ABSTRACT

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	Gisèle-Audrey Mills, Ph.D., 2011
Directed By:	Professor J. Lawrence Witzleben, Department of Ethnomusicology

Originating in Salvador, Bahia, the musical genre and carnival performance known as "*bloco afro*" combines rhythms based on Afro-Brazilian ritual music played on percussion instruments with lyrics that highlight themes of black pride and resistance. The term 'bloco' refers to groups that parade together during carnival, and 'afro' describes the emphasis on manifestations of African and Afro-Brazilian culture. At its founding in 1974, the first bloco afro, Ilê Aiyê, inspired a cultural movement by establishing a visible and intentionally black bloco *afro* in Liberdade, a historically black community in Salvador. Performed by large collectives of drummers and dancers dressed in brightly colored African clothes, many performers with intricately braided hairstyles or dreadlocks, the music was initially linked to a growing movement of Afro-Brazilian activists in black neighborhoods of Bahia promoting racial consciousness and organizing political interventions to combat racism. This study explores bloco afro as a musical movement within the broader context of the contemporary Movimento Negro (Black Movement) in Brazil, and its role in constructing racial identity among black Brazilians. Primarily an ethnomusicology-based study, a trans-disciplinary approach using cultural studies and performance studies is applied toward developing an analytical framework for bloco afro performance, with a focus on identifying specific factors and processes that create and promote musical meaning and the role they play in constructing black identity.

ILÊ AIYÊ: PERFORMING AFRO-BRAZILIAN IDENTITY THROUGH MUSIC

By

Gisèle-Audrey Mills

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Advisory Committee:
Professor J. Lawrence Witzleben, Chair
Professor Nancy Struna, Dean's Representative
Professor Carmen Balthrop
Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon
Dr. Fernando Rios

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Originating in Salvador, Bahia, the musical genre and carnival performance known as "bloco afro" combines rhythms based on Afro-Brazilian ritual music played on percussion instruments derived from Brazil's carnival, with lyrics that highlight themes of black pride and resistance. Traditionally, "bloco" refers to a carnival organization based in a specific neighborhood or community; Ilê Aiyê inspired a cultural movement by establishing a visible and intentionally black bloco *afro* in Liberdade, a historically black community in Salvador. Performed by large collectives of drummers and dancers dressed in brightly colored African clothes, many performers with intricately braided hairstyles or dreadlocks, the music was initially linked to a burgeoning movement of Afro-Brazilian activists in black neighborhoods of Bahia promoting racial consciousness and organizing political interventions to combat racism. This study explores bloco afro as a musical movement within the broader context of the contemporary Movimento Negro (Black Movement) in Brazil, and its role in constructing racial identity among black Brazilians.

Locating Myself: Cultural Identity and Cultural Activism

My interest in cultural expression as an agent of identity construction stems from several different sources, the most prominent of which is personal – the process of constructing my own identity as an African American woman of Haitian descent. From this self-defined subject position, I use the term African American to indicate not necessarily my origin and experience as a black person in the United States but a broader sense of being a person of African descent on

the American continent. My life experience, as a member of both my biological family and the extended family of black Americans, has resulted in a cultural identity that has been influenced by and formed within a historical context of resistance, survival, and pride;[1] certainly pride should be considered a form of resistance given the provocative subtext of oral remembering of extraordinary human efforts in pursuit of individual and collective survival in societies which sought to eradicate Black cultures if not Black people.[2] In addition, I was raised within a family that has great appreciation of and respect for music (albeit with training in mostly European classical forms); my matrilineal ancestors included a composer, musicians, and music teachers. An early exposure to classical piano as a child laid the groundwork for my later role as a cultural activist. As I got older and watched the civil rights and black pride movements explode around me, I developed an oppositional relationship to studying and performing classical piano. I became increasingly determined to raise awareness of and respect for black musical forms of expression as a strategic step in building on the legacies of cultural resistance movements toward informed and effective employment of creative expression in social justice activism.

My attraction to musical activism led to engagements with groups and efforts devoted to cultural organizing, both local and nationally. Although my participation was initially limited to events in the United States, I constantly sought to make connections between activist culture here and abroad, to learn and share information about the Latin American New Song movement, South African cultural resistance movements, Nueva Trova in Cuba, and other repertoires, and to

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[1] Pride as an intentional message in creative and/or artistic works will be discussed and demonstrated in later examinations of bloco afro compositions.

[2] I use the plural term "cultures" in recognition of the cultural heterogeneity of enslaved Africans transported to the Americas who recognized (and therefore) acknowledged the heterogeneity of many countries, most notably Brazil.

draw parallels between those struggles and musically political movements in the United States –
freedom songs in the civil rights movement, topical folk, jazz and soul music in the sixties and
seventies, labor songs, etc. In 1983, I was elected to accompany Pete Seeger to represent the
Peoples Music Network (a US-based group of political musicians) at a political song meeting in
Havana, Cuba. The December meeting of the Comité Internacional de la Nueva Canción
(International New Song Committee) included prominent political musicians from Cuba, El
Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico, Guatemala, Uruguay, Argentina, and the United States. After an
impassioned plea by Pete Seeger regarding the need to establish organizational "New Song
Committees" in each country, I was appointed Executive Director of the U.S. Committee for the
New Song, based at La Peña Cultural Center, a community arts institution founded by Chilean
exiles in Berkeley. In this capacity, I organized and attended cultural exchanges of progressive
cultural workers and participated in international meetings of activist musicians in Quito, Boston,
Berkeley and Rio de Janeiro. The emphasis on global cultural activism would lead me to Brazil
and to my involvement with Afro-Brazilian cultural activists, and finally to this research project.

Brazil: Even the Rhythms are Black

Although the purpose of my first trip to Brazil (December 1985) was to attend a nueva
canción conference outside of Rio de Janeiro, I was also able to meet some of the key Afro-
Brazilian activists in the city during that momentous one-month visit. After the week-long
conference (where I was, amazingly enough, the only person of African descent at an
international gathering of over 100 South American political musicians in Brazil), my host,
Monica Arruda, graciously and quite energetically tapped into her extensive network of contacts
to connect me with local musicians, black political activists, samba schools, and other people and

organizations that shared my interest in cultural activism. In addition, after experiencing racial

discrimination at restaurants in the upscale beach neighborhoods of Copacabana and Ipanema,[3] I

had the good fortune of discovering the "Movimento Negro" booth – one of many of the

progressive networking stands that were set up in Cinelândia, a popular and relatively populist

downtown center. My suspicions about Brazil's "racial democracy" had been increasingly

heightened from my own experience and observations, such as when white Brazilians advised

me on more than one occasion that "here in Brazil you don't have to call yourself black, you

have a nice/light/pretty/not too dark skin color." It was not until I connected with the local

Movimento Negro organizers, however, that I began to understand the depth of racism in Brazil,

where black people comprise at least half of the population, yet experience devastating levels of

inequality in access to education, health care, political power, and economic opportunity

(Hasenbalg 1999).

Prior to arriving in Brazil, I was moderately aware of the existence of African and neo-

African cultural forms – candomblé, capoeira, the polyrhythms of samba, Afro-Brazilian cuisine,

traces of Yoruba language, and social practices in everyday life. My new friends in the Black

movement were eager to educate me further about the strong connection between the survival of

cultural practices and their contemporary struggle against racism in Brazil, and their efforts to

raise racial and political consciousness among black Brazilians. Among the many the obstacles

they faced, probably the most challenging was the lack of racial consciousness in black

communities. In a society that discourages the use of race as an identifying factor in favor of a

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[3]On numerous occasions, I was questioned upon entering restaurants – "O qué que você quer aqui?"
(What do you want here?), and/or would have to wait until others, including (white) people who arrived
after I did, were waited upon. My new friends in the Black Movement suggested that I show my passport
in commercial spaces, which solved the problem quite effectively.

"color continuum" that privileges those with lighter skin color (Hanchard 1999: 86), "black" is rejected by most as a self-identifying term. The reluctance to claim "blackness" is further exacerbated by the negative connotation of the term "*negro*" (black) in social discourse through its association with other descriptive terms, such as poor, dirty, ugly, etc. On one of my early visits to Rio in 1987, I witnessed a distressing example of the problem during a meeting of women who had recently participated in regional preparatory meetings for an upcoming national conference of black women. The participants, most of whom had never been involved in any kind of feminist or black political gathering, spoke at length about how the meetings helped them to understand that that they and their children were poor and uneducated not necessarily due to a lack of intelligence or diligence on their part, but that sexism and racism in Brazilian society contributed to their situation in life. When the facilitator asked if anyone wanted to share examples of how the discussions changed their thinking, one women shyly raised her hand and shook her head as she said "My mother and my grandmother would tell me that my children were dark-skinned because my womb was dirty, and I believed them – all this time! And not just me, lots of women I know explain their color this way." As the women nodded and murmured their agreement, one could only imagine the psychological damage that generations of black women have suffered and passed on as a legacy to their children.

As my visit neared its end, my activist colleagues intensified my crash course in Afro-Brazilian culture and politics. I was taken to see how people lived in the favelas and in the suburbs, predominantly black and extremely poor areas of Rio – in total contrast with and in proximity to luxurious high-rise apartments and secured communities in the upscale beach neighborhoods of Ipanema, Copacabana, and Leblon. They arranged meetings with leaders of different Black Movement organizations: Instituto pela Pesquisa da Cultura Negra (Black

Cultural Research Institute), CEAP (Center for Assistance of Marginalized Peoples), Crioula, a grassroots organization dedicated to black women's issues, and others. I was also invited to participate in *candomblé* and *umbanda* celebrations, invitations I only accepted if it was clear that I would not be attending ritual ceremonies. I had no intention of intruding as an observer during sacred rituals; I am of the belief that participatory observation has its limits, and can often be detrimental to the integrity and sanctity of spiritual ceremonies as well as contribute to egregious misconceptions and portrayals of cultural practices in communities of African descent.

The most memorable moments of that first visit involved music; as I mentioned earlier, my host was instrumental in my exposure to variety of musical events in the city. Through her connections, I was able to not only attend a rehearsal of the samba school Império Serrano, but was also invited to stand at the front with the conductor, a vantage point from which I could see the entire group of almost 200 samba percussionists, and experience the colossal wave of interlaced polyrhythmic sound in a visceral way. I could feel the distinct rhythms in different parts of my body as I watched the various sections of the drum orchestra playing their parts, and there were accompanying emotional responses – suspense during a rhythmic break, elation as the instruments came in together again, and anticipation as the rhythms escalated in their intensity. I was amazed (and exhausted) by the time the rehearsal came to an end.

I also attended a few concerts of popular music – Maria Bethânia, Marisa Monte, Azymuth (Brazilian jazz) – in upscale venues in the city. While I enjoyed these events immensely, they could not compare with what was ultimately the highlight of my introduction to contemporary Afro-Brazilian culture: my first contact with the world of bloco afro. Agbara Dudu, a Rio-based bloco afro group, was presenting a concert on a Friday night at the Circo

Voador (Flying Circus) – an open-air performance space downtown. Arriving fashionably late, or so I thought, I entered the venue. The space seemed crowded, and maybe a hundred people, mostly young adults, almost all black, were standing in front of the stage. There was a heavy "cultural rasta" sensibility in the space – men and women with long (demonstrated commitment to the style) dreadlocks, Bob Marley t-shirts, Lion of Judah patches and buttons, and the faint odor of maconha (marijuana) smoke that wafted through the open air.

After a while, a long while, the drummers appeared. Dressed in colorful Afro-centric garb with painted drums to match, they assembled on the stage. Next, three women dressed in the same colors, but with flowing skirts and scarves tied to their wrists, joined them onstage. One of the women starting singing a cappella, her voice clear and determined as she invoked the names of the *orixás* (gods in the Yoruba-based religion of candomblé). As she continued, the dancers began to sway gently to the rhythm of her voice, their scarves and skirts moving like ocean waves. Then, on some invisible cue, the drummers erupted in a wall of sound – from the calls of the staccato riffs from the repinique (similar to a snare drum) to the thundering sustained tones from the surdo (large bass drum). As I stood there, I became aware of the fact that I was the only one standing still – it seemed that everyone was dancing and singing along to the music. Although I couldn't hear everything they were singing, I could identify some words: "black," "nation," "my people," "Africa," "black culture," "resistance" – words that I understood more clearly in the context that was provided to me by my friends in the Black Movement. I was hooked. Song after song, African words and names set to kinetic harmonies performed both on and off-stage mesmerized me. I again gained understanding through physical experience and presence in the musical moment – experiencing multiple layers of call and response, not only in

the vocal performances but also in rhythmic structures embedded in the embodied interactions between the performers and the audience. In other words, I started dancing, too.

My slow but steady Portuguese at the time enabled me to talk with some of the musicians and organizers after the concert. When they found out that I had just arrived in early December, almost every single person remarked, "Oh, you just missed Black Consciousness Month and the Zumbi celebrations - you will have to come back in November if you want to know about cultural resistance and the Black Movement." They proceeded to tell me about November 20 becoming the National Day of Black Consciousness in honor of the anniversary of the death of Zumbi, ultimate leader of the renowned Quilombo of Palmares. Palmares, in the state northeastern state of Pernambuco, was the site of the largest and longest lasting *quilombo* (settlement of self-proclaimed free Africans) in Brazil (Schwartz 1992: 122-128). The nationally recognized date developed growing significance for organizing consciousness-raising events in the black community. Several mentioned the distinction between commemorating May 13, the anniversary of emancipation in Brazil, and crediting European law for "abolishing" slavery versus celebrating black resistance and acknowledging the continued struggle for social and economic justice for Afro-Brazilians. I asked about this music I had just heard for the first time – I had many questions but couldn't possibly articulate them all with my plodding grammatical constructions and limited vocabulary. I found myself editing my usual run-on questions down to "conceptual shorthand": "Bloco afro. Movimento cultural?" "Quando?" (When?). "Origem. Onde?" (Origin. Where?). Of course, the ratio of words between my questions and their responses was a bit skewed; even with my most determined attention (at 2 am), it was difficult to get a comprehensive sense of everything they were saying. I came to understand that 1) bloco afro started in Salvador, Bahia, in the seventies and had been spreading around the country, 2)

yes, it was part of the Black Movement, but that there were different black cultural expressions in the movement (that conversation was a bit hazy as there seemed to be some disagreement about which genres could be considered part of the movement), and 3) that bloco afro was about African roots, racial pride, black consciousness, beleza negra (black [is] beautiful), Afro-Brazilian history, black identity, *négritud* (the international movement of black intellectuals, writers and activists that promoted the concept of black identity and solidarity against colonialism and cultural domination) and probably related concepts that weren't expressed in cognates I could recognize. Providentially, one of the event organizers went backstage and came back with an album – the "original bloco afro album," he said. People in the group nodded their approval, and some of them started singing as I opened the album cover: "Que bloco é esse? Eu quero saber. É o mundo negro que viemos cantar pra você… (What bloco is that, I want to know. It's the Black world that we've come to sing for you)." Bright red, black, and yellow hand-drawn images featuring cowry shells and other symbols from *candomblé* were prominently featured on the front cover, but it was the inside cover that fascinated me: photographs of black people dressed in Afro-centric dress, images of what appeared to be mass gatherings of drummers and dancers in the street - all wearing bright red, yellow, black, and white clothing emblazoned with the name and apparent symbols of Ilê Aiyê. As I looked at the pictures, people gathered around and attempted to point out specifics – "that guy is Vovô, President of Ilé," "those are pictures of Ilê in Salvador's carnival," "That's Gilberto Gil, he sings with them on the album," "See how their skin is black, really black!?" That last comment is the one that captured my total attention – I'm not sure if I understood correctly, and even if I did understand the words, what did that mean? I took the opportunity to use my two best and most practiced Portuguese words: "Espera. Qué? (Wait. What?)" "Ile Aiye é um bloco afro, um bloco de negro, negro mesmo - até os ritmos" – I had a sense of understanding the implications without having a literal translation, a

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meaning you could only really understand from the intonation: "Ile Aiye is a bloco afro, a bloco of blacks, really black/real blacks – even the rhythms."

Even the rhythms are black… This was something new to me – I was under the impression that all popular Brazilian rhythms were "black," meaning of African descent. Clearly these "black" rhythms were something different, or perhaps the meaning of "black" was different – I had a sense of the latter from the context of the conversation – that this "blackness" was not only about skin color but referred to something much more profound. I wanted to know more about this group Ilê Aiyê, more about this music that transmitted "blackness." Clearly there were lessons to be learned from a group of Afro-Brazilian performers and activists committed to promoting blackness as a positive element, using black cultural expressions and symbols both from within Brazil and from the African diaspora.

Development of a Research Agenda

During numerous visits to Brazil in the late eighties and early nineties, I was fortunate to have had direct access some of the movers and shakers in the emerging bloco afro movement. Unfortunately, I was not aware at the time that my interest in the music would evolve into the foundation of my pursuit of an advanced degree in ethnomusicology. In spite of this hypothetical setback in retrospect, however, I decided to focus my scholarly inquiry on bloco afro as an example of how musical performance can facilitate the articulation and dissemination of symbolic and/or textual expressions that prescribe certain identities and locations, and provide individuals with opportunities and means with which to construct racial/cultural consciousness. An additional focus explores ways in which bloco afro performance both incorporates and

promotes a sense of diasporic community. From their first, modest yet daring appearance in the streets of Liberdade in 1975 to their performances at venues around the world, Ilê Aiyê is and was 'the black world' of which they sing.

My research examines the musical phenomenon of bloco afro as developed, performed, and promoted by Ilê Aiyê, the first established bloco afro performing group and cultural organization in Salvador, Bahia. Between 2000 and 2004, I traveled to Salvador three times, spending less than three months total (my most extended visit lasted only a month). During the visits, I spent most of my time with members of the directorate, shadowing people in different positions in order to gain an understanding of how the institution functioned on a daily basis. I also attended numerous events sponsored by the group, including activities held in commemoration of Black Consciousness Month. I had the opportunity to sit in on classes held in the community school, Escola Mãe Hilda, and meet with both students and faculty members. Several members of the organization invited me to different activities, including public candomblé events, programs sponsored by different organizations in Salvador's Black Movement, and numerous social gatherings with Afro-Brazilian activists and intellectuals affiliated with Ilê Aiyê.

As ethnomusicology provides the primary disciplinary foundation, musical and performance analysis comprise a significant part of the study, focusing on content and performance in bloco afro and its association with African and other black musical expressions. I pay particular attention to visual documentation of live performance in order to discern the role of embodiment as a central component of musical performance, both among the performers and the audience. Visual materials also support an analysis of performance aesthetics, providing a

means with which to describe and identify key elements of a bloco afro aesthetic for artists and

audience participants.

Research Objectives

This project is designed to meet the following objectives:

1. Present a historical overview of the emergence of bloco afro within the context of the contemporary Movimento Negro (1970s – present), emphasizing the political and cultural influences of contemporary African diasporic expressions.

2. Describe musical characteristics of the genre: musical structure, organology, lyrics, and external musical influences.

3. Identify political discourse(s) articulated in bloco afro through an analysis of vocabulary, imagery, symbols, and performance aesthetics expressed within the genre.

Within the discussion of the historical context, musical expression and discourse analysis,

an investigation of the role of musical performance in the process of identity construction among

Afro-Brazilians raises additional critical questions that include (but are not limited to) the

following:

1. Why is musical performance an important vehicle for identity formation among blacks in Brazil?

2. How do the components of musical performance (performers, audience, venue, content) act and interact to affect the process of constructing identity?

3. What are the characteristics of bloco afro as a distinctive Afro-Brazilian musical expression. How does bloco afro reveal its association with other black musical forms?

4. What are the primary texts and symbols in bloco afro music that demonstrate its affiliation with African diasporic cultural expressions? Are there any key subtexts, and if so, how are they used? Are there specific symbols that are used either as oppositional devices or as tools for individual and/or community empowerment?

The information that emerges from these inquiries will help in understanding some of the key

questions about how identity is communicated as an element of musical meaning,

accommodating the fluidity of different individual and collective contexts of expression. Similar questions regarding musical meaning and identity construction have been raised in previous studies (including Béhague 1984, Guilbault 1990, Carvalho 1999, and Dunn and Perrone 2002); I will review some of the related literature in a later section.

Methodologies:

The study focuses on the first established bloco afro performing group in Salvador, Bahia - Grupo Ilê Aiyê. The city of Salvador is unique as the birthplace of the genre and contains large Afro-Brazilian communities with a high percentage of racially conscious individuals, as well as numerous religious and community organizations active in the Brazilian Black Movement. Although the historical focus is on the emergence and rise of bloco afro, it will be important to locate this musical movement along the continuum of related contemporary black consciousness movements in Brazil (1960s to 1990s). Archival research will focus on materials produced by the organization, and include publications by community groups, black newspapers, political organizations, and other institutions related to the black movement. A major element of my research involves text analysis: studying song lyrics and other materials disseminated by Ilê Aiyê to identify symbols and references that demonstrate their intention to promote *diasporic consciousness* (a concept that will be discussed further) both within the organization and to the world community (Clifford 1994, Cohen 2001, Gilroy 1995, Safran 1991).

Finally, the articulation of a trans-disciplinary framework that prioritizes performance analysis facilitates a more comprehensive purview of the interactive elements involved in musical performance and identity construction. By combining methods and insights from cultural studies and performance studies into a fundamentally ethnomusicological research agenda, it becomes possible to identify and evaluate associative relationships between the processes of musical performance, cultural resistance, and identity construction. Using a

performance-oriented framework that privileges multiple sources of textual readings, the study discusses the form, content and shared experiences of this particular genre of musical expression to determine its relationship to the construction of and performance of racial identity among black Brazilians.

As a public scholar and cultural activist, I entered into this project with the goal of contributing to the body of knowledge that strengthens and empowers the collective processes of identifying within the African diasporic community. There is a vital need for increased research and scholarship that explores the experience and meaning of black cultural expression in its distinct and global manifestations, especially in black communities in South and Central America. By examining bloco afro as an example of black resistance culture, specifically its role in affirming racial identity in a society that attempted to negate race or racial difference, it is my intent to present this Afro-Brazilian musical movement as a model for others interested in these topics. We must continue to share knowledge and create new theoretical paths, availing ourselves of the comprehensive interdisciplinary tools at our disposal that allow us to understand and include the experiences of our Afro-Latin neighbors in the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries of the Americas, adding their histories of resistance and survival to the collective expression of peoples of African descent everywhere.

In the next chapter, I provide an overview of trajectory of African American music research within ethnomusicology, with particular attention to black music scholarship in Brazil.

Chapter 2: Legacies of ethnomusicology and early black music research in the Americas

From the earliest eyewitness testimonies of European explorers, missionaries, and military personnel (de Léry 1578), which primarily contained general observations or descriptions of musical events to the relatively sophisticated, more scientifically guided ethnomusicological studies of regional musics (Merriam 1951; Behague 2006; Reily 1994), to more recent transdisciplinary contemplations on the role of Brazilian music in the global cultural industry (Perrone and Dunn 2002, Magaldi 1999, Dunn 2001), the music of Brazil has provided incredibly rich source material for scholars interested in the intersections of music, society, and everyday life. While it is beyond the scope of this study to delineate a complete historiography of music research in Brazil, a brief foray into the historical trajectory of how scholarly inquiry of African American musics evolved within and outside of the discipline of ethnomusicology may help to place this study in a broader context, particularly in relation to the more contemporary, trans-disciplinary approaches that have been introduced in recent decades. Later discussions of the relationships between musical content and public discourse in this study demonstrate the inevitability of continued cross-pollination of disciplines devoted to the study of culture and community. Using analytical tools from ethnomusicology, performance studies, and critical theory, this study builds on emerging interdisciplinary music research methodologies, and hopefully adds to the growing documentation of black musical expression throughout the African diaspora.

First, a presentation of the derivations of ethnomusicology, particularly its location in the global experience of colonial processes and cultural encounter, will assist in contextualizing the

development of the discipline as it relates to African American music research in the United States and South America. Both the influence of early African American (U.S.) musical research and its effect on ethnomusicology's maturation as a discipline would influence the direction and priorities of music scholarship in Brazil and its engagement with Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions. In addition, an overview of Brazilian music research and its relationship to the development of ethnomusicology as a professional discipline draws attention to the political and ideological factors that affected the history of ethnomusicology in the region, and demonstrates the responsiveness of the discipline to shifting perspectives and social transformation within a specific ethno-historical trajectory. As will be shown, Brazilian society struggled with its multiracial population and the forging of a national identity – one moment celebrating the *mestiço* as representative of a unique Brazilian spirit, the next, implementing "whitening" immigration policies to offset the cultural influence of a threateningly large black population. These struggles, often played out in official as well as general public discourse, were reflected in academia and had an impact on how Afro-Brazilian culture was represented, if studied at all, by Brazilian scholars.

The birth of a discipline – (pre World War II)

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, European researchers nurtured the roots of the discipline that was first known as comparative musicology. Early scientific studies involving theories of music history (Adler 1885; Stumpf 1911), tonal and scale classifications (Ellis 1885; Hornbostel 1913), as well as cross-cultural studies of musical instruments (Villoteau 1830; Sachs 1913) formed the initial parameters of the new field. Studies primarily targeted musicological issues, as demonstrated through the predominant areas of study of Carl Stumpf, Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs – intellectual architects of the Berlin School, commonly recognized

as the birthplace of ethnomusicology. Their research involved the analysis of musical samples from different regions of the world, samples provided by missionaries and others that traveled to non-Western cultural areas, mostly European colonies in Africa and Asia. The invention of the phonograph and other related technologies in the late 1800s greatly affected the development of fieldwork both on the collector and the 'collected' - the musical sample itself (Shelemay 1991). The experiments were conducted in laboratory settings, and data were analyzed without the benefit of direct field observations; practices that stand in great contrast to the emphasis on ethnographic fieldwork that characterizes the discipline.

