. The new, free and familiar mode of interaction among people in the carnival allows for new forms of behavior and communication. The gestures and discourses of the carnival are expressions of that carnivalistic life that is freed from the fears and burdens of hierarchy and authority. Thus, eccentricity in the carnival "(...) permits –in concretely sensuous forms– the latent sides of human nature to reveal and express themselves" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 123).

The third category of the carnivalesque sense of the world is the carnivalistic *mésalliance*. Also due to the carnival's free and familiar attitude spread over all aspects of life (thoughts, values and phenomena):

All things that were once self-enclosed, disunified, distanced from one another by a noncarnivalistic hierarchical worldview are drawn into carnivalistic contacts and combinations. Carnival brings together, unifies, weds, and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid” (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 123).

Finally, the fourth category of the carnivalesque sense of the world is profanation. Closely linked to the carnivalistic *mésalliance*, the carnivalistic blasphemies through which profanation is expressed are “a whole system of carnivalistic debasing and bringings down to earth, carnivalistic obscenities linked to the reproductive power the earth and the body, carnivalistic parodies on sacred texts and sayings, etc.” (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 123).

According to Bakhtin (1984a), some of the ways in which this carnivalesque sense of the world is expressed are parody and the carnival square. Bakhtin (1984a) asserts that parody is inherent to carnival. Parody in carnival consists in creating a double that shows a comical aspect of something. However, just like carnival laughter, “Parody here was not, of course, a naked rejection of the parodied object. Everything has its parody (...)” (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 127). This means that parody is not directed from a certain person or group towards another person or group. Rather, everyone and everything is parodied in the carnival. Parodying doubles are highlighted by Bakhtin (1984a) as a common phenomenon in carnivalized literature. As for the carnival square, Bakhtin (1984a) states that it became a symbol of communal performance and free and familiar contact. The carnival square is the setting where all the members of the community can freely interact with one another. In carnivalized literature, public spaces similar to the carnival square become the setting for the action of the plot.

Bakhtin (1984a) also presents two additional types of carnivalistic expressions that have been transposed into literature: carnival acts and carnival imagery. The most important feature of

carnival acts and images is that they express the ambivalent and dynamic carnival logic of change, of death and renewal, of negation and affirmation. Bakhtin (1984a) states that the carnival act that has most often been transposed to literature is the mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king. This ritual expresses the celebration of "(...) the shift itself, the very process of replaceability, and not the precise item that is replaced" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 125). The carnival images, in turn, are ambivalent due to their dualistic nature. Not only do these images depict the ambivalent relationship of death and renewal or negation and affirmation, but they also create many sorts of unions between opposites. Bakhtin (1984a) highlights three kinds of carnival images: paired images (usually contrasting images or oddly similar images), things in reverse (images that break with established social norms) and fire (a fire that simultaneously destroys and renews the world).

A final point about carnivalistic expressions is concerned with the speech of the marketplace. Due to the suspension of hierarchies and the consequent emergence of new forms of interaction and communication during the carnival, Bakhtin (1984b) holds that "The new type of carnival familiarity was reflected in a series of speech patterns" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 16). In the carnival, the language of the market place is aesthetized. Abusive and insulting language, especially towards deities, becomes an ambivalent expression of carnival that is "(...) grammatically and semantically isolated from context and is regarded as a complete unit (...)" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 16). Insults in the carnival both humiliate and revive. Not only did insults and profanities become ambivalent, but they also lost their specific practical direction acquiring a universal character and depth.

The definition, categories, expressions and imagery of the carnivalesque sense of the world will serve the analysis of both the poem and Hughes's cultural influences. They help identify the link between African American culture and the particular carnivalized point of view that shapes "Ask Your Mama". Nonetheless, why and how carnivalesque expressions were part of African American culture in the first half of the twentieth century should be taken into account.

Carnival in the Harlem Renaissance

The Harlem Renaissance is the name that has been given to a period of unprecedented outburst in the making and dissemination of African American culture, that extended from the years after World War I to 1940 and that was based in Harlem, an African American neighborhood in Manhattan, New York. (Brown, 2006). According to Rodgers (1998), it was a period when Harlem became a cultural center for African American arts, including literature, drama, dance and music, from where diverse African American artistic expressions were projected into the mainstream. The Harlem Renaissance was not only an artistic outburst, but also an intellectual one that fostered political and social awareness of African American social issues (Brown, 2006). It was not a movement, because artists and intellectuals did not share a common artistic philosophy or a uniform perception of the Renaissance; rather, what linked all the artists and intellectuals of the Renaissance was a common race experience (Hudlin, 2004). Langston Hughes himself was one of the writers that took part in it both as an artist and an intellectual (Brown, 2006).

There are mainly three social changes that explain the origins of the Harlem Renaissance. The first one is the Great Migration. Rodgers (1998) explains that from 1916 to 1929, a declension on immigration from Europe and a generalized lack of workforce due to World War I generated job opportunities in the northern cities for workers in general, including African Americans. As a result of this, thousands of African Americans migrated to the north to take part in the industrialized and urban north, especially in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and Baltimore. This demographic change is known as the Great Migration and provided the social basis for the emergence of urban African American communities in northern cities such as New York.

A second social change that determined the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance was the consolidation of an African American middle class and of New York as a cultural capital. Hudlin (2004) asserts that the Harlem Renaissance owed its existence to the African American middle class in New York. The author argues that, without a group of African Americans that could engage with art in their leisure time, there could not be any production in arts such as literature. Also, this middle class comprised the educated African Americans that would foster the culture and the arts among African Americans. Regarding, New York as a cultural capital, authors such as Rodgers (1998) and Hudlin (2004) agreed that it is not surprising that such an outburst of African American art took place in this city since it housed the most important publishing companies as well as major institutions of art, theatre and music. "It is not simplistic to say Harlem became the black cultural center, because New York City was the white one" (Hudlin, 2004, p. 5).

Closely related to this last point, the third social change that explains the development of the Harlem Renaissance is the increasing interest in African American artistic expressions. “There was a Harlem Vogue (...) The “Vogue” referred to the interest some whites took in black arts and culture, popular music, Broadway shows featuring black performers, and the nightlife entertainment during Prohibition, when Harlem became a popular nightlife destination” (Hutchinson, 2007, p. 3). Whites became the financial supporters of the Renaissance. Bernard (2007) describes two forms of financial support by whites. On the one hand, whites were the most important consumers in the different cabarets, buffet flats, speakeasies or ballrooms that worked as a platform for staging of African American music, dances and other performances. On the other hand, wealthy white patrons would champion African American arts and culture by means of supporting the careers of many African American artists, holding prizes, creating institutions, or linking African American artists with publishers and members of the entertainment industry. What fostered this interest in African American culture, which followed World War I, was “a weakening of old ideas and values, a sense of adventure and rebellion among the intellectuals and tolerance in the status quo (all of which were facilitated by the economic upswing) (...)” (Hudlin, 2004, p. 8).

However, as much as the Harlem Renaissance represented an ascension of African American culture in the United States, it was not an improvement in the life of the average African American. According to Rodgers (1998), “The money that flowed into Harlem did not benefit the community; it went into the pockets of absentee landlords and business owners, most of whom were White” (p. 5). Poverty was common and most harlemites struggled to pay the expensive rents in the neighborhood. In fact, working class African Americans could not afford

an evening in the most important and famous night clubs of Harlem. Even African American owners and audience were forced to sit segregated from white customers in those clubs (Berdnard, 2007).

In her article “Masks and Masquerade: The Iconography of the Harlem Renaissance”, Swartz (2004) states that the staging of the performing arts during the Harlem Renaissance became the basis for a carnival culture with its particular carnivalesque expressions. To Swartz (2004), what makes the performative culture of Harlem carnivalesque is that it allows for social reversals:

In Arna Bontemp’s description of Harlem (...) a feeling of a special space eluding time is created, the atmosphere often connected with carnival. The iconography of the Harlem Renaissance is akin to that of the masque or carnival—of perceptions and reversals, of expectations about the performer, and of a reversal of societal positions in that the normally marginalized person or group gains control. The idea of the mask, the masque, and the masquerade—what Russian literary theorist Bakhtin would describe as Carnival—illuminates the phenomenon of Harlem during the 1920s (...) [and] also creates a different view of spectators, of a white audience which becomes marginalized, losing ownership of the gaze rather than performing its usual function of marginalizing those others performing for it (Swartz, 2004, p. 244).

Swartz (2004) argues that, in Harlem, African American artists and performers were in control of their art. Their response to white’s exoticism and primitivism enable them to gain that control and, with it, create a space freed from convention.

As Swartz (2004) explains, most whites who visited Harlem and its nocturne shows were trying to escape from modern industrialized urban life by means of exploring the “exotic other”. In African American performance, they were looking for cultural expressions that convey exoticism and primitivism. Rather than conditioning their art, African American artists took advantage of this situation to maintain control over their art by drawing from an ancient African

tradition: the mask. According to Swartz (2004), "Masks have been essential to African-Americans. From the time of their importation as slaves, African-Americans have had to devise strategies for physical, emotional, and cultural survival" (p. 245). Swartz's (2004) proposal for addressing the artistic expressions of the Harlem Renaissance is to place them within a framework of two kinds of discourse or expression that arise out of "wearing the mask".

In order to provide a cultural basis for this framework, Swartz (2004) resorts to the concept of the Signifying Monkey, a particular kind of cultural meaning inspired by a story of the African folk tradition. Swartz (2004) explains about the history of this concept that:

(...) [it] extends through performances in Harlem to present-day rap and discourse in which the meaning of words often varies from the dictionary or "white" meaning. Signifying implies speaking from behind a mask to those who will not understand, and implies a complicit understanding of the wearing of the mask from those who understand (Swartz, 2004, p. 246).

Taking this concept into account, Swartz (2004) differentiates two kinds of masquerade discourse or expression in the iconography of the Harlem Renaissance. The first one is the assumed mask or a discourse of race that satisfied white assumptions about racial stereotypes. The idea is that, on the basis of these stereotypical expectations of the white audience, the discourse overcomes those stereotypes in order to convey a certain meaning. The second mask is that of deformation. These are performances that deforms expectations by returning to ancient forms, in this case African and primitive forms. This return allows for the creation of new forms based on the transformation of older ones. "Through the use of de-formation, many diverse sounds, images, and voices are possible. A polyphonic present that includes many past forms, ways of being, or ways of seeing can be created (...)" (Swartz, 2004, p. 247).

Swartz (2004) comments on the meanings of the use of any of these forms of discourse:

(...) a freed world is provided to the audience. The form used extends from that of the expectations of a white audience (or a black audience enjoying the actors'—and their own—ability to signify on the more powerful white world) to an interest in determining a past and rootedness through the tracing of roots and culture through slavery to African sources. The reversal, or the control that the performer holds, is contained in the private joke of the performers who act from behind this mask and in the vision of the black audience which is party to the signifying being done. The signifying is not revealed to those outside. Performance, then, occurs to a greater or lesser degree as a masque depending on spectators' understanding and expectations (Swartz, 2004, p. 248).

This means, in relation to the concept of the Signifying Monkey and in the context of the Harlem Renaissance, that African American artists and performers appropriated racial stereotypes, most of them coming from exoticism and primitivism, in order to create a mask that enables them to resignify those stereotypes, as well as their African heritage, so as to forge new and exclusive African American forms of expression freed from white oppression. This is African American artists during the Harlem Renaissance attained control over their art and the freedom that came with it. Swartz (2004) recounts that this kind of masquerade and reversal of power has been part of African culture since the beginning of slave trade. Certain ceremonies or festivals that the slaves performed for whites serve as occasions to preserve their customs and their cultural heritage, and also to express their dissatisfaction and unhappiness without being punished by means of disguising satire towards whites as praise towards them.

Additionally, Swartz (2004) highlights the importance of the masquerade for the Harlem Renaissance and jazz as the greatest example of it. The double meaning and the comic irony, the signifying irony that bonds African American performers to their African American audience in the midst of a multi-racial audience, was recurrent in the Harlem Renaissance as a means of survival in an environment of systematic oppression. Whenever racial stereotypes were depicted

in the form of the signifying irony, African American audiences did not seem willing to condemn them. For Swartz (2004), jazz was the most important heritage of the Harlem Renaissance, since it embodies deformation at its best. Not only was jazz a form that creatively innovated based on the heritage of African and African American music, but it also informed all the other artistic expressions of the Renaissance (literature, film, theatre, dance, etc.).

This and the previous section provide a theoretical approach to the forms of expression that this paper argues inspired Hughes' literary forms for his carnivalized critique. Namely, the four categories Bakhtin (1984a) proposed to analyze carnivalization in literature, along with carnivalistic expressions that convey the carnivalesque sense of the world. Moreover, two carnivalistic expressions that were developed during the Harlem Renaissance were presented with some context for their origin. The following section will not address the form of the critique, but its content: that which is criticized.

Racial segregation and the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro

According to Stewart (2007), although the debates for the acknowledgment of African Americans' citizenship and rights date as far back as the Civil War, the emergence of a new identity for African Americans at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century would radically shift the focus of that debate: the identity of the New Negro. Stewart (2007) states that, in the face of their exclusion from full citizenship rights, African Americans were pushed to invent new strategies to struggle for their citizenship. The New Negro was a project to forge a new identity for African Americans, one which would allow them to

achieve all the rights that comprise citizenship. At first, the idea was to get rid of the old prejudices about African Americans:

The New Negro was more than a persona; he was an idea, an ideological construction. The New Negro was invented, in part, by blacks attempting to correct negative stereotypes about them that were already in play by the time they arrived in the New World. (...) Black people created "New Negro" as an attempt to convert popular stereotypes about blacks from those based upon absence (of morality, intelligence, and other basic features of humanity) to presence (Bernard, 2007, pp. 28-29).

However, later, the question about what the identity of the New Negro was and how this identity would help to achieve citizenship became the most important debate in African American politics in the first half of the twentieth century (Steward, 2007).

The first African American writer who talked about the New Negro was Booker T. Washington (Steward, 2007). This African American political philosopher held that "the problem of the black citizen was not a matter of democracy, but a question of power" (Steward, 2007, p. 14). This means that, if African Americans built an economy and a polity controlled by them, they could exercise their citizenship. This project was supposed to be achieved by teaching African American students how to become twentieth century capitalists, business-minded men. Nevertheless, lynching in the South by small white business owners discouraged African American entrepreneurs and the vast majority of African Americans abandoned the south to take industrial jobs in the north during the Great Migration.

In fact, lynching was a devastating and widespread problem in the United States, especially from 1880 to 1940 (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). It took the lives of many African American men, women and children, and that was largely tolerated by state and federal officials. According to the Equal Justice Initiative (2017), after the abolition of slavery, lynching became a

method used by white communities in the South to maintain dominance over the region's political and economic resources, and subjugate African Americans once again by means of fear. African Americans who protested denouncing unfair treatment or demanding their civil rights were often lynched by whites. Hasday (2007) explains that these lynchings against African Americans claiming civil rights continued as late as the 1950's. Although lynchings also occurred in some northern states, they were drastically fewer than in southern states (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). This is why both Equal Justice (2017) and Steward (2007) consider lynching to be an important cause of the Great Migration.

As presented by Steward (2007), the Great Migration was the event that actually unfolded the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro, since many African Americans were entering industrial voting districts and, thus, becoming active political subjects that could define the future of the nation. In this new urban context, in the 1920's, Alain Locke was one of the first and most influential African American authors to propose an identity for the New Negro. Locke highlighted the attitude of self-determination of the New Negro. To Locke, the Great Migration was a sign that the New Negro was a visionary with the goal of achieving political participation who would demand his rights, instead of waiting for others to claim them like the Old Negro. This participation was supposed to be achieved by creating a new culture in the North that allowed African Americans and whites to equally take part in the construction of a new America. Rather than protesting against segregation:

Locke sought a deeper politics than demanding redress from withholding whites. What was revolutionary about the politics of the migrating black masses was that they had stopped trying to force their way into a South that did not want them. Instead, they had

gone within themselves, and found within the black experience a folk culture, a sense of self-respect, and an independent vision of what they should do (Steward, 2007, p. 16).

According to Steward (2007), Locke's idealism regarding the aspirations of the New Negro was due to an optimistic assessment of the popularity of African American cultural expressions in urban contexts and a disillusionment with politics. On the one hand, Locke thought that the increasing interest of African American migrants and educated whites in the new black modernism emerging in urban communities, such as Harlem, suggested that African American cultural expressions had the ability to thrive in the mainstream (Steward, 2007). On the other hand, as for Locke's political disillusionment, Steward (2007) asserts that "Because political citizenship had failed African Americans, Locke and the New Negro intellectuals invented a cultural citizenship that promised a new kind of American identity defined by culture instead of politics" (p. 17).

Steward (2007) holds that Locke believed that the ones in charge of carrying out the project of cultural citizenship were the African American artists and intellectuals. Locke's cultural citizenship was based on the suppression of the class conflict between working class African Americans and middle class intellectuals by means of linking the political agency of these two groups. To Locke, there were two New Negroes: "(...) the poor black masses changing the geography of American citizenship, and the young black writers reflecting that energy in literature" (Steward, 2007, p. 15). The latter were the ones that were on the path to success in the mainstream and, within it, become figures of political participation that would lobby for the end of segregation. They were creating a new African American modernism that was capable of fostering a broader sense of nationality which included both whites and African Americans.

Locke thought of African American artists and intellectuals as the translators of the communal African American experience into powerful modernist artistic expressions. That communal African American experience was shared by the working class masses and the intellectuals due to a historically bounded experience and their living together in the segregated urban communities such as Harlem. Thus, the artistic expressions of African American modernism, although the expression of intellectual individuals, embodied the communal struggle of the New Negro.

In the same vein, as presented by Steward (2007), Locke highlighted and praised the incorporation of African American folk culture by the New Negro artists. The culture of the black masses was supposed to be a source of inspiration for these artists since they considered it to be an authentic expression of the common African American. However, according to Steward (2007), the New Negro artists were not only concerned with a purely African American folk identity. Rather, formation of their identity was a dialectical process in which different cultural influences came into play:

The New Negro was, in reality, an on-going complex transaction between a black sense of self and a sense of self as urban, industrialized, and also white – a balancing act of constantly referring backwards and forwards, from lessons and loyalties of the past to creative immersions in an unruly present, all of which shaped not only the New Negro, but the urban space that emerged in the twentieth century North (Steward, 2007, p. 18).

