made by Dr. W. E. Farrison as a doctoral dissertation at Ohio State University. This was a descriptive study made without reference to African survivals. Reference should be made also to the morphological and syntactical study of Haitian Créole, with special attention to African survivals, by Mlle. Suzanne Sylvain, a native of Haiti; she was at a disadvantage, however, in that she relied almost wholly on African grammars and dictionaries for her African material and made little or no use of African informants.

From my reading of Mendonça’s study of the Portuguese of Brazil and some of Dr. Arthur Ramos’ works, it appears that considerable emphasis is being placed at present on African linguistic survivals in Brazil. This is most encouraging, because there is apparently no more fertile source for the study of African survivals in the New World than that region.

In closing, may I call attention to an important fact which I hope has become obvious during the reading of this paper; namely, that for making any worthwhile study of linguistic survivals the linguist needs the most generous cooperation of the historian and the ethnologist, while they, in turn, can use with profit the findings of the linguist.

**DISCUSSION**

**MR. BASCOM:** I may comment on your reference to the dictionary of Yoruba that you state is preferable to Crowther’s—the one published by the C.M.S. Bookshop. It is Crowther’s work, brought up to date. It seems to be smaller, but it is actually in two volumes, one English-Yoruba and the other Yoruba-English.

**DR. COBB:** Can you explain the type of speech often described as the Charleston accent?

**MR. TURNER:** It is a kind of combination of Gullah Negro speech, and that of the Scotch and Irish and other white groups that settled in that area. The speech of the white people in Charleston is much like that of the Charleston Negroes, and while both speak differently from the Negroes on the islands, they have all been influenced by the speech of the Negroes on the islands.

**MR. STERLING BROWN:** Why is the term Geechee used more than Gullah to denote this peculiar type of Negro speech?
Mr. Turner: Many think that the designation comes from the name of the Ogeechee river. I think this name is an Indian word, but there is an African tribe called the Ogeechee in Liberia, and I have found a great many words from that area in this region of the United States. I suspect that it is the name of this African tribe that has been carried over.

Mr. Sterling Brown: Linguistically, the Charleston area is one where a consistent speech form is found. Would not Gullah serve to designate the entire area?

Mr. Turner: As far as I can see, there is no difference between Geechee and Gullah. In Georgia, the old people speak just as the old people in South Carolina do.

Mr. Bunche: I was curious about your statement that it could be taken for granted that in Brazil African survivals are present in the language, and I wondered why you made that assumption.

Mr. Turner: It appears that African survivals are much more numerous there than in the United States.

Mr. Bunche: Do you assume, then, that because of this there would be more consciousness of such survivals?

Mr. Turner: If the point were made in those terms, I would not be inclined to contradict it.

Mr. Herskovits: Yet does that always follow? In Haiti, for example, a tremendous number of African survivals are to be found—I should say that next to Guiana more African survivals exist in the culture of the Haitian peasant than anywhere else in the New World, including Brazil and Cuba. Yet you find that the Haitian work Mr. Pattee referred to, La Philologie créole, by Jules Faine, is a study whose underlying assumptions are exactly analogous to those in the work of Guy Johnson and Reed Smith and all the others mentioned by Dr. Turner. That is, Jules Faine purports to show that Haitian Créole is a derivative of Norman French, just as these students assume Gullah is derived from earlier English dialects. So it does not necessarily follow that just because survivals are present, they will be taken for granted. I should be interested to learn what Mr. Berrien has to say as to the extent this matter of African survivals is taken for granted in Brazil, especially as concerns the language.
MR. BERRIEN: I believe that Mendonça and other students feel that there are very definite African survivals in vocabulary, in phonetics and in intonation; and I think it would be possible to find all these in non-linguistic aspects of Brazilian life. Such people as Freyre and Dr. Ramos speak of survivals in cooking, in modes of walking, and in any number of other elements in everyday behavior. Freyre points out that though the African survivals are present, they are so well integrated into Brazilian life that they are not to be looked upon as African, but are a part of the total culture which he calls "Brazilidad."