While these initial studies are widely recognized as providing the foundation for ethnomusicology's acceptance as a scientific discipline, it has been suggested that European nationalism also played a role in inspiring the study of folk and other traditional music as objects of ethnomusicological study (Myers 1993). Bela Bartok's collections of folk songs in Hungary, Romania, and Transylvania (Bartok 1931), as well as Cecil Sharp's work with traditional English songs in the early 1900s (Sharp 1920), can be seen as early manifestations of fieldwork within national cultures, similar to musical research that was conducted in native and African American communities in the United States. As will be shown later, additional comparisons can be made with the impact of nationalist sentiment (and political will) on early music research in Brazil.

Research and the colonial project

The process of "armchair analysis" of musical artifacts obtained within the context of economic and political conquest fostered the perception of collusion between researchers and colonial administrations that facilitated the gathering of data in remote places. The connection between research and colonialism has been criticized as a symbiotic exchange that placed

scholarly inquiry at the service of political domination, a charge that led to the discipline of

anthropology being referred to by some as "scientific colonialism" (Lewis 1973) While it has

been difficult to prove that the colonial process benefited or was greatly affected by the results of

academic research, it is clear that the colonial process facilitated the construction and study of

colonial subjects within the context of European power, racial superiority, and related discourses

that prescribed Eurocentric processes of knowledge production and representation of the "Other"

(Pels and Salemink 2000). An example found in musical inquiry might be the European

theoretical inclination toward a broad, "evolutionary" approach to music history, including the

study of the music of "primitive" cultures in providing the missing links to a reconstruction of a

global, musical history of which the more advanced Western classical traditions represent its

later, "civilized" stages (Wallaschek 1893).

Early music research in the Americas: United States

The prevailing discourses of cultural superiority and racialized theories greatly influenced

music research in the Americas as European settlers and their descendants sought to distance

themselves culturally from both the native and African-based communities in the New World.

The effects of these theories on early music research and scholarship have been acknowledged

by the historians of the discipline in the United States – certainly some of the initial musical

studies of Native American peoples embodied the imposition of culturally biased preconceptions

stemming from evolutionary precepts, such as the presumption of a common harmonic

foundation for all music or the forcing of foreign systems of notation on oral musical expressions

(Myers 1993).

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, there were certain developments occurring in the United States that influenced the theoretical direction that ethnomusicological research took, as compared with the work in Europe. The primary difference can be described as an emphasis on ethnological studies, or a focus on comparative analyses of different cultures resulting in generalizations about cultural differences and similarities. Much of the importance given to these studies was directly related to governmental pressures at the time and subsequent sponsorship of studies about indigenous American populations, particularly those which the U.S. government labeled as hostile, or those with which the U.S. army found themselves at war. It is important to note that early European explorers and missionaries had documented Native American ritual dances and music since the so-called discovery of the "New World;" however, only in the late 1800s did indigenous music become the object of serious studies by early American scholars (Fletcher 1884; Fewkes 1890; Densmore 1910).

In the case of musical analysis of early African-American culture, research began somewhat earlier, unrelated to government concerns with attaining an understanding of cultural differences between black and white populations in the United States. At the same time, there were parallels to Native American studies as exemplified by the existence of early documentation based on observations by missionaries and explorers, the latter group including merchants (or mercenaries) involved in slave trading activities (Latrobe 1819). Later, in the years following the Civil War, abolitionists played a role in the first serious attempts to systematically collect and transcribe African American songs; these studies are considered to be the precursor to the establishment of repertory structure and performance practice as prominent subjects of ethnomusicological study. William Francis Allen's introduction to the landmark study, Slave Songs of the United States (1867), examined these subjects in depth, with special attention to

regional variations and performance context. In addition, studies of the relationship between African musical expressions and African-American songs and musical styles provided the basis for long lasting debates regarding issues of acculturation, authenticity, and other topics related to cultural relativism (Hornbostel 1928, Wallaschek 1893).

One of the most significant and polarizing deliberations involved the perceived origins of various African-American musical expressions. Henry Krehbiel's collection of African-American songs published as *Afro American Folksong* in 1914 described the slave repertoire as the "[T]he only considerable body of song which has come into existence in the territory now compassed by the United States" (p.22) and insisted upon the predominance of the African root, a result of the historical experience and situation of blacks in the United States. George Pullen Jackson, a folklore scholar who assembled and published several collections of American spirituals, directly challenged his views. Intrigued by American spirituals from both black and white communities in the South, Jackson explored the impact of European singing traditions on American folk expressions and concluded that black music was strongly affected by Anglo-American styles and was thus related to the British tradition (Jackson 1943). His so-called "white origin theory" echoed the evolution and diffusion theories of musical origin and development coming out of Europe at the time. Richard Wallaschek, an Austrian musicologist who was considered a member of the "founding fathers' club" in the days of comparative musicology, supported Jackson's views. His classic text, *Primitive Music: An Inquiry Into the Origin and Development of Music, Songs, Instruments, Dances and Pantomimes of Savage Races* (1928) is a clear and prominent example of the thinking at the time. In addition to the subtle indications of bias in the title, he proceeds in the preface to further clarify his intentions: "In the present work it has been my aim to deal with the music of savage races only, while the music of ancient civilization has merely been glanced at whenever it was necessary to indicate the connecting links between the most primitive and the comparatively advanced culture" (p. v).

Although he had not traveled or conducted research in the United States or even heard black spirituals performed, he was quick to deny the African connection in the music, adding to the controversial debate among both musicologists and folklorists regarding African cultural retention in the United States.

The role of black colleges and universities was fundamental in the development of a community of African-American scholars in the transition between centuries, and in addition played a part in preserving and promoting black music research. The Fisk Jubilee Singers, based at Fisk University in Nashville, TN, were the outstanding example. Established in 1871, the group was taught by a George White, a white music teacher, to sing spirituals using classically influenced vocal arrangements with piano accompaniment. The Fisk Jubilee Singers toured the eastern U.S. and in their first year were able to raise enough money to purchase the land on which the school was built and to pay off the university's debts. Subsequent tours, including an audience with President Grant at the White House and concerts in Europe, raised awareness of the spiritual as an American musical form (the debates on black vs. white spirituals notwithstanding) and provided a model for other black colleges to emulate. Hampton Institute in Virginia, Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, and Howard University were among those that joined early in promoting this music to audiences around the world.

As public attention and respect for the style grew, the traveling troupes created an incentive for additional collections and documentation of black spirituals. At Fisk University, John Wesley Work, first a music student and later a conductor and performer with university and other professional groups, was an important contributor to research on spirituals. His work with the musical descendants of the original Jubilee Singers helped to establish Fisk University as a

central institution for promoting and preserving black folk music. In 1940, Work published *Folk Song of the American Negro*, a significant scholarly contribution to a growing collection of music research coming directly out of the African-American community, often through the auspices of black academic institutions (Anderson 2009).

A review of early black music historiography reveals an additional issue in the evolution of black music studies – the role and influence of black researchers in the documentation of African-American musical culture. Recognized by some as the first African-American music historian (Ramsey 1996:12), James Monroe Trotter published *Music and Some Highly Musical People* in 1878, a book that primarily focused on Western art music but also included examples of black popular forms at the time (i.e., black minstrel performers and The Fisk Jubilee Singers). Although his work received little if any recognition among American music historians, his efforts were noted by other black researchers and introduced the question of racial politics in the study of African-American culture. Trotter was clear and vocal regarding his agenda: to showcase black musical contributions to instill a sense of pride among blacks, and respect from whites (I will return to the question of music as a mechanism to inspire pride in a later discussion of Ilê Aiyê's mission as a cultural institution). The latter objective no doubt contributed to Trotter's emphasis on art music, yet created a contradiction at some level – would black musical performance's worth be determined by its inclusion or elevation of European musical styles, and if so, would that not be an implicit rejection of the unique and vibrant American music that emerged from the black experience in this country? This contradiction arose consistently in later writings by black music scholars (Ramsey 1996:16), especially as many researchers' backgrounds included classical musical training. A case in point was Maud Cuney-Hare, an African-American concert pianist trained at the New England Conservatory who published

Negro Musicians and Their Music in 1936. Although her point of departure was Africa and its influence on black American music, she advocated the development of American arts music expressions based on black musical folk expressions. This idea was echoed in the work of Alain Locke, who published *The Negro and His Music* in the same year. In his book, he referred to the potential for African-American folk music to be incorporated into American classical expressions. Although not a musician, Locke was firmly established as a leading voice in the black intelligentsia at the time. A Harvard graduate, Rhodes scholar, and professor in the philosophy department at Howard University in the early 1920s, he communicated often with other black thinkers and writers at the time, including W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and James Weldon Johnson (Aptheker 1973). His concept of the New Negro (promoted through a collection of essays by the same name that he edited and published in 1925) advocated racial equality, political awareness and cultural pride. His views on black culture as part of the strategy to advance the race, particularly his inclusion of music as a fundamental component of the African-American community, led to an increased awareness of and attention on the emerging community of African-American scholars and writers. This community that would become increasingly visible as black colleges continued to become more firmly established, and a new black cultural movement took hold in the form of the Harlem Renaissance.

As anthropology continued to exert influence in the field, important theoretical ideas regarding cultural change had an impact on black music research. Melville J. Herskovits, anthropologist and pioneer in the field of African and African-American studies, introduced the concept of acculturation, advocating the need for studies of cultural contact – a timely topic that

would expand the parameters of ethnographic research in areas of colonial encounter. Herskovits's students at Northwestern University included several key contributors both to the discipline and to its incorporation of the study of acculturation as a musical process, namely Alan Merriam, Klaus Wachsmann, and Richard A. Waterman. Waterman's work was particularly noteworthy as he worked closely with Herskovits in conducting fieldwork in the region and outlining the hypotheses that resulted in theories to explain different/new forms of music resulting from African and European musical contact. Identifying similar features in both musics (i.e. polyphony and diatonic scales), they concluded that it was natural for European and African musical styles to combine based on the commonalities. They went on to demonstrate that African musical "survivals" were most prevalent in regions where black populations outnumbered Americans of European descent; their research on religious music in the Caribbean countries of Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad showed the greatest retention of "authentic" African traits when compared with black folk songs in the southern United States (Waterman, 1941, 1951). In 1949, Waterman published a seminal article, "African Influence on the Music of the Americas," in which he identifies specific elements of African music, including the prominence of percussion, strong "metronomic" dance rhythms, syncopated phrasing of melodic accents, and staggered call and response patterns. He then shows how these elements fused with European styles to create distinct musical expressions in North and South America, as well as in the Caribbean.

Although not a prolific writer, Waterman's research was significant at the time and greatly influenced scholars involved in studying black musical expressions. His grounding in anthropology was evident as demonstrated by his emphasis on cultural dynamics and the social functions of music, providing important analytical and theoretical catalysts for emerging

scholarship in black music research. Among Waterman's most significant contributions to the field was his effort to identify musical elements specific to the diaspora in support of arguments in favor of the existence of African cultural retention in the Americas. In addition, his concept of a "metronome sense" – the connection between aural perception and motor behavior - as a rhythmic theory was debated among Africanist ethnomusicologists (Koetting 1970; Kubik 1962, Blacking 1971), often in contrast with Hornbostel's proposal of a theory that rooted rhythm in drumming and the actual physical process of beating an instrument (Merriam 1959). Among those who cite his influence are former student Alan Merriam and colleague Robert Bascom; Bascom, Herskovits, and Waterman were instrumental in establishing African and New World studies as a strong component of Northwestern University's anthropology department in its early years. Waterman's contributions as a teacher, researcher, and active member of the then recently-established Society for Ethnomusicology supported the evolution of cross-cultural black music research studies within ethnomusicology and among scholars in general.

New directions in ethnomusicology and black music research

During the time that ethnomusicology was in the process of emerging from comparative musicology, much of the developing world was in its own process of political and economic transformation, a course that would move communities away from colonial control and cultural domination and into national liberation movements and transnational struggles for independence from European political rule. These political changes would have an indirect impact on the field, as questions emerged regarding the primary goal of musical research: previously it had been undertaken to serve the interests of Western scholars and readers (i.e., examining Western musical concepts by testing their applicability across cultures). As movements for political independence increasingly connected with new ideas related to cultural independence, there was

a parallel demand to open academic disciplines to new perspectives in scholarship and research related to cultural identity and expression. For example, as social and institutional change occurred in political spheres on the African continent, there were also changes in the way that "African musicology" evolved, within the Western academic community as well as among African scholars and cultural institutions. The concern of African researchers and cultural institutions focused on conducting studies that were Africa-centered, that is, designed to explore African music on its own terms (Nketia 1962; Kidula 2006). As the number of African researchers increased and government institutions became more proactive in supporting cultural programs and research, Western 'Africanists' expressed reservation with regard to whether musical studies conducted by people within the culture qualified as ethnomusicology. Bruno Nettl, widely considered to be one of the discipline's "founding fathers" and a specialist in the intellectual history of ethnomusicology, stated that

> Ethnomusicology is, in fact as well as in theory, the field which pursues knowledge of the world's music with the emphasis on the music outside the researcher's own culture, from a descriptive and comparative viewpoint. (1966: 11)

This statement seems to imply that viewpoints which privilege knowledge construction based on cognitive ethnocentrism are intrinsic to ethnomusicology; such a statement would not necessarily be problematic were it not for the inherent imbalance of power embedded in the historical and social context in which the statement was made. Given the paucity of comparative studies that focus on comparisons of musical behavior in cultures and regions within Africa, the concept of "cognitive ethnocentrism" in this case might be read as "unconscious Eurocentrism."

The example is pertinent when considering a similar transition in African-American research in the United States. As mentioned earlier, black culture in the United States was first and primarily documented by white scholars. From the late fifties on, there was an increase in the

number of African-American music researchers, partially as a result of newly established academic departments devoted to African-American studies in the years of the civil rights movement. In addition, the growth of a new black arts and political movements in the United States, which sought to identify and legitimize African-American cultural expressions, would necessarily include music as a primary element of African-American culture. There was a marked increase in studies of spirituals and the evolution of black church music, including gospel, as well as new research on ragtime, blues, rhythm and blues, soul, and jazz.

Eileen Southern, a Harvard-based musicologist, was an early advocate for the increased participation by black scholars in the field; her dedication to developing resources in the field was exemplified not only by the quality and depth of her research, but also through her contributions to the institutionalization of African-American music studies.
Her best-known work, *The Music of Black Americans*, a chronological overview of African-American music, was published in 1971 with its companion text, *Readings in Black American Music* (1971), groundbreaking in its extensive use of primary documents dating from the seventeenth century. A founding editor of the journal, *Black Perspective in Music* (1973), Southern contributed numerous articles on various sectors of African-American musical culture, as well as her own visions for the emerging field. Her commitment to rigorous scholarship and comprehensive studies of the range of African-American music provided important guideposts for future generations of black music scholars.

Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. is another key African-American musicologist in the field of black music research. Like Southern, Floyd was devoted to developing increased understanding and respect for African-American music and musicians, and made seminal contributions to the field.

Black Music in the United States: an Annotated Bibliography of Selected Reference and Research Materials (1983a), published by Floyd in collaboration with Marsha J. Reisser, was considered a landmark work at the time which enhanced the status of black music research. Floyd served as director of the Institute for Research in Black Music at Fisk University (1978–83), and then moved to Chicago where he became founding director of the Center for Black Music Research, based at Columbia College. A product of black colleges (Floyd studied and taught at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University), his location within the black college network strengthened the connection between music scholarship and black academic institutions. Over the years, Floyd strongly promoted the need for a separate field of black music studies, and actively recruited black scholars to work within it. His arguments referred to earlier conclusions regarding the origins of African-American music (i.e., spirituals and jazz) – conclusions which he felt negated the contributions of black people and had been left unchallenged due to the lack of blacks involved in music research (ibid). He identified the lack of information resources as one of the major obstacles to a fuller awareness and appreciation of African-American musics; in an aptly titled article, "On Black Music Research," (1983b: 49), Floyd discusses nine distinct areas in which additional work should be done. His list is broad, from musico-iconographical studies – a project that would document and connect iconic and other images of African-American music to musical analysis to *lexicographical studies*, the latter suggesting the need to create a black music dictionary or encyclopedia.

Floyd's comprehensive approach to developing the field of black music studies hints at the interdisciplinary tendencies that would emerge in his later writings (and in the "new ethnomusicology"), as most clearly expressed in his most recent work, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting its history from Africa to the United States* (1995). In the introduction,

Floyd refers to the influence of black literary theory on the development of new modes for black music inquiry. While his stated assumption involves the study of African musical elements and their role in African-American music, he disregards the traditional debates on survivals and syncretisms in favor of an analysis that goes beyond the musical characteristics to explore what he refers to as musical "tendencies" along with mythologies and interpretative strategies – all of which have been passed down as "African cultural memory" (ibid; 5). Floyd's project is twofold: first, he proposes an innovative approach that attempts to bridge distinct elements of African-American musical culture – music, dance, text, etc – and that provides mechanisms for evaluation and interpretation that arise from the material itself. His proposed approach incorporates theories and methods from literary and critical theory, most prominently Henry Louis Gates' concept of 'signifying' and it effectiveness in interpreting black vernacular culture. Floyd's second objective is to provide "not a traditional music history, but an interpretation of the origin and development of African-American music and music culture" (ibid; 9).

It is in this last statement that Floyd clarifies his broader intent – that black music cannot be studied without studying the corresponding music culture. While that may seem redundant for ethnomusicologists trained in the last few decades, it reflects an important distinction in understanding how and why black music studies have included a number of theorists and researchers from outside the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology, especially when considering the contributions of black scholars.

The tendency toward interdisciplinary approaches becomes evident in the increased resources generated by contemporary black scholars from different disciplines who include elements of musical culture in their analysis. Paul Gilroy presents black music as a central

component of his theory on modernity and black culture, with a focus on music and social relations (Gilroy 1993). Angela Davis, Professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz, published an exceptional work in the area of black feminist theory, based on the music and musical cultures of black blues women Gertrude 'Ma' Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday (Davis 1998). Cornel West, in an interesting twist on public scholarship and black musical culture, forged creative partnerships with jazz and rap performers in his hometown of Sacramento to produce *Sketches of My Culture,* a hip hop album advocating pride in black history and culture.[4]

The growth in interdisciplinary black music scholarship certainly had its reflection within the field of ethnomusicology in the United States – both in the expansion of theoretical approaches and objects of study and in the increase of black scholars in the discipline, including Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, Kofi Agawu, Luvenia George, Portia Maultsby, and Lorna McDaniel. Discussions and debates emerged that demonstrate the responsiveness of ethnomusicology to topical challenges, especially as relevant subjects included contemporary urban expressions within the United States (Lipsitz 1994, Neal 1999, Ramsey 2004, Wong 2004, George 2005), hybrid forms of music as a result of multi-directional cultural flows (Appadurai 1996), and contemporary manifestations of race in musical expression, research and history (Radano 2003). These present-day topics often refer to prior historical debates, yet more often discussions of African cultural survivals are not limited to binary perceptions of musical elements (i.e. present vs. absent) but rather occur in distinct and varied contexts of inquiry (i.e. identity construction and/or representation, musical tropes and social function, etc.).

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[4]Washington Post, 11/6/01
(http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpsrv/aponline/20011106/aponline142029_000.htm

Although Brazil does not necessarily have the experience of an Afro-Brazilian academic community and black music scholarship, there are some parallels (and clear distinctions) that may be drawn regarding black music studies. These will be explored in the next section on Brazilian music research, beginning with an overview of musical research and ethnomusicology in South America.

Early Music Research in South America

The development of ethnomusicology as a discipline in South American countries is characterized by the diversity of experiences in different countries, even as it conforms to general trends, topics, and methods prevalent in the early years of comparative musicology. One finds colorful accounts of musical experiences in the annals of colonial and missionary personnel, attempts on the part of pioneer researchers to collect and classify examples of different styles or genres, and an emphasis on nationalist concerns in the early state-building projects of the new countries. Most important to the objectives of this study, however, is the shared historical and subsequently cultural impact of the meeting and mixture of Amerindian, African, and European populations in the region, and how those cultural divisions and their fusions were studied and portrayed in music research – specifically with regard to African-American musical experience.

Any ethnomusicologically-driven assessment of South American music research must necessarily begin with the extensive contributions of Gerard Béhague, noted ethnomusicologist and educator who pioneered contemporary music research and analysis in South America, just as he played a major role in defining the contours of the discipline in its formative years in the

United States. Born in France and raised in Brazil, Béhague's primary focus was Latin American music, in which he is acknowledged both as a principal specialist and primary advocate for stimulating local, national, and regional studies. His contributions to the field include seminal studies of Brazilian musical cultures, including traditional and contemporary Afro-Brazilian expressions, as well as the founding of the preeminent scholarly journal of South American music research, *Latin American Music Review*, established in 1980. Béhague's writings highlight the history of music research in the region (1991), specific studies of particular genres in Brazil (1975, 1984, 1995, 2004), and proposals for new ways of framing ethnomusicological inquiry (2002, 2006). I will discuss his suggestions for incorporating performance as a specific and fundamental component in music analysis in a later section.

In an article on the ideological history of music research in Latin American (1991), Behague marks the genesis of ethnomusicology (or comparative musicology, as it may have been known at the time, as the term ethnomusicology had not yet been coined) in Latin America as occurring in the late nineteenth century, when local oral expressions gained importance as cultural historians, primarily motivated by nationalist sentiments at the time, reacted against the dominance of European musical expressions in the region. At the same time, the imperial processes of European countries continued to fuel interest in so-called exotic or primitive music among comparative musicologists associated with the Berlin School, including von Hornbostel, Sachs, and Koch-Grunberg (ibid; 57), resulting in an emphasis on primarily descriptive accounts of collected sound and song samples analyzed in ways that echoed the predominant research methods at the time.

Béhague found the descriptive tendency to be problematic in the course of music history research in the region. Unlike the history of ethnomusicology in the United States, which developed with almost symbiotic relationships to other disciplines (most importantly anthropology) related to the study of human behavior, early music research in South America lacked the benefit of direct experience on the part of researchers with the musical phenomena that they sought to represent. Acknowledging that a lack of comprehensive data on oral musics contributed to the prominence of descriptive interpretations, Béhague also points out that the developing awareness of the need for personal experience in and knowledge of the traditions did not necessarily result in methodological shifts in the discipline. He identified this dependency on musical descriptions as a fundamental flaw in musical research in the region and advocated for an increased application of field research methods, among other recommendations for enhanced studies of Latin American musical cultures.[5]

Béhague goes on to discuss the "tri-ethnic makeup of Latin American music" and the preponderance of studies concerned with origins and retentions of particular musical traits associated with specific cultural groups. He connects what he describes as "naive and simplistic generalizations" with an example of the early diffusionist/evolutionist theories that were rooted in the white supremacist and increasingly classist discourse(s) of the historic moment. Describing the contributions of Carlos Vega, Argentine folklorist/musicologist, Béhague first identifies Vega's focus on demonstrating cultural distinctions, such as the capacity for creativity, between "superior" and "inferior" social groups. Secondly, he draws attention to the ethnocentric limitations of Vega's attempt to identify and classify musical systems or styles in a continuum;

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[5]For an enumerated list of specific needs for ethnomusicological research in Latin American, see Behague in Myers (1973).

the employment of inconsistent criteria and dissimilar factors only served to create confusing and inappropriate models for regional musical classification. Unfortunately, his biased concepts regarding culturally superior and inferior social groups and designation of musical folklore as the study of unilinear cultural survivals were passed on to his students and adopted by early music researchers in other South American countries. This regrettable ideological legacy influenced the tendency to locate and construct data collection in ways that emphasized the retention (or dominance) of traditional European musical elements in South American folk music. Certainly such an emphasis did not serve to encourage musical research that may have ventured outside of the sanctioned boundaries of conventional scholarly wisdom at the time, and more likely contributed to the further application of ethnocentric classification systems and models that served the Eurocentric interests of the dominant sectors of increasingly stratified social systems in the region.

Béhague identifies the "lack of conceptual distance between musical folklore and ethnomusicology" as a basic problem in Latin American music studies, suggesting that the former lacked foundation in theory and method (ibid 1991; 60). The distinction reflects the challenge in accommodating the broad array of scholars and practitioners involved in music research at the time within a single discipline, as musicology seemed to expand to include studies of folk songs, dance, non-Western music, organology, ritual music, and other expressions and contexts that did not lend themselves to singular modes of analysis. While the division eventually helped to define ethnomusicology as a discipline in the mid 1950s, it had important ramifications for South American music research in its formative years. Little attention was paid to social context, as researchers emphasized music as a product rather than a process; in this way, significant information such as musical transmission, social function, and music events were

overlooked as irrelevant at the time. I will discuss an additional problem exacerbated by the early folkloric approach of music researchers in Brazil – the representation of Afro-Brazilian cultural images (especially from candomblé) in extraneous contexts as designed to serve the promotional needs of commercial as well as state entities. It will be useful to acknowledge the deliberate use of Afrocentric images and references as an intentional reclaiming and contextual redefinition of the Afro-Brazilian cultural community – a strategic element of cultural resistance.

Béhague provides a critical example of the limitations and challenges in South American ethnomusicology in his comparison of early studies of Luso-Brazilian (of Portuguese descent), Afro-Brazilian traditional and Indian musics in Brazil. He attributes the fact that more attention was paid to the Luso-Brazilian traditions not only to the vast distribution of its forms across the country, but also to the cultural superiority associated with the colonizers (ibid; 63). With regard to Afro-Brazilian musical research, while acknowledging the extensive work on black culture done by folklorists, anthropologists, and sociologists, he points to a few random musical studies done in the 1930s (Luciano Gallet 1934 and Mario de Andrade 1933), mostly commenting on their lack of ethnomusicological thoroughness. His critiques of later attempts – anthropology-focused studies that neglected the importance of music in black religious cultures (Rodrigues 1933, Ramos 1941, Carneiro 1948), other studies that acknowledged music and dance but didn't apply sufficient ethnomusicological analysis (Waterman 1949, Merriam 1959) - provide useful criteria for understanding the need for comprehensive studies of black musical performance studies. Later studies of candomblé and musical performance showed improvement as anthropological methods were increasingly inserted into the methodological canon. This disciplinary shift is reflected in his suggestions for increased, focused regional studies on cult musics:

> …questions dealing with codification of repertories, music's relationship to belief systems and practices, music as a part of religious behavior and as performance understood in ethnographic terms – all are open for investigation in the numerous regional versions of cult music from the state of Pará to Rio Grande do Sul" (Behague 1991:64).