As a consequence of this dialectical process, the New Negro artist or intellectual was “(...) an educated subject who had mastered both the culture of the masses and the culture of international modernism” (Steward, 2007, p. 18).

Stewart (2007) asserts that, to Locke, his project of a cultural citizenship capable of encompassing both African American and white cultures could become real by means of this new black urban modernism. The artists and intellectuals of black modernism were to become the intellectual leaders of the race. With their deep understanding of different subject areas and their remarkable artistry, they were able to actively participate in the intellectual spheres of American society. The leaders of the New Negro were African American writers, philosophers, anthropologists, folklorists, singers, dancers, etc.

Here was an outstanding group of intellectuals as well as artists, men and women as comfortable in the white intellectual world as the black, yet grounded by a commitment to (...) the race and the transformation of America through the culture of the black community (Steward, 2007, p. 19).

Lock also thought that the cultural influence of the New Negro was especially ripe to reach American northern cities because of the vogue of African American cultural products during the 1920's. For Locke, white and African American industrial urban communities in the north allowed for the emergence of identities freed from old rural constraints (Steward, 2007).

Nevertheless, as Steward (2007) explains, in the 1930's a new group of young urban African Americans intellectuals (such as John P. Davis or organizations such as The New Negro Alliance) rejected Locke's project of cultural citizenship. Concerned with widespread employment discrimination and segregation in commercial establishments, this new group of intellectuals claimed that the former approach to gaining citizenship had failed and proposed a direct action approach. Thus, they redefined the identity of the New Negro as an activist. This marked a new path to citizenship with new ways of participation such as picketing and boycotting.

It is worth recalling that from the 1890's until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, segregation and discrimination in the United States were established as a systematic set of customs and laws for white supremacy known as "Jim Crow" (Hansan, 2011). According to Hasday (2007), after the abolition of slavery in 1865, there came some laws that offered legal protection of African American civil rights, such as the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed equal protection under the law for all American citizens. However, these laws only assured certain political rights under a governmental scope, but not social rights. For example, the Fourteenth Amendment "(...) prohibited the states from depriving individuals of their civil rights but did not protect the abuse of individuals' civil rights by other individuals" (Hasday, 2007, pp. 11-12). Hasday (2007) explains that this opened the door for segregation laws concerning differentiated treatment between races in public spaces and in terms of service provision to be passed in many states, especially southern ones. Jim Crow laws mandated separate but equal treatment in many respects, such as schools, churches, public transportation, and in general many public facilities, enforcing segregation (Hansan, 2011). What is more, as explained by Hansan (2011), that separate treatment was not really equal as, more often than not, Jim Crow laws condemned African Americans to inferior treatment and facilities.

Such were the issues against which that new group of intellectuals were to rise. Steward (2007) states that this shift in the idea of the New Negro to a political activist came from the realization of the economic dependence of a number of white corporations and businesses on African American consumers. On the one hand, at the beginning of the twentieth century, American economy was more based on consumption than production. Industrial capitalists' strategy at that time was providing workers with wages that allowed them to be consumers.

African Americans had entered these group of workers with the Great Migration. On the other hand, consumption was racialized: there were products and services for African American ghettos and others for whites. The confluence of these two facts meant the empowerment of “(...) those segregated consumer markets to pressure local and national businesses for concessions around workers’ rights (...)” (Steward, 2007, p. 21). In other words, African Americans could disrupt the markets that were based on them in order to claim their rights. This strategy showed to effectively attract the attention of industrial capitalists and the government due to the concern about the stabilization of the economy during and after the Great Depression (Steward, 2007).

According to Steward (2007), in the 1940’s, a Second Great Migration of African Americans from southern states to northern states due to the demand of the arms industry of workers during World War II strengthened the political turn of the New Negro that had started a decade before. After this migration, African American ghettos became voting majorities in many northern cities, where most politicians started to include African American rights in their agendas and there began to be cooperation between African American political organizations such as the he National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the government. Moreover, besides this acquired political relevance, continued segregation and discrimination in the cities and in the army produced the emergence of a more radical political consciousness for the New Negro.

Unlike the earlier New Negro of the 1910s and the 1920s that avoided frontal assault on segregation and built race pride and racial institutions within its structure, this post-World War II New Negro citizen demanded America dismantle institutional segregation as the first step to Negro freedom in the United States (Steward, 2007, p. 23).

The Second Great Migration clearly had a major impact in American politics as well as in the idea of citizenship for the New Negro. Achieving political citizenship, the aspiration of becoming a citizen like any other American, was the main goal of most African Americans at the time.

Unfortunately for this political turn in the struggle for citizenship, due to 1940's and 1950's McCarthyism, sympathizers of the struggle for African American's civil rights were persecuted and many African American activists were charged with Communism as well as those who took part in protests (Storrs, 2015). According to Schrecker (2009), McCarthyism was one important hindrance in the struggle for freedom of African Americans:

Besides destroying left-wing civil rights organizations, McCarthyism isolated or silenced individual activists, broke up alliances with liberals, labor unions, and other minority groups, narrowed internationalist perspective of the movement, and deflected the struggle for racial equality toward the attainment of a limited, albeit important, set of legal, rather than economic, goals (xiv-xv).

Direct action and activism was not well received by all African Americans either. As explained by Steward (2007), the reaction and participation of African American intellectuals from the 1930's to the 1960's in regard to the pronounced shift towards a political citizenship for the New Negro was diverse. Some intellectuals actively supported the political activism that was driving the struggle for political citizenship. Other intellectuals embodied the role of the New Negro as both a cultural citizen and a political rebel. Steward (2007) points out the case of Paul Robeson as a paradigmatic example of an artist that would bring together and express the struggles of segregated communities in his art and, at the same time, would use that art as a platform for political activism. In the case of Robeson, as in other cases, the artist would not only advocate for the struggles of African American, but also for the ones of other African or

aboriginal peoples. "(...) Robeson became most effective as a New Negro ambassador to the world in the 1930s by using his cultural efficacy to open up a unique space in global politics" (Steward, 2007, p. 21). Lastly, there were African American intellectuals who rejected the radical shift towards political citizenship. These intellectuals claimed that in the exclusive pursuit of political citizenship, African Americans had forgotten about their advantageous cultural position to criticize and transform the American idea of citizenship as well as the possibility of cultural integration. To them, political citizenship did not empower African Americans as political participants in American society, nor did it assure that the legal acknowledgement of their rights would gradually weakened segregation, discrimination and white supremacy in reality. In this way, they saw "(...) the necessity for an independent cultural citizenship grounded in the Negro community (...) that transcended even the post-World War II success of expanded Negro political citizenship" (Steward, 2007, p. 25).

As an African American artist and intellectual, Langston Hughes also took part in the debate. In his essay "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain", Hughes (1926) states what could be considered as his take on cultural citizenship. The essay criticizes middle class African Americans who neglect African American culture and the general reception of African American art at the time. To Hughes (1926), middle and upper-middle class African Americans embraced white culture and stayed away from African American culture because they saw it as a way to match their social status with their recently acquired economic status. Having access to some previously white economic privileges, such as higher education and better purchasing power, middle class African American began to consume previously white-only products, attend white theatres and churches, read white books, have white teachers and adapt white manners.

Hughes (1926) thought this abandonment of African American culture by middle class African Americans was problematic for four reasons. First, middle class African Americans were not being true to themselves, pretending to be whites and denying their Negro essence. Second, such abandonment was based on the false traditional white evaluation of African American culture as a lower and uncivilized culture. Third, middle class African Americans were neglecting the value and richness of African American culture. Lastly, and as a consequence of the last phenomenon, middle class African American artists were trying to make white art, also denying their Negro essence and the beauty of the experience of their people and their heritage.

In Hughes's (1926) opinion, African American artists making white art was a critical issue for African American culture because the cultural context of the 1920's was already discouraging true Negro artists and true Negro art. Hughes (1926) explains that, at the time, the reception and demand of African American art did not encourage to make true Negro art, but it rather encouraged them to make white art or, at least, white-friendly art. On the one hand, whites did not fully appreciate African American art since, for them, it was something rather amusing and exotic. Most white promoters were not willing to support any African American artist who intended his art to be more than that. On the other hand, because of the middle class African Americans' attitude towards African American culture, African Americans in general did not fully appreciate African American art either. Whenever some African American artist or piece was praised by colored people, most of the time, it was due to the previous recognition by the white mainstream of the artist or the piece. Thus, a true African American appreciation of the art of other colored people was scarce.

In such a context, Hughes (1926) states that true African American art is in the hands of the true Negro artists who persevere in creating art that is inspired in their heritage and their race experience. To Hughes (1926), that heritage and that race experience are one of the most valuable inspirations an artist could desire. Because of this and the discouraging context of African American art, in the essay, Hughes (1926) expressed his profound sorrow and concern about African American artists trying to make white art and, hence, not contributing to their culture.

The debate for the citizen of the New Negro can be summarized as a disagreement between two takes on how to achieve that citizenship: cultural citizenship and political citizenship. The former proposed a deep transformation in American culture led by African American intellectuals and artists that would allow a broader sense of citizenship shared by whites and African Americans. The latter claimed that attaining civil rights through direct action was the path to actually achieving citizenship. For cultural citizenship, the New Negro should be a cultural leader that would change American society from inside its cultural institutions. For political citizenship, the New Negro should be a political activist struggling for the improvement of legal protection of African American civil rights. Having addressed the origins and unfolding of this debate towards which the interpretation of the poem is directed, the following section provides a conceptualization of two African American cultural expressions that influences the poem: African American Music and The Dozens.

Conceptual Framework

This section provides a characterization of three genres of African American music that have an important influence in the poem, along with the African American game of The Dozens, which greatly influenced the poem as well.

The happy sad character of African American music

In his essay "The Roots of Jazz", Langston Hughes (1958a) has supported the idea that African American music is happy and sad at the same time. Specifically, the author addresses three genres of African American music that have been influential in African American history. These genres are African drums, blues and jazz.

As explained by Hughes (1958a), African drums had an important role in the leisure time of slaves in New Orleans:

In the early 18th Century, Congo Square in New Orleans was one of the saddest happy places in the world. It was there in this open dusty acreage that the slaves held their Sunday dances and all day long beat on their drums the rhythms of Africa. They made intricate wonderful happy music and shook their feet in gay abandon, until the sundown warning sent them back to the slave quarters. When dancing, many of them forgot their bondage. Yet the music itself, for all its gaiety, remembered Africa, the Middle Passage, whips, chains, the slave market, the lifetimes of work, past and to come, without pay and without freedom (Hughes, 1958a, pp. 370-371).

According to this, dancing to African rhythms played on drums allowed for slaves to experience some kind of joy and happiness in spite of their bondage by forgetting the oppression of slavery but, at the same time, it recalled the sadness of their story as slaves. Because of this, African drums express a feeling of happiness that tries to put up with a harsh reality without completely denying it. The contrast between Sunday dances and their everyday life is, for slaves, uplifting and saddening at once, as it simultaneously affirms and denies their bondage. Hence, dancing to

African drums was an exceedingly joyful experience for slaves that was also sad due to its transience and its rootedness in the past.

In the case of blues, the idea of this genre expressing happiness and sadness was deeply studied by Hughes and there are several essays where he addresses it apart from "The Roots of Jazz". In his essay "The Roots of Jazz", Hughes (1958a) presents blues as "(...) mighty music of despair and laughter, of trouble and determination to *laugh* in spite of trouble" (p. 371). Also, in the essay "Songs Called the Blues", Hughes (1941) holds that "For sad as Blues may be, there's almost always something humorous them—even if it's the kind of humor that laughs to keep from crying" (p. 213). Likewise, in "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain", Hughes (1926) comments on the humor of blues explaining that it "becomes ironic laughter mixed with tears" (p. 33). Thus, the mood of the blues combines deep sorrow and a humorous attitude to endure that sorrow. As a result, blues expresses both sadness and hope (Hughes, 1941).

However, it is important to note that such endurance of the blues is prompted by itself, by the very moment when that sorrow and that humorous attitude are experienced. Hughes (1941) explains that blues songs do not look into the future. Blues are not escape songs. Rather, "(...) Blues are *today* songs, here and now, broke and broken-hearted, when you're troubled in mind and don't know what to do, and nobody cares" (Hughes, 1941, p. 213). In another essay entitled "Around the Clock in Madrid", Hughes (1938) also states that blues songs are "(...) songs, with a kind of triumphant sadness, a vital earthiness about them from which life itself springs" (p. 200). Moreover, according to Hughes (1941), the expressiveness of blues can be experienced by the music itself, and it transcends cultures and languages: "(...) you don't have to understand the

words to know the meaning of the Blues, or to feel their sadness, or to hope their hopes" (p. 213).

Finally, as for jazz, in "The Roots of Jazz", Hughes (1958a) proposes that blues and African drums are the foundations of jazz. In particular, the writer refers to the combination of sadness and happiness that blues and Africa drums embody as the principal influence for the later development of jazz. It was the sad-happy rhythms of African drums and the combination of sadness and laughter of the blues that gave jazz its unique qualities. Jazz is happy sad music as well. On the one hand, "Its spontaneous improvisations, its syncopations, its infectious rhythms are all tributes to the play spirit in men and women—the will to laugh and live" (Hughes, 1958a, p. 371). But, on the other hand:

behind the fun—in the beat of its drums, the cry of the trumpets or the wail of its sax—lie all the shadows of sorrow and suffering that were first woven into the distant origins of this wonderful music. Men and drums stolen from Africa, songs and drums held in the harshness of a new world, rhythms tangled in the tall cane, caught in the white bolls of the cotton, mired in the rice swamps, chained on the levees or in the heat of the Georgia roads, targets for the cross fire of the Civil War, crying in the poverty of Reconstruction (...)" (Hughes, 1958a, p. 371).

The sadness of jazz is of a different kind compared to that of either blues or African drums. Since jazz comes from such a long history of injustice, Jazz expresses a feeling of longing, a questioning attitude towards the harshness of reality, a cry for change (Hughes, 1958a). In fact, Hughes (1958a) states that in all jazz in spite of its gaiety or joyfulness there is something of the question "How long, how long before men and women, races and nations, will learn to live together happily?" (p. 371), and that "It is this longing and this laughter combined that gives jazz its great basic human appeal and endows it with a kind of universality that causes it to be played

and loved around the world” (pp. 371-372). Thus, in a similar fashion to blues, the longing and the laughter of jazz transcend cultures.

The idea that jazz expresses longing was also proposed by Hughes (1958b) in the essay “Jazz as Communication”. There, Hughes (1958b) asserts that “(...) jazz is a montage of a dream deferred. A great big dream—yet to come—and always yet—to become ultimately and finally true” (p. 370). This means that jazz is music that points to the future and depicts a desire for a particular future to come. Considering Hughes’s (1958a) and Hughes’s (1958b) exposition, jazz conveys a gay and joyful questioning about the possibility for the fulfilment of a long-awaited dream. However, apart from the questioning expressed by jazz, there is an additional perspective of it that should be addressed for a better understanding of its influence on the poem: the musical practices on which jazz is based.

Jazz as a musical practice

According to Jackson (2002), jazz cannot be defined as set of musical features that a group of pieces share. Rather, jazz should be understood as a set of musical practices to arrange and perform music that had its origin in African American music. Those practices focus on the transformation of a tune using varied musical resources borrowed from African, African American and European music for a specific performance of it. Jackson (2002) describes the process of making jazz as a conversation where musicians collectively explore ways of transforming a tune based on “(...) the musicians’ understanding of the tune, a particular arrangement of it, their experiences playing with one another and jazz performance practice more generally” (p. 91). This means that the musical resources that are used and combined in a jazz

performance are not conventional. Rather, musicians have the freedom to decide, based purely on their experiences, what musical resource better fits a particular performance of a tune. This explains that musical resources used in jazz usually come from a variety of musical traditions and that they are combined and performed always in a distinct manner by every musician; the goal of every jazz player is to develop a personal style of interpretation and to make of every performance of a tune unique (Jackson, 2002).

With the characterization of those three African American musical genres as happy sad music and of jazz in particular as a musical practice, the characterization of the African American game of The Dozens is addressed hereafter.

The ritualistic character of The Dozens

Mills (2015) defines The Dozens as a "(...) a black vernacular speech ritual in which participants invent dueling insults, often of a sexual nature and often about each other's mothers" (p. 147). It has also been defined by Lefever (1981) as a ritualized verbal contest where participants interchange insults, usually about each other's relatives. According to Labov (1997), this kind of ritual insults are common among African American communities –especially among males– and, although they receive different names –being "Sounding" and "The Dozens" the most common names–, the strongly similar verbal behaviors found in different communities suggest a general phenomenon. Based on Lefever's (1981), Labov's (1997) and Mills's (2015) accounts of The Dozens, this game is considered to be a ritual or to have a ritualistic character because it follows a specific set of social norms and language patterns that establish a distinct

social setting autonomous from everyday life where verbal interaction acquires a non-referential meaning.

Labov (1997) explains that one of the essential properties of African American ritual insults is a symbolic distance that sets it apart from other types of verbal interaction:

Sounds are directed as targets very close to the opponent (or at himself) but by social convention it is accepted that they do not denote attributes which persons actually possess: (...) symbolic distance maintained serves to insulate this exchange from further consequences. (p. 486).

This means that African American ritual insults are based on an assumed symbolic distance that is to be maintained in order for insults to be understood as driven by the ritual itself and not to be taken as personal insults intended to directly attack someone. In a similar vein, Mills (2015) highlights the non-referential nature of insults in *The Dozens*: "Central to the game (...) is that the participants understand the imaginary, nonreferential nature of the insults" (p. 147). The author also presents non-referentiality as the enabling precondition for *The Dozens* to take place. As explained by Labov (1997) and Mills (2015), the manner in which non-referentiality or symbolic distance are maintained is the use of absurd, bizarre, whimsical, unreal or inaccurate claims. Both authors comment that the more distant from reality the insult is, the better the ritual status of the game is maintained. Conversely, if the insult is somehow close to reality, it is likely to disrupt the ritual status of the game. In brief, there is an implicit agreement between participants of *The Dozens* in which insults during the ritual do not refer to real attributes of real people, this is, they do not have a referential meaning.