MR. TURNER: An interesting situation in Georgia may be mentioned. All the children have nicknames, and I find that 95 percent of these are African words. Such nicknames are used in their homes and among their associates, but when they go to school they are not allowed to use them, since the teacher, a lady from Charleston, refuses to record those names. When they write to friends off the island they use their English names, but as soon as they return home they use African names. If a field-worker doesn't come into contact with these people in their homes, he will assume, just as some of the writers I mentioned have assumed, that no African names are used, but only English ones.

MR. PUCKETT: Do these African words seem to be used more commonly in certain types of group activities than others? Do you find African words especially connected with religion and agriculture, or the family?

MR. TURNER: The largest number would be the proper names, and only a few of these words are used in any other connection. Names of birds and animals would yield the next largest group of African terms. There are a good many religious words, but not as many as for birds and animals and plants. One also finds a group of words that are never used in daily conversation, but only in songs and stories. In their folk tales, the Gullah Negroes sometimes use whole African phrases, though sometimes these phrases will be employed in English translation. But such words, again, are not used in daily conversation. There is, however, a considerable number of African words that figure in everyday usage. For instance, the Kongo word for salt; the word "ninnie," mean-
ing female breast, and the Umbundu word for elephant, “jumba” for the female, and “jumbo” for the male. My list of African words used by the Gullahs comes to approximately five thousand items.

**Mr. Puckett:** Is there much use of secret names? I was wondering if the use of the nicknames indicated a desire to hide the identity of the real names.

**Mr. Turner:** They do not consider them secret.

**Mr. Johnson:** To what extent would you say, Dr. Turner, that any of these words have trickled into the common speech of other Negroes or of whites?

**Mr. Turner:** I have not made a study of speech in other areas of the South, but I should think that a great many such words would be found elsewhere; certainly a great many more than we know about now.

**Mr. Bunche:** I was wondering if in attempting to measure the tenacity of Africanisms it is possible to get any comparative data. You find, for example, the retention of certain linguistic forms among the Gullah. How quickly are they lost when people from the sea islands move inland?

**Mr. Turner:** The areas further inland haven’t been studied; I have only been able to work in the coastal region, especially in the Sea Islands.

**Mr. Berrien:** Did I understand you to say that a great number of the terms which are African survivals are used by persons who themselves don’t understand their meaning?

**Mr. Turner:** These are mainly songs and folk tales.

**Mr. Berrien:** The same thing is true in Antillean folk tales and songs. Such a specialist in Afro-Antillean customs as Mme. Eusebia Cosme, the Cuban *diseuse*, does not know the meaning of certain terms in her songs.

**Mr. Turner:** I have recorded songs of three or four stanzas which these Gullah Negroes sing in good Mende or Vai. But they don’t know the meaning of the words they use.

**Mr. Herskovits:** I should like at this point to introduce a few general comments on method which may be germane to this and various other questions raised in our discussions.
I have been concerned for some years with the study of African survivals in the New World, and I have been increasingly struck with the importance of a matter Mr. Turner brought up at the very outset of his remarks. From the point of view of scientific method there is a great deal to be desired in the approach of those who, especially in the United States, have written on the problem of African elements in Negro behavior. As Mr. Turner showed, linguists write about African survivals in language without the faintest knowledge of the linguistic background of the Negroes whose speech they are discussing, nor is there any evidence that they attempt to fill in such background materials.

Mr. Turner was speaking principally of vocabulary and phonetics, but the same thing is true in the field of grammar. Mrs. Herskovits and I have demonstrated, in our book, *Suriname Folklore*, not only that the identical grammatical patterns run through all the pidgin English dialects of West Africa that we have been able to record or find anything about and the taktaki of Dutch Guiana, but that the same constructions mark as well the Negro-English of Trinidad, Jamaica, and the English-speaking Antilles in general. The speech of the Gullahs, which those who deny its African elements may study in recorded texts, likewise contains many of these grammatical and idiomatic forms, which are comparable to literal translations of phrases from certain West African languages which we collected while in that area.