Although his views on the scope and methods of ethnomusicology may have been ahead of their time in relationship to the evolution of the discipline in Brazil, Béhague's own contribution to the study of black musical performance was extraordinary. His contributions as a theorist and researcher have included new ways of thinking about musical change, performance practice, and music as popular culture, among other topics. From his early focus on ritual music in candomblé to his more recent studies of samba reggae in Bahia, Gerard Béhague advocated and practiced the kind of ethnomusicological study that pushed the boundaries of the discipline, and contributed to elevating the value of black music research in Brazil.

Music research in Brazil

Brazilian music research in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrated an apparent contradiction in the country's nation-building project: the rejection of European cultural dominance and the negation of non-white elements of the cultural mix that defined the Brazilian nation. Brazilian ethnomusicologist Suzel Reily speaks to both the issue of racial ideologies and policies in the emerging nation-state as well as the impact of nationalism on musical development and documentation in her introduction to a special issue of the *British Journal of Ethnomusicology – Brazilian Musics, Brazilian Identitities*. Linking the acceptance of European theories on race and culture as justification for Brazil's proactive whitening policies, she goes on to extend the connection to music research through the work of Silvio Romero, a supporter of the policies and one of the first collectors of popular Brazilian song texts in the late

1800s. It is interesting to note, however, that Romero's embracing of the Eurocentric model eventually led to an exaltation of the mestizo as the cornerstone of Brazilian culture. Reily goes on to outline the construction of "canonical narratives" that form the base of Brazilian music histories (Reily 2000). She contends that music historians in Brazil inserted their own nationalist agendas into their research, resulting in the presentation of Brazil's music history as a linear, chronological sequence of styles – styles that, by virtue of their status as granted by historical account, came to define Brazilian music. Reily first identifies a formative period that covers the colonial era and focuses on the hybrid musical forms that resulted from the encounter of Europeans, Indians, and Africans (ibid; 6). Almost a century before the term "racial democracy" affected a national consciousness regarding the historical reality of race in the consolidation of class and power in Brazil, a similar concept characterized the narrative of Brazilian music history – the idea of a triangular encounter of musical cultures (European, Amerindian, African), which ultimately resulted in the official (and popular) promotion of specific regional (and whitened) musics as emblematic of Brazilian national identity.

In addition to the impact of nationalist sentiment on Brazilian musical history, the actual creation of Brazilian music was tremendously influenced by proponents of the emerging modernist project of establishing a national identity (Reily 1994: 74) Again, in the spirit of the contradiction cited earlier, early advocates of the Brazilian nationalist project in the arts community began to draw upon the tri-racial base of Brazilian culture as a strength, as opposed to a justification for cultural inferiority. Mario de Andrade, often credited as being the first Brazilian ethnomusicologist (Reily 1994), was in an excellent position to link musical research to the establishment of a distinct Brazilian culture that rejected European models and expressions. A leader in the Brazilian intelligentsia's Modernist movement, in 1928 Andrade published the

seminal work *Ensaio sobre a musica brasileira* (Essay on Brazilian Music), a call to composers to begin to utilize the rich cultural resources within the country to create national expressions, placing his own expansive collections of Brazilian musical resources at their disposal. Rather than elevate the European segment of the tri-ethnic mix, Andrade attempted to demonstrate how the three cultural groups collaborated in creating an integrated, national expression of Brazilian music. His research in different regional genres contributed to his overarching goal of articulating the genealogy and musical manifestation of the Brazilian psyche (Reily 1994:81), and his methods anticipated the incorporation of anthropological field research in music studies. De Andrade's work is particularly relevant as he also conducted some of the earliest research on Afro-Brazilian ritual musics. While his methods were somewhat unreliable given the lack of systematic analysis of the rhythmic structure he proposed (ibid; 84), his ideas on the relationship between rhythm and possession states foreshadowed later studies that focused on music and trance (Merriam 1957, 1965; Davis 1972; Kartomi 1973; Erlmann 1982; Becker 2004)

Mario de Andrade's efforts toward defining "the musical manifestation of the national psyche" (Reily 2000:4) were unfortunately stymied with the advent of a new populist current which emerged in the1930s, politically embodied in the Getulio Vargas regime (1930-1945). Vargas employed a vigorous nationalist discourse in the institution of the Estado Novo (New State); his vision of a national identity involved the elevation of the "mestiço" in the role of laborer dedicated to the advancement of the country (ibid.; 4). Vargas's regime also coincided with the rise of samba, which provided a useful mechanism through which to extol the virtues of racial integration through cultural expression and create a tangible symbol of national music identity. At the same time that the political system embraced (or co-opted) composers and performers, the government was also implementing cultural censorship and artistic repression in

the media. These measures had the effect of limiting the scope of music research and solidifying the tendency toward a nationalist approach by Brazilian music scholars (ibid.; 5), a tendency that continued through the years of the military dictatorship (1964-1985).

Although Brazilian scholars may have been obstructed in their efforts to document the diversity of musical forms during the Vargas regime, ethnomusicologists outside of the country expressed an active interest in Afro-Brazilian ritual music at the time (Merriam 1951, 1956, 1963; Herskovits 1944; Waterman and Herskovits 1949; Béhague 1975, 1977; Kubik 1979). As discussed earlier, much of the earlier research was undertaken in order to explore theories of African cultural retention in African-American music. Ritual music in Afro-Brazilian communities provided a rich source of material from which to investigate related issues being debated at the time, such as acculturation, syncretism, and the relationship of drumming to possession and trance. Bahia was especially valuable as a site for field research; as a primary port in the Atlantic slave trade, the concentration of black populations and their retention of African cultural traditions established the region as a starting point in the evolution of distinct Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions such as candomblé and capoeira.

Contemporary Research on Afro-Brazilian Music (1970s to present)

As Béhague noted in an assessment of the challenges to avoiding racial and class bias, the fact is the most Brazilian music scholars were of European descent and members of the socio-economic elite (Béhague 1991:61). This raises questions of interpretation and objectivity - in the worst case, white Brazilian academics did not consider black musical expressions to be worthy of scholarly attention, or continued to transmit racially biased concepts within the canon. At best,

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Afro-Brazilian music was still viewed as a subordinate component of Brazil's tri-ethnic musical heritage, and relegated to limited and generalized acknowledgement based on racialized ideas about African musical elements in Brazilian music. On a broader scale, it is only fair to say that the state of music (or any) scholarship reflects the ideological priorities of academia at a particular place and time; the cultural politics of the nationalist movement and the general repression of academic freedom combined to delay serious consideration of contemporary black music among existing music scholars at the time.

It was not until after the 1970s, when blacks in the city of Salvador established a new cultural movement affirming Brazilian blackness and its roots in African-derived practices and institutions, that music scholars (or scholars in other disciplines who wrote about music, as was more often the case then) began to take notice. Antonio Risério, Bahian poet and anthropologist, published *Carnaval Ijexá - notas sobre os blocos e afoxés do novo carnaval afrobaiano* (Ijexa Carnival, notes on the blocos and afoxes of the new Afro-Bahian carnival) in1981 – the first comprehensive look at what he called the "re-Africanization" of Bahian carnival by black-mestizo youth. In a later article, he articulates his view that the term not only referred to the emerging cultural groups built on pride in their African heritage, but also alluded to the African roots of Bahian carnival (Risério, 1999:250). Although he is not a musicologist, his work looks at several different examples of the recent musical manifestations of affirmed blackness in Salvador, as well as some of the international influences on Afro-Brazilian youth coming from the United States (James Brown) and Jamaica (reggae).

Another Bahian scholar who has made significant contributions to contemporary studies of music, race, and identity is Jose Jorge de Carvalho. Carvalho is a cultural anthropologist with

a specialization in ethnomusicology who has done extensive research on Afro-Brazilian religious and popular music. His publications include *Estéticas da opacidade e da transparência: mito, música e ritual no culto* (Aesthetics of Opacity and Transparency: myth, music and ritual in the cult, 1993) and *A tradição musical iorubá no Brasil: um cristal que se oculta e revela* (Yoruba Musical Tradition in Brazil: a crystal that hides and reveals itself, 2003). In addition, he has introduced articulations of the relationships between power and culture, or what he has called "aesthetic geopolitics" (Carvalho 2003). A professor at the University of Brasilia, Carvalho has participated in numerous gatherings and activities of the Brazilian Black Movement and has been a vocal advocate for affirmative action in university admissions in Brazil.

A new focus on black music emerged within Brazilian universities and research institutions with the proliferation of contemporary black musical phenomena, such as funk and charm dances, Brazilian reggae, and bloco afro groups, whose model was being adopted in other cities as well. Research agendas were debated and formulated to address issues of racial and cultural identity, ethnicity, and the social function(s) of musical participation in black communities, as well as the impact of globalization on local musical production. An important initiative at the time was Projeto S.A.M.B.A. (Project on the Social Anthropology of Music in Bahia) – a graduate program at the Federal University of Bahia in Salvador led by Livio Sansone, a social anthropologist born in Italy and academically trained in Amsterdam. The program collaborated with A Cor da Bahia (The Color of Bahia), a related research and training project focused on race, culture, and ethnicity, to produce a collection of essays on contemporary black music. *Ritmos em Transito: A sociologia da musica baiana* (Rhythms in Transit: A socio-anthropology of Bahian music), edited by Livio Sansone with Jocélio Teles dos Santos, anthropologist and director of the Center for Afro-Asiatic Studies, was published in 1998 and

explored themes connecting local musical expression and black cultural production to questions of racial and ethnic identity in the era of globalization.

These questions stimulated interest among ethnomusicologists and music scholars in the United States as well. In 1992, Gerard Béhague directed a colloquium on music and black ethnicity in the Caribbean and South America, with scholars from the fields of musicology, anthropology, and sociology; the proceedings were published in 1994 and featured articles on the how racial identity is articulated through musical expressions in the region. The gathering was sponsored by the North South Center at the University of Miami, a research institute focused on the Americas with an interest in creating connections between scholars and universities in different countries. The following year, the North South Center collaborated with the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Florida and UCLA's Latin American Center on another conference, "Black Brazil: Culture, Identity and Social Mobilization." The conference was organized by Larry Crook, an ethnomusicologist and musician who has conducted research projects in Brazil and Nigeria, and featured presentations by Afro-Brazilian artists and community activists in addition to academic papers. The presentations were subsequently published in 1999 in a volume of the same name, and included a section on music, carnival, and identity. Increased collaboration among emerging scholars writing about these topics, especially in Bahia, inspired a more recent publication, *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*, edited by Charles Perrone (professor of Portuguese and Luso-Brazilian Culture and Literatures at the University of Florida) and Christopher Dunn (specialist in Brazilian cultural and literary studies). Although the volume addresses the national spectrum of Brazilian popular musics, there are several articles drawn from the earlier Projeto S.A.M.B.A. research and translated into English (Dunn and Perrone 2002). The inclusion of essays about Afro-Brazilian musical performance in

a national and global context demonstrates the increasing recognition of contemporary black

Brazilian music research and its relationship to broader social questions.

As mentioned earlier, up until recently, there has not been a Brazilian parallel to the

American experience of historically black colleges and universities promoting and supporting

black cultural research, nor the influence of prominent black scholars on a growing community

of black academics. I raise this historical distinction as those factors played a role in stimulating

a body of research and reflective inquiry that recognized and addressed the need for black

scholarship in the field of music research in the United States. Scholars who advocated racial

advancement developed mechanisms and resources to support black music research and provided

intellectual leadership over the years. Unfortunately, due to a variety of historical and social

factors that have contributed to the disparities in education levels between blacks and whites in

Brazil, as well as additional challenges faced by Afro-Brazilians attempting to obtain college and

university degrees (economic limitations, racial discrimination, etc.), the lack of a critical mass

of black Brazilian researchers has made it difficult to establish the kind of academic networks

and resource centers that encouraged black music research in the United States (Southern 1973;

Floyd 1981) . However, a national initiative is currently developing among black scholars and

research institutions in Brazil. In 2000, black Brazilian academics based at universities and

institutes across the country established the Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores Negros –

ABPN (National Association of Black Researchers). ABPN's mission is to support and promote

scientific-academic studies conducted by black researchers on issues of direct interest to the

black Brazilian community, and to assist in the development of local and regional Afro-Brazilian

studies initiatives at universities or research centers. In addition, they identify a direct

relationship between research and the development of public policies that address the issues

raised by the black academic community, specifying their role as researchers to promote public policy positions. This connection between research and social action is similar the activist stance taken by black scholars in the U.S., especially during the Harlem Renaissance and through the Civil Rights Movement.

The recent surge in contemporary black music research in Brazil combined with an emerging community of black Brazilian scholars points toward the potential for new perspectives in the field, as well as the expansion of community-based initiatives and resources created by researchers directly tied to the communities in question. As we saw in the case of black institutional development in music research in the U.S., such initiatives can provide much needed impetus and support for black scholarship in a society that has diminished or negated the historical, social, and cultural contributions of its communities of African descent.

As we have seen, black music research in Brazil has gone through many stages, and has been affected by numerous factors related to the political, cultural, and social history of Brazil. In addition, music scholars outside of Brazil have conducted research on Afro-Brazilian communities within a larger context of regional black cultures and musical expressions of the African diaspora, raising questions that cut across disciplines and informed theoretical innovation with regard to issues of cultural contact, transmission, and cultural retention in music research. Although ethnomusicology as an institutionalized discipline is in its formative stages in Brazil, new trends in Afro-Brazilian music research are likely to instigate additional innovations in musicological study, perhaps eventually establishing the topic as a primary research area within Brazilian ethnomusicology. As music research moves away from a historical canon and nationalist agenda that diminished the contributions of Afro-Brazilian expressions in misguided

efforts to promote a singular Brazilian musical identity (Reily 2000: 8), a new generation of

Brazilian music scholars is poised to develop its own agendas and objects of study. Certainly, the

central questions raised in recent black Brazilian music research – music and identity, cultural

production and consumption at local and global levels, folklorization and cultural appropriation –

can inform research in other musical communities in Brazil, contributing to a more realistic and

comprehensive presentation of regional and ethnic diversity in Brazilian musical expression.

Chapter 3: Ilê Aiyê: African Identity through Cultural Affiliation and Performance

Ilê Aiyê is a community-based cultural entity that embodies the fluidity of local/national/global identification within a black community in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. It is an Afro-Brazilian cultural institution based in the Curuzu quarter in the neighborhood of Liberdade, in Salvador, capital city of the state of Bahia, Brazil. Each of those reference points has a specific meaning in diasporic history: Brazil, importer of the greatest numbers of Africans during the slave trade, and having the largest black population outside of Africa; Bahia, the site of early revolts by Africans against the landed elite; Salvador, home and cultural base of candomblé – the sacred force that connected and continues to connect Brazil to an African spiritual experience and value system. Finally, Liberdade, the neighborhood in which Ilê Aiyê creates and sustains its base, is the oldest and largest black community in the city. The intersections of these geo-social references establish the historic grounding from which Ilê Aiyê emerged, and inform the role of the organization in social activism and racial advancement.

This section introduces Ilê Aiyê, beginning with a description of the significance of the historical-geographic location of the group in the context of Afro-Brazilian history. The unique experience of the state of Bahia is fundamental in providing a historical framing for the emergence of bloco afro, as is the particular social and political trajectory of Afro-Bahian cultural (and specifically carnival) organizations in the city of Salvador. The connection between history and place contributes to understanding the key factors that provide Ile Aiyé with its racial, cultural, and community legitimacy, and how those factors are embedded in the musical

expressions that communicate blackness in that context. Although processes of globalization

have introduced new possibilities for individual and collective affiliation outside of the

traditional categories of identification, such as community, nation, ethnicity and/or race (Lipsitz

1994:13), it is clear that the local geographical and historical contexts are integral to Ilê Aiyê's

narrative and political positioning. However, this does not mean that a purely local grounding is

its final and/or singular reference point. Rather, the narrative begins with African resistance to

slavery and ends with an Afro-Brazilian organization that emphasizes Africa as the cultural

source of identity for blacks in Brazil – a view that suggests a circular process of identification,

beginning with Africa as the motherland and continually invoking African identity through

cultural affiliation and performance. Such a process facilitates the use of cultural strategies as a

means to sustain the connection between Afro-Brazilians and their African heritage. These

strategies are rooted in the early survival mechanisms of enslaved Africans and, later, freed Afro-

Brazilians who struggled for justice and dignity on various fronts in Bahia, including those

within religious and performance structures, namely candomblé and carnival.

In addition to the influence and legacy of candomblé and the early Afro-Brazilian

carnival groups, it is imperative to recognize the contemporary political context of the African

diaspora in which Ilê Aiyê was created. This context includes both the Brazilian setting in which

Afro-Brazilians were empowering themselves through a national anti-racist effort, the

Movimento Negro (Black Movement), and the impact of black struggles in the global arena –

liberation struggles in Africa, the anti-apartheid movement, and the North American civil rights

movement. The convergence of these political influences had a profound effect on the founders

of and early participants in the organization, which I will discuss briefly before presenting the

specific history of Ilê Aiyê.

The cultural history of Salvador, Bahia demonstrates the formative role that early black populations played in establishing and maintaining African cultural identity in black communities both within and apart from the larger Brazilian society. Although a thorough assessment of Afro-Bahian cultural history is beyond the purview of this study, it is important to recognize the ancestral fonts of musical affirmation of black identity in Salvador – candomblé and carnival, two primary arenas for individual and collective negotiation of Afro-Brazilian identity. There were other spaces and institutions such as the Catholic and lay black brotherhoods through which Afro-Brazilians articulated distinctly African cultural allegiances and played a role in self-determination and racial advancement, however, while these groups organized processions and festivals featuring music and dance (Fryer 2000:57), they did not employ music as a central organizing element. The ritual and performance phenomena of candomblé and carnival demonstrate how music is directly connected to early constructions of black identity and manifestations of Afro-Brazilian participation in Salvadoran cultural politics. In addition, both practices suffered aggressive persecution and harassment by the police and other less official instruments of social control, i.e., political campaigns and media targeting (Braga: 1993). These sustained attacks on black culture and expressions of racial identity subsequently made each form, in and of itself, symbolic of black agency and resistance, which in turn blurs the distinction between political and cultural empowerment for Afro-Brazilians in the region. Just as candomble houses and black carnival organizations fought for cultural rights and equality in a racist society in post-abolition Salvador, these institutions continue to serve as both alternative spaces for black communities and instruments for racial advancement in Bahian society today.

3.1 Candomblé: Nations of Africa

Between the early sixteenth and late nineteenth centuries, the transatlantic slave trade resulted in Brazil receiving the greatest numbers of Africans in the hemisphere at its capital port – Salvador, Bahia. Due to patterns of trade at the time (Verger: 1964), Africans were brought to Brazil from three primary ethnic groupings: the Sudanese, which included the Yoruba culture, commonly considered to be the largest and most influential African cultural influence in Brazil, the Bantu, and the Guinea-Sudanese (Africans of Muslim faith). Followers of Islam were clearly identifiable as distinct communities in the historical development of Afro-Brazilian culture and politics.[6] In addition, due to the longevity of the slave trade in Brazil, there was a consistent, dynamic flow and exchange of cultural elements among the Africans who settled in Salvador.[7] Certainly, intense repression and violence at the hands of white slave owners provided a strong incentive for unity and collaboration among Africans from various ethnic and religious affiliations, as Africans chose to emphasize their common interest in resistance and survival to establish mechanisms for community building and mutual support. These mechanisms included the establishment of ritual communities in which African spiritual beliefs and practices were nurtured and maintained. Bahian candomblé emerged from these communities and, through its ritual practices and community organization, grew to become the predominant repository of African worldview, tradition, and identity in Brazil.[8]

One of the most significant elements of the early formations of candomblé communities involved the utilization of African ethnic nations as a basic organizing principle. In her study of

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[6]João José Reis (1983) explores the history of Bahian Muslims and their role in slave in revolts in the state in *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia.*

[7]Although Portugal outlawed slavery in 1761, trafficking of Africans continued in its colonies, especially in Brazil, which was the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery in 1888.

[8]For comprehensive studies on the origin and evolution of candomblé, see Carneiro: 1948, Bastide: 1960, Harding: 2003, Matory: 2005.

post-abolition black communities in São Paulo and Salvador, Kim Butler (1988) refers to a "redefined African ethnicity" that facilitated the establishment of *terreiros* based primarily on the rituals of one of the predominant African nations (Daniel: 2005: 3).[9] This system of denominational classification instituted the source from which Afro-Bahians derived their identity based on cultural rather than racial association (Butler 1998:169-170; de Carvalho 1999:4). This distinction is important in understanding identity construction in black communities in Salvador, as it presents a unique strategy for group affiliation within an African organizational structure – that of ethnic nations, as opposed to racial classification. The limited relevance of color or race-based identification would prove to be a challenge for future black movement activists in the region, as will be discussed later.

The predominant role of musical performance in the enactment of ritualized spiritual communication is a constitutive characteristic of African cultures. In most African societies, music and dance play an integral role in mediating communication between humans and cosmological deities. This communication occurs in a variety of forms within different regions or cultures - through vocal or instrumental music, via collective expression or by way of individual intermediaries, in public or private ritual spaces. Musical performance is the mode through which communication takes place between the spirits and those humans chosen to interpret the divine interventions within the ritual context **(**Becker**:** 2004**,** Robertson**:** 2004**,** Shelemay 1991b**).** Bahian candomblé uses music and dance as the primary vehicles for spiritual realization: percussion, voice and movement interact in every ritual as the mechanisms through which the gods, or orixas*,* are invoked. (Herskovitz 1944; Herskovitz and Waterman 1949; Merriam 1951)

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[9]Generally refers to candomblé congregations and/or the consecrated land on which the community conducts its ritual practices.

Since the first slave ships landed in Salvador, embodied expressions of cultural knowledge have been preserved and passed on through generations of *babalorixas* and their adherents.[10] The survival and continuous expansion of candomblé is a testament to the resilience of black communities in the face of racist, state-sanctioned repression that specifically targeted African cultural practices and their practitioners.

The conception of social interaction as the primary site for the construction of identity and knowledge presents a useful perspective through which to appreciate ritual as both a space and a process for negotiating meaning. From its inception, candomblé provided a space in which language, images, movement, and sound came to represent "Africa," enabling people from different ethnic, geographic, and language groups to reaffirm an individual sense of cultural identity and to create and strengthen communal affiliation through shared experienced and worldview. As a process, the reflexive nature of identity construction and performance is manifested in ritual contexts; ritual participation allows individuals to not only receive and interpret meaning, but also to simultaneously communicate and affirm meaning by performing their constructed identities through a variety of interactions, including embodiment through trance or possession, call and response singing, drumming, and dance.

Candomblé, particularly, is an example of how spiritual practice served as oppositional discourse to the hegemonic, racist ideologies that negated the value and humanity of people of African descent. The development and representation of African belief systems through sacred rituals and symbols attests to the determination of and the regular occurrence of transformative, liminal experiences among ritual participants. This construction of an "African imaginary" has been an essential and constant element of black cultural (and nationalist) movements throughout

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[10]Candomblé priest or priestess

the diaspora, as evidenced in the rise of literary movements such as Négritude. In a later section I will explore how these symbolic representations of Africa are created and transmitted through the performance/texts of Ilê Aiyê.

Carnival: Public Manifestations of African Identity

The process of identity affirmation through performance and symbolic representation of African culture in candomblé has its parallel in black carnival organizations. As Africans and Afro-Brazilians sought to participate in early street celebrations, they encountered discrimination and, in some instances, legal prohibition. A brief overview of Afro-Brazilian carnival manifestations starting in the late 1880s in Salvador will shed light on the historic legacy of early Afro-Brazilian carnival groups that informed the creation of Ilê Aiyê.