The non-referential meaning of the insults in *The Dozens* is also underlined by their value in the game. In line with Labov (1997), insults are evaluated based on their effect on the

audience. Laughter and approval are the most common forms in which the audience expresses the evaluation of an insult. Approval by the group is crucial since it determines the winner in the verbal contest. According to Levine (1978) cited by Mills (2015), the winner in The Dozens is “(...) recognized on the basis of verbal facility, originality, ingenuity, and humor” (p. 153). Similarly, Labov (1997) asserts that:

The winner in a contest of this sort is the man with the largest store of couplets on hand, the best memory, and perhaps the best delivery. But there is no question of improvisation, or creativity when playing, or judgement in fitting one dozens into another (p. 474).

Based on documented games, Labov (1997) has found that there are certain implicit criteria among participants to determine who is the winner. These criteria include formal linguistic features that are praised by players, such as simile, metaphor, syntactical complexity, narration, juxtaposition of meanings, among others. Hence, in The Dozens, insults are not evaluated based on their accurate description of reality. Rather, their value is based on the effect that the formal properties of them have on the audience.

The non-referential and effect-based evaluation of verbal interaction in The Dozens is the basis for its ritualistic character, because it allows for behaviors different from those of everyday life. Labov (1997) explains that the symbolic distance in ritual insults results in freedom from personal responsibility: “Rituals are sanctuaries; in ritual we are freed from personal responsibility for the acts we are engaged in” (p. 486). In this vein, Labov (1997) also asserts that, by maintaining the symbolic distance of the insults, players intend to “(...) depersonalize the situation (...) removing the dangers of a face-to-face confrontation and defiance of authority” (p. 486). Different authors have described how the social setting for The Dozens contrasts with ordinary life. Abrahams (1962), cited by Mills (2015), presents the language of The Dozens as

“(...) different from the everyday language of the contestants, occurring on a hypothetical playfield distanced from reality” (p. 152). Likewise, Lefever (1981) holds that The Dozens is a ritualized play and that:

The social worlds of both rituals and play are different from the real world. Rituals and play are acted out in contexts that assume the quality of “make-believe,” and in which symbols are used to depersonalize and protect the actors involved (p. 81).

Furthermore, Dollard (1939) cited by Lefever (1981) notes that the freedom of expression in The Dozens comes from a shared playful attitude among the participants that allow them to recognize the verbal interaction as a joke and not to take it seriously. All these different accounts show how The Dozens enable participants to display behaviors that would not be allowed in ordinary social situations.

However, as it has been suggested so far, in order for The Dozens to provide participants with that freedom, it is necessary to follow the particular social norms of the game. First, there needs to be the implicit agreement about the non-referential nature of the insults. Second, insults must be distant from reality so that they do not disrupt the game. If any of these norms is broken, ritual insults become ordinary personal insults and disruptive outcomes, such as disapproval or violence, may occur. (Labov, 1997). Lefever (1981), Labov (1997) and Mills (2015) agree that this is another essential ritualistic feature of The Dozens. According to these authors, The Dozens is an isolated, autonomous and self-contained event. The ritualistic meaning of the insults can only exist within the game. Labov (1997), Lefever (1981) and Mills (2015) cite many documented cases in which, as soon as an insult is taken seriously, the game ends. Those cases have also been interpreted as one way of losing the game: the participant who becomes upset or

starts acting violently loses. Thus, the isolated, autonomous, self-contained character of The Dozens underlines its ritual status as well.

Although the game is a stablished ritual play of African American culture, some assessments of it by white people have shown to be based on racist prejudices. Mills (2015) asserts that "Misinterpreting the dozens as referential can also be a mechanism of racism" (p. 153). Citing White (1970), Mills (2015) also explains that the game has been interpreted by some psychologists and linguists as young African Americans' desires of having actual sexual intercourse with others mothers as a consequence of the matriarchal social structure where they live. For instance, that is the case of Abrahams (1962), cited by Lefever (1981), who claims The Dozens are a game where young African Americans express those desires in order for them to overcome the dominant female values of the matriarchal organization of their context, and forge their masculine identity. The problem that Mills (2015) finds in these kind of interpretations is that they are based on a popular biased sociological assumption according to which the matriarchal organization of African American communities explains many of the social issues of these communities. Jordan (1983) also denounces a similar bias in works such as Dollard (1939) and Abrahams (1962). In line with Jordan's (1983) claims, The Dozens has been regarded by these works as either a pathological behavior or as an example of some kind of cultural deficiency.

Having presented the theoretical and conceptual foundation for the interpretation, the following section describes the methodological processes undertaken to achieve it.

Methodology

In order to attain an in-depth analysis of specific carnivalized images, expressions, attitudes or assessments in the poem, a corpus consisting of selected stanzas of the poem with their corresponding musical annotations was created. The analysis of the corpus was divided into three steps. First, the African American cultural elements referenced in the stanzas and the musical annotations were identified and the most important ones were researched in order to clarify their cultural meaning in African American culture. Then, those cultural elements were analyzed on the basis of the definition, categories, expressions and imagery of the carnivalesque sense of the world. Finally, taking into account the analysis of the cultural elements, an analysis of the meaning of the stanzas in the poem allowed to forge an interpretation of the carnivalized worldview that is shaped in each one.

Taking into account that this study deals with racial segregation and the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro in the United States, it was defined that the criterion to select the excerpts for the corpus was the depiction of American urban scenery. Only the excerpts that depict or are related to the life and the conflicts of urban African Americans are included in the corpus. The resultant corpus is found in Annex 1. In it, the stanzas and the musical annotations are grouped according to which one of the twelve moods of the poem they appear in and all of them are numbered. The verses that are indented in the poem are marked with an asterisk. Additionally, in order to simplify referencing the corpus in the body of the text, the following abbreviations were employed:

- v. = verse

CARNIVALIZATION IN LANGSTON HUGHES'S "ASK YOUR MAMA: TWELVE MOODS FOR JAZZ"

- vv. = verses
- s. = stanza
- m. = mood
- a. = annotation

Interpretation

Criticism of cultural citizenship and racial segregation in the poem

There are many stanzas in the poem that address different social issues of the African American community in the first half of the twentieth century. The main issues that the poem deals with are poverty, segregation, elitism in middle class and high class African Americans, the lost heritage of African Americans, whites taking advantage of African American artists, African Americans not having access to culture, whites' disinformation and misconceptions regarding African Americans, and a generalized stagnation of America as a segregated society. The depiction of most of these issues not only raises awareness of them, but it also criticizes the people responsible for them and the inability of the project of cultural citizenship to solve them. Only the stanzas that are more explicitly related to the aforementioned social issues and in which criticism is direct and not carnivalistic are addressed in this section. The stanzas on which the carnivalistic effect of the poem depends are addressed in the following sections.

The first major criticism of the poem towards whites and cultural citizenship is the extended disinformation² regarding African Americans in American society. In *IS IT TRUE?*, the poem denounces the lack of a comprehensive knowledge and documentation of the culture and struggles of African American and African peoples. The first stanza in this mood refers to places very far from western culture with languages and peoples not known by scholars yet: "TO THE FARTHEREST CORNERS SOMETIMES / OF THE NOW KNOWN WORLD / UNDECIPHERED AND UNLETTERED / UNCODIFIED UNPARSED / IN TONGUES

² Misconceptions are addressed further on.

UNANALYZED UNECHOED / UNTAKEN DOWN ON TAPE—" (m. 8, s. 1, vv. 3-8, p. 115).

Due to the lack of interest in documenting and investigating the peoples from these places, their struggles are not heard and remain unknown, in the shadows: "FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE QUARTER / SHOUTS ARE WHISPERS" (m. 8, s. 1, vv. 1-2, p. 115). This stanza also denounces that the interests of whites in these peoples usually come only from exoticism. The stanza refers to Folkways, a record label that documented folk, world, and children's music, as an example of that exotic approach to African culture by calling it being on a safari: "NOT EVEN FOLKWAYS CAPTURED / BY MOW ASCH OR ALAN LOMAX / NO YET ON SAFARI" (m. 8, s. 1, vv. 9-11, pp. 115).

Moreover, in the first stanza of ASK YOUR MAMA, Hughes (1961) extends the lack of interest of whites towards African culture to recent African American culture. The stanza begins almost exactly like the first one in IS IT TRUE?, but now it refers to the addresses of cultural buildings such as the DuSable Museum of African American History, the Lincoln Theater of Los Angeles³, the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum and the American Jazz Museum, calling them "THE NOW KNOWN WORLD" as well (m. 9, s. 1, pp. 116). With the cultural citizenship project, African and African American cultures were supposed to become relevant in American society to the point that they would transform it, but the poem depicts the opposite situation. This stanza denounces that places which are supposed to disseminate African American culture are barely known or still seen as new exotic places.

³The Lincoln Theater was an African American owned theater in Los Angeles that featured many of the most important African American artists of the period between the 1920's and the 1950's (Flamming, 2005).

Another stanza that complements that criticism is the third stanza in IS IT TRUE? (m. 8, s. 3, p. 116). In it, the struggle of working class African Americans to achieve better life conditions in middle class suburbs is depicted by using the metaphor of a horse: the horse represents that struggle. The beginning of the stanza suggests this meaning for the metaphor, since it expresses the aspiration of a suburban life which is contrasted, later in the stanza, with a hard path to achieve it. The stanza starts with "YES, SUBURBIA / WILL EVENTUALLY BE" (m. 8, s. 3, vv. 1-2, p. 116), and then it continues with "MEANWHILE / OF COURSE / OF COURSE / OF COURSE / ON A MUDDY TRACK / IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES / NEGROES / NEGROES / SOME HORSE MIGHT / SLIP AND BREAK / ITS BACK" (m. 8, s. 3, vv. 4-14, p. 116). Right then and there, the stanza states that script-writers and sport-writers would not write about it. This way, the stanza criticizes the media, which would only pay attention to famous and successful African Americans and not to the ones that are struggling to overcome poverty and segregation.

This criticism towards the media is also found in the fifth stanza in BIRD IN ORBIT (m. 10, s. 5, p. 119). In it, Hughes (1961) denounces the generalized lack of coverage of African American struggles through a synecdoche, where Martha Roundtree—a journalist who created and moderated the first public-affairs program on American television "Meet the Press"—represents American political journalism in the 1950's. Taking into account the synecdoche, the verses "THE TV SILENCE / OF A MILLION MARTHA ROUNDTREES" (m. 10, s. 5, vv. 28-29, p. 119) depict this lack of coverage.

The second major criticism towards whites and cultural citizenship is the continuation of poverty and segregation. There are several stanzas in the poem that depict the poverty and segregation of many African Americans in spite of the rise of African American culture to the mainstream and the emergence of high and middle class African Americans. For instance, the first stanza in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* portrays the vulnerability and the poor living conditions of many African Americans, who live in places only sheltered by “DOORS OF PAPER” (m. 1, s. 1, p. 105). In the same vein, the fourth, fifth and seventh stanzas in *ODE TO DINAH* also portray poverty and vulnerability by referring to the insufficiency of the government’s welfare checks for African Americans to overcome their financial problems and to the ever-present danger of being lynched (m. 4, s. 4, 5 & 7, pp. 110-111). Furthermore, in the first stanza in *HORN OF PLENTY*, the social conditions of African American celebrities are compared to that of the working class African Americans (m. 6, s. 1, pp. 112-113). The wealth of those celebrities is emphasized by referring to the names of exclusive neighborhoods with better homes and services than those in the neighborhoods of working class African Americans. In the first stanza in that mood, the symbol for dollars (\$) is actually included in the verses about celebrities, whereas the symbol for cents (¢) is included in the verses about the working class African Americans. Besides this contrast, Hughes (1961) also criticizes the elitism of those African Americans who have achieved a high class status in the fifth stanza in the same mood: “HIGHLY INTEGRATED / MEANS TOO MANY NEGROES / EVEN FOR THE NEGROES—” (m. 6, s. 5, vv. 5-7, p. 112).

As for segregation, African Americans’ differentiated access to certain services because of the Jim Crow laws is portrayed in the second, fifth and sixth stanzas in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE*. The second stanza depicts the unlikeliness of any African American leaving the ghettos, even though these are

located "BY THE RIVER AND THE RAILROAD" (m. 1, s. 2, v. 1, p. 105). The only African Americans who can leave are the celebrities like Leontyne Price, African American soprano. The fifth and sixth stanza, in turn, depict two instances of differentiated access in northern cities: differentiated entrances to the movies and laundromats (m. 1, s. 5-6, p. 106). Taking into account all the situations that the poem denounces, the poem depicts how the rise of African American culture to the mainstream only changed the social condition of a few privileged African Americans, while the majority continues to live segregated and in poverty.

Another criticism directly linked to the previous one is that the rise of African American culture to the mainstream brings about the unfortunate consequence that working class African Americans cannot access the artistic performances of other African Americans due to whites' monopoly and exploitation of those artistic expressions. A recurrent image in different stanzas in the poem is that of African Americans having difficulties to access African American artistic performances. A first example of this is the second stanza in ASK YOUR MAMA (m. 9, s. 2, pp. 116-117). In it, an African American complains that he cannot go to see *Porgy and Bess*, an African American opera, because he does not have the money to pay. A second example is the first stanza in ODE TO DINAH, where a television in an African American house fails to display a presentation of African American actress and singer Pearl Bailey (m. 4, s. 1, p. 109). Likewise, the fourth stanza in BLUES IN STEREO (m. 5, s. 4, p. 112) and the third stanza in SHOW FARE, PLEASE (m. 12, s. 3, p. 121) depict malfunctioning televisions as well. Moreover, there is a dialogue between a child and his mom that occurs in the sixth stanza of ODE TO DINAH (m. 4, s. 6, p. 111) and in the first stanza in SHOW FARE, PLEASE (m. 12, s. 1, pp. 120-121), in which the child insistently asks his mother to attend a show. The mother always answers saying that at the moment the child cannot go, because she does not have the money to pay for that. The image of the television and this dialogue are metaphors of African Americans' generalized lack of access to the performing arts due to their adverse financial situation.

As noted above, this lack of access to culture is depicted as being caused by the monopoly and the exploitation of African American artistic expressions by whites. The stanza that most clearly portrays this monopoly and exploitation is the first one in *SHOW FARE, PLEASE*: "ALL THAT MUSIC, ALL THAT DANCING / CONCENTRATED TO THE ESSENCE / OF THE SHADOW OF THE DOLLARD" (m. 12, s. 1, vv. 9-11, p. 121). Thus, the commercialization of African American performing arts has deprived them of any value different from the economic one. Two other stanzas that address this issue are the first and the sixth stanza in *HORN OF PLENTY*. In the first stanza, the third and fourth verse portray the commercialization of African American performing arts as a hindrance for achieving freedom through the metaphor of Sol Hurok, a manager of different African American artists, managing the Statue of Liberty (m. 6, s. 1, vv. 3-4, p. 112). In the sixth stanza, the first and second verse also introduce a metaphor with another manager of African American artists, Joe Glasser: "HORN OF PLENTY / IN ESCROW TO JOE GLASSER" (m. 6, s. 6, vv.1-2, p. 114). The metaphor portrays how the exploitation of African American artistic expressions by the entertainment industry is keeping all the economic benefits of the rise of African American culture to the mainstream, leaving African Americans without any retribution. This criticism is reinforced as well through the image of a businessman "SOAKING UP" African American music in the fifth and eighth stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, indicating the industry's appropriation of this music (m. 10, s. 5 & s. 8, pp. 119-120).

Furthermore, the only ways in which working class African American have access to the performing arts are depicted as sterile and alienating. The metaphors that are employed to depict this include jukeboxes. In the third stanza in *ODE TO DINAH*, jukeboxes are portrayed as machines that play African American songs only for the profit of the entertainment industry and the exploitation of singers, as well as to maintain the cultural distance between working class African Americans and the performing arts:

FAT JUKEBOXES / WHERE DINAH'S SONGS ARE MADE / FROM SLABS OF SILVER
SHADOWS. / AS EACH QUARTER CLINKS / INTO A MILLION POOLS OF QUARTERS /
TO BE CARTED BY BRINK'S / THE SHADES OF DINAH'S SINGIN / MAKE A SPANGLE
OUT OF QUARTERS RINGING / TO KEEP FAR-OFF CANARIES / IN SILVER CAGES
SINGING (m. 4, s. 3, vv. 5-14, p. 110).

This last two verses are a metaphor in which canaries are female singers exploited by the music industry and they are kept in silver cages, as they certainly get paid but their freedom is restrained by the industry itself. In a similar vein, in the second stanza in *JAZZTET MUTED*, jukeboxes are portrayed as "NEON TOMBS" where music is laid to die (m. 11, s. 2, p. 120). Thus, the poem depicts how the rise of African American culture to the mainstream and its subsequent commercialization constitute a new urban form of segregation.

The last direct criticism towards whites and the project of cultural citizenship consists in the depiction of African American lives as stagnated in segregation. Stagnation is portrayed by the recurrent image throughout the poem of Niagara Falls being frozen. The image is a metaphor of African Americans' fear of struggling against racism and their lack of vitality and commitment to it. The metaphor comes from the story of a slave that was escaping slavery by traveling to the north of the continent by train, but who was so afraid of being caught that, when the train passed by Niagara Falls, he hid himself instead of enjoying such a landmark on his way to freedom (Hughes, 1961). At the end of the 18th century, slaves escaping to the North and Canada was common due to a vast network of people – some of whom were said to be white Quakers– that would help slaves run away from their slaveholders, as well as finding transportation and shelter, that was known as the Underground Railroad (PBS, 1999). The second stanza in *ODE TO DINAH*, where the metaphor is completely introduced, praises the

emancipatory commitment of those who took part in the Underground Railroad, and contrast it to the stagnated and segregated African American lives in the cities:

WHEN NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN / THERE'S A BAR WITH WINDOWS FROSTED /
FROM THE COLD THAT MAKES NIAGARA / GHOSTLY MONUMENT OF WINTER / TO
A BAND THAT ONCE PASSED OVER / WITH A WOMAN WITH TWO PISTOLS / ON A
TRAIN THAT LOST NO PASSENGERS / ON THE LINE WHOSE ROUTE WAS FREEDOM /
THROUGH THE JUNGLE OF WHITE DANGER / TO THE HEAVEN OF WHITE QUAKERS
/ WHOSE HAYMOW WAS A MANGER MANGER / WHERE THE CHRIST CHILD ONCE
HAD LAIN. / SO THE WHITENESS AND THE WATER / MELT TO WATER ONCE AGAIN
/ AND THE ROAR OF NIAGARA / DROWNS THE RUMBLE OF THAT TRAIN / DISTANT
ALMOST NOW AS DISTANT / AS FORGOTTEN PAIN IN THE QUARTER / QUARTER OF
THE NEGROES / WITH A BAR WITH FROSTED WINDOWS / NO CONDUCTOR AND NO
TRAIN (m. 4, s. 2, vv. 1-21, pp. 109-110).