These same constructions are found also in Negro-French, as recorded in Martinique and Guadeloupe, in Haiti, and in Louisiana; while insofar as it has been possible to get material bearing on the *papamiento* dialect of Curacao, a form of Negro-Spanish, the same is true. These are not chance correspondences, nor may we assume that they represent the unsuccessful efforts of the slaves to imitate properly the speech of their masters. Yet the students of linguistics Mr. Turner has named, or such a one as Cleanth Brooks, whose name should be added to the list, quite ignore the possible existence of African backgrounds.

A similar situation obtains in the field of music. The question of the African provenience of American Negro music is far more debated than studied. So far as I know, none of the people who
has written about it knows the idiom of historically relevant African musical styles. Those who edited the early collections of slave songs from the Sea Islands, or similar series, had a sentimental interest in the abolitionist tradition which led them to attribute the source of this music to the anguish of the slave. Later, in an equally uncritical manner, the idea that Negro songs were predominantly African was developed by Krehbiel in his *Afro-American Folk-Songs*. Krehbiel had heard some Africans sing at the Field Columbian Exposition and knew something of New Orleans Negro songs, but he had engaged in no systematic research.

Then E. M. von Hornbostel, an outstanding German musicologist, heard Negroes singing at Hampton; and on the basis of that experience he drew conclusions that, I think, have had more influence than anything else in determining present-day views on origins. In reviewing a number of books of Negro songs he singled out those African traits which he believed had carried over into the spirituals as we know them. Rhythm is fundamental in African music, and the Negroes therefore found the European “Scotch snap” congenial. Hence one finds syncopation in American Negro songs. The tendency to sing in thirds was believed by Hornbostel to be entirely European. Yet among the Ashanti of the Gold Coast I found the use of thirds in almost every song I recorded. I have records where, for example, one singer strikes a wrong note and the others break off with a laugh; but they start again with the correct harmony. These points are sufficient to show Hornbostel’s position.

Hornbostel knew comparative musical styles—his difficulty was essentially that his knowledge of African music did not include the crucial types of songs from the relevant tribes. But Guy Johnson, Newman White, George Pullen Jackson, and others who have purported to study the derivations of American Negro songs, have no acquaintance at all with African musical styles, to say nothing of Negro music outside the United States.

The matter is even more serious when we consider studies in some other fields of culture. In many of the books which discuss the backgrounds of Negro culture in the United States, it is taken
for granted, where it is not positively stated, that the Negro has lost all traces of his aboriginal past. Books such as those of Dowd, or Tillinghast, or Weatherford, are still widely used; yet none of these writers had any first-hand contact with the cultures of Africa, nor, what is worse, did they approach critically those outmoded and unreliable sources they used. This being the state of affairs, Mr. Turner's discussion is no less than revolutionary. For, with adequate phonetic training, he has actually gone to African languages in the study of linguistic survivals in this country!

Again, there is the view, exemplified in Reuter's revised edition of his book, *The American Race Problem*, that African backgrounds cannot be profitably studied because valid source materials are not at hand. Yet this is far from true, for the data available from West Africa are much better than is ordinarily supposed. One can point to Rattray's volumes on Ashanti; or to the works of Meek on Ibo law and custom, and on the cultures of the tribes of Northern Nigeria, which are rarely mentioned. The work of the French group is also of high standard. Labouret's many studies are most important, while the groups from the Musée de l'Homme, working on the Dogon, have published some excellent papers. The method of presenting dance materials used in *Masques Dogon*, a memoir of the Institute of Ethnology in Paris, opens an entirely new approach. The files of the journal *Africa*, in which the reports of such men as Nadel and Fortes and others who have done field-work in West Africa have appeared, must not be forgotten. On the other hand, we lack information from the Congo, where little acceptable work has been done in terms of modern ethnological knowledge. I hope some day it will be possible to take advantage of the fact that one of our most competent anthropologists, Professor Olbrechts of Brussels, is in a strategic position to carry on and direct research there.