Public carnival celebrations in Salvador began with the *entrudo* – a form of street celebration imported from Portugal from the early to mid 1800s. Characterized by practical jokes, dousing people with water, or pelting them with wax objects, the simple street activities were eventually denounced as being too unruly and violent (Ferreira 2005). The entrudos presented blacks with the opportunity to participate in public celebrations alongside of whites, provoking negative reaction from the elite who sought to distance themselves from Africans and African culture, at least publicly. Whites objected to what they perceived as an encroachment of public space by blacks, space which was the eminent domain of "civilized" (of European descent) Brazilians. Their disaffection inspired a strategy of economic exclusion - the entrudos were eventually suppressed and replaced by public balls and parades organized around Eurocentric themes primarily based on Greek and Roman mythologies. These highly organized and choreographed displays of Euro-Brazilians were in great contrast to the unruly nature of the

entrudo, and temporarily mollified those who continued to fear the intrusion of African culture in Salvadoran society. A new form of carnival performance emerged from these parades and dances– one that emphasized street parades of organized cultural groups, with floats and messages of social critique – much like the carnival celebrations we see today, especially in the hyper-commercialized festivities in Rio de Janeiro – the *porta-bandeira* of Brazilian identity on a global level. [11]

At first, the celebrations were dominated by the large carnival societies established in white communities, generally restricted to blacks outside of the role of laborer. In spite of the concerted efforts to restrict blacks from public carnival, Afro-Brazilians responded by creating the first Afro-centric carnival groups, utilizing African cultural and political references as the basis for their group identification and message. Groups such as Embaixada Africana (African Embassy), Pandegos da Africa (Merrymakers of Africa) and Chegada Africana (African Arrival) took to the streets with the drums and percussion instruments of candomblé, creating what came to be known as *candomblé de rua*, or street candomblé - performances of ritual rhythms with antiphonal singing, as well as African-inspired attire. In addition, the practice of a pre-performance ritual was a requisite element of the candomblé de rua; this was an element that not only distinguished these groups from the European-based carnival organizations, but also served to maintain a strong connection between the religious communities and the carnival entities. These early black organizations were the first "afoxés" **-** a term which historically referred to groups that performed sacred music in secular settings, and was derived from the name of one of the ritual instruments, the *afoxé,* a small gourd strung with beads or *"contas"* (cowrie shells used

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[11]The porta-bandeira is the carnaval parade role/function in which the designated flac-carrier waves and turns the samba-school banner at the front of the parade.

in Yoruba divination practices). The ritual rhythms and songs of these groups incorporated stories of African civilizations and black nations such as Ethiopia (Butler 1998: 177). Their visibility as intentionally African-identified performance entities provided Afro-Bahians with a sense of pride and agency, as well as made political statements regarding the cultural and political rights of a disenfranchised population in post-abolition Salvador. Furthermore, their repertoires promoted and facilitated international solidarity with African countries against increased European aggressions (ibid; 179). These early manifestations of an African diasporic consciousness provide insight into what might be considered a distinctly Afro-centric discursive practice, one in which cultural performance is a central site for social discourse as well as a channel for political expression and participation, where musical "texts" are the principal transmitters of ideological constructs. The elements of such a discursive approach as practiced by Ilê Aiyê and other contemporary Afro-Bahian groups will be explored in later sections.

As more black groups joined the festivities, there was an increased negative response from conservatives and elite groups seeking once again to eradicate the African element from public demonstrations of Bahian culture. In the first half of the twentieth century, dominant social forces used a variety of strategies to marginalize black carnival manifestations; none of these strategies succeeded, however, in impeding the formation of one of the most important, historic Afro-Bahian carnival organizations, Filhos de Gandhy. Established in 1949, Filhos de Gandhy was founded and populated by black stevedores, naming themselves as a tribute to Indian leader and activist Mahatma Gandhi, who had been recently assassinated. In addition to its adherence to the theme of peace as a powerful instrument of social change, as embodied by Gandhi, this carnival group elevated Gandhi's image to promote the humanist elements of African philosophy articulated through candomblé. Wearing white and blue costumes, with

turbans on their heads, long robes, beaded necklaces, and sandals on their feet, they parade to the traditional songs and musical instruments of candomblé – atabaques (conical drums of various sizes), agogôs (double-belled metal instrument played with a wooden stick), and shekeres (medium to large beaded gourds). Like the earlier black carnival groups, Filhos de Gandhy perform "candomblé de rua." The primary rhythm of their repertoire, ijexá, is derived from ritual music performed for specific orixas, the deities of the candomblé pantheon, and performed with the fundamental bell pattern:

They also continue the tradition of the pre-performance ritual, both during their own carnival manifestations and in other public ritual and/or religious performance spaces such as the city-wide processions for Ash Wednesday and the syncretic ceremony, *A Lavagem do Bonfim*, where thousands of Catholic and candomblé adherents follow a procession of *baianas* (Afro-Brazilian women from various terreiros) from the Igreja de Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Praia to the Igreja do Nosso Senhor do Bonfim, where a ritual washing of the church steps occurs. The purification ritual is followed by celebrations in several public squares, featuring percussion, dance, and traditional Afro-Brazilian foods, particularly those foods associated with *Oxala*, the orixá who, through the Catholic-Candomblé syncretic structure, corresponds to the Senhor do Bonfim. Because they performed music based on sacred rituals in secular settings, Filhos de Gandhy was designated as an afoxe group, similar to the traditions of the earlier black carnival groups, rather than what would eventually come to be considered the commercially-viable, carnival bloco entities.

Another key precursor to the emergence of the bloco afro was the bloco de indio –

carnival associations that paraded to the rhythms of samba schools while choosing names and

wearing costumes inspired by the depictions of Native Americans as portrayed in Hollywood

films. The group first group of its kind, Apaches de Tororó, was founded in 1968 and included

the promotion and support of Afro-Indigenous Brazilians as part of its mission. Today, it is one

of only three surviving blocos – the other two being Comanche do Pelô (1974) and Universo

Verde (Green Universe), which connects ecological issues with indigenous rights.

Diasporic Inspiration(s) in the Brazilian Black Movement

During the 1970s, Brazil's black activist community continued to strengthen its campaigns

for racial justice, with strong inspiration from the numerous movements occurring around the

world, and beginning with the initial process of demilitarization – *abertura* (opening) - occurring

within Brazil at the time (Mitchell 1986). The political liberalization process pursued by the

government of President Ernesto Geisel from 1974 to 1979 had a broad effect on social and

popular movements, as new constituencies emerged to demand rights and recognition, while

existing movements and their leaders reappeared after years of government persecution or, in

many cases, exile. During that time, a new generation of black organizations came forward, one

which also found inspiration in the liberation struggles and victories in Africa, particularly those

in the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola, the anti-apartheid movement in South

Africa and including the more geographically, if not linguistically, accessible civil rights

movement in the United States. These movements, among others, inspired black Brazilians to

strengthen their own anti-racist organizations and planted the seeds for what would come to be

known as the "Movimento Negro," or Black Movement - the contemporary term used to define

the collection of Afro-Brazilian activists and organizations engaged in the struggle against racism in Brazilian society.

"Movimento Negro" refers to a broad grouping of institutions and individuals working at various levels - local, regional and national - as well as within different political and social sectors: youth, women, labor, legal, cultural, etc. Through a wide variety of strategies in many contexts, Afro-Brazilians confront the various forms of racism embedded within the country's institutions and which have resulted in the oppression and marginalization of Brazil's black population. Through promoting positive senses of racial identity within private and public contexts, exploring affirmative action programs and policies in education, and establishing legal guarantees and protection of basic rights at the federal level, black activists wage a battle against social injustice and discrimination on all fronts.[12]

African-American influences

During the decade of the seventies, Brazilian blacks were influenced by the African-American cultural arts movements in the United States that advocated black pride and power, characterized by the phrase 'black is beautiful. In addition, the global distribution of commercial cultural products (i.e., "blaxploitation" films like Shaft and Superfly), black-identified sports celebrities, and "soul" music, provided them with numerous models for symbolic affiliation with black identities, however removed from their immediate national/cultural context. African-American musical expressions, such as songs performed by James Brown ("I'm Black and I'm

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[12]Additional information on the history of the contemporary Movimento Negro, can be found in Hanchard 1998; Gonzalez 1982.

Proud") and other socially conscious black performers, inspired parallel cultural movements among black communities in urban areas in Brazil – "black-rio" and "black-sampa"[13] – movements that supported a renewed sense of racial consciousness through music and other expressions of "blackness," including Afro hairstyles, platform shoes, dashikis, and bellbottom pants, as absorbed through the media. These urban musical movements of samba-funk fusions, manifested primarily in large dance parties in Rio, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, and Salvador, created new opportunities for young blacks to identify individually and collectively as black Brazilians, as well as social spaces in which to promote racial awareness and political activism, providing a catalyst for subsequent culture and arts-based consciousness-raising projects within the movement.

Both black and non-black detractors leveled criticism against the "Black Soul" phenomenon. Black cultural workers, including composers of samba and other traditional Brazilian musical styles, characterized the movement as musically limited, imitative and blatantly commercial, while white elites accused its promoters of importing racist philosophy from the United States into Brazil (Hanchard 1994:114). Similar accusations would later be used to discredit Ilê Aiyê at the outset of its mobilization efforts, specifically allegations of racism and exclusionary practices. However, in spite of attempts to disparage or repress these new(er) forms of racial affiliation and cultural expression, the musical movements thrived and expanded to different regions around the country; funk and *charme* (charm, referring to slower songs of the genre) dance events continue to attract thousands of black youths in Brazil's urban centers.[14]

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[13]"Sampa" is slang for São Paulo
[14]For expanded discussions of black soul and funk movements and their relationship to racial identity formation, see Hanchard 1994; Sansone 2001; and Lima 2002.

Jamaican reggae

During this time as well, reggae music was beginning its rapid rise as a symbol of black cultural resistance around the world, and became a rallying point for black Brazilians seeking racial validation and connection (albeit primarily ideational) to global black communities (Pinho 2001). Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff and Peter Tosh's songs, with their unflinchingly confrontational lyrics that denounced racism and exalted African roots, became increasingly popular in Brazil and encouraged further Afro-Brazilian affiliation with the political and cultural elements of the global African diaspora. Even as the majority of Brazilian reggae enthusiasts were limited in their comprehension of the song texts, the pulsating, syncopated rhythms provided an alternative method of access to this new, black music from a sisterland with shared histories of colonial, racist oppression and resistance. For example, in Jamaica, the history of the maroon societies parallels that of the Brazilian quilombos, settlements of self-proclaimed free Africans who created alternative societies from which to resist European domination. Some Afro-Brazilians saw the Rastafarian community as a contemporary quilombo – their oppositional lifestyle and ideological differences with the government and broader society were reminiscent of the historic significance of Palmares for black Brazilians. The ideological focus that Rastafarians placed on African cultural retentions as well as their roots in black nationalism and pan-Africanist politics also facilitated access to and acceptance of reggae as a musical movement, as these concepts and international solidarity practices were consistent with fundamental elements in the correlating ideological constructs of the Movimento Negro and its participants. The adoption of dreadlock hairstyles and the use of imagery and symbols associated with Rastafarianism (the tri-colored Ethiopian flag, Haile Selassie, the Lion of Judah, etc.) provided Afro-Brazilians with additional

representative resources through which to claim membership in an African diasporic community as well as in the emerging local subcultures of racially conscious black Brazilians.[15]   The growth of a specific Afro-Brazilian reggae subculture centered on reggae styles and music, including nationally known and local Brazilian artists singing reggae songs in Portuguese, contributed to the creation of additional spaces – mental and physical (such as the proliferation of reggae bars in Salvador) – in which Brazilian blacks could develop and perform their racial identities through the adoption of African diasporic iconography and physical-aesthetic forms. These spaces supported the incorporation of reggae-transmitted political-cultural expressions into Afro-Brazilian, and more specifically, Afro-Bahian musical forms, including the creation of carnival blocos dedicated to reggae and/or Rastafarian themes. [16]

Ilê Aiyê: Emergence of the Bloco Afro

Officially known as A Associação Cultural Bloco Carnavalesco Ilê Aiyê, (the Carnival Cultural Association Group Ilê Aiyê), the bloco was founded in 1974 by Antônio Carlos dos Santos, more popularly known as Vovô ("grandpa"), and his close friend Apolônio de Jesus (deceased). At the time, the two young residents of Liberdade were employed as dockworkers; both had been participants in carnival organizations – blocos do indios – as teenagers. Vovô, the eldest son of a local "*mae de santo*" (candomblé priestess), would bring years of experience in maintaining and transmitting Afro-Brazilian ritual practices as his primary formative influence;

[15]I use the term "subculture" based on Dick Hebdige's fundamental description of such as "a reaction of subordinated groups that challenge the hegemony of the dominant culture" [Hebdige: 1979].

[16]For a comprehensive presentation of reggae, Afro-Brazilian music and globalization, see Ari Lima and Osmundo de Araújo Pinho in Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization, Perrone, C. and Dunn, C., eds. 2002.

Apolônio was more involved in the carnaval community, and was an active participant in the Apaches de Tororó and a familiar presence among composers, musicians, and participants with different carnival affiliations across the city. Both, however, were affected by the increasingly visible and global connections being made within the emerging political and musical intersections in communities of racially conscious Afro-Brazilians. After years of organizing informal outings and leisure activities for the local community, the two took it upon themselves to create a carnival group based in Liberdade. Theirs would be a different kind of group; unlike the popular blocos do indio, imitating Hollywood's inventions of the "noble savage," this would be a "bloco de negros," (a bloco of blacks) – a bloco *afro*, promoting and validating the African cultural foundations of Black Brazil.[17]

The process began with the naming of the group and its self-identification as a bloco *afro*. Ilê Aiyê - Yoruba words, meaning "House of Life," is a name that locates the institution directly within Brazil's historically imagined African heritage as well as part of the contemporary universal community of candomblé. The connection to candomblé is further established by the word "ilê" – a term used to designate "terreiros," or specific spiritual communities (i.e., Ilé Axé Iyá Nassô Oká ,'Ilé Iyá Omi Axé Iyamassê (Terreiro do Gantois), and Ilé Axé Opô Afonjá - three of the oldest and/or most well-known candomblé houses in Salvador). Despite the complex history of ethnic and cultural diversity among the African population(s) in Brazil during slavery, the equation of Yoruba cultural elements with African descent through candomblé has been widely accepted (especially by Brazilians) as the primary source of African cultural retention in Brazil. By naming themselves using predominant referents for African tradition in Bahia, Brazil

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[17]Michel Agier's excellent ethnographic study of Ilê Aiyê [Agier_1980] includes interviews with both founders regarding their collaborations in the initial organization of the group.

– Yoruba language, candomblé house – Ilê Aiyê established itself firmly within an intentionally self-defined black/African/Bahian/Brazilian space, opening a process of cultural transmission and identity construction based on those specific identity elements.

Beyond the naming of the group, there is a direct connection to candomble through Ilê Aiyê's affiliation with Hilda Dias dos Santos (Mãe Hilda Jitolu), *iyalorixá* (spiritual leader) of Ilê Axé Jitolu and mother of Antônio Carlos dos Santos (Vovô), Ilê Aiyê's founder and president. During the first years of its existence, when the organization was based at her home, Mãe Hilda and other family members helped in various and crucial capacities, creating an informal affiliation that would eventually become incorporated into the culture and structure of the organization. Mãe Hilda's involvement was instrumental in instituting the pre-parade ritual, the "blessing of the path," as an integral element of the carnival performance, as well as in establishing the community school program that bears her name and is based at Ilê Aiyê's headquarters. The close connection to Mãe Hilda and her terreiro provided and reinforced a sense of authenticity and cultural competency with regard to Afro-Bahian religion (in this case the Gege-Nagô nation), its principles, and symbols.

For its first public carnival appearance, the group chose to represent the theme "Africa in Bahia." Visibly and distinctively black men and women dressed in African attire with dreadlocks or intricately braided hairstyles paraded through the streets to similarly distinctive rhythms - a sonic, visual, embodied force taking Brazilian blackness to the streets:

> Somo crioulo doido e
> Somo bem legal.
> Temos cabelo duro e
> Somo black power.

We're crazy "crioulos" and
We're really cool
We have nappy hair and
We are Black Power (*Que Bloco É Esse?*)

If the thematic emphasis on black African culture, music and style had not been enough to

provoke a response from the broader community, the decision to limit participation to dark-

skinned blacks incited a maelstrom of negative public reaction. A prominent local newspaper

described their 1975 debut performance in article entitled "Racist Bloco: A Discordant Note":

> Besides their improper exploitation and imitation of North American themes,
> revealing a great lack of imagination, given the infinity of subjects to explored in this
> country, the members of Ilê Aiyê – all people of color – were even given to making
> fun of those whites and other persons watching from the official stands. Exactly
> because of this country's prohibition against racism, it is our hope that Ile's members
> return in a different manner next year, and use the natural liberation of the
> characteristic instinct of Carnaval. (A Tarde, 1975)

As was seen in the case of the "official" responses to the "black soul" and "charme" cultural

networks, black activists were labeled as racists, importers of inappropriate racial ideologies

from the United States, even in conflict with Brazil's laws specifically prohibiting racism.

Regardless, the public recruitment of dark-skinned blacks was a crucial element in Ilê Aiyê's

strategies for racial validation; the elevation of skin color and physical features long associated

with negative connotations in Brazilian society facilitated Afro-Bahians' access to positive

images and associations with blackness, as well as a sense of pride and self-esteem connected to

their newly found racial identities.

Over more than thirty years, Ilê Aiyê developed a series of strategic initiatives to achieve

its overall mission – empowerment of the black community through the recovery and validation

of African cultural heritage in Brazil. During the first decade, Ilê Aiyê focused its resources on perfecting the carnival presence, creating a series of cultural programs and events in the community that culminated in a unique, community-based, ritualized carnival performance. Two of these programs, the pre-parade ritual and the "Noite da Beleza Negra" (Night of Black Beauty), were programmatic innovations that have since become key focal points of the organization's performance strategy; they will be discussed further in Chapter 5. More essential to the carnival performance, however, was the research on African culture and history that the organization began to do in preparation for each annual theme. Seeking to create realistic (if not necessarily authentic) representation of the "black world," members prepared packets of information about the history, resistance movements, black leaders, dress, foods, even raw materials and other economic references, for distribution to aspiring composers. One of the organization's earliest projects was the printing of pamphlets featuring song lyrics with supplementary information about the country, event, or historical figure celebrated that year. These pamphlets provided the community with educational resources that made cultural and political information accessible to the black community and reinforced a sense of diasporic affiliation through association with Ilê Aiyê. The publications were reproduced and distributed nationally through the black movement network, especially among educators and others involved with raising racial consciousness among Afro-Brazilian youth.

As Ilê Aiyê strengthened its capacity as a cultural institution, its agenda expanded to include activities and programs that addressed community needs in different areas, including education and professional training, as well as political concerns such as racial discrimination and international solidarity. An administrative board, comprising activists, educators, scholars, and community members, was established to provide guidance to the staff and to help execute

the institution's programs. The professionalization of the board and staff enabled Ilê Aiyê to develop and manage several projects, including national and international tours of the performances ensemble, "Band'Aiyê," production and distribution of the group's first recording, "Canto Negro" (Black Song), and the creation of major community events celebrating Afro-Brazilian, African, and black history and culture. The implementation of Ilê Aiyê's comprehensive socio-cultural programs facilitated the organization's transformation from a singularly focused carnival organization into a political cultural movement that had a profound effect not only on the Bahian carnival and its participants, but also on black Brazilians throughout the country. Their revolutionary approach to using music to affirm racial consciousness among black Brazilians initiated new strategies that were adopted by other groups in Bahia and throughout Brazil. Through the "re-Africanization" of Afro-Bahian carnival, Ilê Aiyê provided a socio-political model that enabled numerous black carnival organizations to achieve institutional autonomy and greater access to opportunities for local community development.

Chapter 4: Bloco Afro: Musical Performance as Text

A musical genre is many things at the same time: it is a rhythmic pattern, a drumming pattern, a precise, or at least a recognizable harmonic circle sequence, sometimes it is a set of words or fixed literary tropes that combine with this rhythmic pattern and with this particular kind of harmony and melodic movement because these words or tropes evoke a certain social landscape, a historical landscape, a landscape, a divine landscape, or even a landscape of the mind. All that is a musical genre.

- José Jorge de Carvalho (1999:7)

De Carvalho's broad yet concise summary of the term "musical genre" provides a useful outline with which to delineate the key elements of bloco afro music as developed by Ilê Aiyê. The demarcation of an interactive set of (suggested) definitive criteria – rhythmic pattern, harmonic sequence, set of words or tropes - continues to insist on an interdisciplinary framework of inquiry that both addresses the individually defined components of the genre as well as privileges those theoretical approaches that acknowledge processes of interaction as requisite, independent objects of analysis. Furthermore, his identification of a "landscape of the mind" is particularly fitting when investigating a musical mission as part of a larger social justice movement, that is, how the cultural organization implements political will by means of musical performance, including the evocation of an individual and collective racial consciousness.

In this chapter, I introduce distinct components of bloco afro - primarily musical and textual elements, but also those performative aspects that play a fundamental role in articulating blackness in the context of Afro-Brazilian identity construction as performed by Ilê Aiyê. Within each component, I will identify primary references and symbols in bloco afro music and culture that demonstrate its affiliation with Afro-Brazilian and African diasporic cultural expression, as

well as key subtexts that support Ilê Aiyê's stated mission of social and individual transformation. The three areas – music, text, and performance aesthetics, while facilitating deeper and closer readings of the generative themes contained in bloco afro performance as expressed through music, lyrics, and visual imagery, must be understood as interdependent components, as opposed to disparate analytical objects. In fact, the purpose of this section is to evaluate specific characteristics in order to more clearly examine the process through which they interact to generate and mediate racial consciousness. The designation of key symbolic references, for example, provides seminal data for the later application of a comprehensive analytical paradigm that actively engages transdisciplinary approaches to reveal the inter-relationship between the performative nature of identity and the communicative function of cultural performance in the construction and expression of identity.

Sonic Representations of Blackness

Musical analysis has been a contested methodology in many disciplines, including those defined by their dedication to the study of the musical object. Ethnomusicologists, for example, have long disputed numerous issues related to musical analysis, including methodological challenges such as the cross-cultural application of Western transcription and notation practices, and theoretical concerns regarding the primacy of musical data in relation to other pertinent information outside of a strictly aural assessment. Adam Krims (2000) introduces a complex approach to musical analysis in popular music as he presents his concept of "musical poetics," or the study of how musical sound is deployed (in rap music). Characterizing music analysis as "close reading," he presents a cross-disciplinary overview of critiques by scholars of popular music, cultural studies, and musicology of the validity and/or appropriateness of musical analysis

[ibid.; 17-24]. While his assessment tends toward an objective representation of diverse views, he advocates

> …the importance of delineating carefully what one considers the parameters relevant for consideration – a decision that will often be highly context-specific by genre – and of specifying (…) the *culturally salient* reason for doing so. (Ibid; 19)

By reiterating the significance of contextual considerations, Krims succeeds in mediating the debate (at least for the duration of his presentation), and provides a useful guideline for evaluating and articulating the application of music analysis in popular music studies.

Following Krim's suggestion that music analysis be relevant in inquiries of popular music, I contend that the review and description of aural/sonic data, albeit limited, is of primary significance as this study is guided by the priorities and principles as determined by Ilê Aiyê:

> We build an internationally recognized, socio-carnivalesque institution, a reference model, primarily for *afro* entities, through our cultural activities and music directed toward the validation of the black population, with self-sufficient administration. (Ilê Aiyê 1995)

The statement introduces the concept of a "musical reference model," one that clearly implicates Ilê Aiyê's position as the originators of the bloco afro genre, and conveys their unequivocal intent to use music as an instrument for social change. This initial commitment was crucial in the creation and promotion of a musical style that would not only address the advancement of Brazil's black communities but also serve as a sonic representation of their mission. The determination of a definitive sound that would evoke cultural affirmation and racial consciousness was central to the establishment of the organization as a viable force in Salvador, given the rich legacies of resistant cultural forms in the history of people of African descent in Bahia, Brazil. The centrality of musical manifestations within those forms – candomblé, capoeira, and carnival – reinforced the intent and subsequent achievement of a unique and

identifiable new genre that transformed social as well as mental landscapes first in Liberdade, Salvador, throughout Brazil, and into the global black diaspora.

The question of intent is paramount in all aspects of the institution's activities: from its original mission as a carnaval group to the community education and economic development projects that have characterized its institutional development over the years. As a clearly identified and highly visible black cultural entity, Ilê Aiyê translated its activism into a musical instrument of social change, using rhythms, percussion, costumes, and dance to signify and promote racial consciousness and pride. Each of the elements was carefully selected and elaborated with the intention of raising racial awareness and self esteem in black communities; for this reason, discussion of Ilê Aiyê's performances must acknowledge the intention of the performers among its parameters. I will return to this point in later elaborations related to an integrated approach to performance analysis.

As the bloco afro politico-cultural phenomenon spread to other neighborhoods in Salvador, new groups introduced rhythmic innovations, most notably the "samba-reggae" patterns, promoted globally by Grupo Cultural Olodum, that grew to become synonymous with bloco afro as a cultural concept among consumers of world music. Eventually, terms such as "samba-reggae" or "axé music" became catch-all classifications for the percussion-focused music and/or rhythms generated by later bloco afros, carnival groups and commercial artists. However, while the emergence of associated stylistic variations is often perceived as a requisite stage in genre formation, particularly from a cultural studies perspective, I would reiterate the parameters of this analysis as being strictly focused on and limited to the original style, *samba-afro*, as created and performed by Ilê Aiyê. Given Ilê Aiyê's role as the locus of musical

invention, I believe it is not only possible but also necessary to establish the musical parameters of the genre as defined by the original bloco afro.

Musical performances, first in the local community context of Bahia's carnival and later as part of a larger outreach effort, created opportunities to implement the strategy – to celebrate blackness through music with messages that inspire a sense of worth and self respect among black Brazilians. The musical representation of this primary objective is first found in the selection of instruments and the construction of the initial rhythm. The first rhythmic manifestation of Ilê Aiyê's samba-afro was conscientiously constructed as a "black sound" – a sonic representation of shared cultural contexts: candomblé and carnaval. Fundamental to this intentional representation is Ilê Aiyê's dedication to acoustic instruments – percussion and vocal - maintaining the aesthetic quality of African-based musical traditions in Brazil. This characteristic distinguishes their music from many of the blocos that followed in the eighties that incorporated additional instrumentation such as electric bass, guitar and saxophone in to their performance. The distinction contributes to a public perception of Ilê Aiyê as being more "African" or "authentic" in terms of identity politics within the larger Bahian carnival community; the association of their unique sound with being "authentically black" is a testament to the effectiveness of Ilê Aiyê's cultural strategy. Deliberately created to articulate and reinforce black identity, samba-afro communicated a singularly Afro-Brazilian historical and social experience, enabling participants and audiences to identify instantly and viscerally with the music – instruments and rhythms both familiar and innovative.