Just like Niagara Falls, such stagnation in the cities is also depicted by the image of frozen windows in a bar. Besides, some of the consequences of that stagnation are portrayed, namely, injustice against African Americans being forgotten and African Americans not having a clear political direction.

There are two other images in the poem where snow depicts African American lives stagnated in segregation. One is the metaphor of malfunctioning televisions. On some of the stanzas where this metaphor appears, it is related to the image of Niagara Falls being frozen, since, in those malfunctioning televisions, it is snowing. Snow in televisions suggests that they are an alienating form to access culture, just like jukeboxes, and that they contribute to stagnation. The stanzas where this image is found are the first one in ODE TO DINAH (m. 4, s. 1, p. 109), and the fourth one in BLUES IN STEREO (m. 5, s. 4, p. 112). The latter highlights how African Americans were excluded from the country's social and economic

development, since they could not perceive it in any way: "DOWN THE LONG ROAD THAT I BEEN HOEING / I THOUGHT I HEARD THE HORN OF PLENTY BLOWING. / BUT I GOT TO GET A NEW ANTENNA, LORD- / MY TV KEEPS ON SNOWING" (m. 5, s. 4, vv. 1-4, p. 112). The other image where snow also portrays stagnation is found in the first three verses in the first stanza in ODE TO DINAH, where African Americans are depicted as used to it: "IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES / WHERE TO SNOW NOW ACCLIMATED / SHADOWS SHOW UP SHARPER" (m. 4, s. 1, vv. 1-3, p. 109).

All those images related to snow, ice, coldness and winter constitute a metaphor that is transversal to the poem. In this metaphor, winter-related images represent the stagnation of African American lives in urban segregation. Such stagnation keeps African Americans from standing up for their citizenship, as their struggle has been deprived of the joy that came from experiencing African American music and dancing. The relationship between images of malfunctioning televisions and snow emphasizes this criticism, since –as said before– television is depicted as an alienating way of accessing culture that contributes to stagnation. A similar relation is held between the frozen windows of the bar in the second stanza in ODE TO DINAH with the metaphors of the jukeboxes, since they are also depicted as alienating. In this sense, bars with jukeboxes are places through which stagnation is maintained as well. Furthermore, the first stanza in HORN OF PLENTY relates the lack of access to culture with the metaphor of Niagara Falls being frozen: "IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES ☺☺☺☺ / WHERE WINTER'S NAME IS HAWKINS ☺☺☺ / AND NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN ☺☺☺☺☺☺ / IF SHOW FARE'S MORE THAN 30 ☺☺☺☺☺☺" (m. 6, s. 1, vv. 26-29, pp. 113). Thus, by means of these images and metaphors, the poem depicts how cultural citizenship was not able to keep the vitality and joy that African American music and dancing offered to most African Americans and, because of this, how it failed in fostering the commitment to the struggle to achieve citizenship among all African Americans.

On the contrary, the joy and vitality that characterized African American culture have been put aside until a new political awakening that embodies them occurs. What the metaphor of Niagara Falls being frozen means is that, unless African Americans recover the vitality of their culture and transpose it into a political commitment, they will not achieve citizenship and social development. Their will to attain some advancement in these respects will continue to be frozen –as it is portrayed in the poem– and they will not be capable of melting Niagara Falls into water again just like other movements that embodied that vitality, such as the Underground Railroad, did.

What is more, different verses in the poem depict the frustration and the longing of African Americans regarding citizenship. For instance, the second stanza in *IS IT TRUE?* depicts the sorrow and the frustration of having had to wait very long to start to see small changes:

TWENTY HOURS / FOR THE MILL WHEEL TO BE MILL WHEEL / WAITED TWENTY
DAYS / FOR THE BISQUIT TO BE BREAD / WAITED TWENTY YEARS / FOR THE
SADNESS TO BE SORROW. / WAITED TWENTY MORE / TO CATCH UP WITH
TOMORROW (m. 8, s. 2, vv. 1-8, p. 115).

Another stanza that addresses this issue is the fifth one in *ODE TO DINAH*, whose verses eighteenth to twentieth express longing: "*GOT TO WAIT– / THIS LAST QUARTER OF CENTENIAL / GOT TO WAIT*" (m. 4, s. 5, vv. 18-19, p. 111). These verses resemble the lyrics of "Hesitation Blues", which Hughes (1961) called, in the introductory annotations to the poem, the leitmotif of the poem. Taking all those expressions of frustration and longing, it is reasonable to conclude that "Hesitation Blues" depicts the frustration and the longing of African Americans regarding citizenship.

As stated at the beginning of this section, the stanzas analyzed so far are not creating meaning from a carnivalized point of view. Rather, they are the basis to understand how the poem expresses it. In the following sections, the elements in the poem that create the carnivalistic point of view are analyzed –

in particular, those closely linked to the African American cultural expressions that are pivotal to the architecture and composition of the poem.

Jazz and The Dozens as settings for free and familiar contact in the poem

From the very title of the poem, Hughes (1961) highlights two African American cultural expressions that are axes to the creation of meaning in the poem: the game of The Dozens and jazz. As different authors have noted⁴, “Ask Your Mama” is a reference to a popular phrase used by players of The Dozens. Jazz, in turn, is explicitly used in the title. Jazz and The Dozens provide a carnivalistic architectonics for the poem, where social hierarchies and social distance are suspended and free and familiar contact between people and cultures is allowed. In the following paragraphs the dialogic nature of jazz is discussed along with its role throughout the poem, and the ritual status of The Dozens and its role are discussed as well.

As explained in the conceptual framework, jazz provides musicians with freedom to choose elements from different musical traditions only based in their experience, resulting in a non-conventional approach to music making. This freedom underlies jazz carnivalistic nature, as such freedom results in the familiar contact among otherwise distant musical traditions that are merged into a single performance. Thus, jazz has a dialogic nature that allows for free familiar contact between musical traditions.

The dialogue between musical traditions that jazz prompts is transposed and resignified in the poem. The very first musical annotation of the poem, the first one in CULTURAL EXCHANGE, already indicates an odd and unique combination of three usually distant musical

⁴ See Scanlon (2002) and Higgins (2009)

traditions: the European, the Afro-Caribbean and the African American. The annotation describes a “guira” –a percussion instrument from Dominican Republic– merging with a piano changing between blues and lieder –German country songs in which poetry is adapted to a classical piece (m. 1, a. 1, pp. 105-106). This blend between blues and lieder starts again in the fifth annotation of the same mood (m. 1, a. 5, pp. 106-107), continuing with the combination of Afro-Caribbean and African American music. In the last annotation of CULTURAL EXCHANGE (m. 1, a. 9, p. 107) and the first one in RIDE, RED, RIDE (m. 2, a. 1, p. 108), “When the Saints Go Marching In”, a song popularized by African American musician Louis Armstrong, is accompanied by maracas and it is later joined by a piano playing calypso –a musical style originated in 19th-century in Trinidad and Tobago. Another example of this odd and unique musical combinations in the poem is the first annotation IN SHADES OF PIGMEAT, in which “Eli Eli” –a traditional Hebrew song– is mixed with an Afro-Arabic theme and blues (m. 3, a. 1, pp. 108-109). Finally, in the third annotation in CULTURAL EXCHANGE (m. 1, a. 3, p. 106), the second in BLUES IN STEREO (m. 5, a. 2, p. 112), and the second one in ASK YOUR MAMA (m. 9, a. 2, p. 117) blues or jazz are played alongside African drums.

The dialogue, and free and familiar contact among musical traditions that the music of the poem embodies is transposed to the verbal material. However, in the case of the verbal material, the blend includes people from different cultural, social and historical backgrounds who come in contact, regardless of geographical, political, social or temporal distances. There are at least two kinds of these contacts among people from different backgrounds that have distinct meanings in the poem and that often have a complementary musical accompaniment.

The first kind of free familiar contact occurs among African peoples around the world. In the poem, the struggles of African peoples from different countries are joined together, highlighting their similarities. For instance, Hughes (1961) depicts the common or similar origins of the problems that many African peoples have to face. The seventh stanza in CULTURAL EXCHANGE introduces a metaphor that compares the confusion and the fear felt by African Americans in their migration to northern states such as New York with the confusion and the fear felt by Africans being brought to the New World when they were traded as slaves: “AND THE TOLL BRIDGE FROM WESTCHESTER / IS A GANGPLANK ROCKING RISKY / BETWEEN THE DECK AND SHORE / OF A BOAT THAT NEVER QUITE / KNEW ITS DESTINATION” (m. 1, s. 7, vv. 8-12, p. 106). The metaphor points out the similarity between the struggles to attain citizenship among previously slaved African peoples and migrants to the North, because they all originated in the confusion and the fear of being strangers in an unknown land with an unknown culture after having been displaced from their homeland. Following the metaphor, those feelings have not substantially changed since then. The music that accompanies that stanza is the one described in the third annotation in that mood. It consists of a band playing “Hesitation Blues” as deep-toned African drums join the blues (m. 1, a. 3, p. 106). This reinforces the link between the feelings of urban Africans and African Americans, and those of Africans during slave trade.

Another expression of the free familiar contact among African peoples is found in depictions of cultural and political connections among them. In the fourth to the ninth verses in the first stanza in RIDE, RED, RIDE, the lyrics of “Hesitation Blues” are blended with verses from the emblematic song of the French Revolution “Ça Ira”, which in English means “It’ll be

fine": "TELL ME HOW LONG— / MUST I WAIT? / CAN I GET IT NOW? / ÇA IRA! ÇA IRA! / OR MUST I HESITATE? IRA! BOY, IRA!" (m. 2, s. 1, vv. 4-9, p. 108). This encounter between the lyrics from different musical traditions suggests solidarity between the struggles of African American and Afro-French people. The questions of the "Hesitation Blues", which depicts the longing of African Americans in their struggle for citizenship, are answered by the combative revolutionary and assuring chants of the African French people. Moreover, the thirteenth to the nineteenth verses in the first stanza in ODE TO DINAH depict the closeness between African American and Afro-Caribbean culture in the image of the crumbles of a fruitcake from Georgia falling into the "RUM THAT WAFTS MARACAS" to a disc by African American blues, pop and R&B singer Dinah Washington: "FROM ANOTHER DISTANCE QUARTER / TO THIS QUARTER" (m. 4, s. 1, vv. 13-19, p. 109). Furthermore, reinforcing the connection between the struggles of Afro-French people and African American people, in the third stanza in BIRD IN ORBIT, Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Alioune Diop, Afro-French writers, politicians and proponents of the Négritude, are referred to along with American cultural and political activists of the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights Movement (m. 10, s. 3, p. 118).

Cultural and political connections among African peoples are also portrayed by relating African American activists with African politicians. The two most notable examples of this are the fifth stanza in ASK YOU MAMA and the fifth in BIRD IN ORBIT. In the fifth stanza in ASK YOU MAMA, Chukwuma Bamidele Azikiwe, Nigerian diplomat and political figure and son of Nnamdi Azikiwe (the first president of Nigeria as an independent republic), is shaking hands with Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old African American who became an icon of the Civil Rights Movement after being lynched and his killers acquitted (m. 9, s. 5, p. 117). This image is

a portrait of solidarity between the political struggles of Nigerians and those of African Americans. In the fifth stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, Ahmed Sékou Touré (first president of Guinea as an independent republic), Patrice Lumumba (first prime minister of the independent Democratic Republic of the Congo), and Jomo Kenyatta (first president of Kenya as an independent republic) are depicted as the lost sons of Sojourner Truth, an eighteenth century African American abolitionist (m. 10, s. 5, p. 119). This way, Hughes (1961) connects the independence movements in Africa with the abolitionist movement in America, suggesting a common history of struggle.

The poem also portrays free familiar contact between the aspirations of different African peoples. As explained in the previous section, in the poem, there is a metaphor where riding a horse means pursuing a dream. In other stanzas in the poem, this metaphor is also present. However, the kind of animal that the character is riding corresponds to how ambitious their dream is. For example, the third stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, Martin Luther King Jr. is depicted mounting a unicorn, indicating a very ambitious dream (m. 10, s. 3, p. 118). In the fourth stanza in *ASK YOUR MAMA*, an Afro-French student is depicted as willing to ride a unicorn as well (m. 9, s. 4, p. 117). Keeping this metaphor in mind, in the fifth stanza in *ASK YOUR MAMA*, Hughes (1961) refers to "THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES" as a place where "NO SHADOW WALKS ALONE" and "LITTLE MULES AND DONKEYS SHARE / THEIR GRASS WITH UNICORNS" (m. 9, s. 5, vv. 13-16, pp. 117). This way, the political and cultural aspirations of different African peoples can be shared and be mutually nurtured, regardless of any geographical or cultural distance.

The second kind of free familiar contact occurs among African Americans from different social backgrounds. For example, *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* narrates how Leontyne Price, African American soprano, returns to her hometown in Mississippi to eat a regional dish made by her grandpa: a stew of collard greens. The ninth stanza in that mood depicts the smell of that stew combined with lieder in a working class house in Mississippi: "IN THE POT BEHIND THE / PAPER DOORS WHAT'S COOKING? / WHAT'S SMELLING, LEONTYNE? / LIEDER, LOVELY LIEDER / AND A LEAF OF COLLARD GREENS" (m. 1, s. 9, vv. 1-5, p. 106). This combination of lieder and collard greens in that setting suggests that, although Leontyne has become famous and successful by singing European music, she is still linked to African American traditions and the living conditions of most African Americans. In the fourth stanza in the same mood, other successful African American artists are portrayed visiting working class African Americans as well (m. 1, s. 4, p. 105). Thus, the poem brings together high class or middle class African Americans with working class African Americans regardless of their social or economic distance.

Another way in which the poem does this is by equally assessing their struggles against racism. In the first stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, the poem portrays a voice that expresses being delighted by the thought of meeting African American celebrities and activists such as Eartha Kitt, Bo Diddley, Lil Greenwood, Harry Belafonte, Josephine Baker or Ada "Bricktop" Smith (m. 10, s. 1, p. 118). However, right then and there, the voice expresses their willingness to meet southern working class African Americans who have also gained a better place in American society by means of activism, namely, the McDonogh three, who were three African-American girls that, at the age of six, were the first black students in an all-white school in New Orleans,

the students from the sit-in movement, who protested differentiated treatment in public facilities, or any other African American who struggles against racism in the South controlled by whites, but that has not been inducted in a political organization. Assessing the achievements of African American celebrities and those of working class activists in the South with the same enthusiasm creates a connection between the efforts of both classes to achieve citizenship. Continuing with this connection, there are also different stanzas in the poem where political leaders and activists are mentioned alongside African American artists. For example, the third stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT* refers to political leaders and activists such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Martin Luther King Junior, and African American artists such as Harlem's cultural leader Adele Glasgow and saxophonist Charlie Parker (m. 10, s. 3, p. 118).

All these instances of free and familiar contact among African peoples and African American classes occur within "THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES". The recurrence of this verse in the poem indicates the depiction of an open, free and familiar cultural space where the struggles of all African peoples can be shared and the expressions that accompany those struggles are allowed. The emergence of this cultural space was inspired and fostered by the attitude of free familiar contact among the musical traditions of jazz and a similar attitude was transposed to the poem. Due to this transposition, the poem depicts jazz as an element of African American culture that becomes a platform for political solidarity among African American peoples. Moreover, given that this space is usually depicted as place closer to working class African Americans where people from different social classes engages in free familiar contact, it is close to Bakhtin's (1984a) account of the carnival square.

The similarity between the carnival square and “THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES” is also highlighted by the inclusion of ritualized insults by Hughes (1961) in his poem. As noted before, The Dozens has a ritualistic status that, as in the case of jazz, contributes to the attitude of free and familiar contact portrayed by the poem. The Dozens also provides a setting for free familiar contact. Because of the symbolic distance that is agreed and held in the verbal in the game and the non-referential effect-based evaluation of insults, direct confrontation among individuals and defiance of authority is avoided. This allows players to display behaviors different from those of everyday life and to come up with insults that would be censored in ordinary social situations. Here, unusual behaviors and insults are accepted with a playful and humorous attitude. Given all these features of The Dozens, it is reasonable to assert that The Dozens embodies a carnivalistic sense of the world and that it is an event where participants engage in a relationship of free and familiar contact. Just like in Bakhtin’s (1984a) and Bakhtin’s (1984b) accounts of the carnival, authority and social conventions are broken to let in an attitude of joyful relativity and behaviors that cannot be displayed in the ordinary life of the community.

Given its carnivalistic nature, The Dozens provides the poem with a setting of free and familiar contact. However, unlike a regular game of The Dozens, the free and familiar contact does not occur between members of an African American community, and the broken social norms or conventions are not those of ordinary life in such community. In the poem, the racial and social conflicts underlying the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro become a game of The Dozens. In this sense, the participants in this game are representatives of the different social classes confronted in this conflict: whites, and working class, middle class and upper class African Americans. In the game, these social classes engage in a relationship of free and familiar

contact, challenging traditional American cultural conventions, and undermining racial and social hierarchies. The main effect of these encounters in the poem is the removal of seriousness and power from whites' misconceptions about African Americans.