In studying African survivals in the New World we must, of course, exercise great caution at every step. In recognizing the fact that Negroes in this country are descended from Africans whose culture could not immediately be entirely forgotten, we must not overlook the strong influences brought to bear on those people and their descendants by the ways and institutions of the New World. Yet, in taking account of past and present New
World influences we should not assume that their historic African past has completely ceased to function in their lives.

Mr. Frazier: I have not found anyone who could show any evidence of survival of African social organization in this country. I may cite a concrete case. You will recall that in reviewing my book, *The Negro Family in the United States*, in *The Nation*, you said the description I gave of the reunion of a Negro family group could, with the change of a few words, be regarded as a description of a West African institution. But it also happens to be equally adequate as a description of a Pennsylvania Dutch family reunion. What are we to do in a case like that? Are we to say it is African?

Mr. Herskovits: Methodologically, it seems to me that if in studying a family whose ancestry in part, at least, came from Africa I found that something they do resembles a very deep-seated African custom, I should not look to Pennsylvania Dutch folk, with whom this family had not been in contact, for an explanation of the origin of such a custom. I may be wrong, but this seems to be elementary.

Mr. Frazier: But where did the Pennsylvania Dutch get their custom that resembles the one I described? Did they get it from Africa, too?

Mr. Herskovits: May I ask if the methodological point at issue is this: is it maintained that if we find anything done by Negroes in this country that resembles anything done in Europe, we must therefore conclude that the Negroes' behavior is derived from the European customs, the inference then being that the traditions of their African ancestors were not strong enough to stand against the impact of European ways?

Mr. Frazier: No, I wouldn't say that, but I believe it should be the aim of the scholar to establish an unmistakable historical connection between the African background and the present behavior of Negroes, rather than to rely on *a priori* arguments.

Mr. Herskovits: We will be in agreement, if you will add to your statement of principle that neither should the scholar deny any such connection on *a priori* grounds.

Mr. Frazier: Of course not.

Mr. Bunche: Did I interpret correctly the statement of methodology that was made—I hope I didn't—that if, in a study of social institutions among Negroes in this country a resemblance

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to African institutions is shown, then the presumption favors African survival?

Mr. Herskovits: I would say if you found traits of American Negro behavior which resembled deep-seated African patterns and certain European customs as well, a European influence is not necessarily indicated.

Mr. Bunche: But would not the task of the social investigator be to attempt to trace the thread with the fullest possible documentation, rather than to jump from an existing trait or institution back to Africa? In general the characteristics of our Negro culture are much more likely to be indigenous to America than to Africa. And unless the thread of contact and correspondence could be carried all the way back, would we not have to regard any assumption of causal relationship to Africa as invalid?

Mr. Herskovits: I agree with you in principle. Naturally, Negroes have experienced different degrees of acculturation over all the New World. Africanisms in the United States are many fewer in number and intensity than in Haiti or Guiana, or even in Brazil or Cuba. But even in Brazil, Cuba or Haiti, some persons are acculturated to European patterns to a far greater degree than others. The matter depends upon the locale, on the group, on the particular historical situation involved. From the point of view of method, it would be as unfortunate if, in discussing the problem of African linguistic survivals, Mr. Turner were to say that Gullah is an African language—as he would not do—as it is for others to claim that Gullah speech is only of English derivation.

Mr. Johnson: Returning to the question of African sources and American music, I don't recall that Herzog, who has studied African and American Negro music and is both a musician and an ethnomusicologist, was mentioned.

Mr. Herskovits: Herzog worked among the Jabo of Liberia, who are somewhat removed from the area from which most of the slaves were brought to the New World. His special interest was the relationship of the tones in the language to the horn calls and the drum calls.