The primary musical element of bloco afro is the rhythm, rooted firmly in the ritual drumming of candomblé. Initially developed by Antonio Luis Alves de Souza, famously known as 'Neguinho do Samba,' Ilê Aiyê's first *mestre da bateria* (percussion director) – the signature rhythm combined samba and ijexá rhythms, mixing samba percussion instruments with the wooden hand drums - atabaques – used in the afoxés. He divided the large *surdo* (bass) drums into interlocking parts and layered the atabaque and repique (smaller, higher-pitched metal drums) in additive rhythms on top. The major innovations to samba were the introduction of a new, 4th surdo playing rapid rolls with two mallets, the addition of a backbeat played on the caixas (snare drums), and the invention of a new pattern that was a blend of traditional Bahian *samba-de-roda* clave with a bass drum backbeat.[18] Again, Ilê Aiyê looked to existing rhythms associated with and familiar to the black Bahian community to create its signature sound. A form based on African rhythms and dance with Portuguese influences, samba-de roda emerged in Bahia in the 17th century, and was eventually transported by predominantly black migrants to Rio de Janeiro where it evolved into the forms commonly associated with the internationally renowned Rio carnaval.[19] Samba, the existing forms of the earlier Bahian samba music as well as the more modern, Rio-based variations were part of the black Bahian shared musical memory, as were the dances associated with them.

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[18]Mario Pam, one of Ilê Aiyê's percussion masters, generously shared information about the group's musical evolution and demonstrated Ilê Aiyê's signature rhythms on various occasions during my visits to the center.

[19]In 2005, UNESCO proclaimed the Samba de Roda of the Recôncavo of Bahia within its Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity Program - http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?cp=BR&topic=mp)

A typical formation of Ilê Aiyê's percussion ensemble during Bahian carnaval includes over a hundred instruments (~150 as listed below):

1. 80 surdos, also known as tambores de *marcação* (time-marking)

2. 40 repique

3. 10-20 various hand percussion instruments (i.e., xequeré, agogo bell, afoxe)

4. 10 caixas

5. 5 atabaques

There are 3 or 4 surdo (bass drum) parts in the bloco afro formation. The first (largest-diameter) and second (next largest) surdos keep the beat, with the lowest drum hitting the first beat and the higher drum hitting the second. Together, the first and second surdos are known as the *fundos* (literally 'the back'), presumably because they are placed in the back row. The third surdo part, called *terceira* ("third") or *cortador* ("cutter" in English), is played on smaller and higher-pitched drums, and features patterns that provide syncopations and fills, producing an effect of cutting across the basic pulse created by other two surdo parts. The fourth surdo is tuned very tightly and plays fast rolls with two mallets, an innovation introduced by Neguinho do Samba, who eventually came to be considered as the "father of samba reggae" in Brazil.

The repique is played with two, flexible plastic sticks and is a featured solo instrument when playing rolls, improvised fills, and/or the introductory call. The conductor often stands in front of the group and plays the repique to introduce a song, then to signal rhythmic breaks or changes in the pattern.

The caixa generally provides the solid backbeat and often plays the same or similar pattern as the repique. On occasion, the caixas will be called upon to provide a rhythmic break, but generally they sustain the backbeat, creating an additional layer of sonic texture to the interlocking parts, reinforcing the higher frequencies of the percussive spectrum.

Hand percussion instruments – agogo, afoxe, chocalhos – serve to sustain the basic rhythm as well as to reinforce the layering of additive components in the polyrhythmic structure. The agogo bell, for example, is a vital element in transmitting the "clave" of the ijexa base rhythm; in addition, it provides a timbral reflection of the interplay between the high and low surdos.

The syncretic, poly-rhythmic model reflected the musical articulation of both the mission of the carnival/cultural organization and the shared socio-cultural experience of the members and followers of Ilê Aiyê. Established as an overtly black collective, its founders sought to instill pride in and respect for African cultural traditions and its practitioners – black Brazilians – by enhancing their carnival experience. Those who responded to this new, audacious call for black participants in a carnival bloco were for the most part already involved in predominantly black institutions, including (and primarily) candomblé, and other social organizations. As noted earlier, the organization not only had its start within the terreiro Ilê Axé Jitolu, but established a structural connection between candomblé and bloco afro by institutionalizing the role of the "mae de santo do bloco," an organizational affiliation between cultural group and spiritual center (the affiliation further blurred the delineations between performance and ritual, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter). Through the use of song structures and rhythms that were already part of the local cultural memory, the music performances reached its audience at liminal

levels, recalling other shared cultural experiences that reinforced individual and collective identification with the meanings embedded in and generated by the rhythms. The reception and subsequent enactment of identity performance was further facilitated by the ritualized context and structure of Bahian carnival, in which symbolic, embodied, and publicly performed musical representations of African cultural identity play a historical, yet dynamic role in the evolution of the modern carnival.

Symbols and Signifiers in Text

> Que bloco é esse? Eu quero saber.
> É o mundo negro que viemos mostrar pra você.
>
> What bloco is that? I want to know.
> It's the black world that we've come to show for you.

The lyrics from the first performed carnival theme succinctly express the identity and purpose of Ilê Aiyê – the embodiment and presentation of the "black world." From the symbols included in visual and sonic imagery to actual ritual elements performed as part of the carnival *desfile* (parade)*,* Ilê Aiyê made a conscious and public choice to not only acknowledge but to celebrate its black identity by incorporating African diasporic references in all aspects of its presentations. These references can easily be identified in the lyrics, where Ilê Aiyê creates and sustains a musical discourse that is the most public manifestation of its socio-political ideology. In this section, I will identify three major themes: 1) racial identity; 2) histories of resistance; and 3) diasporic solidarity, with references from the song texts to demonstrate how specific textual content contributes to the creation and transmission of musical meaning in this process of racial identity construction.

Candomblé (and other African-based religious practices in Brazil) played a pivotal role in the preservation and continued practice of African and neo-African cultural expressions, facilitating constructions of black or Afro-Brazilian identities in opposition to slavery and subsequent white supremacist ideologies and practices. Ritual participation allowed individuals to not only receive and interpret meaning, but to simultaneously communicate and affirm meaning by performing their constructed identities through a variety of interactions, including the regular occurrence of transformative, liminal experiences among the participants. As black Brazilians took their rhythms and chants to the streets in the early formations of Bahian carnaval, their public, collective performance of black identity became inextricable from the secular celebration, as the parades clearly reflected African expressive modes in the selected themes and songs (Fryer 2000: 23). The transference of the mechanisms of sacred communication intrinsic to private ritual in candomblé to the public spaces of Bahian carnival created additional and expanded opportunities for transformative experiences within the black Bahian community. Taking inspiration from the ways in which Africans and their descendants commemorated their cultural origins through rhythm, song, and costume in the early iterations of Bahian carnaval, Ilê Aiyê claims that same public performance space to affirm and extend those origins as the basis for its strategic intervention as a black cultural institution in Salvador, Bahia.

When Ilê Aiyê emerged on the Bahian carnival scene in 1975, there was no question about their identity as a black carnival entity, given their recruitment of dark-skinned participants; this initial identity introduced the first and primary element of Ilê Aiyê's tactics as a black Brazilian cultural institution – black visibility at all levels. However, this was just the beginning and only a part of Ilê Aiyê's greater cultural strategy. The enlistment of black (dark-skinned) Brazilians into a bloco *afro* with a Yoruba name was an unusually public assertion of

racial identity, an assertion that was expressed in virtually every song they performed. In contrast to the negative connotations associated with the word "negro," Ilê Aiyê turned negro into a virtue:

> Branco se você soubesse
> O valor que o negro tem
> Tu tomava banho de piche
> Pra ficar negro também
>
> White man, if you knew
> the value that blacks had
> You'd bathe in tar so that
> you could be black, too. *(Que bloco e Esse?)*

For Ilê Aiyê, black was beautiful and powerful; it was strength, peace, and love. This was a potent message in a society that had projected precisely the opposite throughout its history. Reclaiming the terminology that had been often used in derogatory ways, negão/negona ("big, black man/woman") – these designations became something that one might aspire to be: big, strong, powerful, beautiful, and black - like Ilê Aiyê. Clearly inspired by the rhetoric of the civil rights movement, Ilê Aiyê's founders recognized the need to promote racial consciousness with positive imagery in order to counter the anti-black messages faced by its participants on a daily basis:

> Me diz que sou rídiculo,
> Nos teus olhos sou mau visto,
> Diz até tenho má indole…
>
> Negro é sempre vilão
> Até meu bem provar que não
>
> You tell me I'm ridiculous
> In your eyes I am viewed with disapproval
> You say that even my laziness is lacking…

The black man is always the villain
Until, my friend, proven not to be.
(Ilê de Luz)

Such statements were contrary to the general denial of racial prejudice and discrimination in

Brazil, a result of decades of national internalization of the "racial democracy" façade that was

promoted officially and unofficially with regard to Brazilian race relations. Ilê Aiyê contested

this denial and continued vilification by declaring the positive qualities of blackness, elevating

the self-esteem of black Brazilians through their messages of pride and self-respect:

Se me perguntar
De que origem eu sou
Sou de origem africana
Eu sou, com muito orgulho eu sou

If you ask me
Of what origin I am
I am of African origin
I am, with great pride I am
(*Minha Origem*)

If, for some reason, the intent of Ilê Aiyê remained unclear to some, there were verses that stated

their purpose more explicitly:

Elevar a auto estima é a sua missão
Consciência negra é a sua sina

Raising self-esteem is your mission
Black consciousness is your destiny
(Diferentes, Mas Iguais)

In addition to pride in their racial heritage, promoting self esteem involved challenging

the aesthetic status quo, as well; if black were powerful, it was also beautiful:

Quem é que sobe a ladeira do Curuzu?
E a coisa mais linda de se ver?

É o Ilê Ayê
O Mais Belo Dos Belos
Sou eu, sou eu
Bata no peito mais forte
E diga: Eu sou Ilê

Who is that ascends the hill of Curuzu
It's the loveliest thing to see
It is Ilê Ayê
The best looking of the beautiful ones
I am, I am
Beat on your strong chest
And say: I am Ilê
(O Mais Belo Dos Belos)

Some songs were directed to the women of Ilê Aiyê, as highlighted during the "Ebony Goddess"

festivals; verses referred to African clothing and hairstyles used by women in Ilê Aiyê, drawing

attention to the intentional use of performance aesthetics of people of African descent:

Minha Crioula
Eu vou contar para você
Que estás tão linda
No meu bloco Ilê-Aiyê
Com suas tranças muita originalidade
Pela avenida cheia de felicidade

My crioula (black woman)
I am going to tell you that
You are so lovely
In my bloco Ilê Aiyê
With your braids, much originality
Through the avenue full of happiness
(*Ebony Goddess*)

For Ilê Aiyê and its adherents, to be black is to be of the chosen, and with that

designation came responsibility. Their carnival themes inspire and educate Brazilians regarding

black resistance movements in Brazil, actively countering the lack of Afro-Brazilian presence in

the national historical narrative. References to figures such as Zumbi of Palmares, the ultimate

leader of the longest-lasting *quilombo*, and to Luiza Mahin, an ex-slave associated with the

Revolta dos Males in 1835 and mother of Brazilian abolitionist Luis Gama, are made throughout

the repertoire, as in the next two excerpts:

> Saudade o sonho dos palmares
> Ilê Aiyê revelou
> Sonho e legados preciosos
>
> Longing for the dream of Palmares
> Ilê Aiyê revealed
> Precious dreams and legacies
> *Sonho dos Palmares*
>
> Ao inexplicável alá
> com raça e poder
> o ilê traz em ciência a Revolução Malê
> pela unidade afro contra o povo desumano
> o marco na história fez nascer
> Os negros islamizados de abadá
> se rebeleram ,com a licença do senhor
> Da casa de Calafati o caminho da liberdade as ruas de Salvador
> África Malê
>
> To the unfathomable Allah
> With race and power
> Ilê brings the knowledge of the Malê Revolution
> Through black unity against an inhumane people
> The historic mark was born
> The Islamic blacks dressed in white gowns
> Rebelled, with the Lord's permission
> From the house of Calafate, the path of freedom to the streets
> of Salvador
> *(Referência Quilombola)*

Like the ancestors and historic figures celebrated in song, black Brazilian followers of Ilê

Aiyê were called upon to stand up and resist oppression in order to combat racism and

inequality. In the context of carnival, the first step of black resistance involved aligning one's

self with Ilê Aiyê, whose sonic presence embodied black resistance:

> Dos Quilombolas, segue a resistência viva
> resistente na batida ,na Bahia estendeu
> a bandeira da paz,da igualdade social

Ilê Aiyê canta o seu ideal
negro de paz e amor

From the descendents of the quilombos,
Continues the living resistance
Resistant in the rhythm that spread through Bahia
The flag of peace, of social equality
Ilê Aiyê sings its ideal
Blacks of peace and love
(*Resistencia Viva*)

A good part of the repertoire speaks to celebrating black resistance movements outside of Brazil, as well. In keeping with its identity as "the black world," Ilê Aiyê emphasized the connections between African, Afro-Brazilian, and African diasporic histories of struggle and survival. In addition to the messages of resistance, Ilê Aiyê prioritized teaching about African countries through its carnival themes and repertoire; the first 1975 carnival theme, "Africa in Bahia," introduced its strategy of highlighting the cultures and histories of African nations, always returning to the diasporic connection as embodied in Ilê Aiyê:

Moçambique meu eu é você sua história o mundo marcou
Moçambique não posso esquecer a batalha que você travou
Ver seu canto traduzido discutido em Salvador
Pelo poder da resistência o intransigente Ilê Aiyê cantou

Mozambique my I is you, the world commemorated your history
Mozambique I cannot forget the battle that engaged you
Seeing your song translated, discussed in Salvador
Through the power of resistance that the uncompromising Ilê Aiyê sang.
(llê Aiyê Nos Cinco Continentes)

The songs included information about the countries, within the limitations of the carnival theme characteristics – short verses and a chorus, repeated through the parade route. Even within the structural constraints of the song, Ilê Aiyê raised diasporic awareness and promoted solidarity by

highlighting key figures, historic references, even economic resources, as seen in this text about

Ghana:

> Tema Gana Ashanti
> Ilê vem apresentar
> Ashanti, povo negro
> Dessa rica região
>
> Gana império Gana
> Do ouro e do cacau
> Sudaneza, Alto Volta
> e África occidental
>
> Ghana Ashanti theme
> Ilê comes to present
> Ashanti, black people
> Of that rich region
>
> Ghana, empire Ghana
> Of gold and cacao
> Sudanese, Upper Volta
> And West Africa
> (*Negrice Cristal*)

Apart from the essentially didactic, thematic references in the texts, many of the songs

include Yoruba terms, words not translatable literally but understood by Brazilians as allusions

to candomblé. Certainly, the depth of meaning derived from such references depends on the level

of familiarity a participant or listener has with ritual language. Numerous African terms have

found their way into Brazilian language and culture – the names of Afro-Brazilian foods like

vatapá or cururu, or orixãs associated with national celebrations, such as Iemanja, are often used

as referents to Brazil's African heritage in popular culture. Ilê Aiyê's use of ritual references is

quite different, as the texts are intentionally directed to its black followers, most of who have

more than a cursory relationship to candomblé. In addition to recognizing some of the rhythmic

elements that are directly derived from candomblé, many participants are fluent enough in the

ritual culture to recognize texts taken from ritual performances. An example can be found in the song "Negrume da Noite" (Blackness of the Night), which begins with a phrase, "Odé comorodé odé arere odé comorodé odé odé arere," that becomes the choral refrain. According to Joselina da Silva, Afro-Brazilian sociologist and activist, the phrase and the melody are from a song of praise to an orixa that is not identified in the song specifically. However, the literal meanings of the words are less important than the reference to a particular African ancestral tradition, in this case the exaltation of the orixãs through music. The inclusion of such texts demonstrates Ilê Aiyê's strategy of using Afro-Brazilian cultural references to reinforce their own "African" identity as well as to promote and validate African culture within Brazil.

Ilê Aiyê's strategy of presenting the "black world" by means of the texts of carnival themes (and supplemental publications disseminated locally and nationally) generated new information and symbolic resources for the Afro-Brazilian community. These resources, in turn, encouraged black Brazilians to identify and connect not only as individuals within the emerging Afro-identified Brazilian community, but also as part of a greater African diaspora through the cultural and social histories shared by black people around the world. Through the music and performance events of Ilê Aiyê, blacks were able to come together as Brazilians and as Africans, constructing a localized, collective diasporic identity in the carnival experience.

Blackness as Stylized Identity Performance

Ilê Aiyê's emphasis on visual presentation is a central component of its strategic cultural interventions: the validation of blackness through positive representations and models is enhanced through the highly discernible, accessible, visual elements associated with the group.

From the beginning, there was a rigorous effort to create a visual identity for the organization, one that would reflect a boldly unapologetic, public black presence as a political statement to counter the invisibility of blacks in carnival and, referentially, in society as a whole. From its radical call for dark-skinned participants in the inaugural carnival presence to the annual Festival of Black Beauty, Ilê Aiyê has, over the years, constructed an embodied, stylized performance aesthetic that communicates blackness through dress, hairstyle, and dance. This "black aesthetic" is intrinsic to Ilê Aiyê's identity, first as an organization participating in carnival, where aesthetic form is a key evaluative criteria, and second, as a self-designated repository of African cultural resources that include visual elements and symbols used to convey affiliation with African culture. In this latter function, these elements are also disseminated through mechanisms that extend their impact beyond the performance events (i.e., informational pamphlets, newsletters, and audio recordings).

This final section explores distinct components of Ilê Aiyê's performance aesthetic and how they are used to represent and construct black identity in different presentation contexts. The primary features of this aesthetic can be viewed as layered elements – black skin, hairstyle, dress, and dance - each layer conveying distinct and complementary aspects that collectively express the essence of Ilê Aiyê's institutional mission to promote pride and self-respect among Afro-Brazilians. These performative elements generated visually accessible presentations that contained and extended the predominant discourse promoted by Ilê Aiyê, facilitating a visceral affiliation with the messages communicated through sonic and textual references. The aesthetic provided extensive opportunities for individual expressions of identity – the adoption of embodied characteristics, such as elaborate hairstyles, enabled individuals to articulate and further extend black identity and cultural presence beyond the performance event and insert them

into the daily context of the society at large. Creative variations and innovations in hairstyles, adornments and dress based on African-identified patterns and iconography manifested both the commitment on the part of individuals to publicly assume their blackness as well as the development of an "aesthetically black" community based on stylistic identity performance.

The visual impression constructed by the group came first from its initial configuration as a self-defined bloco of "blacks," as stated in its call for dark skinned participants. What critics perceived as a purely discriminatory project, a kind of "reverse racism" in the land of "racial democracy," was in effect a critical and calculated strategy on many levels. The designation of dark skin as a selection criterion for bloco participants established an embodied definition of blackness, a public claiming of African ancestry through skin color. The creation of a carnival organization that valorized black skin introduced a new venue for racial affirmation within a setting that broadened the relatively closed, social contexts in which African and Afro-Brazilian cultural practices had been transmitted and maintained. The visual impact of close to a hundred black Bahians parading through the streets, identifying themselves as "the black world," marked the beginning of a localized connection to a global, diasporic identity rooted in a purely phenotypical identification, a racial identification that challenged the Brazilian social norms and status quo regarding race. Within that challenge, opportunities emerged for individuals who most likely had experienced discrimination due to their color at some point in their lives (if not on a daily basis) to finally celebrate their hue as part of a select group – one that not only valued their skin color but shared, elevated, and promoted it in a most socially visible manner. This would be in stark contrast to the negative associations that Brazilian society had placed on blackness since slavery to humiliate and degrade its black population while it venerated those of European descent. Ilê Aiyê established itself firmly as a black institution dedicated to the recovery,

maintenance and performance of Afro-Brazilian culture, beginning with black skin as a focal

acknowledgement of African descent. As the organization maintained its image as visibly and

intentionally identified as "black," the first bloco "afro" in the context of contemporary Bahian

carnival, it created possibilities for black individuals and communities to publicly assume racial

identity in association with this renegade organization whose primary mission was the

affirmation of Brazil's African heritage as embodied in Brazil's black population.

Black hairstyling as identity performance

Ilê Aiyê's studied presentation of black hair in its varied array of styles further extends its

embodied performance aesthetic – braids, dreadlocks, and intricately designed haircuts became

one of the constitutive elements of Ilê Aiyê's constructed visual identity. The styles also

influenced a generation of black Brazilians, beginning in local Bahian communities which had

begun to embrace the "black is beautiful" aesthetic manifestations of the United States black

movement as well as the distinctive cultural expressions associated with the Jamaican

Rastafarian community. These embodied racial expressions extended throughout Brazil as Ilê

Aiyê's messages and imagery resonated with people in black Brazilian communities around the

country.

It would be simplistic (not to mention arrogant) to attribute the importance of hair styling

in the Afro-Brazilian aesthetic solely to contemporary (or external) influences from the United

States and Jamaica. The significance of hair as a cultural signifier for Africans and people of

African descent has been well documented,[20] as has its history as an object of derision in the face

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[20]In May, 2000, The Museum of African Art, New York City, presented an exhibition, "Hair in African
Art and Culture," which featured sections that addressed specific roles of hair in African society,

of Eurocentric beauty ideals. Black feminist scholars in particular, in highlighting the intersections of gender and racial oppression, have included analyses of the impact of phenotypic variations, i.e. skin color and hair texture, on the roles and status of black women during slavery (Craig 2002). While most research tends to address the social and economic effects of white supremacist beauty ideals, particularly in regard to black women as labor and property, there is also an acknowledgement of black women asserting forms of "aesthetic agency" in their cultural resistance or the means through which blacks, both men and women, asserted an embodied opposition to Eurocentric models of beauty or public appearance.

Rachel Harding describes how in nineteenth century Brazil, "[T]hrough a variety of aesthetic means, blacks in Brazil cultivated an alternative sense of themselves, their community, and their relation to the material and structural elements of the hegemonic society" (Harding 2000:128). She continues by citing early accounts by visitors to Brazil that made reference to hair design as a common element of black style at that time, one which enabled Africans and their descendents to exercise agency in creating their own individual images, images that reflected their ancestry and cultural heritage. African derived hairstyles, primarily for women, also included the use of adornments such as cowrie shells and natural fibers woven into intricate patterns, as well as head wraps created from cloths. In spite of efforts to establish and assert their own criteria for beauty as black women, the dominant supremacist discourse translated its racist, aesthetic dichotomy (or dichotomous aesthetic?) of white/European and black/African into a style, a substance with supernatural power and spiritual import, and an object of beauty and adornment. physical manifestation, that of "good" and "bad" hair. These characterizations

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exploring hair as: an indicator of social status and religious function, a symbol of age and authority, and a traditional aesthetic element.

affected generations of Afro-Brazilians, creating and reinforcing experiences of internalized

racism and low esteem based on the texture of their hair.

The designation of "*cabelo duro/cabelo ruim*" (literally translated as hard or bad hair, but

better understood as "nappy" or "kinky" in the context) as a negative characteristic was widely

applied to black Brazilians, especially those with darker skin. Ilê Aiyê recognized this shared

experience as a crucial channel through which to affirm key aesthetic elements of African

heritage in Brazil. Many of the songs make reference to the physical beauty of the black woman,

praising her dark skin and braids and admiring her grace and dignity, as well as to women's role

in the history of black resistance in the diaspora. The identification of a Eurocentric beauty

standard as a major obstacle to Afro-Brazilian pride and dignity instigated and supported

institutional programs designed to raise awareness of the "politics of beauty" and create

alternative aesthetic options for Afro-Brazilians. These programs, such as the selection of the

carnival "Ebony Goddess" and the annual "Black Mother" celebration, also stimulated the

inclusion of black women's history and issues in the organization's political discourse and

pedagogy, including the identification and promotion of black women activists in Brazil and

throughout the diaspora.

The costumes worn by the performer/participants in Ilê Aiyê are designed to reflect

Brazil's African heritage as they simultaneously communicate the annual carnival theme. The

basic elements of the design recall the style of dress used in candomblé, especially in the

garments worn by women participants – tunic-styled blouses, long, flowing skirts, the "*pano da

costa*" (literal meaning – cloth from the coast – a shawl-like cloth worn over the shoulder), a

variety of elegantly sculptured head wraps, and leather sandals. Men wear a complementary

outfit comprised of ballooned or bouffant pants with full-length shirts or cloths tied across their bodies, with matching printed hair bands and/or other African-styled head coverings. All members are encouraged to add personal adornments to add to the collective performance; accessories such as cowry shell necklaces, earrings made of natural materials, and handcrafted leather bracelets are worn to enhance the costume.

The direct reference to African heritage through the language and iconography of candomblé has been a central strategy of the organization, and provides the basis for its recognition as promoting "authentic" representations of African culture. While the symbols and images change to reflect the African country or culture highlighted each year, many of the elements remain constant. The four colors of Ilê Aiyê: white, black, red, and yellow are associated with different orixãs from the candomblé pantheon, and are also interpreted as representing their associated qualities. White represents peace and is associated with Oxalá; black represents the skin color of the black world and also references Omolu; red symbolizes suffering and is a color associated with Exu; finally, yellow/gold symbolizes prosperity, fertility, wealth - color and characteristics of Oxum. The costumes are printed with the organization's logo and slogan: "Perfil Azeviche,"[21] or "black profile," and features the cowry shell, a ubiquitous symbol of Afro-Brazilian religion and culture. Participants who are also active members of a "terreiro" (house of candomblé) are encouraged to wear their *contas*, long, beaded necklaces in the different colors of their personal orixas. In these ways, Ilê Aiyê maintains a consistent visual affirmation of its an unwavering allegiance to candomblé as the source of its "negritude" and Brazil's African heritage.

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[21]The word *azeviche* refers to particular kind of organic gem created by compacted coal; it is also known as "black amber."