This is the case of most of the instances in the poem where responses that resemble those of *The Dozens* appear. The eleventh stanza in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* criticizes the misconception that African American people would prefer to be white: "AND THEY ASKED ME RIGHT AT CHRISTMAS / IF MY BLACKNESS, WOULD I RUB OFF? / I SAID, ASK YOUR MAMA" (m. 1, s. 11, vv. 1-3, p. 107). This response mocks the absurdity of that misconception, expressing a comical assessment of it. According to this comical assessment, the question –and the idea behind it– is so absurd and far-fetched that it must not be taken seriously but, rather, as a ritualized insult, which is to be answered with a witty insult. Similarly, the misconception that African Americans cannot improve their economic condition and the idea that it is something that should not happen are criticized similarly in the fourth and seventh stanzas in *HORN OF PLENTY*. In the fourth stanza, a middle class African American is asked by white people where he got his money and he responds with another witty insult: "FROM YOUR MAMA" (m. 6, s. 4, pp. 113-114). Likewise, in the seventh stanza, some white asks a middle class African American if he could recommend a maid, to which he answers: "YES, YOUR MAMA" (m. 6, s. 7, p. 115). This response makes the idea that African Americans have to be employed only in domestic jobs a comical insult that is answered with another one.

This way, the political and cultural conflicts that emerged from the struggle to achieve citizenship, where African Americans actively tried to create a new public image for them and

got rid of old prejudices, are portrayed in the poem as a verbal contest of ritualized insults. In it, just like in a game of *The Dozens*, insults are assessed from an exclusively formal and rhetorical point of view regardless of the power relationships that could be maintained between the participants, allowing for the expressions of the powerless to interact those of the more powerful. In other words, the symbolic aspect of cultural and political conflicts is emphasized leaving out the restrictions that the difference of power between the opponent parties brings to them because of the status of the verbal exchange as a ritual or ritualized play.

An example of a very politically-charged conflict that is deprived of its seriousness in its depiction in the poem is the United States presidential elections in 1960. In the second stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, an African American is asked whether he voted for Richard. In a similar vein to the other examples, implying the idea of an African American supporting a conservative republican candidate, who did not show an active commitment to support the Civil Rights Movement, is taken as a ritual insult and answered as such: "VOTED FOR YOUR MAMA" (m. 10, s. 2, p. 118).

Rather than plainly denying white misconceptions, bringing them into the game of *The Dozens* enables African Americans to relativize them through mockery. This mockery in the poem expresses an attitude of joyful relativity towards the debate about the citizenship of the New Negro, since hegemonic views are depicted as the targets of ritualized insults that are as absurd and comical as those views. This is an ambivalent assessment of these misconceptions that affirms and negates them at the same time because, while they are mocked and depicted as absurd, the responses of African Americans are ritualized comical insults that can be answered

the same way. Thus, the debate is portrayed as a symbolic exchange that is open to more questions and more responses regardless of the speakers' backgrounds, and where those questions and responses will continue to be assessed on basis of the dynamics of the ritual.

However, based on those same dynamics, African Americans are depicted in the poem as the ones who deliver the funniest and most rhetorically effective insults. White misconceptions are outwitted by the tradition of humor that is shared among African Americans and represented by The Dozens. In this sense, the response "ASK YOUR MAMA" is a homage to that tradition of humor; a homage that is reinforced by the playful melody of "Shave and Haircut Fifteen Cents", which is played with the rest of the musical accompaniment whenever the phrase appears⁵. As a result, the joy and humor that characterize African Americans are portrayed as advantageous in the symbolic exchange to define their citizenship, transposing their cultural heritage into political relevance.

As stated before, the influence of The Dozens in the poem contributes to the depiction of "THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES" as a carnival square. This assertion is based on Bakhtin's (1984a) description of the carnival square as a place where insults are aesthetized and become significant elements in the interaction among people. With the previous discussion on The Dozens, it is clear that Hughes (1961) aesthetizes ritual insults as they express a cultural and political stand towards the project of the New Negro and create a space for symbolic interaction. Furthermore, due to its status as a carnival square, having "THE QUARTER OF THE

⁵ See Introductory Musical Annotations

NEGROES” as a setting for the aforementioned symbolic interaction opens the possibility for other carnivalistic expressions, namely, parody and masquerade expressions.

Parody and masquerade expressions in the poem

Humor is an essential element in the poem and it is used in different stanzas throughout the poem. Besides the comical speech patterns inspired on *The Dozens*, there are several examples of parody in the poem that also mock the absurdities and misconceptions of different discourses as part of the symbolic exchange between whites and African Americans regarding the citizenship of the New Negro. Stanzas where parody occurs can be divided into those that parody racist ideologies and those that parody the ideology of the supporters of cultural citizenship.

Within the first group of those stanzas, some of them parody the misconception of associating African and African American political aspirations with Communism, which was common during the McCarthy era. In order to interpret these stanzas, it is important to understand the meaning related to the character of Santa Claus in the poem. In the stanzas where Santa Claus appears, he is depicted as a symbol of advance in economic welfare. In the third stanza in *RIDE, RED, RIDE*, Santa Claus’s gifts represent material advance for African American children, as those gifts are books and dolls (m. 2, s. 3, p. 108). However, parodying whites’ misconception that demanding any kind of economic advancement is related to Communism, those gifts are said to be rebellious: “SANTA CLAUS, FORGIVE ME, / BUT YOUR GIFT BOOKS ARE SUBERSIVE, / YOUR DOLLS INTERRACIAL” (m. 2, s. 3, vv. 1-3, p. 108). The parody continues with Santa Claus being interrogated because of the political persecution against

Communists by James Eastland, a southern segregationist politician part of a subcommittee to investigate the Communist Party in the United States during the 1950's.

Similarly, in the seventh stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, a white businessman refers to many African and African American political leaders and activists as Communists or people who should be investigated because of their possible Communist affiliations (m. 10, s. 7, p. 119). However, the businessman's claims become evidently absurd as his lists of names begins to include people from very different backgrounds and ideologies. Starting with the students from the sit-in movement, Fidel Castro –leader of the Cuban Revolution– and African anticolonial leaders –such as Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah–, the list then refers to Ralph Bunche – African American diplomat and political scientists who won the Nobel Peace Prize–, Mary McLeod Bethune –African American educator, activists, philanthropist and stateswoman–, and Robert Weaver –African American Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in Kennedy's administration–, as well as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Lastly, highlighting how absurd and arbitrary the list is, the businessman claims Santa Claus should be investigated because his gifts suggest his Communist affiliations, along with high class African Americans who buy expensive dogs, such as a Doberman Pinscher. Thus, this stanza also parodies said misconception of associating African American struggles with communism.

Other parodies of racist ideologies are related to the lack of attention by the media to African American culture and struggles. For instance, the eighth stanza in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* portrays an unlikely situation that seems absurd in the context of 1960s America because of the Cold War: Ornette Coleman, an influential African American jazz musician,

claims attention from newspapers, which do not have any news regarding the Soviet Union (m. 1, s. 8, p. 106). Because of the unlikeliness of the situation, the verses in this stanza express by means of irony and parody the excessive attention paid by newspapers to Russia at the time.

As for the stanzas that parody the ideology of the supporters of cultural citizenship, they criticize their focus on showing whites that African American are cultured, often neglecting their culture. One example of this is the ninth stanza in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE*. In it, a voice asks African American soprano Leontyne Price what the smell coming from his grandparents' house is and then answers: "LIEDER, LOVELY LIEDER / AND A LEAF OF COLLARD GREENS" (m. 1, s. 9, vv. 4-5, p. 106). As discussed earlier, this blend depicts the link between Price and the traditions of her ancestors, regardless of her career in lyrical singing. Nevertheless, the emphasis given to lieder in the cited verses is ironical, since collard greens are the ones with a clear and identifiable smell. The ironical emphasis parodies African American artists who try to give more importance to their closeness to white art than to their link to African American culture, just like the ones Hughes (1926) criticized in his essay "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain".

Another stanza that criticizes cultural citizenship is the fourth stanza in *HORN OF PLENTY*, which parodies the image of academicism that supporters of cultural citizenship intended to project (m. 6, s. 4, pp. 113-114). In this stanza, after an African American is asked where he got his money, he begins ironically wondering whether his erudition on African American cultural affairs –such as the music of jazz musician Charles Mingus or the life of African American writer Richard Wright–, his sensitivity or his love for his country could have been considered by the whites asking the question. The stanza presents these affairs as irrelevant

in the face of the continuation of racial prejudices, parodying the excessive importance given to them by cultural citizenship:

THEY WONDERED WAS I SENSITIVE / AND HAD A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER? /
DID I NOW CHARLIE MINGUS? / AND WHY RICHARD WRIGHT / LIVE ALL
THAT WHILE IN PARIS / INSTEAD OF COMING HOME TO DECENT DIE / IN
HARLEM OR THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO / OR THE WOMB OF
MISSISSIPPI? / AND ONE SHOULD LOVE ONE'S COUNTRY / FOR ONE'S
COUNTRY IS YOUR MAMA (m. 6, s. 4, vv. 4-13, pp. 113-114).

With this ironical tone, this stanza criticizes the political irrelevance of the academicism embraced by supporters of cultural citizenship to generate a change in whites' misconceptions regarding African Americans.

Just like the parody in the carnival described by Bakhtin (1984a), parodies in the poem are not directed only towards one specific group of people, but they mock the political flaws of both whites and African Americans. This way, the parodies contribute to the openness and the humor of the symbolic interaction that takes place in the poem among the ideologies of African Americans and whites in the definition of the citizenship of the New Negro by removing the seriousness and relativizing racist discourses and the discourse of cultural citizenship. In this sense, as in the case of the speech patterns inspired by *The Dozens*, parodies free the symbolic interaction from the restrictions that the difference of power between whites and African Americans brings to it.

There is yet another element in the poem that contributes with the same freedom: masks. As discussed in the theoretical framework, according to Swartz (2004), two forms of masquerade expression were developed and became part of the carnivalistic set of expressions of African American performing artists during the Harlem Renaissance, which allowed performers to express themselves freely in spite of the audience's racist ideas. These expressions are the assumed mask and the mask of deformation. There are different elements and stanzas in the poem that express the double meaning that characterizes each kind of those masquerade expressions.

One of the most important instances of assumed masks in the poem is the inclusion of speech patterns inspired by *The Dozens*. As discussed in the conceptual framework, misinterpreting the dozens as referential verbal exchanges and considering it to be some kind of cultural deficiency have shown to be racist assessments of the game. Those biased assessments of *The Dozens* illustrate the negative connotations that the game can have if interpreted from a racially prejudiced point of view. Taking this into account, it is reasonable to interpret the inclusion of speech patterns inspired by *The Dozens* by Hughes (1961) as an assumed mask. The apparent meanness and aggressiveness of *The Dozens* that was interpreted as a pathological or backward behavior is depicted in the poem as valuable. As noted earlier, in the poem, the joyful attitude of *The Dozens* and its symbolic meaning is depicted as an advantageous stand in the debate for the citizenship of the New Negro. Similarly, although references to mothers are still present in the verses that resemble speech patterns from *The Dozens*, the poem displaces the apparent sexual focus that the game often has and resignifies those references. Thus, Hughes (1961) takes an element of African American culture that can evoke prejudiced assessments by a

white audience to create a mask and, then, he resignifies it in order to overcome those assessments.

Another instance of an assumed mask in the poem occurs in the twelfth and thirteenth stanzas in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* (m. 1, s. 12 & s. 13, p. 107). In them, a dream is portrayed where Martin Luther King Jr. and other Civil Rights political leaders had assumed the government of Georgia throwing all the segregationist politicians out of it, and where African Americans are wealthy landowners. In this dream, African Americans have white servants and white sharecroppers working for them. African American children even have white “mammies”. Nevertheless, Hughes’s (1981) portrayal of the dream becomes comical and absurd when he introduces them, because segregationist politicians Orval Faubus, James Eastland and John Patterson are said to be the “mammies”.

The assumed mask, in this case, consists in portraying this dream as the political aspirations of African Americans. As explained before, according to Storrs (2015) and Schercker (2009), African American political aspirations were considered to be radical and were associated with the political aspirations of Communism. By depicting a radicalized version of these aspirations, Hughes (1961) creates a mask with the prejudices of white people towards them. The mask is able to overcome the racial prejudices by depicting the absurdity of the dream, which is underlined by the clearly ironic desire of African Americans having segregationist politicians take care of their children. Thus, these stanzas mock the racial prejudices towards African American political aspirations through the mask of radicalized political views. However, not only does the mask mock those prejudices, but it also criticizes the contradiction in the social

organization within traditional southern households. African Americans would never have whites taking care of their children but whites did have African Americans doing it in spite of all the hatred they expressed towards them. With this, Hughes (1961) criticizes that white people do not acknowledge the state of dependence on African Americans that they created for themselves. This dependence constitutes a contradiction with their despising attitude towards African Americans.

Regarding the masks of deformation, as explained by Swartz (2004), jazz is based on this kind of masquerade expressions, since it deforms elements of traditional African American music in order to create new forms of expression. As in the case of the free and familiar contact among cultural traditions, deformation is also transposed from jazz to the poem. Musically, this kind of masquerade expression is found in the blend of more urban and progressive genres of African American music –such as bebop and other styles of jazz– with more traditional genres – such as blues and African drums. In this case, the mask is emphasized by that blend, because the latter consists in a heterogeneous polyphonic blend among musical traditions, rather than a homogeneous one. The components of it are supposed to be identifiable within the blend, as it is suggested in the musical annotations. Hence, the musical blend emphasizes the connections between different genres of African American music. The importance of this connection in the poem is addressed in the following section.

In the case of the verbal material, the exploration of the past and its later deformation is expressed in the contrast between urban African Americans and African American slaves. In different stanzas in the poem, slaves' struggles are brought to the present and resignified in

relation to those of urban African Americans, blurring the temporal distance and linking their struggles. This way, Hughes (1961) creates a mask of slavery for urban African Americans. As a result, the history of slavery is reassessed from an urban point of view and new forms of expression emerge.

One of the expressions resulting from this is the depiction of African American abolitionists as characters from a story told by an African American grandfather. In the fifth stanza in *BIRD IN ORBIT*, an excited voice asks their grandfather if he knows about the stories of abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass, John Brown and Sojourner Truth (m. 10, s. 5, p. 119). This stanza connects the abolition of slavery with the struggle to achieve citizenship through the depiction of a close family relationship between slaves and urban African Americans. The previously analyzed metaphor of Niagara Falls being frozen and that of the bridge of Westchester being a gangplank through which slaves entered the ships to be traded are also examples of how wearing the mask of a slave links past struggles with present ones. The metaphor of Niagara Falls being frozen acknowledges that the fear to stand up for one's rights has been present in both struggles, as the metaphor of the bridge of Westchester does.

The resulting expressions from wearing the mask of slavery create those links due to the creative assessment of the history of slavery from which they come. Rather than negating or expressing shame regarding this history, Hughes's (1961) assessment proudly exalts the emancipatory commitment of abolitionists and considers it to be part of the cultural heritage of urban African Americans. However, although, slaves also faced the fear of being displaced, persecuted, segregated, mistreated or killed, their commitment led them to succeed. As explained

before, this commitment is depicted by the image of Niagara Falls melting as slaves escape to the North.

The musical accompaniment of the stanzas where the mask of slavery appears also exalts abolitionists emancipatory commitment. In the second stanza in ODE TO DINAH –which refers to the Underground Railroad– (m. 4, s. 2, pp. 109-110), and in the fifth stanza in BIRD IN ORBIT –which refers to other abolitionists– (m. 10, s. 5, p. 119), the musical annotations indicate musicians to play the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”. According to Hughes (1958c), this song is one of America’s greatest songs and it is a song of conflict that expresses the commitment to fight. Thus, this song contributes to the exaltation of abolitionists emancipatory commitment.

Just like in the Harlem Renaissance performing arts, the masquerade expressions in the poem allow for the resignification of racist representations in order to express new meanings. In the case of the assumed masks, the stereotypes of African Americans being violent and having radical political aspirations are resignified to mock whites’ misconceptions. In the case of the masks of deformation, remembering slavery as part of African Americans’ history is resignified as well in order to exalt abolitionists’ emancipatory commitment. This last masquerade expression reinforces the criticism that, unless African Americans recover the vitality of their culture and transpose it into a political commitment, they will not achieve citizenship and social development. However, the emancipatory commitment is not just recalled in the poem but revitalized and brought to the present through poetry and music. What drives this revitalization of the emancipatory commitment of African Americans in the poem is, not just the mask of slavery, but the *mésalliance* between happiness and sadness that characterizes African American culture, which are transposed to the poem.

The happy sad *mésalliance* of African American music in the poem

As discussed in the conceptual framework, African drums, blues and jazz all share the characteristic of expressing happy and sad feelings simultaneously. The music of African drums allowed slaves to dance joyfully and forget about their bondage, while missing their homeland. Blues songs express the laughter of someone trying not to cry when they are troubled. Jazz, in turn, conveys the longing and the excitement of fulfilling a dream in the face of an unfair reality. In all these genres, the vitality of the music comes from a feeling of happiness that is able to put up with a deep sorrow. This way, the seriousness and harshness of the situations, from which these genres emerged are relativized by the joy and laughter of the music. Because of this, it is reasonable to categorize the happy sad character of African American music as a carnivalistic *mésalliance*. This *mésalliance* is transposed to the poem, allowing for the expression of joy, laughter and hope in contrast to the harsh realities that it denounces.

The revitalization the emancipatory commitment of abolitionists is one the instances of this *mésalliance* in the poem. The stanzas that depict the fear of being displaced, persecuted, segregated, mistreated or killed in a racist context are contrasted with the joyful and encouraging music of African drums. For example, the third annotation in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE*, which describes the music accompanying to the seventh stanza in that mood, indicates that African drums join the music around the verses where the metaphor of the bridge of Westchester is introduced (m. 1, a. 3, p. 99). It must be recalled that this metaphor depicts that kind of fear. Another example of this is the musical accompaniment to the second stanza in *ODE TO DINAH* (m. 4, a. 6, p. 110). It describes drums beating strongly after the stanza introduces the metaphors of a "A BAR WITH WINDOWS FROSTED" (m. 4, s. 2, v. 20, p. 110) and that of Niagara Falls being frozen, both of which depict such fear as well. These drums play as the last verses of said stanza joyously and triumphantly recall the vitality of Congo Square, a place in New Orleans where slaves organized

dances: "BONGO-BONGO! CONGO! / BUFFALO AND BONGO! NIAGARA OF THE INDIANS / NIAGARA OF THE CONGO" (m. 4, s. 2, vv. 22-25, p. 110). The contrast between the fear felt by African Americans in a racist society and the joy and vitality of African drums expresses hope in the struggle to achieve citizenship.