The dance style associated with Ilê Aiyê is referred to as "ijexa," a term used also to refer to the rhythm and closely associated with candomblé. The steps are repetitive, slow and flowing movements with expressive hand gestures similar to and derived from ritual dance associated with the orixas. The dance style also includes influences from samba, especially the more traditional samba de roda associated with Bahia. Descriptions of the style and its associated movements emphasize the distinctions between African and European dance traditions, highlighting the fluidity of the ijexa movements in contrast with the structured precision of ballet, for example. For Ilê Aiyê, dance is inextricably connected to candomblé and their commitment to its insertion as a key institutional identity component reinforces their intent to validate all forms of African and Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions. Ilê Aiyê privileges dance as a vital component of their performative identity as "Africans in Bahia." The "Dança Afro Livre do Ilê Aiyê, (Free Afro Dance of Ilê Aiyê)," is considered to be both pioneer and legacy in the field of Afro-Bahian dance. The cultivation of a specific dance aesthetic has been a constant in its programmatic development as demonstrated by the inclusion of dance as part of the institution's pedagogical and performance projects implemented over the years.

Although there is no defined, collective choreography - each participant performs the steps with his or her own sense of style - the organization has implemented mechanisms through which to promote its emblematic "dança afro" style within the local community and externally. First, dance is a fundamental element of Ilê Aiyê's educational programs for youth. Children take classes with a dance instructor as part of the musical training, as they become familiar with bloco afro instruments. Young people learn at an early age to experience movement as inseparable from bloco afro performance, and to associate the rhythms with the culture and rituals of candomblé. Many of the young students, especially the girls, continue studying dance and later

join Ilê Aiyê's dance performance group as young adults. Ilê Aiyê's dance group is comprised of thirty to forty people and has been coordinated Dete Lima, a member of the administrative board and sister of Vovô, founder of Ilê Aiyê. The number of participants increases as members of the youth group join and new dancers are recruited into the performance section after the Ebony Goddess contests.

In that historic moment in which "black" was proud, beautiful and liberated, Ilê Aiyê capitalized on the natural convergence of the political and cultural global black movements to create an institution that placed the black communities of Curuzu, Liberdade, Salvador, Bahia, and Brazil directly within the black diaspora. Constructing and generating their message as both content and image, the organization sought to extend its impact beyond the local carnival. While a detailed analysis of Ilê Aiyê's printed materials is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it would be negligent to ignore the tremendous impact of Ilê Aiyê's publications in the equally tremendous political moment of Brazil's black movement at that time. Having constructed a publicly visible Afro-Brazilian presence through musical, aesthetic, and dance performance during carnival, Ilê Aiyê extended its self-identified role as curator and promoter of African heritage in Brazil through the inclusion of its visual vocabulary in any and all printed materials. The organization's logo in bright red, yellow, and black denotes Ilê Aiyê as the source, as do the artistic designs of J. Cunha, a graphic artist whose drawings richly decorate their texts as well as album and CD covers, percussion instruments, and costumes. Again, the use of symbols derived from candomblé (cowry shells, popcorn, shekeres, etc.) further creates the "African World" of Ilê Aiyê, clear and consistent in all forms of their cultural production.

Having identified the elements that comprise Ilê Aiyê's cultural strategies in their larger mission to validate Afro-Brazilian culture, the next chapter presents an analytical framework that articulates/reiterates specified elements of musical meaning and performance for Ilê Aiyê, the associative relationships between them, and how they interact to communicate and facilitate racial identity constructions.

Chapter 5: Constructing Meaning through Performance

In this chapter, I develop and apply an analytical framework that articulates specified elements of musical meaning and performance for Ilê Aiyê, the associative relationships between them, and how they interact to communicate meaning and facilitate racial identity construction. Using methodologies for analysis from three distinct yet complementary academic disciplines – cultural studies, performance studies, and ethnomusicology – selected approaches will focus on ways in which performance analyses can serve to identify and demonstrate relationships between performance and identity construction.

In order to discuss the approaches that have been taken by academics in analyzing the "performance of identity," it is necessary to first define the concepts, or at least to describe the ways in which the terms are understood in the three relevant disciplines. As each of these fields draws on the others (and additional related subjects such as anthropology, psychoanalysis, linguistics, literary criticism, and sociology), it is appropriate to recognize the inter- and multi-disciplinarity that is inherent in the various theories and methodologies that have been applied toward understanding the relationship(s) between identity and performance. In addition, as each discipline matures, new objects of study and methods of inquiry are incorporated in response to multidirectional relationships between historical change and shifts in political, social, and economic conditions.

Cultural Studies

The field of cultural studies provides a rich illustration of the value of combining critical social theories with systematic analysis of mass media and other elements of the "cultural industry," a term coined by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, early critical theorists of the Frankfurt School (The Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt). The "School" was established in 1924 by a cadre of neo-Marxist intellectuals who, while embracing the fundamental materialist perspective that placed modern capitalism at its center, sought to elevate the significance of culture and ideology in society. The theory of the commodification of cultural products, for example, is intrinsic to Adorno's concept of the cultural industry and the basis for his ostensibly fatalistic view of the ideological omnipotence of the industry versus the veritable powerlessness of the masses. His assertions that popular music was "standardized" by core structures yet differentiated by "pseudo-individualization" – stylistic elements that varied just enough to disguise the repetitive characteristics of the commodified musical products – placed popular music in a relationship of binary opposition to "serious" (classical) music. While Adorno's portrayal of listeners, or cultural "consumers," as distracted and inattentive might have been intended to demonstrate the power of the industry to divert attention, his observations tend to betray his belief that the dominant classes will inevitably triumph due to the submissive tendencies of the dominated.

Although much of its theoretical basis has been critiqued as incomplete, elitist and/or outmoded, the Frankfurt School (and Adorno in particular) made key contributions through conceptual innovations relevant to understanding and analyzing culture, especially popular culture. While Frankfurt School theories did not purport to address issues of identity per se, elements of Adorno's writings on popular music provide a glimpse into what might be expressed

as the role of popular music and its related industry and marketing in impeding individual identity constructions through culture, or, in a sense, facilitating the process of what we might call "identity obstruction." Adorno's pessimistic assessment of the processes of structural standardization and pseudo-individualization as well as the lack of critical audience reception could also be applied to contemporary popular music, as much of what is considered to be its dominant genres and products tend to support a process of cultural homogenization.

While the Frankfurt School is acknowledged as the initial site of the then emergent field of cultural studies, it was at the Birmingham School (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, England) that supplementary theoretical approaches and conceptual frameworks were developed for understanding cultural and ideological manifestations in the changing world from the late 1950s on. The intellectuals associated with this evolutionary stage of the discipline continued to privilege the analysis of the role and impact of cultural industry within the context of social relations, but with an increased focus on culture as a site within which contestations of ideology and (or subsequently) power occur. Stuart Hall, a leading theorist of the Birmingham School, advanced the concept of ideology as the "mental frameworks" that people use to understand society – referring to language, concepts, thought imagery, and systems of representation. Hall perceives the cultural field as a site of ideological struggle, the weapons of which are the contestations and (re)constructions of meaning that transpire via the consumption of cultural texts and practices. His theories on reception and textual encoding/decoding demonstrated the variability of meaning within language and representation in different contexts, and the possibilities for the negotiation of texts through what he called "oppositional" readings, which, in turn, enable resistant constructions and performances of identity (Hall 1980).

Drawing on both structuralism's starting point of semiotics – the primacy of language systems (which include images, fashion, music as symbols or signs) in representing and communicating meaning - and poststructuralism's emphasis on the variable nature of and relationships between language, meaning, and power as well as its focus on self and identity, British cultural studies theorists began to examine how culture facilitated the construction and performance of oppositional identities among subcultural groups, beginning with youth culture. As social inequalities became increasingly identifiable beyond divisions of class with further lines being drawn based on race, gender, and ethnicity, identity politics emerged and provided further terrain upon which to analyze and validate the relationship between culture and identity as well as to develop oppositional readings and new constructions of meaning as strategies for resistance to hegemony. More recently, George Lipsitz has articulated similar patterns and processes of identity performance within what he terms the "global cultural economy" – where popular culture (music in particular) can be seen as a microcosmic reflection of new(er) patterns of exchange, interaction and identity constructions that emerge as a result of global integration (1994).

Performance Studies

Performance studies is a discipline that focuses on performance, a tautological definition that suggests circular logic, yet which becomes functional when the term "performance" is presented as an "essentially contested concept," as described by W. B. Gallie: "[it] implies recognition of rival uses of it (such as oneself repudiates) as not only logically possible and humanly 'likely,' but as of permanent potential critical value to one's own use or interpretation of the concept in question" (Gallie 1955:1). However, within the context of examining the

intersections of the three selected disciplines, the delineation of performance studies that relates to identity becomes clearer once it is understood that the discipline has its roots in the term "cultural performance," as introduced by Milton Singer in the late 1950s. As a folklorist, Singer sought to describe how cultural traditions and social structures could be expressed through events such as dance, theater, festivals and other activities. He identified specific characteristics of these "performances": a limited time span, a beginning and an end, an organized program of activity, a set of performers, an audience, and a place and occasion of performance (Singer 1959: xiii).

From this point, other anthropologists such as Dell Hymes (1964:1-34), who introduced the concept of an "ethnography of communication," began to incorporate ethnographic observations and studies of performance into cultural analysis, progressing from describing single performance events to expanded inquiries into the communicative function of performance in culture. Folklorists Richard Bauman and Roger Abrahams focused on performance as a mode of expression and introduced several key concepts related to performance as communication. Characterizing performance events as culturally specific and unique, they described the context of performance as a "generalized cultural system in a community" and emphasized the interactive nature of communication that connects the audience to the performer(s) (Abrahams 1972; Bauman 1977).

This expansion of research parameters led to increased collaboration among theorists and scholars in distinct sectors of the human sciences such as sociology, psychology, and linguistics. These disciplines joined forces with others that focus on what was seen as traditional, artistic performance (i.e., music, theater, and dance) to create trans-disciplinary approaches that reveal

the interrelationship between the communicative function of cultural performance and the performative nature of identity in the construction and expression of identity. The conflation of these ways of comprehending the performance of identity can be further understood through the presentation of two interrogative categories which inform performance studies analyses: 1) identity as performative in the lived experience and/or within the context of a performance event, expressed both at individual and collective levels, and 2) the designation of cultural performance as a primary site for analyzing communicative processes as they affect identity construction.

The characterization of identity as performative has some of its roots in social constructionist theories that emphasize the role of language as social action – language itself as a performative, interactive process. In addition, poststructuralists contend that language is inherently polysemous and is constantly interpreted, or "negotiated," depending on the specific historic, cultural and/or social contexts. As such, language can also be seen as a site in which meaning and identity are both constructed and contested. If we expand the concept of language to include discourse – defined for our purposes as a set of representations, images, narratives, etc., that together present a particular way of seeing and understanding (similar to Hall's "mental frameworks") – it is possible to identify ways in which identities are constructed and re-constructed through individual or collective negotiations of meanings within particular discourses.[22]

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[22]Note: It is important to mention that identity, like meaning, is both variable and multiple depending on context and/or discourse. For this reason, individuals and groups perform different roles depending on the particular set of meanings in a given context.

A discussion of ways in which performance studies has contributed to understanding the performance of identity would be incomplete without reference to the collaboration between noted anthropologist Victor Turner and Richard Schechner, a specialist in theater studies. Turner's work expanded on Arnold van Gennep's concepts related to rituals of transition, such as rites of passage in which he identified distinct stages in terms of *liminality*: preliminal, liminal, and postliminal (van Gennep 1909), establishing the basis for Turner's concentration on the ritual of social process and the dialectic relationship between ritual and theater (Turner 1969). Primary in his analysis is the view that performance tends to exist in the liminal, or "in-between," spaces, and thus serves as a potential transitional area in which social transformation can take place. This idea of performance as a dynamic process existing in the margins or on the borders had a significant impact on performance theorists, particularly those interested in socially or politically oriented performance. In his introduction to a posthumous collection of essays by Turner, Richard Schechner summarizes Turner's interest in performance:

> Turner, who specialized in the liminal, the in-between, lived in a house that was all doors: every idea led to new ideas, every proposition was a network of possibilities. I think he was so long interested in performance – theater, dance, music, ritual and social drama – because performance is the art that is open, unfinished, decentered, liminal. Performance is a paradigm of process. (Schechner 1987:8)

Schechner was intrigued by Turner's concept of "social drama," drawing parallels that informed his own related theories of "aesthetic drama." His work echoed Turner's assertions of organized, identifiable processes in social rituals and sought to identify similar stages in theatrical performance (1985). According to Schechner, restored behavior (also known as *strips of behavior*) refers to "organized sequences of events, scripted actions, known texts, scored movements [that] exist separate from the performers who 'do' these behaviors" (ibid; 36). The

behavior is "restored" through the process of transmission or rehearsal that enables the behavior to be stored, changed or transformed. Schechner's elaboration of this concept supports Turner's view of the transformative potential in the liminal spaces of performance, as well as borrows from social theorist Erving Goffman's concepts of "strips of experience" and "keying," which also acknowledges performance as transformative. Turner and Schechner worked together to create new ways to bring theories and methods from both anthropology and theater together to mutually influence their respective disciplines. Their collaborations provided valuable guideposts for interdisciplinary approaches to understanding the role of both social and aesthetic forms of performance and their connections to human behavior, especially as related to transformative strategies of identity construction and performance.

Ethnomusicology

Similar to performance studies, yet to a somewhat lesser extent, ethnomusicology might also be perceived as focusing on "essentially contested concepts" of music and culture in addition to performance. An evaluation of the numerous definitions of both "music" and "culture" is beyond the scope of this section, but for purposes of elucidating how ethnomusicology contributes to the process of understanding performance (specifically as it related to identity), I would suggest that a disciplinary division as characterized by Anthony Seeger be taken as a starting point: **"One group of scholars has been concerned with the relationship of music to the society producing it, and another group with the study of the musical sounds in themselves"** (Seeger 1980:7) Regardless of the area of concentration, the object of study for ethnomusicologists is music, and the locus of research is the musical event. Furthermore, the field is often described as either the study of music *in* culture or music *as*

culture - either view requires an implicit consideration of contextual information (music *in/and* context?*). In an attempt to connect the concept of musical performance to the method of ethnography, Herndon and Norma McLeod edited the notable collection of essays published as *The Ethnography of Musical Performance* (1980). In their conclusion, the editors present fundamental statements with regard to context presented as a series of distinct orders (i.e., geographic, time-space, seasonal, style, etc), defined as "the concept of context as an interweaving of factors – one of which is music." They go on to discuss music as a cognitive phenomenon, where music ("patterns of sound") is culturally conceived, produced and perceived. In this discussion, they present Victor Turner's concept of "communitas," emphasizing its liminal quality, as parallel to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of "flow": "…the totally controlled feeling of streaming from one moment to another, with the self, the environment, blending past, present, and future" (ibid; 182). The sensation of *flow* is attributed to individuals and groups of performers, and is presented primarily as a precondition for improvisational performance. This conceptualization of flow is limited to the performer(s), or, at best, implies a unilateral communicative process directly from performer to audience. The model I present intends a more comprehensive consideration of "flow" as having multiple sources that generate the communal space in which the shared experience occurs. For Ilê Aiyê, there is little distinction between audience and performer; ritual and embodied memory construct a culturally specific "past, present and future" that is shared through the collective performance, facilitating access to the interstices of communitas.

Herndon and McLeod continue their observations on the nature of performance by articulating performance as a phenomenon centered in the communication between performer and audience. They refer to some of the aforementioned sources on performance theories,

Bauman and Abrahams among others, and proceed to outline the importance of delineating boundaries of performance in producing ethnographies of musical performance. Their presentation of guidelines for applying this particular methodology as an approach to analyzing "music *in* <u>and</u> *as* performance" provides insights into possibilities for connecting theories related to communication, cultural context, meaning and performance into a specific framework that facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the relationships between musical performance and identity.

Gerard Béhague reiterates the significance of studying music as performance with an inclusive approach that integrates context and sound, or what he refers to as "performance and practice" (1984). He also cites the influence of folklore studies in revealing the communicative nature of performance, and credits both McLeod and Herndon for specific conceptual contributions they have made to innovative theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of musical performance, acknowledging McLeod's naming of the "musical occasion" as a central unit of study, as well as Herndon's insistence on the primacy of social context in analyzing the "occasion." He adds, however, a concern with the question of musical meaning, as well as recognition of the role of the audience's behavior in determining the performance situation. The inclusion of audience members as active participants in the musical occasion is of great importance in analyzing negotiations of meaning and reconstructions of identity as strategic resistance to oppressive discourses.

More recently, other ethnomusicologists have centered their research on performance and the complex approaches that can lead to more comprehensive understandings of music's role in identity construction and in lived experience. In a unique ethnographic study of salsa music in

New York City, Chris Washburne presents a musician's perspective on the different factors that affected the community of salsa musicians there in the 1990s (Washburne 2008). His analysis includes performance events, music structure and discursive practices, and the relationship between the musical culture and cultural identity. Deborah Wong expresses ethnomusicological concerns with identity in her book, *Speak it Louder: Asian Americans Making Music* (2004), in which she asserts "music is performative and that it 'speaks' with considerable power and subtlety as a discourse of difference" (Wong 2004: 3). Wong goes on to describe performance as a site of cultural production, where performance is "constructive rather than reflective of social realities" (ibid; 4). Her designation of performance as a discursive force in the production of "social realities" reflects the trans-disciplinary approaches that many music scholars, particularly those engaged with studies of popular music, apply in analyzing musical performance (Lipsitz 1994; Middleton 2003, 2006; Moore 2003; Connell and Gibson 2003; Sharma 2010). Thomas Turino extends a similar approach in his identification of "the nature of musical meaning and the crucial roles music plays in social, spiritual and political life" as fundamental questions in generating new conceptual frameworks for evaluating "expressive cultural practices" (Turino 2008: xvi). These approaches prove to be particularly applicable to this study, especially Wong's belief that performance can construct reality; this principle will lend support to understanding performance as a dynamic process through which performers and audience create a transitional space in which social transformation is made possible.

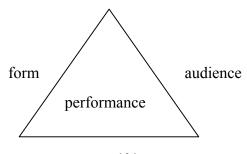**Identity construction through performance: An interdisciplinary model**

At this time, I introduce a model for analyzing processes of identity construction through performance, based on an trans-disciplinary synthesis of approaches from the three disciplines

discussed above. This section builds on my previous analysis of the performative elements of

bloco afro– rhythm, lyrics, dance, and performance aesthetics – and adds additional components

– audience and shared experience – in an attempt to demonstrate the relationship between the

performative nature of identity and the communicative function of cultural performance in the

construction and expression of identity: in this case, racial identity. The primary object of study

is the performance of Ilê Aiyê and defers to Milton Singer's definitive characteristics of cultural

performance: a limited time span, a beginning and an end, an organized program of activity, a set

of performers, an audience, and a place and occasion of performance. Finally, the application of

theories and methods from the three disciplines facilitates an exploration of the transformative

potential of musical performance – focusing on how performance can create opportunities for

individual and collective agency in "constructing social realities" beyond the musical event.

The framework was inspired by and based on anthropologist Bruce Kapferer's

identification of the "interconnectedness of the directionality of performance, the media through

which the performance is realized, and an attention to the way it orders context," and his

discussion of how those factors interact to create meaning through performance (1986:192). His

concern expands a common (yet extremely sparse) definition of "performance as the enactment

of text," a limited approach that is susceptible to the tendency toward privileging either the

enactment or the text, resulting in a less comprehensive understanding of the whole. By

identifying associative relationships between key elements of performance, Kapferer presents a

useful structure that can serve as an initial foundation on which to construct a comprehensive

paradigm for performance analysis. Challenging the limited, dichotomous perception of

"enactment" and "text," he elaborates on the interconnected elements that comprise and create

performance – *directionality*, *media* and *(ordering) context*. First, directionality is defined as audience*,* recognizing the variability of audience "members" that includes performers, spectators - even spiritual beings in some ritual contexts. I find the term "directionality" useful and particularly appropriate here, as it implies a dialogic flow among participants. Such flow precludes the unidirectional, static model that privileges the performer as communicating to (rather than with) an audience, a process that by definition marks the audience as passive. Furthermore, the static model cannot contain the dynamic interactions that precede the liminal experience, effectively shutting down the possibility of opening a transitional, transformative space in which engagement can occur. The second element, media*,* refers to the performance *form* (i.e., dance, music, theater); it is essential to the process of audience engagement, as is, obviously, the *audience.* Kapferer connects these first two elements, audience and form, in structuring the third - *context*: "together they constitute meaning of the ritual, variously enable the communication of its meaning, *and create the possibility for the mutual involvement of participants in the one experience…* (emphasis mine)" (ibid;193). Again, multidirectional, dialogic communication enhances opportunities for "mutual involvement" and provides access to a sense of shared experience, even as such experience necessarily involves multivocal generation and reception of meaning(s) in a given performance context.
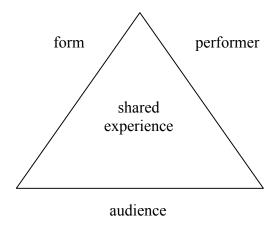

I begin by constructing a triangular model using the three concepts as interconnecting lines, with the overall performance as the central area of the triangle:

form   audience

performance

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<center>shared
experience</center>

Looking at this structural model, it appears that a key element is absent – the role of the performer. It might seem most feasible to include the role of the performer within the "form" element, considering that the performer can be perceived as an integral component within the form (whether the form is dance, theater, musical performance, or a combination of forms). However, I believe it is more useful to include the performer(s) as a separate analytical subject in this framework, as it will be important to acknowledge the role of the performer as a transmitter in evaluating the communicative function of a performance. The relationship between the performer and the audience is also significant as it is fundamental to the interactive exchange that occurs during the performance event.

Returning to the triangular structure, here is the revised model after inserting the performer as a structural element:

<center>
form   performer

shared
experience

audience
</center>

This revision offers a better representation of the interconnections between elements of a performance, as well as places the "shared experience" element at the center of the analysis. This specific element demonstrates the core of Ilê Aiyê's musical and social function – the transmission and reception of Afro-Brazilian cultural expression through rhythm, song, dance, and embodied aesthetics. As we have seen in the description of the distinct features encompassed in Ilê Aiyê's performance, the concept of "form" reveals itself to be more complex than the simple identification of a particular performance medium; related elements will include the objective, or mission, of the event and the context in which the event takes place – factors that are usually interrelated, as will be shown. Employing this model to serve as the frame of the analysis provides a structure on which to evaluate additional, relevant components as necessary.

Audiences and communities

At the base of the framework is the audience; in the case of Ilê Aiyê, the audience begins at the extremely local level – the neighborhood of Curuzu in the community of Liberdade in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil – and extends to a global collective of what I like to refer to as the "African diasporati" (black intellectuals and activists around the world who share a consciousness of common history and culture as well as a commitment to international solidarity among people of African descent). It is the local community, however, that informs this particular analytical framework, as Ilê Aiyê's musical occasions include, if not depend upon, community participants. In the context of Curuzu, Ilê Aiyê's community comprises distinct, yet overlapping features. First, there is the geographical/spatial community that shares the historic legacy of being the oldest and largest black locality in Brazil. Second, there is the extended local community that follows Ilê Aiyê's events or experiences them through the public media. Third,

and most important, there is the institutional community created by Ilê Aiyê through its carnival and extended educational and training programs. These three community elements combine to define Ilê Aiyê's audience as the initial component in this performance framework. These audience sectors will also prove useful in determining how communities access the multiple levels of meaning communicated through Ilê Aiyê's performance events.

As described in Chapter 3, Ilê Aiyê's initial call specifically identified dark, black skin as the primary selection criteria for participation in the carnival group. Although the focus here is on the audience, the organization's unambiguous self-identification as a black performance group contributed to the coming together of an ideological community, one into which racial consciousness and Afro-Brazilian identity were key entry points. The establishment of an explicitly black carnival group during the military regime in Brazil was a political act: Ilê Aiyê was the cultural vanguard of an increasingly visible black movement in Salvador and throughout Brazil. Those who responded to the call for a "bloco de negros" at the time were conscious of their racial identity and of the political implications of publicly affirming that identity. While the ideological community extends from the local to the global, as their rhythms and music become part of the diasporic dialogue, these founding participants established the base for the institutional community. This community includes people who are actively committed to and involved in the implementation of the organization's mission, whether occupied with the day-to-day preparations for carnival or involved in the management of one or more of the institution's major cultural events or community education projects.

The institutional community includes the performers as well as non-performing representatives of the institution (the President, the affiliate "mãe de santo," members of the

directorate, and other program managers) and the institution itself. Although institutions are not

generally considered to be performers in this kind of inquiry, I believe that including the cultural

institution within the category of performer can contribute to more comprehensive insights into

the communicative flow among different community constituents. This is particularly relevant in

the case of a Bahian carnival entity, as the form and context require personal and collective

affinity with the specific bloco. Indeed, several songs in their repertoire express this collective

identity, emphasizing an immediate personal identification with the group, from the repeated

chant of "Eu sou Ilê" (I am Ilê), to a more collective purview: "Nossa história é você, Ilê, Ilê

Aiyê" (Our history is you, Ilê, Ilê Aiyê).[23] It is important to recognize this personification aspect

that facilitates the reception of the core message among their target audience, as it allows

individuals to assume the identity embodied by Ilê Aiyê through affiliation, and subsequently to

express their own interpretations as members of the performance group. It also reinforces the

institution's oracular role as both keeper and transmitter of African and Brazilian culture and

Afro-Brazilian identity. Furthermore, Ilê Aiyê's insertion as a black institution in the larger

Bahian society allows it to represent its communities by "performing blackness" in external

social contexts, first through its role as a key player in the politics and production of Salvador's

carnival,[24] and, second, by serving as a visible and vocal defender of black culture and racial

equality in Brazil from municipal to national and international levels.

A prominent example of how Ilê Aiyê channeled its resources through community

engagement is its Pedagogic Extension Program (PEP), established in 1995. The program's

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[23]From the songs "Ilê Pra Somar," and "Estação Azeviche."