Similarly, many stanzas that depict issues of urban African Americans are accompanied by blues, expressing the same hope. Stanzas that depict poverty and segregation are often accompanied by some variation of blues, such as the first two stanzas in *CULTURAL EXCHANGE* (m. 1, a. 1, pp. 105-106), and the sixth stanza in the same mood (m. 1, a. 3, p. 106). All these stanzas, as discussed earlier, depict differentiated access to services and poor living conditions in the suburbs. These issues are contrasted with "old-time traditional 12 bar blues" in the first and second stanza, and with the "Hesitation Blues" in the sixth one. This is also the case in other similar stanzas. For instance, the first and third stanzas in *ODE TO DINAH*, where African Americans' lack access to culture is portrayed and traditional blues and the "Hesitation Blues", correspondingly, as well (m. 4, a. 2 & a. 8, pp. 109-110).

However, the music indicated by the musical annotations is not the only element in the poem that expresses the happy sad *mésalliance* inspired by African American music. Humor is another element that expresses it. The parodies, assumed masks and speech patterns borrowed from *The Dozens* respond with laughter to the unfairness of whites' misconceptions, conveying an attitude of joyful relativity. As noted before, this attitude suppresses the seriousness of the oppression exerted by hegemonic discourses and allows for the humor of those expressions to bring joy to the struggle of achieving citizenship. Hughes (1961) actually acknowledges and

exalts this attitude in the fifth stanza in *ASK YOUR MAMA* by stating that African Americans would keep struggling regardless of what others say about them: "BRICKBATS BURST LIKE BALOONS / BUT HEARTS KEEP DOGGED BEATING / SELDOM BURSTING / UNLIKE BUBLES / UNLIKE BRICKBATS / FAR FROM STONE" (m. 9, s. 5, vv. 7-12, p. 117).

In fact, there are several stanzas in the poem that also emphasize the joy of standing up for one's rights. As much as the poem criticizes the loss of vitality and commitment in urban African Americans, it also depicts instances where the joy of apparently small achievements, or just dreams, improves African Americans' commitment to struggle for their citizenship. The fourth stanza in *RIDE, RED, RIDE* portrays an African American feeling happy and hopeful because of his economic advance, represented by the character of Santa Claus and the metaphor of him riding a Jaguar: "RIDING IN A JAGUAR, SANTA CLAUS, / SEEMS LIKE ONCE I MET YOU / WITH ADAM POWELL FOR CHAUFFEUR / AND YOUR HAIR WAS BLOWING BACK / IN THE WIND" (m. 2, s. 4, vv. 2-6, p. 108). Following the third musical annotation in this mood, this stanza is accompanied by a "Loud and lively up-tempo Dixieland jazz", which emphasizes both the longing and the joy behind the character's achievements (m. 2, a. 3, p. 108). The metaphor of the Jaguar also expresses hope in the increasing political participation of African American in politics due to his reference to Adam Clayton Powell Jr., who was the first person of African American descent to be elected to the New York Congress. Similarly, the third stanza in *SHADES OF PIGMEAT* depicts the joy and the hope of an African American celebrating his achievements and dreams:

HIP BOOTS / DEEP IN BLUES / (AND I NEVER HAD A HIP BOOT ON) / HAIR /
BLOWING BACK IN THE WIND / (AND I NEVER HAD THAT MUCH HAIR) /
DIAMONDS IN PAWN / (AND I NEVER HAD A DIAMOND / IN MY NATURAL LIFE) /
ME / IN THE WHITE HOUSE / (AND AIN'T NEVER HAD A BLACK HOUSE) (m. 3, s. 3,
vv. 1-12, pp. 108-109).

Another stanza that depicts this kind of joy is the first one in *BLUES IN STEREO*, where the small chance of succeeding in achieving better life conditions for African Americans is compared to winning the lottery, but is assessed as the promise of a triumph:

YOUR NUMBER'S COMING OUT! / BOUQUETS I'LL SEND YOU / AND DREAMS I'LL
SEND YOU / AND HORSES SHOD WITH GOLD / ON WHICH TO RIDE IF MOTORCARS
/ WOULD BE TOO TAME— / TRIUMPHAL ENTRY SEND YOU— / SHOUTS FROM THE
EARTH ITSELF / BARE FEET TO BEAT THE GREAT DRUMBEAT / OF GLORY TO
YOUR NAME AND MINE / ONE AND THE SAME: / YOU BAREFOOT, TOO (m. 5, s. 1,
vv. 1-12, p. 112).

Besides the joyful and triumphant tone of the promises, it is important to note that, in this stanza, the mask of slavery expresses hope and commitment again. On the one hand, the verse about beating the drumbeat is a metaphor where the music of African drums represents experiencing freedom. On the other hand, that freedom is depicted by the image of a freed slaves, which used to be called “barefoot”, linking once again the aspirations of slaves with those of urban African Americans. This way, this stanza celebrates the opportunity to struggle to achieve better life conditions in the path to freedom regardless of how small the chance to succeed is.

Some verses in the poem portray a similar attitude, expressing the will to live a better life in spite of the circumstances. All these verses have in common that they resemble the lyrics of a blues song in that they feature a questioning pattern like that in "Hesitation Blues". From the fifteenth to the twentieth verse in the third stanza in ODE TO DINAH, a voice asks what time it is and, then, asserts that they are going to follow their intentions regardless of the time: "*WHAT TIME IS IT NOW? / DON'T CARE WHAT TIME IT IS- / GONNA LOVE YOU ANYHOW*" (m. 4, s. 3, vv. 15-20, pp. 110). This last verse depicts the unbreakable commitment to lead a happy life. Likewise, from the first to the sixth verses in the third stanza in BLUES IN STEREO depict the same commitment: "*WHAT TIME IS IT NOW? / MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME- / BUT I'M ASKING ANYHOW*" (m. 5, s. 3, vv. 1-6, p. 112). Moreover, the determination in these verses contrasts with the questions of the leitmotif of the poem, the "Hesitation Blues". While it asks "*How long must I wait? Can I get it now-or must I hesitate?*" (m. 1, a. 5, pp. 106-107), the cited verses state that there is nothing to wait for in the struggle to achieve citizenship.

However, just as important as the expression of feeling of joy and determination in the poem is the depiction of them as expressions of a force that comes from the experience itself of being an African American. The clearest instance of this depiction is the mood JAZZTET MUTED. In its first stanza, the slightly higher blood pressure that African Americans are prone to because of genetics becomes a metaphor of their vitality and commitment to change (m. 11, s. 1, p. 111). This metaphor is combined with another metaphor where fire represents the expression of such vitality and commitment in music: "*IN THE NEGROES OF THE QUARTER / PRESSURE OF THE BLOOD IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER / IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES / SUDDENLY CATCHING FIRE / FROM THE WING TIP OF A MATCH TIP /*"

ON THE BREATH OF ORNETTE COLEMAN” (m. 11, s. 1, vv. 1-6, p. 120). These verses depict saxophonist Ornette Coleman’s revolutionary approach to jazz –which is known to have been pioneering in the style of free jazz– as a product of his African American heritage and as an expression of the vitality that he inherited. Both metaphors are reintroduced in the second stanza in the same mood: “TO THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES / WHERE THE PRESSURE OF THE BLOOD / IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER– / DUE TO SMOLDERING SHADOWS / THAT SOMETIMES TURN TO FIRE” (m. 11, s. 2, vv. 8-12, p. 120). The accompaniment of this mood depicts this relationship between present expressions of vitality and commitment and cultural heritage as well. It begins with bop blues –a style of jazz that, in spite of its innovation is rooted in blues– that changes into “*very modern jazz burning the air like a neon swamp-fire cooled by dry ice*” (m. 11, a. 1, p. 120).

A similar link between older and newer styles of African American music was noted in the previous section and it is relevant to understand how these links create meaning in the poem. As in the case of the musical accompaniment to the mood JAZZTET MUTED, there are musical annotations throughout the poem where older styles of music are blended with more modern ones. That is the case of the first and third musical annotations in CULTURAL EXCHANGE (m. 1, a. 1 & a. 3, pp. 105-106), as well as the second annotation in BLUES IN STEREO (m. 5, a. 2, p. 112), where African drums merge with blues. These kinds of blends highlight the similarities among different genres and styles of African American music, suggesting a common history. This way, the poem depicts all these genres and styles sharing the happy sad *mésalliance* proposed by Hughes (1958a). Nonetheless, not only does the poem depict a common history of the genres and styles of African American music, but –as explained earlier– it also portrays a

common history of struggle among African peoples. Besides sharing similar issues, the links that the poem creates among these peoples suggest that they all have a similar commitment to struggle. This commitment comes from the joy, hope and determination and relativizing perspective that result from the same happy sad *mésalliance*. Thus, Hughes (1961) depicts this *mésalliance* as an inherent characteristic of the experience of African and African American peoples.

All the stanzas, verses and other elements in the poem addressed in the present section express feelings of determination and joy that contrast with the harshness of all the social issues that are depicted and denounced by the poem. This contrasts, in turn, relativizes the ever present sorrow and resentment portrayed in the stanzas addressed in the first section of the interpretation. As a result, although the poem criticizes racial segregation and the failures of the cultural citizenship project depicting that sorrow and resentment, it also conveys hope in the struggle for African Americans' citizenship through the exaltation of the vitality of African American culture and its rootedness in African heritage. This ambivalence is explained by the transposition of the happy sad *mésalliance* of African American music to the poem. Hence, as in the case of the humor of *The Dozens* and the openness of jazz, Hughes (1961) assesses the happy sad *mésalliance* of African American music as a valuable characteristic of African American culture that is politically advantageous and that is to be acknowledged and embraced in the struggles of African Americans.

Furthermore, in line with Bakhtin's (1984a) definition of eccentricity in the carnival, all these expressions lie in this category, as they can be considered expressions of the latent sides of

human nature that result from free familiar contact in the carnival. The happy sad *mésalliance* of African American music, ritualized insults, the masks and the parodies all depend on that free familiar relationship, which in the case of the poem is transposed from the game of The Dozens and jazz, and they allow for the expression of laughter, joy and vitality. In the context of racism and segregation, those are sides of the African American experience that do not normally had a place in American society in the first half of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

As discussed in the first section of the interpretation, the poem points out four major issues regarding the state of racial affairs in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. The first one is the extended disinformation and misconceptions in relation to African Americans and their culture. The second one consists in the continuation of poverty and segregation for African Americans. The third one is the lack of access to African American cultural expressions, especially dance and music performances, for working class African Americans. Finally, the fourth one, and the most important one, consists in the stagnation of urban African Americans' lives in segregation. The poem denounces all these issues, criticizing whites and supporters of the cultural citizenship project for the persistence of racial segregation in spite of the rise of African American culture into the mainstream and the generalized economic advance of the country.

This criticism, however, acquires a carnivalistic character due to the attitude of joyful relativity and ambivalence from which the poem assesses racial conflicts and issues. There are four elements in it that express such an attitude. First, the poem provides racial conflicts with a setting where relationships of free and familiar contact are maintained among people. This setting is a result of the transposition of, on the one hand, the dialogic nature of jazz in relation to musical traditions and, on the other hand, the ritualistic status of *The Dozens* to the poem. The transposition of the dialogic nature of jazz allows for the contact among different African American and African peoples, emphasizing a history of common struggle that is shared by them all regardless of their cultural, social and historical backgrounds, and expressing a sense of solidarity among them. The transposition of the ritualistic status of *The Dozens*, in turn, results in

the depiction of racial conflicts as an exchange of ritualized insults, highlighting their symbolic aspect, leaving out the restrictions that the difference of power between races gives to them, and removing the seriousness from whites' misconceptions about African Americans.

The second element in the poem that expresses its attitude of joyful relativity and ambivalence is parody. Just like parody in the carnival, parodies in the poem are not directed only towards one specific group of people, but they mock the absurdities and misconceptions of both whites and African Americans as part of the symbolic interchange between them regarding the citizenship of the New Negro. Parodies also remove the seriousness of hegemonic discourses on race and relativize them. As with ritualized insults, this contributes to free the symbolic interaction from the restrictions that come with the difference of power between races.

Masks are the third element in the poem that expresses said attitude. They are assumed masks and masks of deformation and allow for the resignification of racist representations. In the case of the assumed masks, the stereotypes of African Americans being violent and having radical political aspirations are resignified to mock whites' misconceptions. Masks of deformation remind of slavery as part of African Americans' history, which is resignified as well, in order to exalt, revitalize and bring abolitionists' emancipatory commitment to the present.

Finally, as a fourth element, the poem embodies a happy sad *mésalliance* that was transposed to it from African American music. This *mésalliance* is the most important of all the elements related to the attitude of joyful relativity and ambivalence in the poem since it is a transversal element in the poem. The *mésalliance* is expressed by different stanzas, verses, masks and annotations in the poem and it allows for the expression of joy, laughter and hope in contrast to the harsh situations that it denounces.

This contrast relativizes sorrow and resentment of those situations, resulting in the ambivalence between criticizing racial segregation and the failures of the cultural citizenship project and conveying hope in the struggle for African Americans' citizenship. The happy sad *mésalliance* also allows for eccentric expressions of joy, laughter and vitality that come from African American culture and have been put aside by the urban American social organizations of the first half of the twentieth century.

Taking into account all these elements, "Ask your Mama: Twelve Moods for Jazz" is conceived as a carnivalized critique, whose carnivalistic point of view is expressed through those four elements. The ambivalence of this point of view allows the poem to combine social commentary on the racial issues addressed in this paper with the exaltation of the joy, vitality and determination of African American culture. The combination of these two aspects underlies the attitude of joyful relativity of the poem, which is inspired by the happy sad *mésalliance* of African American music. Just like African drums, blues and jazz, the poem is an expression of joy and laughter that relativizes the seriousness and harshness of African American social issues. Particularly, it fills the longing and struggle to achieve citizenship with joy and commitment. Moreover, the poem portrays the vitality that it expresses as an inherent characteristic of the experience of being African American, assessing African American culture as an advantage in the political confrontation against racial segregation that must not be overlooked.

The interpretation of the poem that is supported in this paper offers a perspective that could serve as a meeting point between the interpretations of the poem as a celebration and resignification of African American traditions and cultural expressions, and interpretations of it

as a critique of American society, because the inclusion of Bakhtin's (1984a) theory of carnivalization in literature allows for a clearer identification and characterization of the link between culture and politics in the poem. Given that the political significance of the carnivalistic expressions and categories proposed by Bakhtin's (1984a) are based on the joyful relativity that they embody, Carnivalization in literature can provide an account of Hughes's (1961) assessment of African American cultural expressions as a politically relevant, which is also based on the joy expressed by those expressions. This perspective also explains the strong link noted by different authors between the experimental form of the poem and its political significance. Nevertheless, interpreting a poem that is greatly influenced by African American culture and to a lesser by American literature with a theory of carnivalization that was meant to explain the influence of European folk traditions in European literature begs the question of why and how there could be a relationship between this apparently distant traditions. This question must be considered in further works dealing with carnivalization.

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Annex - Corpus

Introductory Musical Annotations

The traditional folk melody of the "Hesitation Blues" is the leitmotif for this poem. In and around it, along with the other recognizable melodies employed, there is room for spontaneous jazz improvisation, particularly between stanzas, where the voice pauses.

The musical figurine indicated after each "Ask your mama" line may incorporate the impudent little melody of the old break, "Shave and a haircut, fifteen cents."

Mood 1: CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE	<i>The rhythmically rough scraping of a guira continues monotonously until a lonely flute call,</i>	1
2	IN THE QUARTER		
3	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
4	WHERE DOORS ARE DOORS OF PAPER		
5	DUST OF DINGY ATOMS		
6	BLOWS A SCRATCHY SOUND.		
7	AMORPHOUS JACK-O'-LANTERNS CAPER		
8	AND THE WIND WON'T WAIT FOR MIDNIGHT		
9	FOR FUN TO BLOW DOORS DOWN.		

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	BY THE RIVER AND THE RAILROAD	<i>high and far away, merges into piano variations on German lieder</i>	
2	WITH FLUID FAR-OFF GOING		
3	BOUNDARIES BIND UNBINDING		
4	A WHIRL OF WHISTLES BLOWING		
5	NO TRAINS OR STEAMBOATS GOING--		
6	YET LEONTYNE'S UNPACKING.		

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES	<i>gradually changing into old-time traditional 12-bar blues</i>	
2	WHERE THE DOORKNOB LETS IN LIEDER		
3	MORE THAN GERMAN EVER BORE,		
4	HER YESTERDAY PAST GRANDPA--		
5	NOT OF HER OWN DOING--		
6	IN A POT OF COLLARD GREENS		
7	IS GENTLY STEWING.		

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	THERE, FORBID US TO REMEMBER,	<i>up strong between stanzas until African drums throb against blues</i>	
2	COMES AND AFRICAN IN MID-DECEMBER		
3	SENT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT		
4	AMONG THE SHACKS TO MEET THE BLACKS:		
5	LEONTYNE SAMMY HARRY POITER		
6	LOVELY LENA MARIAN LOUIS PEARLIE MAE		

Verse	Stanza 5	Annotation	No.
1	GEORGE S. SCHUYLER MOLTO BENE	<i>fading as the music ends.</i>	2
2	COME WHAT MAY LANGSTON HUGHES		
3	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
4	WHERE THE RAILROAD AND THE RIVER		
5	HAVE DOORS THAT FACE EACH WAY		
6	AND THE ENTRANCE TO THE MOVIE'S		
7	UP AN ALLEY UP THE SIDE.		

Verse	Stanza 6	Annotation	No.
1	PUSHCARTS FOLD AND UNFOLD	<i>"Hesitation Blues" with full band up strong for a chorus in the clear</i>	3
2	IN A SUPERMARKET SEA.		
3	AND WE BETTER FIND OUT, MAMA,		
4	WHERE IS THE COLORED LAUNDROMAT,		
5	SINCE WE MOVED UP TO MOUNT VERNON.		

Verse	Stanza 7	Annotation	No.
1	RALPH ELLISON AS VESPUCIUS	<i>between stanzas then down under voice softly as deep-toned distant African drums join the blues until the music dies. ...</i>	
2	INA-YOURA AT THE MASTHEAD		
3	ARNA BONTEMPS CHIEF CONSULTANT		
4	MOLTO BENE MELLOW BABY PEARLIE MAE		
5	SHALOM ALEICHEM JIMMY BALDWIN SAMMY		
6	COME WHAT MAY-THE SIGNS POINT:		
*7	GHANA GUINEA		
8	AND THE TOLL BRIDGE FROM WESTCHESTER		
9	IS A GANGPLANK ROCKING RISKY		
10	BETWEEN THE DECK AND SHORE		
11	OF A BOAT THAT NEVER QUITE		
12	KNEW ITS DESTINATION.		

Verse	Stanza 8	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES	TACIT	4
2	ORNETTE AND CONSTERNATION		
3	CLAIM ATTENTION FROM THE PAPERS		
4	THAT HAVE NO NEWS THAT DAY OF MOSCOW.		

Verse	Stanza 9	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE POT BEHIND THE	<i>Delicate lieder on piano continues between stanzas to merge softly into the melody of the "Hesitation Blues" asking</i>	5
2	PAPER DOORS WHAT'S COOKING?		
3	WHAT'S SMELLING, LEONTYNE?		
4	LIEDER, LOVELY LIEDER		
5	AND A LEAF OF COLLARD GREEN.		
6	LOVELY LIEDER LEONTYNE.		

	<i>its haunting question, "How long must I wait? Can I get it now—or must I hesitate?" Suddenly the drums roll like thunder as the music ends sonorously.</i>	
--	---	--

(...)

Verse	Stanza 11	Annotation	No.
1	AND THEY ASKED ME RIGHT AT CHRISTMAS	TACIT	6
2	IF MY BLACKNESS, WOULD I RUB OFF?		
3	I SAID, ASK YOUR MAMA.	<i>Figure impishly</i>	7

Verse	Stanza 12	Annotation	No.
1	DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES...	<i>into "Dixie" ending in high shrill flute call.</i> TACIT	8
2	NIGHTMARES... DREAMS! OH!		
3	DREAMING THAT THE NEGROES		
4	OF THE SOUTH HAVE TAKEN OVER—		
5	VOTED ALL THE DIXIECRATS		
6	RIGHT OUT OF POWER—		
7	COMES THE <i>COLORED HOUR</i> :		
8	MARTIN LUTHER KING IS GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA,		
9	DR. RUFUS CLEMENT HIS CHIEF ADVISOR,		
10	ZELMA WATSON GEORGE THE HIGH GRAND WORTHY.		
11	IN WHITE PILLARED MANSIONS		
12	SITTING ON THEIR WIDE VERANDAS,		
13	WEALTHY NEGROES HAVE WHITE SERVANTS,		
14	WHITE SHARECROPPERS WORK THE BLACK PLANTATIONS,		
15	AND COLORED CHILDREN HAVE WHITE MAMIES:		

Verse	Stanza 13	Annotation	No.
*1	MAMMY FAUBUS	<i>"When the Saints Go Marching In"</i> <i>joyously for two full choruses with maracas. ...</i>	9
*2	MAMMY EASTLAND		
*3	MAMMY PATTERSON.		
4	DEAR, <i>DEAR</i> DARLING OLD WHITE MAMMIES—		
5	SOMETIMES EVEN BURIED WITH OUR FAMILY		
*6	<i>DEAR</i> OLD		
*7	MAMMY FAUBUS!		
8	<i>CULTURE</i> , THEY SAY, IS A <i>TWO-WAY STREET</i> :		
9	HAND ME MY MINT JULEP, MAMMY.		
*10	MAKE HASTE!		

Mood 2: RIDE, RED, RIDE

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	I WANT TO SEE MY MOTHER	<i>Maracas continue rhythms of "When the Saints Go Marching In" until the piano gently supplies a softly lyrical calypso joined now by the flute that ends in a high discordant cry.</i>	1
2	WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED UP YONDER		
3	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES:		
*4	TELL ME HOW LONG—		
*5	MUST I WAIT?		
*6	CAN I GET IT NOW?		
*7	ÇA IRA! ÇA IRA!		
*8	OR MUST I HESITATE?		
*9	IRA! BOY, IRA!		

(...)

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	SANTA CLAUS, FORGIVE ME,	TACIT	2
2	BUT YOUR GIFT BOOKS ARE SUBERSIVE,		
3	YOUR DOLLS ARE INTERRACIAL.		
4	YOU'LL BE CALLED BY EASTLAND.		
5	WHEN THEY ASK YOU IF YOU KNEW ME,		
6	DON'T TAKE THE FIFTH AMENDMENT.		

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES	<i>Loud and lively up-tempo Dixieland jazz for full chorus to end.</i>	3
2	RIDING IN A JAGUAR, SANTA CLAUS,		
3	SEEMS LIKE ONCE I MET YOU		
4	WITH ADAM POWELL FOR CHAUFFEUR		
5	AND YOUR HAIR WAS BLOWING BACK		
6	IN THE WIND.		

Mood 3: SHADES OF PIGMEAT

(...)

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	HIP BOOTS	<i>"Eli Eli" merging into a wailing Afro-Arabic theme with flutes and steady drum beat changing into blues with each instrument gradually</i>	1
2	DEEP IN BLUES		
3	(AND I NEVER HAD A HIP BOOT ON)		
*4	HAIR		
5	BLOWING BACK IN THE WIND		
6	(AND I NEVER HAD THAT MUCH HAIR)		
7	DIAMONDS IN PAWN		
8	(AND I NEVER HAD A DIAMOND		
9	IN MY NATURAL LIFE)		
*10	ME		

11	IN THE WHITE HOUSE	<i>dropping out one by one leaving only the flute at the end playing a whimsical little blues of its own. ...</i>	
12	(AND AIN'T NEVER HAD A BLACK HOUSE)		
*13	DO, JESUS!		
*14	LORD!		
*15	AMEN!		

Mood 4: ODE TO DINAH

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES	TACIT	1
2	WHERE TO SNOW NOW ACCLIMATED		
3	SHADOWS SHOW UP SHARPER,		
4	THE ONE COIN IN THE METER		
5	KEEPS THE GAS ON WHILE THE TV		
6	FAILS TO GET PEARL BAILEY		
7	SINCE IT'S SNOWING ON THE TV		
8	THIS LAST QUARTER OF CENTENNIAL		
9	100-YEARS EMANCIPATION		
10	MECHANICS NEED REPAIRING		
11	FOR NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN		
12	AS IS CUSTOM BELOW ZERO.		
13	MAMA'S FRUITCAKE SENT FROM GEORGIA		
14	CRUMBLES AS IT'S NIBBLED		
15	TO A DISC BY DINAH		
16	IN THE RUM THAT WAFTS MARACAS		
17	FROM ANOTHER DISTANT QUARTER		
18	TO THIS QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
19	WHERE THE SONG'S MAHALIA'S DAUGHTER		
20	STEP-FATHERED BY BLIND LEMON		
21	STEP-FATHERED BY		
22	BLIND LEMON...		

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	WHEN NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN	TACIT	3
2	THERE'S A BAR WITH WINDOWS FROSTED		
3	FROM THE COLD THAT MAKES NIAGARA		
4	GHOSTLY MONUMENT OF WINTER	<i>Verse of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" through refrain repeated ever softer to fade out slowly here</i>	4
5	TO A BAND THAT ONCE PASSED OVER		
6	WITH A WOMAN WITH TWO PISTOLS		
7	ON A TRAIN THAT LOST NO PASSENGERS		
8	ON THE LINE WHOSE ROUTE WAS FREEDOM		
9	THROUGH THE JUNGLE OF WHITE DANGER		
10	TO THE HEAVEN OF WHITE QUAKERS		
11	WHOSE HAYMOW WAS A MANGER MANGER		
12	WHERE THE CHRIST CHILD ONCE HAD LAIN.		
13	SO THE WHITENESS AND THE WATER		

CARNIVALIZATION IN LANGSTON HUGHES'S "ASK YOUR MAMA: TWELVE MOODS FOR JAZZ"

14	MELT TO WATER ONCE AGAIN	TACIT	5		
15	AND THE ROAR OF NIAGARA				
16	DROWNS THE RUMBLE OF THAT TRAIN				
17	DISTANT ALMOST NOW AS DISTANT				
18	AS FORGOTTEN PAIN IN THE QUARTER				
19	QUARTER OF THE NEGROES				
20	WITH A BAR WITH FROSTED WINDOWS				
21	NO CONDUCTOR AND NO TRAIN.			<i>Drums up strong for interlude and out.</i>	6
*22	BONGO-BONGO! CONGO!				
*23	BUFFALO AND BONGO!				
*24	NIAGARA OF THE INDIANS!				
*25	NIAGRA OF THE CONGO!				

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	BUFFALO TO HARLEM'S OVERNIGHT:	TACIT	7
2	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
3	WHERE THE WHITE SHADOWS PASS,		
4	DARK SHADOWS BECOME DARKER BY A SHADE		
5	SUCKED IN BY FAT JUKEBOXES		
6	WHERE DINAH'S SONGS ARE MADE		
7	FROM SLABS OF SILVER SHADOWS.		
8	AS EACH QUARTER CLINKS		
9	INTO A MILLION POOLS OF QUARTERS		
10	TO BE CARTED OFF BY BRINK'S,		
11	THE SHADES OF DINAH'S SINGIN		
12	MAKE A SPANGLE OUT OF QUARTERS RINGING		
13	TO KEEP FAR-OFF CANARIES		
14	IN SILVER CAGES SINGING.		
*15	<i>TELL ME, PRETTY PAPA,</i>		
*16	<i>WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?</i>		
*17	<i>PRETTY PAPA, PRETTY PAPA,</i>		
*18	<i>WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?</i>		
*19	<i>DON'T CARE WHAT TIME IT IS--</i>		
*20	<i>GONNA LOVE YOU ANYHOW</i>		
21	WHILE NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN.		

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	SANTA CLAUS, FORGIVE ME,	TACIT	9
2	BUT BABIES BORN IN SHADOWS		
3	IN THE SHADOW OF THE WELFARE		
4	IF BORN PREMATURE		
5	BRING WELFARE CHECKS MUCH SOONER		
6	YET NO PRESENT DOWN THE CHIMNEY.		

Verse	Stanza 5	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE SHADOW OF THE WELFARE		
2	CHOCOLATE BABIES BORN IN SHADOWS		
3	ARE TRIBAL NOW NO LONGER		

4	SAVE IN MEMORIES OF GANGRENOUS ICING	<i>Drums alone softly merging into the ever-questioning "Hesitation Blues" beginning slowly</i>	10
5	ON A TWENTY-STORY HOUSING PROJECT		
6	THE CHOCOLATE GANGRENOUS ICING		
*7	<i>JUST WAIT.</i>		
8	TRIBAL NOW NO LONGER PAPA MAMA		
9	IN RELATION TO THE CHILD,		
10	ONCE YOUR BROTHER'S KEEPER		
11	NOW NOT EVEN KEEPER TO YOUR CHILD–		
12	SHELTERED NOW NO LONGER.		
13	BORN TO GROW UP WILD–		
14	TRIBAL NOW NO LONGER ONE FOR ALL		
15	AND ALL FOR ONE NO LONGER		
16	EXCEPT IN MEMORIES OF HATE		
17	UMBILICAL IN SULPHUROUS CHOCOLATE		
*18	<i>GOT TO WAIT–</i>		
19	THIS LAST QUARTER OF CENTENIAL		
*20	GOT TO WAIT.		

Verse	Stanza 6	Annotation	No.
1	<i>I WANT TO GO TO THE SOW, MAMA.</i>	<i>but gradually building up-tempo as the</i>	
*2	<i>NO SHOW FARE, BABY–</i>		
*3	<i>NOT THESE DAYS.</i>		

Verse	Stanza 7	Annotation	No.
1	ON THE BIG SCREEN OF THE WELFARE CHECK	<i>metronome of fate begins to</i>	
2	A LYNCHED TOMORROW SWAYS...		
3	WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED A		
4	LYNCHED TOMORROW SWAYS.		

Verse	Stanza 8	Annotation	No.
1	LIVING 20 YEARS IN 10	<i>tick faster and faster as the music dies</i>	
2	BETTER HURRY, BETTER HURRY		
3	BEFORE THE PRESENT BECOMES WHEN		
*4	AND YOU'RE 50		
*5	WHEN YOU'RE 40		
*6	40 WHEN YOU'RE 30		
*7	30 WHEN YOU'RE 20		
*8	20 WHEN YOU'RE 10		
9	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
10	WHERE THE PENDULUM IS SWINGING		
11	TO THE SHADOW OF THE BLUES		
12	EVEN WHEN YOU'RE WINNING		
13	THERE'S NO WAY NOT TO LOSE.		

(...)

Mood 5: BLUES IN STEREO

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	YOUR NUMBER'S COMING OUT!	TACIT	1
2	BOUQUETS I'LL SEND YOU		
3	AND DREAMS I'LL SEND YOU		
4	AND HORSES SHOD WITH GOLD		
5	ON WHICH TO RIDE IF MOTORCARS		
6	WOULD BE TOO TAME-		
7	TRIUMPHAL ENTRY SEND YOU-		
8	SHOUTS FROM THE EARTH ITSELF		
9	BARE FEET TO BEAT THE GREAT DRUMBEAT		
10	OF GLORY TO YOUR NAME AND MINE		
11	ONE AND THE SAME:		
12	YOU BAREFOOT, TOO,		
13	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
14	WHERE AN ANCIENT RIVER FLOWS		
15	PAST HUTS THAT HOUSE A MILLION BLACKS		
16	AND THE WHITE GOD NEVER GOES		
17	FOR THE MOON WOULD WHITE HIS WHITENESS		
18	BEYOND ITS MASK OF WHITENESS		
19	AND THE NIGHT MIGHT BE ASTONISHED		
20	AND SO LOSE ITS REPOSE.		

(...)

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
*1	<i>WHAT TIME IS IT, MAMA?</i>	<i>African drum-beats over blues that gradually mount in intensity to end in climax.</i>	2
*2	<i>WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?</i>		
*3	<i>MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME-</i>		
*4	<i>BUT I'M ASKING ANYHOW.</i>		
*5	<i>WHAT TIME IS IT, MAMA?</i>		
*6	<i>WHAT TIME NOW?</i>		

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	DOWN THE LONG HARD ROW THAT I BEEN HOEING	TACIT	3
2	I THOUGHT I HEARD THE HORN OF PLENTY BLOWING.		
3	BUT I GOT TO GET A NEW ANTENNA, LORD-		
4	MY TV KEEPS ON SNOWING.		

Mood 6: HORN OF PLENTY

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	SINGERS	TACIT	1
2	SINGERS LIKE O-		
3	SINGERS LIKE ODETTA-AND THAT STATUE		
4	ON BEDLOE'S ISLAND MANAGED BY SOL HUOK		
5	DANCERS BOJANGLES LATE LAMENTED \$\$\$\$		
6	KATHERINE DUNHAM AL AND LEON \$\$\$\$		
7	ARTHUR CARMEN ALVIN MARY \$\$\$\$\$\$		

CARNIVALIZATION IN LANGSTON HUGHES'S "ASK YOUR MAMA: TWELVE MOODS FOR JAZZ"

8	JAZZERS DUKE AND DIZZY ERIC DOLPHY \$\$\$		
9	MILES AND ELLA AND MISS NINA \$\$\$\$\$\$		
10	STRAYHORN HIS BACKSTAGE WITH LUTHER \$\$		
11	<i>DO YOU READ MUSIC?</i> AND LOUIS SAYING \$\$		
12	<i>NOT ENOUGH TO HURT MY PLAYING</i> \$\$\$\$		
13	GOSPEL SINGERS WHO PANT TO PACK \$\$\$\$		
14	GOLDEN CROSSES TO A CADILLAC \$\$\$\$\$\$		
15	BONDS AND STILL AND MARGARET STILL \$\$		
16	GLOBAL TROTTERS BASEBALL BATTERS \$\$\$		
17	JACKIE WILLIE CAMPANELLA \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$		
18	FOOTBALL PLAYERS LEATHER PUNCHERS \$\$\$		
19	UNFORGOTTEN JOES AND SUGAR RAYS \$\$\$\$		
20	WHO BREAK AWAY LIKE COMETS \$\$\$\$\$\$		
21	FROM LESSER STARS IN ORBIT \$\$\$\$\$\$		
22	TO MOVE OUT TO ST. ALBANS \$\$\$\$\$\$		
23	WHERE THE GRASS IS GREENER \$\$\$\$\$\$		
24	SCHOOLS ARE BETTER FOR THEIR CHILDREN \$		
25	AND OTHER KIDS LESS MEANER THAN <i>ccc</i>		
26	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES <i>cccc</i>		
27	WHERE WINTER'S NAME IS HAWKINS <i>cccc</i>	<i>"Hesitation Blues" 8 bars.</i>	2
28	AND NIAGARA FALLS IS FROZEN <i>ccccccc</i>		
29	IF SHOW FARE'S MORE THAN 30 <i>ccccccc</i>		

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	I MOVED OUT TO LONG ISLAND	TACIT	3
2	EVEN FARTHER THAN ST. ALBANS		
3	(WHICH LATELY IS STONE NOWHERE)		
4	I MOVED OUT EVEN FARTHER FURTHER FARTHER		
5	IN THE SOUND WAY OFF THE TURNPIKE-		
6	AND I'M THE ONLY COLORED.		

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	GOT THERE! YES, I MADE IT!		
2	NAME IN THE PAPERS EVERY DAY!		
3	FAMOUS-THE HARD WAY-		
4	FROM NOBODY AND NOTHING TO WHERE I AM.		
5	THEY KNOW ME, TOO, DOWNTOWN,		
6	ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY, EUROPE-		
7	ME WHO USED TO BE NOBODY,		
8	NOTHING BUT ANOTHER SHADOW		
9	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES,		
10	NOW A NAME! MY NAME-A NAME!		