[24]Antônio Carlos dos Santos, founder and president, served as co-coordinator of carnival in Liberdade from 1989-1992, and as general coordinator of carnival in Salvador in 1996.

objective was to create an educational pedagogy based on the recovery of African cultural roots and its influences in Brazil, with a view toward preparing Afro-Brazilian youth to help build and live in a multicultural society. The organization established partnerships with public elementary schools in the community and developed curricular materials in the form of "Cadernos de Educação" (Education Notebooks). These materials were presented to teachers in training seminars facilitated by educators affiliated with Ilê Aiyê; the training focused on three main axes – identity, self-esteem, and critical thinking. After the training, the curriculum was presented to students in the classrooms, with ongoing teacher support and program evaluation by the PEP staff. In addition, members of Ilê Aiyê facilitated workshops for the students in dance, percussion, African braiding, and capoeira, as well as artistic and literary competitions. These workshops reiterated the importance of creative expression in African culture and its centrality to the performance of Afro-Brazilian identity, and introduced teaching methods that integrated the arts into a broader curricular and pedagogic context.

The PEP publications emphasized the following topics: 1) the reconstruction of African civilizations in the territory of Brazil, 2) organizations of black resistance, 3) anthropological theories on the origin of man, and 4) education: visibility, invisibility and repression of the Afro-Brazilian in the process of establishing national society (da Silva 2004:69). The 'Cadernos' were based on the historical research related to Ilê Aiyê's carnival themes and were produced by members of the directorate and educators involved in PEP. The team also collaborated with prominent academics in the Salvador community whose research focuses on Afro-Brazilian and Bahian history, religion, and culture; these scholars gave seminar presentations, contributed texts on specialized topics, and served as project advisors/consultants. The published texts included songs from Ilê Aiyê's repertoire and illustrations by J. Cunha, resident graphic artist and designer

of the institution's overall visual identity; later texts also featured poetry, visual art, and essays by students in the program, as well as suggestions for pedagogic activities for both teachers and students.

Through the PEP initiative, Ilê Aiyê sought to systematize its extensive repository of information on African and Afro-Brazilian culture, black history, and resistance movements in the form of didactic resources to support teachers in the classrooms, as such content was nonexistent in the official public curricula. The materials encouraged teachers to integrate themes related to the black experience into their courses, and provided them with both tangible support and inspiration to develop and apply their own teaching resources related to said topics. As word of the project spread among black activists and organizations, Afro-Brazilian (as well as a few progressive white) educators across the country solicited copies of the texts and training materials, instigating a wave of innovative curricula and youth programs designed for and by the Afro-Brazilian community. In this way, the staff and community supporters involved in PEP established a viable and valuable project that reached thousands of students, providing black youth the tools with which to build self-esteem, to express their identities as Afro-Brazilian, and to understand the historical and social forces that created racial inequalities in Brazilian society.

As described earlier, Ilê Aiyê's initial mission was to empower the black community through the recovery and validation of African cultural heritage in Brazil. While this mission has not changed, it has grown to include the affirmation of black citizenship, placing it directly in the political arena of Brazil's black movement. Fundamentally a community-based cultural institution, its role has extended into national and international arenas through its participation in organizations such as the Movimento Negro Unificado (United Black Movement) and its cultural

exchange programs with various African countries, validating its identity as a defender of

Brazil's African heritage and of the political rights of the Afro-Brazilian population. As

expressed in its statement of principles and values:

> Through its work, Ilê Aiyê seeks to emphasize strength as an organization, to awaken the self-esteem of black people, to promote professional courses and social-educational activities with children and adults, to preserve afro traditions, the integration of the black community, and to stimulate the resistance and defense of the black race. (Ilê Aiyê 1989:28)

As the organization grew from its first 100 members to the thousands that parade with them each

year, Ilê Aiyê gained visibility and community support, enabling it to establish itself as one of

the leading, community-based Afro-Brazilian cultural institutions in Salvador. As it gained

institutional stability, most appreciably with the construction of its physical headquarters in the

center of Curuzu community in Liberdade, the organization strengthened its public persona

among black cultural groups and within the Brazilian Black Movement, which helped to solidify

its image as an authentic source of African culture, as well as a staunch advocate of Afro-

Brazilian human rights.

In addition to the carnival-related events held at the site, Ilê Aiyê hosts numerous

community events in observance of important dates in black history, and presents public

programs that celebrate and promote specific aspects of Afro-Brazilian culture. In November,

during Brazil's "Month of Black Consiousness,"[25] for example, Ilê Aiyê commemorates several

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[25]Since the 1970s, the Brazilian black movement has recognized November 20 as the "Day of Black Consciousness" in commemoration of the anniversary of the death of Zumbi dos Palmares (1695), ultimate leader of the Quilombo dos Palmares; over time, it extended to become the "Month of Black Consciousness." In 2003, the government under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva designated the date a national holiday, and added a directive that requires all schools to include Afro-Brazilian culture and history in the core curriculum (Law N° 10.639, January 9, 2003; see http://www3.dataprev.gov.br/sislex/paginas/42/2003/10639.htm).

important dates, including its founding (November 1, 1974), the independence of Angola (November 11, 1975), and the "Revolta da Chibata" (Revolt of the Whip), a historic naval mutiny by black sailors in Rio de Janeiro (November 21- 26, 1910) (Ilê Aiyê 1999:18). Finally, Antonio Carlos do Santos "Vovô" (Ilê Aiyê's President) and other members of the Directorate are regularly invited to represent the organization in educational seminars, public debates, or media events related to racial issues, and are frequently asked to provide commentary to the press on incidents of racial discrimination or other issues specifically related to Salvador's black communities.

While the organization's community followers identify with Ilê Aiyê through its embodiment of black resistance and cultural heritage, the organization reciprocates by representing the communities' cultural, social, and political interests to the larger society. The visible role that Ilê Aiyê's institutional representatives play in the service of its mission allows for the completion of a symbiotic relationship with its communities: if "I am Ilê," then it logically follows that "Ilê is me." Expanding this to include its multiple communities of followers, Ilê Aiyê's performance as a political-cultural institution allows its participants the opportunity to identify with an organization that personifies the collective black community – "Ilê is us."

Levels of Meaning

The percussionists, singers, and dancers interpret the annual theme during the carnival parade, as well as other pertinent messages at related Ilê Aiyê-sponsored events. While the distinct elements of the performance reveal aspects of the musical meaning embedded in the performance event(s), it is the collective performance that communicates the message in its

entirety. "Africa in Brazil" is expressed through the rhythms derived from African ritual expression, the songs that express "African" values and themes, and the embodied expressions of an Afro-centric aesthetic – each of these performance elements are combined to create an integrated cultural presentation through which meanings are conveyed and accessed at multiple levels. As particular meanings are available to different audiences, and are open to interpretation by individual participants, the integrated performance approach creates a parallel, comprehensive "integrated meaning," which transcends audiences, form, and context to eventually emerge within the shared experience.

Certainly, the first and most basic message is: "We are black." This level of meaning is easily accessible and readily received by the community: for the first time in their lives, blackness equals social cachet. This primary message extends into "We are black and beautiful/powerful/strong/resilient/free," clear statements that affirm the positive cultural values associated with blackness and introduce a race-based discourse that challenges social norms in Brazil. It is at this level that pride in being black not only contributes to an increased sense of self-esteem, but also provides access to the transmission and assumption of pride as an encoded message of resistance. For Ilê Aiyê, resistance is a key characteristic of "the black world" and thus serves as both a reference to the historic legacy as well as a challenge to the present black community - a challenge that simultaneously provides participants an outlet through which to extend their individual or collective assumptions of black identity in service to black resistance through Ilê Aiyê.

A subsequent level involves the transmission of the historic legacies of Africans, blacks in Brazil and throughout the African diaspora. The strategy of the annual thematic approach —

that is, the identifying and promotion of histories of resistance and cultural heritage in various black communities in the world — serves as the basis for the construction of an "imagined Africa," or what Ilê Aiyê refers to as the black world. Every year, information about the selected countries and/or communities is disseminated to aspiring composers, part of Ilê Aiyê's institutional community, who create songs that emphasize the dominant themes – African cultural legacies, histories of resistance, heroes and heroines, etc., – almost always referring back to Ilê Aiyê, the accepted custodian of black histories and cultures and their connection to black Brazil. From December through January, the song competition occurs within the context of the "Festival of the Music of Ilê," where the music and theme for the following carnival are chosen. Also, public rehearsals are held from June to January, where performers and audience build familiarity with the repertoire. These events allow the community to gain knowledge about the culture and histories of the country or community highlighted that year, helping to fulfill Ilê Aiyê's mission to educate the community about its African heritage in order to raise self esteem and validate Brazil's black history and culture. At this level, the emphasis on the history and culture of the African diaspora and black Brazilian communities reinforces and expands the ideological community. While these messages are readily accessed by the more politically aware and racially conscious adherents, the embedded meanings which promote individual and collective racial identity and identification with the black world become increasingly accessible to other participants as they participate in and experience the series of events that lead to the actual carnival performance.

An additional level of meaning is drawn from through the institution's affiliation with African-centered religion - first from Ilê Aiyê's identification with and cultural grounding in its identified spiritual source, candomblé, and then through related references generated from this

source. The insertion of rhythms derived from candomblé ritual into its percussive repertoire has already been presented, as has the inclusion of melodic phrases that refer to specific orixãs. The embedding of candomblé's iconography in multiple aspects of the organization's visual presentation(s) is particularly effective in providing access to the multiple meanings generated from candomblé. From the drawings of orixãs' symbols that permeate Ilê Aiyê's publications, to the use of those same symbols as well as the colors that may relate to specific orixãs in the costumes worn by performers and followers, the institution's employs numerous visual and material references from candomblé to associate itself with the African-based religion.

There is a significant performative component that also expresses an affinity with candomblé, and that is the embodied performance of the black world through dance. As introduced in Chapter 4, Ilê Aiyê prioritizes dance as an integral element of both its public performance and its institutionalized cultural pedagogy. Clearly, there are distinctions between ritual dance and the dances that are influenced by and/or include signs or symbols from a ritualized repertoire and are performed publicly; Ilê Aiyê operates on the fine line between this distinction, maintaining its primary identity as a black carnival entity that includes candomblé-influenced performative elements in secular contexts. At the same time, its connection to a legitimate, localized candomblé source, the "terreiro" of Ilê Axé Jitolu, strengthens its institutional performance as a credible source of Afro-Brazilian culture. However, it is dance as an embodied expression and its role in the performance and transmission of black identity via Ilê Aiyê that informs this analytical framework.

As stated earlier, dance in Ilê Aiyê serves a dual function: it is both a vehicle for communicating blackness and a symbol of African/Afro-Bahian identity. As a vehicle, it

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emphasizes and promotes the organization's particular form of dança afro, steeped in the encoded messages contained in the movements of candomblé. As a symbol of Ilê Aiyê's connection to Africa through African-based religion in Brazil, dance provides a visceral expression of the institution's commitment to representing black cultural forms through its affiliation with and use of embodied forms of communication associated with candomblé, and by extension, African culture. The institution prepares its dancers to include movements from candomblé sources, symbolic movements that transmit and enable access to a range of social as well as spiritual meaning(s). Ilé Aiye's followers receive and interpret the varied, encoded messages through an embodied response that acknowledges movement as discursive, with its own set of contextual signs and symbols.

Dancer and anthropologist Yvonne Daniel presents a compelling argument for understanding music and movement as forms of "embodied knowledge" in the African Diaspora. Moving through and learning with different African-based religious traditions in Haiti, Cuba, and Brazil, Daniel employs an "African Diaspora Dance perspective" that recognizes dance and music as central to understanding African-American life and culture. Her articulation of music and movement as vehicles for communicating meaning provide insight into how both candomblé ritual performance and carnival parades were/are used to both construct and express Afro-Brazilian identity:

> "Dance and music communicate through multiple sensory channels and thereby contain, symbolize, and emit many levels of meaning. The search for meaning reaches from the visions of the creators and intentions of the performers to the content and context of the performance, to the participants or audience, and usually to the entire social community. Different meanings can be found at every level of analysis (movement and symbolic levels, individual and societal levels, choreographer/dancer and audience level, etc), and multiple channels of sensory stimuli are activated for use in exploring and explaining meaning." (Daniel 2005: 52-53)

Daniel's reference to the multiple levels of meaning accessible through dance and music supports the idea that performance events, by providing cultural context and content – or form, enable audience(s) to access different elements of meanings using "multiple channels of sensory stimuli." Adrienne Kaeppler, cultural anthropologist and dance ethnologist, prefigures an increasing concern with meaning in dance through "the analysis of meaning of specific movements and meanings of a movement system as a whole" (2000:121). Her description of "structured movement systems" as socially and culturally constructed systems of knowledge reiterates the significance of context and the potential for movement to produce meaning in performance. Both Kaeppler's and Daniel's observations provides insight into the ways that Ilê Aiyê's communities receive and interpret cultural meanings; they also confirm the logic of comprehending bloco afro performance as an integrated whole that contains and expresses multivalent layers of meaning through music, dance, and performance aesthetics.

Communitas and shared experience

As Ilê Aiyê established its calendar of events and extra-carnival activities — (i.e., the community school and pedagogic extension program, women's group, professional training curricula, etc) — it created a range of experiences through which varied sectors of the community - youth, women, artists, teachers, and professionals - could participate in Ilê Aiyê. In addition, public rehearsals, the music festival, the Night of Black Beauty, culminating in the carnival experience – each of these musical occasions contributed to building a sense of community through a coherent cultural trajectory that strengthened the organization's capacity to communicate its message(s) and the audience's ability to receive and interpret the meanings therein. These programmed activities and annual events provide the nexus through which form and audience meet. Ilê Aiyê's intentional, institutional programming to specific audiences and target communities attracts those audiences and interacts with them to create, convey, and

receive affirmations of cultural meaning that resonate with their particular level of access to the whole.

Ilê Aiyê's performance events play an important role in creating a sense of "communitas," a concept popularized by anthropologist Victor Turner in his studies of ritual and performance. He distinguishes between three forms (Turner 1969: 132):

- *existential or spontaneous communitas*, the transient personal experience of togetherness
- *normative communitas*, communitas organized into a permanent social system
- *ideological communitas*, which can be applied to many utopian social models.

While each of these can be applied to distinct aspects of Ilê Aiyê as a cultural institution, it is the first classification that is most relevant to this analytical model. The other forms are clearly manifested in Ilê Aiyê's performance trajectory; I've introduced the concept of the ideological (including spiritual) and institutional communities that provide content and continuity for Ilê Aiyê's performance community. Again, it is important to acknowledge the cultural institution as performer, as it is the institution that sustains and expands each of the distinct communities by providing the organizational structure through which projects are implemented and events are produced. The institution itself can be viewed as a form of normative communitas, which would then acknowledge the organizational structure of Ilê Aiyê as a "permanent social system." Furthermore, it is possible that normative and ideological communitas may necessarily be prerequisite to bloco afro performance, as it is within those specific sectors that content and context are forged, with performance as the fulcrum upon which personal experience and collective affiliation move together toward a space conducive to spontaneous communitas.

As discussed earlier, many, if not most, of the original participants found their way into the organization through their affiliations with local candomblé houses, including the house where Ilê Aiyê was based at the time, Ilê Axé Jitolu. Highly skilled in the African cultural practices and musical expressions of candomblé, these early adopters were well-versed in the ritual sounds and symbols embedded in the group's musical mission, facilitating the creation of a community that shared an intimate understanding of both the implicit and explicit meanings and messages generated by Ilê Aiyê. Performers and community members directly involved in local terreiros were able to connect their particularized experience as candomblé practitioners to their individual, personal performances of black identity in the context of the organization's cultural events. Their ability to generate and negotiate multiple levels of meaning contributed to an enhanced, interactive performance space that facilitated and validated liminal experiences at individual levels within a collective, shared experience. In addition, their familiarity with the signs and symbols of ritualized performance contributed to the development of a context-specific set of cultural references that indicate key elements and aspects of Ilê Aiyê's mission; the set of references is dynamic and cumulative as the organization consistently expands community knowledge of the black world through its carnival themes and popular education programs. Familiarity with these references enhances a sense of belonging (ideological community) and reinforces racial consciousness through an increased awareness of shared histories of black resistance and an understanding of Brazil's particular legacy of slavery and the subsequent series of racist government policies that shaped the Afro-Brazilian experience.

Turner describes three phases of liminality: 1) preliminal (separation), 2) liminal (transition) and 3) postliminal (reincorporation), borrowing from Arnold van Gennep's conceptualization of the three phases of rites of passage (Gennep 1977). As stated, existential or

spontaneous communitas — or "the transient personal experience of togetherness" (Turner 1969:132) — is of principal concern in evaluating a performance model that culminates in shared experience at its center. In order to evaluate the viability of a trans-disciplinary model, it will be necessary to apply the approach to specific performance events. As has been shown, ethnomusicology and performance studies present overlapping definitions of the performance event – McLeod and Herndon describe a "series of distinct orders (i.e., geographic, time-space, seasonal, style, etc)" while Singer echoes those elements and adds more specific criteria, including an organized program of activity, a set of performers, and an audience. These criteria can be applied in exploring Ilê Aiyê's performance events and their role in facilitating "spontaneous communitas," or liminal experience among it participants. In addition, Ilê Aiyê's commitment to "stimulating the resistance and defense of the black race" is manifested through the strategic creation and development of performance events as potential transitional areas through which social transformation might emerge - first at the individual level, but always within a shared, community experience.

The specific performance events examined here are the "Night of Black Beauty" and the ritual ceremony that precedes the carnival exit from Curuzu/Liberdade. The two events contain and express key elements of Ilê Aiyê's performance strategy, as well as demonstrate the communicative reciprocity between the institution and its participant audience(s).

"Night of Black Beauty"

"A Noite da Beleza Negra" (Night of Black Beauty) was established in 1979, as suggested by Sergió Roberto, a member of Ilê Aiyê's directorate. The event celebrates black

women by means of a contest to select the "Queen of Ilê Aiyê;" also known as the "Goddess of Ebony," as designated in a popular song associated with the bloco:

> Minha Crioula
> Eu vou contar para você
> Que estás tão linda
> No meu bloco Ilê-Aiyê
> Com suas tranças muita originalidade
> Pela avenida cheia de felicidade
>
> My black woman
> I am going to sing to you
> That you are so lovely
> In my Ilê Aiyê bloco
> With your braids, much originality
> Through the avenue full of happiness
>
> Refrão (Bis)
> Minha deus do Ébano
> É Deusa do Ébano
> É Deusa do Ëbano
>
> Refrain (2x)
> My Ebony Goddess
> (She) is Goddess of Ebony
> (She) is Goddess of Ebony
>
> Todos os valores
> De uma raça estão presentes
> Nesta estrutura deste bloco diferente
> Por isso eu canto pelas ruas da cidade
> Pra você minha crioula, minha cor, minhas verdades
>
> All of the values of a race are present
> In this structure of this different bloco
> For this, I sing through the streets of the city
> For my black woman, my color, my truths.
> ("Deusa do Ebano," composed by Geraldo Lima)

Every January (a month before carnival), young, black women compete for the title of "Deusa do Ebano – Rainha do Ilê Aiyê" (Ebony Goddess – Queen of Ilê Aiyê), the woman who will represent Ilê Aiyê, through her grace, beauty, and blackness, at all of their presentations,

starting with carnival. The candidates are generally from the local community; many have existing ties to the organization -some as recurrent participants, while others are relative new to the event and its larger context. The Queen is selected during a contest where, after various elimination rounds, about 15 finalists parade in elaborate attire inspired by African styles – brightly colored fabric in flowing styles, imprinted with geometric designs interspersed with images and symbols that reflect Ilê Aiyê's thematic repertoire. Some women wear highly crafted headwear woven of raffia with natural adornments such as cowry shell patterns, wooden beads, or even small gourds, while others show off ornate, braided hairstyles or Rastafarian dreadlocks, sculpted in unique designs with similar natural embellishments.

The finalists dance before an enthusiastic public and a jury composed of members of the directorate, both men and women. Behind the dancers, performers provide songs and rhythms that inspire a multi-faceted consciousness where gender, race, and cultural (Afro-Brazilian) ethnicity come together. Again, dance is a focal element of performance, as the women receive training in both ritual dance movement techniques and the particular, "embodied knowledge" embedded in those movements, such as the specific gestures and positionings associated with individual orixas. These orientations facilitate an understanding of expressive culture as fundamental to the performance of black identity, and challenge the participants to create choreographies that express their own, individual interpretations of blackness through their bodies. Finally, the ritualized movements provide the women with potential entry to a state of "spontaneous communitas," a personal foray into the liminal space where individual transformation may occur.

The "Night of Black Beauty" is an integral component of Ilê Aiyê's programmed calendar of events; it provides a unique example of how the organization promotes pride and resistance within the black community, while simultaneously intervening on its behalf in the larger social context. Promotional materials disseminated by Ilê Aiyê about the event to potential candidates and to the general public emphasize the history of racial discrimination in Brazil as exemplified by the Eurocentric standards of beauty that prevented black women from participating in similar contests for queen in the predominantly white carnival organizations. Raising the issue of ethnic identity and the factors that constitute distinct, Afro-centric standards of beauty, the program grew from informal, spontaneous "fashion shows" that occurred during rehearsals into a professionally produced event that attracts overflowing audiences to the organization's headquarters in Curuzu/Liberdade. The program includes presentations by each of Ilê Aiyê's performing groups, as well as a featured performance by a nationally known music celebrity.

In contrast with other, more traditional carnival queen competitions, the Night of Black Beauty emphasizes and affirms its own original aesthetic, one that is based on the "legitimate signs of negritude." (Ilê Aiyê 2004:40). These "signs" are derived from the institutional culture of Ilê Aiyê: that is, they reflect the performance elements that are prioritized as defining the bloco: dark skin, knowledge of black history, proficiency in "dança afro," and the "assimilation of a coherent discourse of Negritude" (Ilê Aiyê 2004:40). The criteria provide a general overview of the factors that determine a candidate's suitability to assume the role of "Ebony Goddess," a role that essentially entails the embodiment of Ilê Aiyê's message. Such criteria for what might erroneously be seen as a mere beauty contest by those unfamiliar with the organization, suggests a sense of cultural fluency as requisite for those who seek to participate in

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the bloco at the level of normative communitas. In this case, the Queen of Ilê Aiyê achieves her

role by demonstrating an ability to receive and interpret multiple levels of meaning generated by

the institution, and her potential capacity to represent that "coherent" interpretation to the larger

community throughout the year of her reign. The fact that her "royal duties" include service to

the community underscores Ilê Aiyê's commitment to promoting self-esteem through racial

consciousness to the black community at large.

The Night of Black Beauty allows Ilê Aiyê to focus on and interact with a key

constituency of its audience – black women. Although initial performance outlets for women

participants were primarily limited to traditional roles for women in carnival entities (i.e.,

dancers and bloco queen), women participants in Ilê Aiyê also perform as percussionists and

singers. From institutionalizing the role of Mãe Hilda Jitolu as Ilê Aiyê's spiritual leader within

the directorate, to the women's group that provides training in dança afro and Afro-Brazilian

performance aesthetics, Ilê Aiyê encourages and facilitates women's participation in the

organization. Further, many of the black women associated with the organization are also active

in the Brazilian black women's movement at local, regional, and national levels. The connection

between racial consciousness and social activism becomes clearer as women get more involved

in the organization and actively participate in its various programs. This process of social

transformation by means of individual "conscientization" is fundamental to Ilê Aiyê's

community-based strategy.[26] By recognizing and celebrating black culture through music and

dance among people who had been silenced and made virtually invisible in society, Ilê Aiyê

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[26]The word Portuguese term *conscientizaçao* does not have a direct translation in English, but is understood to refer to the process of conscious raising. The term was popularized by Brazilian educator and theorist, Paulo Freire in his widely celebrated work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, published in 1970.

provided resources and opportunities for individual empowerment. As the community of empowered, racially conscious black individuals grew, the organization extended its ideological and institutional communities, creating a critical mass of conscious, proud black people prepared to confront racial oppression.

Ilê Aiyê's role as producer of the "Night of Black Beauty" substantiates its function as a performer in this analytical model – in this case, the institution acts as defender and promoter of black women by establishing new criteria and opportunities for women in Ilê Aiyê's community to become carnival queen. In response, black women incorporate the aesthetic by participating in the institution's workshops on African hair braiding, headwrap styling, attire, and dance. From the beginning, these styles presented a way for individuals to publicly express their identity as black, or Afro-Brazilian, and generated an African-based fashion aesthetic that has since come to characterize the black community of Salvador, Bahia. Ilê Aiyê, by creating an alternative form of beauty contest based on its own, institutionally defined standards of beauty, introduced an aesthetic articulation of oppositional discourse through social intervention.

The Opening Ritual Ceremony - Curuzu/Liberdade.

Since its inception, Ilê Aiyê has launched its annual carnaval activities with a ritual ceremony led by Mãe Hilda Jitolu and members of her terreiro, Ilê Axé Jitolu. The purpose of the ritual is to request protection and peace – that the carnaval programs may proceed as planned with the guidance and support of the orixas.

Led by designated spiritual leaders dressed in the traditional, ceremonial white garments of candomblé, the ritual includes offerings of *pipoca* (white, popped corn), *farofa* (manioc flour) and *água de cheiro* (scented water) to the orixas. After the offerings are made and all petitions are completed, the ritual ends with the release of white doves and a grand display of fireworks. The event is attended by hundreds of Ilê Aiyê's members, residents of the Liberdade, community leaders, tourists and the press. Following the event, the procession begins at the Curuzu headquarters and traverses the neighborhood's main avenue, Lima e Silva, stops at the town square and then separates to meet again for the parade on the main carnival circuit. It is a sea of red, white, yellow, – yes, and black, moving physically and sonically in rhythmic waves through the streets of Curuzu/Liberdade. Drummers and dancers, young and old, voices raised in songs of racial consciousness and cultural resistance as the black world takes center stage in Salvador's carnaval.