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	YET THEY ASKED ME OUT ON MY PATIO	<i>Figurine.</i>	4
2	WHERE DID I GET MY MONEY!		
3	I SAID, FROM YOUR MAMA!		
4	THEY WONDERED WAS I SENSITIVE		

5	AND HAD A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER?		
6	DID I KNOW CHARLIE MINGUS?		
7	AND WHY DID RICHARD WRIGHT		
8	LIVE ALL THAT WHILE IN PARIS		
9	INSTEAD OF COMING HOME TO DECENT DIE		
10	IN HARLEM OR THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO		
11	OR THE WOMB OF MISSISSIPPI?		
12	AND ONE SHOULD LOVE ONE'S COUNTRY		
13	FOR ONE'S COUNTRY IS YOUR MAMA.		

Verse	Stanza 5	Annotation	No.
1	LIVING IN ST. ALBANS		
2	SHADOW OF THE NEGROES		
3	WESTPORT AND NEW CANAAN		
4	IN THE SHADOW OF THE NEGROES-		
5	HIGHLY INTEGRATED		
6	MEANS TOO MANY NEGROES		
7	EVEN FOR THE NEGROES-		
8	ESPECIALLY FOR THE FIRST ONES		
9	WHO MOVE IN UNOBTRUSIVE		
10	BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH IN CASES		
11	SEEKING SUBURB WITH NO JUKEBOX		
12	POOL HALL OR BAR ON CORNER		
13	SEEKING LAWNS AND SHADE TREES		
14	SEEKING PEACE AND QUIET		
15	AUTUMN LEAVES IN AUTUMN		
16	HOLLAND BULBS IN SPRING		
17	BIRDS THAT REALLY SING		
18	\$40,000 HOUSES-		
19	PAYMENTS NOT BELATED-		
20	THE ONLY NEGROES IN THE BLOCK		
21	INTEGRATED.		

*Gently yearning
lieder on piano
delicately
sedate, quietly
fading on the
word belated. ...*

TACIT

Verse	Stanza 6	Annotation	No.
1	HORN OF PLENTY		
2	IN ESCROW TO JOE GLASSER.		
3	THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT		
4	IN BILLINGTON'S CHURCH OF RUBBER.		
5	LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF		
6	IN GEORGE SOKOLSKY'S COLUMN.		
7	BIRDS THAT REALLY SING.		
8	EVERY DAY'S TOMORROW		
9	AND ELECTION TIME IS ALWAYS FOUR YEARS		
10	FROM THE OTHER		
11	AND MY LAWN MOWER		
12	NEW AND SHINY		
13	FROM THE BIG GLASS SHOPPING CENTER		

*Again the old
"Hesitation
Blues" against
the trills of
birds, but the
melody ends in a
thin high flute
call.*

14	CUTS MY HAIR ON CREDIT.		
----	-------------------------	--	--

Verse	Stanza 7	Annotation	No.
1	THEY RUNG MY BELL TO ASK ME	TACIT	8
2	COULD I RECOMMEND A MAID.		
3	I SAID, YES, YOUR MAMA.	<i>Figurine.</i>	9

(...)

Mood 8: IS IT TRUE?

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE QUARTER	TACIT	1
2	SHOUTS ARE WHISPERS CARRYING		
3	TO THE FARTHEREST CORNERS SOMETIMES		
4	OF THE NOW KNOWN WORLD		
5	UNDECIPHERED AND UNLETTERED		
6	UNCODIFIED UNPARSED		
7	IN TONGUES UNANALYZED UNECHOED		
8	UNTAKEN DOWN ON TAPE–		
9	NOT EVEN FOLKWAYS CAPTURED		
10	BY MOE ASCH OR ALAN LOMAX		
11	NOT YET ON SAFARI.		
12	WHERE GAME TO BAG'S ILLUSIVE		
13	AS A SILVER UNICORN		
14	AND THE GUN TO DO THE KILLING'S		
15	STILL TO BE INVENTED,		
16	TO FERTILIZE THE DESERT		
17	THE FRENCH MAY HAVE THE SECRET.		
18	TURN, OH, TURN, DARK LOVERS		
19	ON YOUR BED OF WHISPERED ECHOES:		
*20	<i>jAY DIOS!</i>		
**21	<i>jAY DIOS!.</i>		
***22	<i>jAY DIOS!</i>		
		<i>Deep drum vibrato into a single high flute note. ...</i>	2

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	TWENTY HOURS	TACIT	3
2	FOR THE MILL WHEEL TO BE MILL WHEEL		
3	WAITED TWENTY DAYS		
4	FOR THE BISQUIT TO BE BREAD		
5	WAITED TWENTY YEARS		
6	FOR THE SADNESS TO BE SORROW.		
7	WAITED TWENTY MORE		
8	TO CATCH UP WITH TOMORROW		
9	AND I CANNOT WRITE COMMERCIALS–		
10	TO MY CHAGRIN–NOT EVEN SINGING–		
11	AND THE WHISPERS ARE UNECHOED		
12	ON THE TAPES–NOT EVEN FOLKWAYS.		

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	YES, SUBURBIA		
2	WILL EVENTUALLY BE		
3	ONLY IN THE SEA. ...		
4	MEANWHILE		
5	OF COURSE		
6	OF COURSE		
7	OF COURSE		
8	ON A MUDDY TRACK		
9	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
10	NEGROES		
11	NEGROES		
12	SOME HORSE MIGHT		
13	SLIP AND BREAK		
14	ITS BACK:		
15	BUT SCRIPT-WRITERS WHO KNOW BETTER		
16	WOULD HARDLY WRITE IT IN THE SCRIPT-		
17	OR SPORTS-WRITERS IN THEIR STORY.		
18	YET THE HORSE WHOSE BACK IS BROKEN		
19	GETS SHOT RIGHT INTO GLORY.		

(...)

Mood 9: ASK YOUR MAMA

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE QUARTER		
2	SHOUTS ARE WHISPERS CARRYING		
3	TO THE FARTHEREST CORNERS		
4	OF THE NOW KNOWN WORLD:		
5	5TH AND MOUND IN CINI, 63RD IN CHI,		
6	23RD AND CENTRAL, 18TH STREET AND VINE.		
7	I'VE WRITTEN, CALLED REPEATEDLY,		
8	EVEN RUNG THIS BELL ON SUNDAY, YET		
9	YOUR THIRD-FLOOR TENANT'S NEVER HOME.		
10	DID YOU TELL HER THAT OUR CREDIT OFFICE		
11	HAS NO RECOURSE NOW BUT TO THE LAW?		
12	YES, SIR, I TOLD HER.		
13	WHAT DID SHE SAY?		
14	SAID, TELL YOUR MA.	<i>Figurine.</i>	1

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	17 SORROWS		
2	AND THE NUMBER		
3	6-0-2.		
4	HIGH BALLS, LOW BALLS:		
5	THE 8-BALL		
6	IS YOU.		
7	7-11!		
8	COME		
9	PORGY AND BESS		

10	AT THE PICTURE SHOW.		
11	I NEVER SEEN IT.		
12	BUT I WILL.		
13	YOU KNOW.		
14	IF I HAVE		
15	THE MONEY		
16	TO GO.		

(...)

Verse	Stanza 4	Annotation	No.
1	LUMUMBA LOUIS ARMSTRONG	<i>Delicate post-bop suggests pleasant evenings and flirtatious youth as it gradually weaves into its pattern a musical echo of Paris which continues until very softly the silver call of a hunting horn is heard far away. African drums being</i>	2
2	PATRICE AND PATTI PAGE		
3	HAMBURGERS PEPSI-COLA		
4	KING COLE JUKEBOX PAYOLA		
5	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
6	GOD WILLING DROP A SHILLING		
7	FORT DE FRANCE, PLACE PIGALLE		
8	VINGT FRANCS NICKEL DIME		
9	BAHIA LAGOS DAKAR LENOX		
10	KINGSTONE TOO GOD WILLING		
11	A QUARTER OR A SHILLING. PARIS-		
12	AT THE DOME VINGT FRANCS WILL DO		
13	ROTONDE SELECT DUPONT FLORE		
14	TALL BLACK STUDENT		
15	IN HORN-RIM GLASSES,		
16	WHO AT THE SORBONNE HAS SIX CLASSES,		
17	IN THE SHADOW OF THE CLUNY		
18	CONJURES UNICORN,		
19	SPEAKS ENGLISH FRENCH SWAHILI		
20	HAS ALMOST FORGOTTEN ABOUT MEALIE.		
21	BUT WHY RIDE ON MULE OR DONKEY		
22	WHEN THERE'S A UNICORN?		

Verse	Stanza 5	Annotation	No.
1	NIGHT IN A SÉKOU TOURÉ CAP	<i>a softly mounting rumble soon to fade into a steady beat like the heart.</i>	2
2	DRESSED LIKE A TEDDY BOY		
3	BLOTS COLORS OFF THE MAP.		
4	PERHAPS IF IT BE GOD'S WILL		
5	AZIKIWE'S SON, AMEKA,		
6	SHAKES HANDS WITH EMMETT TILL.		
7	BRICKBATS BURST LIKE BALLOONS		
8	BUT HEARTS KEEP DOGGED BEATING		
*9	SELDOM BURSTING	TACIT	3
*10	UNLIKE BUBBLES		
*11	UNLIKE BRICKBATS		
*12	FAR FROM STONE.		
13	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES	<i>Repeat high</i>	4
14	WHERE NO SHADOW WALKS ALONE		
15	LITTLE MULES AND DONKEYS SHARE		
16	THEIR GRASS WITH UNICORNS.		

<i>flute call to segue into up-tempo blues that continue behind the next sequence. ...</i>	
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Mood 10: BIRD IN ORBIT

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	DE–	<i>Happy blues in up-beat tempo trip merrily along until the music suddenly stops in a loud rim shot.</i>	1
2	DELIGHT–		
3	DELIGHTED! INTRODUCE ME TO EARTHA		
4	JOCKO BODDIDLY LIL GREENWOOD		
5	BELAFONTE FRISCO JOSEPHINE		
6	BRICKTOP INEZ MABEL MERCER		
7	AND I'D LIKE TO MEET THE		
8	ONE-TIME SIX-YEAR-OLDS		
9	FIRST GRADE IN NEW ORLEANS		
10	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
11	WHERE SIT-INS ARE CONDUCTED		
12	BY THOSE YET UNINDUCTED		
13	AND BALLOTS DROP IN BOXES		
14	WHERE BULLETS ARE THE TELLERS		

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	THEY ASKED ME AT THANKSGIVING	TACIT	2
2	DID I VOTE FOR NIXON?		
3	I SAID, VOTED FOR YOUR MAMA.		

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	METHUSELAH SIGNS PAPERS W.E.B.	<i>Cool bop very light and delicate rising to an ethereal climax completely far out. ...</i>	3
2	ORIGINAL NIAGARA N.A.A.C.P.		
3	ADELE RAMONA MICHAEL SERVE BAKOKO TEA		
4	IRENE AND HELEN ARE AS THEY USED TO BE		
5	AND SMITTY HAS NOT CHANGED AT ALL.		
6	ALIOUNE AIMÉ SEDAR SIPS HIS NEGRITUDE.		
7	THE REVEREND MARTIN LUTHER		
8	KING MOUNTS HIS UNICORN		
9	OBLIVIOUS TO BLOOD		
10	AND MOONLIGHT ON ITS HORN		
11	WHILE MOLLIE MOON STREWS SEQUINS		
12	AS LEDA STREW HER CORN		
13	AND CHARLIE YARDBIRD PARKER		
14	IS IN ORBIT		

(...)

CARNIVALIZATION IN LANGSTON HUGHES'S "ASK YOUR MAMA: TWELVE MOODS FOR JAZZ"

Verse	Stanza 5	Annotation	No.
1	GRANDPA, WHERE DID YOU MEET MY GRANDMA?	<i>"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" as a flute solo soft and far away fading in the distance. ...</i>	4
2	AT MOTHER BETHEL'S IN THE MORNING?		
3	I'M ASKING, GRANDPA, ASKING.		
4	WHERE YOU MERRIED BY JOHN JASPER		
5	OF THE DO-MOVE COSMIC CONSCIENCE?		
6	GRANDPA, DID YOU HEAR THE		
7	HEAR THE OLD FOLKS SAY HOW		
8	HOW TALL HOW TALL THE CANE GREW		
9	SAY HOW WHITE THE COTTON COTTON		
10	SPEAK OF RICE DOWN IN THE MARSHLAND		
11	SPEAK OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS'S BEARD		
12	AND JOHN BROWN'S WHITE AND LONGER		
13	LINCOLN'S LIKE A CLOTHESBRUSH		
14	AND HOW SOJOURNER HOW SOJOURNER		
15	TO PROVE SHE WAS A WOMAN WOMAN		
16	BARED HER BOSOMS, BARED IN PUBLIC		
17	TO PROVE SHE WAS A WOMAN?		
18	WHAT SHE SAID ABOUT HER CHILDREN		
19	ALL SOLD DOWN THE RIVER.		
20	<i>I LOOK AT THE STARS,</i>		
21	<i>AND THEY LOOKED AT THE STARS,</i>		
22	<i>AND THEY WONDER WHERE I BE</i>		
23	<i>AND I WONDER WHERE THEY BE.</i>		
24	STARS AT STARS STARS. ...		
25	TOURÉ DOWN IN GUINEA		
26	LUMUMBA IN THE CONGO		
27	JOMO IN KENYATTA...STARS...		
28	GRANDPA, DID YOU FIND HER IN THE TV SILENCE	TACIT	5
29	OF A MILLION MARTHA ROUNDTREES?		
30	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
31	DID YOU EVER FIND HER?		

Verse	Stanza 6	Annotation	No.
1	THAT GENTLEMAN IN EXPENSIVE SHOES	<i>Flute cry. ...</i>	6
2	MADE FROM THE HIDES OF BLACKS		
3	WHO TIPS AMONG THE SHADOWS		
4	SOAKING UP THE MUSIC		
5	ASKED ME RIGHT AT CHRISTMAS		
6	DID I WANT TO EAT WITH WHITE FOLKS?		

Verse	Stanza 7	Annotation	No.
1	THOSE SIT-IN KIDS, HE SAID,	TACIT	7
2	MUST BE RED!		
3	KENYATTA RED! CASTRO RED!		
4	NKRUMAH RED!		
5	RALPH BUNCHE INVESTIGATED!		
6	MARY McLEOD BETHUNE BARRED BY		
7	THE LEGION FROM ENGLEWOOD		

8	NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL!		
9	HOW ABOUT THAT N.A.A.C.P.		
10	AND THE RADICALS IN THAT		
11	THERE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE?		
12	AIN'T YOU GOT NO INFORMATION		
13	ON DR. ROBERT WEAVER?		
14	INVESTIGATE THAT SANTA CLAUS		
15	WHOSE DOLLS ARE INTERRACIAL!		
16	INVESTIGATE THEM NEGRAS WHO		
17	BOUGHT A DOBERMAN PINSCHER.		

Verse	Stanza 8	Annotation	No.
1	THAT GENTLEMAN IN EXPENSIVE SHOES	<i>Flute call into very far-out boopish blues.</i> ...	8
2	MADE FROM THE HIDES OF BLACKS		
3	TIPS AMONG THE SHADOWS		
4	SOAKING UP THE MUSIC...		
5	MUSIC...		

Mood 11: JAZZTET MUTED

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE NEGROES OF THE QUARTER	<i>Bop blues into very modern jazz burning the air</i>	1
2	PRESSURE OF THE BLOOD IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER		
3	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
4	SUDDENLY CATCHING FIRE		
5	FROM THE WING TIP OF A MATCH TIP		
6	ON THE BREATH OF ORNETTE COLEMAN.		

Verse	Stanza 2	Annotation	No.
1	IN THE NEON TOMBS THE MUSIC	<i>eerie like a neon swamp-fire cooled by dry ice until suddenly there is a single ear-piercing flute call. ...</i>	
2	FROM JUKEBOX JOINTS IS LAID		
3	AND FREE-DELIVERY TV SETS		
4	ON GRAVESTONE DATES ARE PLAYED.		
5	EXTRA-LARGE THE <i>KINGS</i> AND <i>QUEENS</i>		
6	AT EITHER SIDE ARRAYED		
7	HAVE DOORS THAT OPEN OUTWARD		
8	TO THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
9	WHERE THE PRESSURE OF THE BLOOD		
10	IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER-		
11	DUE TO SMOLDERING SHADOWS		
12	THAT SOMETIMES TURN TO FIRE.		

(...)

Mood 12: SHOW FARE, PLEASE

Verse	Stanza 1	Annotation	No.
1	TELL ME, MAMA, CAN I GET MY SHOW	TACIT	1
2	TELL ME FARE FROM YOU?		

3	OR DO YOU THINK THAT PAPA'S	<i>Rhythmic bop, ever more ironic, laughs itself softly into a lonely flute call. ...</i>	2
4	GOT CHANGE IN HIS LONG POCKET?		
5	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
6	WHERE THE MASK IS PLACED BY OTHERS		
7	IBM ELECTRIC BONGO DRUMS ARE COSTLY.		
8	TELL ME, MAMA, TELL ME,		
9	ALL THAT MUSIC, ALL THAT DANCING		
10	CONCENTRATED TO THE ESSENCE		
11	OF THE SHADOW OF THE DOLLAR		
12	PAID AT THE BOX OFFICE		
13	WHERE THE LIGHTER IS THE DARKER		
14	IN THE QUARTER OF THE NEGROES		
15	AND THE TELL ME OF THE MAMA		
16	IS THE ANSWER TO THE CHILD.		
17	DID YOU EVER SEE TEN NEGROES		
18	WEAVING METAL FROM TWO QUARTERS		
19	INTO CLOTH OF DOLLARS		
20	FOR A SUIT OF GOOD-TIME WEARING?		
21	WEAVING OUT OF LONG-TERM CREDIT		
22	INTEREST BEYOND CARING?		

(...)

Verse	Stanza 3	Annotation	No.
1	THE TV'S STILL NOT WORKING.	<i>"The Hesitation Blues" very loud, lively and raucously. Two big swing choruses—building full blast to a bursting climax.</i>	3
2	SHOW FARE, MAMA, PLEASE.		
3	SHOW FARE, MAMA. ...		
4	SHOW FARE!		