This capstone activity is yet another example of how Ilê Aiyê demonstrates its affiliation with candomblé, the ultimate repository of African-derived cultural expression in Brazil. The performance of the ceremony provides the organization with an opportunity to assume this association publicly, and introduces a specific setting that powerfully connects the sacred and the secular in a ritualized context. It is an impressive spectacle that attracts thousands who come to witness the annual inauguration of Ilê Aiyê's thematic presentation through its different performance elements – costumes, music, dancers, percussionists and the Ebony Goddess, Queen of Ilê Aiyê. While it is certainly possible to appreciate any single element on its own merit, the essence of the performance is found in the unified expression as a whole – all things coming together to represent the black world of Ilê Aiyê. As discussed earlier, ritual can be experienced as both a space and a process for negotiating meaning; ritual participation allows individuals to not only receive and interpret meaning, but also to simultaneously communicate and affirm meaning through performance.

In the setting of carnaval, the ritual energy extends into the community, publicly claiming and expanding the space in which black identity is expressed at individual and collective levels. At the same time, the spiritual context facilitates access to the liminal, especially for those already fluent in the ritual practices of candomblé. Even to those who are not, the potential for both personal and social transformation is accessible through the ceremony; individuals connect with and demonstrate communal affinity through sound and movement in the moment, blurring the distinctions between participant and observer as the shared experience opens the way to spontaneous communitas – the "transient personal experience of togetherness."

An additional function of the public staging of Afro-centric ritual is tied to candomblé as a symbol of Afro-Brazilian cultural resistance and survival. The spiritual practices that have been passed down from the first Africans in Brazil and are present in the terreiros today serve as testament to the black community's ability to create and sustain cultural identity in the face of extreme, persistent racist oppression.[27] Its history of persecution resulted in candomblé becoming a form of oppositional discourse to the white supremacist ideologies that sought to discredit and disempower blacks in Brazil. Ilê Aiyê use of both ritual performance and visual elements derived from candomblé communicates its affiliation with the community and affirms its role as defender of African people and cultures.

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[27]Persecution against candomblé continues today, primarily by Pentecostal and other evangelical Christian churches – see Burdick 1999.

Chapter 6: Summary/Conclusions

In my original research agenda, I proposed to study the musical phenomenon of bloco afro to determine how performance might enhance the process of racial identity construction through the use of symbolic and textual expressions. After considering possible vantage points from which to observe the burgeoning musical movement, I chose to center the inquiry in the experience of Ilê Aiyê, the carnival organization that first created the genre and which has existed for over thirty years as a visibly black community institution in Salvador, Bahia. As an ethnomusicologist, I was intrigued by the idea of a group so committed to promoting racial consciousness and pride among Afro-Brazilians that "even their rhythms are black." The concept of a "sonic blackness" conveyed through musical performance instigated a desire to further investigate performance and musical meaning and how they interact in constructing racial identity in Brazil.

In this final chapter, I review the objectives of the study and related key questions, present a summary evaluation of the proposed framework, and suggest possible areas for further collaborative research. I will conclude with some observations regarding multi- and trans-disciplinary approaches to cultural performance and the potential for more complex analyses that can address the communicative processes involved in the transmission and reception of musical meaning.

First, the research objectives:

1. Present a historical overview of the emergence of bloco afro within the context of the contemporary Movimento Negro (1970s – present), emphasizing the political and cultural influences of contemporary African diasporic expressions.

2. Describe musical characteristics of the genre: musical structure, organology, lyrics, and external musical influences

3. Identify political discourse(s) articulated in bloco afro through an analysis of vocabulary, imagery, symbols, and performance aesthetics expressed within the genre

    As my project explored bloco afro as a musical movement in the context of the contemporary Brazilian black movement, it was first necessary to present the specific historical-geographic location of Ilê Aiyê and how it contributed to the evolution and articulation of their current cultural narrative of "Africans in Brazil." In Chapter Three, I outlined several factors that enabled the organization to create and navigate the flow between local, national, and global identities, consistently grounded in their local community. Salvador's historic role as the center of a large, multi-ethnic African population from slavery through post-abolition facilitated the creation and survival of African (and neo-African) cultural practices that in turn became vital mechanisms for black identity construction, first in Bahia, then throughout the country, as blacks began to migrate south. Two primary cultural expressions, candomblé and carnival, were integral to the early formation of self-identified Afro-Brazilian communities.

    The historical overview of the ritual and performance phenomena of candomblé and carnival demonstrates how music was directly connected to early constructions of black identity

and manifestations of Afro-Brazilian participation in Salvadoran cultural politics. The discussion of the development of both practices reveals how African-based sacred ritual music that was initially performed only among the members of "terreiros" became the source for public manifestations of black musical expression during carnival. These groups paraded in costumes recalling African styles and performed songs that celebrated black cultures and promoted international solidarity with African countries. The use of candomblé instruments, rhythms, and dance by black carnival groups strengthened the Afro-Brazilian community as they resisted exclusion and overt discrimination by whites who sought to eradicate African elements from public presentations of Bahian culture.

It is significant that Afro-Bahians at the time were well aware of the larger diasporic community; Salvador was a major port during the height of the slave trade, which facilitated communication among blacks coming from and going to different countries. Africans and black Brazilians shared information about slave revolts, the quilombos in Brazil and similar settlements of self proclaimed free Africans in the region, trading stories as well as music and other cultural expressions. This historic connection of Afro-Brazilians with black nations and movements in the diaspora highlights a legacy of a globalized black identity that continues as a key element of the musical and political discourse advanced through bloco afro.

During the 1970's, African liberation struggles and the civil rights movement inspired blacks in Brazil, influencing a new generation of black movement activists. In addition, black musical forms from the United States and Jamaica had a profound effect on the black cultural expression in Brazil at the time, providing Afro-Brazilians with additional sonic and visual representations of blackness. Ilê Aiyê built upon these forms and their related performance

aesthetics to promote racial identity through the adoption of African diasporic iconography and physical-aesthetic presentation, such as dreadlocks and African-styled hair braiding.

After an evaluation of specific aspects of both North American and Jamaican musical influences, Chapter Three concludes with an in-depth presentation of Ilê Aiyê, tracing its history and development as the first bloco afro in Salvador, and the trajectory of its mission to empower the black community through the recovery and validation of Afro-Brazilian cultural heritage. It was critical to acknowledge the role of candomblé in the initial formation of the organization: Ilê Aiyê had its origins in Ilê Axé Jitolu, a candomblé center led by Mãe Hilda, mother of Vovô (founding member and current president). Ilê Aiyê's affiliation with a ritual community reinforced a sense of authenticity and cultural fluency with regard to the principles and symbols of Afro-Bahian religion, as well as validated the implementation of cultural strategies as the primary means to raise racial consciousness and sustain the connection between Afro-Brazilians and their African heritage.

Similar to the earlier black carnival groups, Ilê Aiyê represents and promotes cultural resistance through its carnival interventions, sharing diasporic histories and cultures through various elements of performance. However, I contend that Ilê Aiyê introduced a deeper level of institutional commitment and community involvement for Afro-Bahian carnival organizations as it developed distinct programmatic approaches to achieve its goals and strengthened its capacity to work on political projects in coalition with emerging Black Movement entities. The emphasis on researching black histories and cultures established Ilê Aiyê's role as a repository for informational resources about the African diaspora; these resources inspired the creation of community education programs and generated materials specifically designed to reach black Brazilians. In addition, the establishment of a school for local youth within the institutional

headquarters helped to build relationships between Ilê Aiyê and certain sectors of the community, including parents, Afro-Brazilian educators, and private and public institutions committed to working with black youth. The institutionalization of an annual calendar of major cultural events such as the "Week of the Black Mother" (September), "Black Awareness Day" commemorating Zumbi of Palmares, the anniversaries of the independence of Angola and the "Rebellion of the Whip," the 1910 revolt by black sailors in Rio de Janeiro against racist practices and physical abuse in the Navy (November), and the "Night of Black Beauty" (January) increased the visibility of Salvador's black communities and amplified Ilê Aiyê's leadership role in anti-racist and cultural politics. Finally, the institution's investment in establishing concrete connections with black movement activists nationally and globally through tours, cultural exchanges, and political solidarity campaigns underscores its commitment to continually promote Afro-Brazilian culture within the context of the African diaspora and enhances its ability to negotiate the multiple levels of a globalized black identity – from the Curuzu sector of Liberdade to the "African world."

Chapter Four addresses the remaining research objectives: the articulation of bloco afro as a musical genre and an analysis of the elements of musical performance that communicate Ilê Aiyê's key political discourse(s). I introduce the topics by acknowledging an expanded view of the multivalent nature of the term "musical genre" as suggested by Bahian ethnomusicologist José Jorge de Carvalho. He describes a musical genre as being "many things at the same time," identifying rhythmic pattern, harmonic sequence, and a set of words or tropes as interactive elements that evoke certain "landscapes," including a "landscape of the mind." De Carvalho's description refers both to specific musical elements and to the process of communicating musical meaning, and positions the interactive relationship between the elements as the catalyst for that

process. Further, his inclusion of "mental landscapes" supports the notion of performance as a strategic tool in raising consciousness, endorsing Ilê Aiyê's mission to create "music directed toward the validation of Brazil's black population." This expanded definition of musical genre informs the analytical framework I created to identify and evaluate specific elements that comprise the bloco afro genre and to assess how those elements interact to promote racial consciousness among Afro-Brazilians.

Rhythm is the primary musical element of bloco afro, the essence of the aforementioned concept of sonic blackness. Ilê Aiyê's signature rhythm was commissioned with an artistic charge to translate Afro-Brazilian experience and identity into a musical form, resulting in the creation of distinctive rhythmic patterns that evoked both African and Brazilian cultural sources. The original samba afro reflected the intersection of candomblé musical references with regional expressions of traditional samba as it originated in black communities in Bahia. The rhythms are performed on a variety of percussion instruments by performance ensembles that can include close to one hundred and fifty participants; I identified the distinct instruments used in bloco afro performance and described some of the aural characteristics of the poly-timbral percussive interactions.

Vocal performance is also a key element of Ilê Aiyê's presentation: a cappella introductions and interludes in the songs support their commitment to acoustic musical expression as antiphonal patterns reflect the participatory nature of African-based cultural practices. In addition, vocal presentations often incorporate melodic references from related cultural sources such as praise songs for specific orixãs or "citations" from diasporic musical expressions that evoke similar "landscapes of the mind." This musical intertextuality reinforces

and helps to expand the sense of collective identification by contributing to a generative musical vocabulary that references Afro-centric concepts and cultural practices. As participants gained knowledge about Afro-Brazilian history and racial politics in the context of a globalized African diaspora (the "African world"), they developed a sense of shared knowledge and political commitment, supporting the growth of Ilê Aiyê's ideological community. The collective achievement of advanced levels of fluency in understanding and expressing the Afro-Brazilian experience enabled increased access to encoded and contextualized meanings embedded in musical and other elements of performance.

The incorporation of rhythms and melodies associated with and familiar to the black Bahian community facilitated access to multiple levels and expressions of musical meaning for carnival participants. I maintain that meanings also became available to the collective group through what I refer to as "shared musical memory," or the communal experience and developed familiarity with musical expressions that contain and produce meanings in the ritualized context of carnival. This idea reflects an emphasis on process: in this case, the processes of producing meaning and of constructing collective racial identity. "Shared musical memory" is itself a concept whose meaning(s) can be presented and interpreted in different ways – memory can be understood to refer to the act of remembering, highlighting the memory of both the music and the sharing, where sharing is the collective experience, the process that opens the liminal space. Memory may also suggest a collective remembering of the black experience through the music – or what would be the an extension of the above: the sharing of both the music and the memory. In both cases, it is clear that there is an integrative relationship between content and process, and it is the interaction between them that simultaneously produces meanings and facilitates consciousness-raising and racial identity construction. Based on the opportunities for increased

communal access to musical meaning, I inferred that the ritualized context contributes to the potential for liminal experiences that reinforce a sense of community in the process of constructing collective identity.

The following section presents musical texts selected from the repertoire to demonstrate how song lyrics communicate key themes related to black identity construction, and to explore how these textual references interact with other performance elements to communicate meaning. Bloco afro's lyrical influences from both candomblé and traditional Bahian samba performance converge as each form privileges orality as a vital component in their respective presentation contexts. Spiritual fulfillment in ritual context requires oral as well as aural (percussion, bells, handclaps, etc.) communication; traditional samba lyrics became central to the carnival practice of thematic enactment. Ilê Aiyê incorporated elements from both sources to create and promote songs that inspire "racial fulfillment" in the context of carnival, and reflect the basic tenets of their socio-cultural agenda.

Songs were selected from three topical categories - racial identity/consciousness, histories of resistance, and diasporic solidarity. In the first category, songs transmit positive images and qualities of blackness to inspire pride and to raise self-esteem – these messages are crucial as part of the oppositional discourse that Ilê Aiyê sought to establish to counter the derogatory characteristics that were historically associated with the black population. In the second, lyrics recounting episodes of black resistance and extolling black heroes serve to educate people regarding Afro-Brazilian and other histories of resistance in the African diaspora. The songs address the invisibility and/or distortion of the black experience in Brazilian history, and bolster Ilê Aiyê's role as a source of legitimate information and cultural authority. In the last

category, diasporic identification and solidarity, lyrics are generally written to convey the annual themes that celebrate specific countries or cultures. Community-based research provides access to information resources for aspiring composers (and students of African culture), and the rehearsals and selection process help to build the repertoire as well as foster a sense of collaboration among participants.

The information shared through these songs is fundamental in positioning Afro-Brazilian identity, culture, and history within a collectively constructed and globally perceived "African landscape." Equally if not more important, however, is the strategy of using song as an organizing tool for raising racial consciousness. In addition to the discursive power of the song texts in articulating Ilê Aiyê's principles and political priorities, performing the songs in preparation for and during carnival provides a vehicle for collective expression and participation, enabling participants to align themselves with the messages conveyed and reinterpret them to external audiences or observers. Communal performances of the songs reiterate and enhance the sense of shared experience, anticipating access to the liminal spaces that transcend the performance event and activate the transformative potential of consciousness-raising and racial affirmation.

After analyzing music and text as principal elements of the bloco afro genre, I propose "performance aesthetics" as an additional and critical component of the genre. Ilê Aiyê composed an embodied, stylized, performance aesthetic that communicates blackness through dress, hairstyle, dance, and iconography, honoring Afro-centric forms of cultural expression as central to racial affirmation. The designation of dark, black skin as requisite to participation in the group established the initial visual element. The function of this policy was less aesthetic

than it was political: the founders of the group were quite clear in their intent to directly challenge the portrayal of Brazil as a "racial democracy" and the inherent contradictions of the social reality. While the decision to exclude whites (and lighter-skinned blacks) did elicit negative responses from some social sectors, the tactic of visibly celebrating blackness by validating dark skin was thoroughly efficient in communicating the essence of Ilê Aiyê's purpose. The inaugural parade of dark skinned Afro-Brazilians dancing and singing about nappy hair and black power intensified the adoption of an "Afro-aesthetic" as a means of individual and collective affiliation with the black world in Brazil.

Aesthetic manifestations of black identity were especially effective in raising racial consciousness in individuals and expanding a self-identified, visibly black community. As Ilê Aiyê prepared for its debut performance in Liberdade, Afro-Brazilians were already demonstrating political and racial solidarity with the civil rights and black cultural movements in the United States and Rastafarianism in Jamaica by adopting associated styles and fashions such as Afro haircuts and braids, dreadlocks, and dashikis. Ilê Aiyê introduced a visually symbolic force that resonated at many levels among blacks in Salvador. The emergence of aesthetic styles that integrated signs and symbols specific to the Brazilian black experience injected a localized sense of racial consciousness and pride in Brazil's African heritage. Again, Ilê Aiyê and their supporters were quite adept in their ability to connect the local to the global; a simple adornment of cowry shells woven into dreadlocked hair could evoke a sense of diasporic connection through a common history of cultural resistance and survival, where the cowry shell serves as a visual metonym for African-derived spiritual practices, specifically candomblé in this particular context. This example also references the cultural significance of hair as an aesthetically political statement and its role in black identity expression, from traditional styles in African cultures that

indicated ethnic, social, age-group and/or other affiliations, to the cultivation of distinct styles by enslaved Africans in Brazil that enabled them to maintain and express their cultural heritage. Given the official attempts to systematically annihilate all vestiges of African culture in Bahia, the transmission and survival of such forms of "aesthetic agency" are a testament to the power of embodied practices as a mechanism for identity construction and expression.

Additional elements and examples of the performance aesthetic include the costumes worn during the parade, the use of symbols and images from candomblé, and the inclusion of dance as an essential performance component. Each of these elements individually expresses a particular connection to the locally constructed African sensibility – together they coalesce into a unified, embodied manifestation of black empowerment through the recovery of African cultural heritage and validation of black identity in Brazil. Ilê Aiyê's performance aesthetic involves the communal enactment of black resistance through cultural expression while simultaneously communicating racial consciousness, positive self-esteem, dignity and pride.

The inclusion of aesthetic elements extends the aural/oral focus of musical analysis by evaluating visual and embodied aspects that factor into an interactive process of communicating and accessing musical meaning through performance. Such a focal extension could enhance integrated approaches to studying musical performance, including the development of analytical frameworks and methods that might, through proper contextualization, reveal African or indigenous aesthetic and cultural values. I elaborate further on these possibilities in the next section, in discussing the process of constructing an interdisciplinary model that emphasizes the interdependent nature of key performance elements and attempts to portray the communicative processes through which they come together to produce musical meaning.

The penultimate chapter chronicles the development of an analytical framework designed to identify and articulate interactive relationships between musical performance and identity construction. To restate my overall objective, I commit to developing a framework that articulates 1) specified elements of musical meaning and performance for Ilê Aiyê, 2) the associative relationships between them, and, 3) how they interact to promote racial identity construction. Identifying Ilê Aiyê as the original and paradigmatic example of the bloco afro genre, the proposed framework is informed by the particular context and stated mission of the cultural institution. Such contextualization contributes to formulating an inclusive approach that recognizes a complex set of integrated factors and acknowledges the interactive processes through which musical meaning is communicated and received. Again, it is critical to appreciate the integrated, dynamic processes that create and communicate musical meaning; it is through these interactive processes that musical performance enables the creation of a transitional space and introduces the possibility of social transformation.

The presentation of the distinct elements of bloco afro performance and their collective role in producing meaning to inspire racial consciousness suggests the potential advantages of interdisciplinary methodologies, or better, a trans-disciplinary approach that might begin to address the multifaceted nature of bloco afro performance and musical meaning. Understandably, analyses of musical performance, musical meaning, and social change have generally remained within the purview of ethnomusicological scholarship. However, it seems only fair to state that ethnomusicology is often perceived as an inherently interdisciplinary discipline, given its hybrid roots as the wayward child of anthropology and musicology. Of course, one of the engaging characteristics of ethnomusicology is the breadth of its scope and the numerous areas of focus claimed by its practitioners; a science that attempts to explain the cross-

cultural phenomenon of music, its relationship to culture, and its potential to affect and reflect

social change would necessarily have to cover extensive areas of inquiry. In its formative years,

ethnomusicology incorporated methods from various disciplines, including cultural

anthropology, linguistics, psychology and history, attesting to its capacity to embrace

interdisciplinary, interdependent methodologies in the pursuit of musical understanding.

     At the same time, the facility with which ethnomusicologists apply external (yet

complementary) methodologies in addressing musical questions might be perceived as exposing

the limitations of analyses bounded by obdurate, disciplinary rigidity. Such a perception has not

yet presented itself as a problem, and is likely to be more of an empty threat as the concept of

"disciplinary rigidity" reveals itself to be oxymoronic in the context of ethnomusicology. This

leads to the question of whether the inverse might be true; does "disciplinary flexibility" imply

the arbitrary dismissal of theories and methods proven to enhance comprehension and exposition

of ethnomusicological questions? As a committed aficionado of the seemingly limitless capacity

of my home discipline for integrated, inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches to complex

musical issues, I offer my rendition of a trans-disciplinary framework based in ethnomusicology

that finds collaborative harmony with the sister disciplines of cultural and performance studies.

     I defer to a description of transdisciplinarity offered by the International Center for

Trans-disciplinary Research:

> [T]rans-disciplinarity complements disciplinary approaches. It occasions the
> emergence of new data and new interactions from out of the encounter between
> disciplines. It offers us a new vision of nature and reality.[28]

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[28]From the Charter of Transdisciplinarity adopted at the First World Congress of Trandisciplinarity, Convento da Arrábida, Portugal, November 2-6, 1994 (excerpted from Article 3).

The idea of disciplinary encounters generating new interactions resonates with the various interactive processes generated by bloco afro performance; it validates an integrated approach to assessing these processes and privileges a multi-referential and multidimensional perspective that complements the multi-vocal nature of transmitting and receiving musical meaning. The suggestion of something new that affects our vision of reality emerging from a space "between" echoes Turner's insistence on liminal (in-between) spaces as a potential site for social transformation.

Chapter 5 begins with an overview of the disciplinary fields in this particular analytic "encounter," highlighting the potential contributions of each toward an integrated, comprehensive approach that effectively articulates specific performance elements and processes that interact in the production of musical meaning. Stuart Hall, leading cultural studies theorist, identifies the cultural field as a site where meaning is negotiated through the enactment of alternative cultural texts and practices. Ilê Aiyê's intensive production of cultural content in various formats – music, poetry, dance, and aesthetic style – was a direct and concrete response to the paucity of relevant, accessible resources that could enhance the growth of racially conscious, politically active communities of proud, black Brazilians. Hall's theories on reception and textual encoding/decoding point to the advantages of a dialogic communication process in generating and interpreting musical meaning; such a process prioritizes interactivity as a necessary component in meaning production, and validates the use of contextualized symbols and coded messages that require a particularized cultural fluency for accessing multiple levels of meaning.

The concept of cultural fluency accentuates the role of cultural knowledge and applied experience in determining the capacity for complex and properly contextualized interpretations of embedded or encoded messages. To illustrate this more clearly, it helps to return to the differentiated levels of "communitas" that comprise Ilê Aiyê's extended institutional family. As discussed, the creation of a bloco that publicly assumed a multifaceted, strategic performance of blackness as its primary mechanism for community empowerment depended greatly on its early members, most of who were already affiliated with candomblé and/or other Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions – capoeira, for example. These original adherents had varying levels of access to the multiple meanings embedded in and expressed through symbolic, embodied cultural performance; those with more experience and greater exposure to Afro-centric cultural practices tended to benefit from a ritualized context that enhanced their ability to both construct and communicate meaning through cultural performance. As Ilê Aiyê transformed itself from a relatively fledgling group of African-identified carnival activists into a vibrant, self-sustaining, community-based institution, the concept of cultural fluency assumed a greater role in the process of negotiating and accessing meaning through performance.

As mentioned earlier, a lexicon of black cultural and political references is continually expanded through the different carnival themes and public education programs. The constancy of its expansion suggests the evolution of a cumulative set of contextual references that help to create and evaluate cultural fluency, setting a process in motion that sustains and extends the course of community building among politically (and culturally) conscious Afro-Brazilians. The cumulative nature of the shared knowledge and experience introduces the potential for emergent *cumulative meanings* to develop over time and through the combined elements of Ilê Aiyê's programmatic strategy. In fact, it seems likely that strategies emphasizing community-based

education through participatory activities inherently create opportunities for sustained involvement as members develop a sense of acceptance and belonging; this is especially significant for people of African descent in societies consumed by racist histories and practices. In addition, the serial nature of the organization's cultural programs enhances the development of a core group of participants, many of whom eventually connect with Ilê Aiyê's administrative structure through leadership training and organizational accountability. Finally, the prominent role of its innovative, interdisciplinary youth education programs (including but not limited to the center-based Escola Mãe Hilda), demonstrates Ilê Aiyê's commitment to and investment in providing opportunities for its members to both access and generate cumulative meanings through the cultural programming made available to them at all stages of participation. The fact that many members were first introduced to Afro-Brazilian culture and racial identity as students in elementary or secondary school attests to the effectiveness of educating young people about their history and cultural heritage as a mechanism for building a sense of collective identity over time; it is not by chance that the bloco reflects a multigenerational community of participants, from its elders to the children – with many participating as extended family units.

In conclusion, I believe this research project succeeded in applying a trans-disciplinary approach to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the primary elements expressed through cultural performance and their relationship to the process of racial identity construction. However, much remains to be studied in this area, especially regarding the subsequent stage(s) of the liminal experience, that is, how individuals and groups access the energy generated by the immediacy of the transient shared experience and channel it toward achieving social transformation. By intentionally creating opportunities for individual and collective constructions of positive racial identity, Ilê Aiyê provides Afro-Brazilians with the resources and tools to build

strong, black communities comprised of proud, conscious Afro-Brazilians committed to furthering the struggle against racism in the global, African diaspora today.

Finally, it is my hope that the analytical framework presented herein might serve as a model for additional research that privileges inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches in understanding the complexities of musical performance, identity construction and social transformation. With regard to performance analysis functioning as a method of identifying processes of identity construction, the use of approaches that prioritize elements related to the communicative function of the performance, the role and location of the performer(s), textual analysis of both symbols and form (including the role of embodiment in the 'enactment of text') and the level of audience interaction can be combined to create frameworks through which to identify relevant aspects of identity construction processes and how they are made manifest in cultural performance. The contemporary theories and methodologies of cultural and performance studies can be combined with ethnomusicology (and other disciplines) in search of answers to the questions as well as the identification of new inquiries that we as ethnomusicologists face in our quest to understand what music can teach us about human behavior, social change and transformative processes.

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