Mr. Johnson: He has given some attention to their songs and comes to about the same conclusion as Von Hornbostel.
Mr. Herskovits: I might mention the conclusions reached by Dr. M. Kolinski, who after intensive analysis of a large collection of recordings made in West Africa was able to demonstrate specific correspondences between specific spirituals and specific West African songs. If I could play for you records of songs from various West African folk, and then songs from Brazil, Trinidad, Jamaica, Haiti, and the United States, I don’t think there would be much question in your minds as to the single musical pattern represented.

Mr. Johnson: In connection with your statement that the Jabo inhabit a region of West Africa from which not many of the slaves came, I wonder, as I remember Mr. Turner's long list of African words in Gullah speech, if we will not have to revise to some extent our notions of the areas of Africa from which the slaves were brought.

Mr. Herskovits: Undoubtedly.

Mr. Apteker: Slaves were brought to America from the eastern coast of Africa, too, weren’t they?

Mr. Herskovits: According to the records abstracted by Miss Donnan, only about two shiploads, numbering some thousand individuals, which, of course, is a negligible proportion.

Mr. Apteker: Frederick Bancroft, I think, offers an estimate citing the fact that there were some slaves who came from East Africa. In any event, this would seem to be a subject that would stand investigation.

Mr. Herskovits: Research into the problem of provenience of the Negroes is badly needed, because the hypothesis that the Negroes come from all over the continent is widely accepted. Work that some of us have done in recent years, however, does seem to indicate a much more restricted area from which the slaves came, and the economics of the situation would seem to point the same conclusion, there being no reason why slaves should be shipped all the way from East Africa to the New World when a very good market existed near at hand in Arabia.

Mr. Harris: Wouldn’t that depend largely upon the political factors within the continent? A considerable number of slaves may have found their way to the West from the East through
conquest, and I think I can show you sources in which references are made to that sort of interchange.

Mr. Herskovits: I should deem it unlikely in view of the distances to be traversed.

Mr. Harris: Another point I should like to raise concerns the degree to which the establishment in West Africa of trading posts in the sixteenth century brought about an association of European and African culture. As an economist, I should wonder about the effect of the change in commercial relations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Because it would be difficult to have dealings in slaves without some sort of intercourse resulting between the people who sold them and the people who bought them.

Mr. Wish: Those trading posts were quite restricted as to their location.

Mr. Harris: But whether or not the market was far-flung, the exchange in slaves must necessarily have involved some exchange of ideas.

Mr. Herskovits: You mean that a relatively small number of Europeans could have really influenced the culture of some millions of Africans?

Mr. Harris: I merely raised the question of the degree to which European influence penetrated Africa by reason of trade over a period of 250 years.

Mr. Herskovits: Isn’t the fundamental point the need in our research to take all possibilities into account? We recognize the complexity of the problem, but if, in trying to explain what we find at the present time in American Negro behavior, we close our eyes to the possibility of some African survivals, no matter how tenuous the form, are we not committing a methodological fault? It seems to me that when we find something in Negro behavior that deviates from the general pattern of American life, we should look elsewhere for a possible explanation, which may be historically substantiated. When among German-Americans we find deviants in behavior that resemble customs existing in Germany, we have no hesitation in asking whether this behavior may not be a survival of German custom. The only difference in the case of Africanisms is that the methodological difficulties in our way are so much greater. That is one reason the West Indies and South America
are so important in our research, for here we can utilize the series of diminishing intensities of Africanisms to be found, which, when carefully used, lead to the recognition of relationships in a manner otherwise impossible to achieve when one goes directly from the United States to Africa.

MR. FRAZIER: I think there is a mistaken notion that Negro scholars do not wish to recognize Africanisms in American Negro behavior. I do not think that is true; an equally good case could be made out for the opposite point of view. That is, race-conscious Negroes have shown, I think on the whole a greater disposition to attribute things to African culture than have whites.

MR. STERLING BROWN: I was much struck by the comment on the Negro music, and I recognize the justice of it. For instance, race-conscious Negroes claim for the spirituals an African background; they took “noble” spirituals and found “noble” African savages who were singing them. On the other hand, we find men like Jackson trying to understand Negro music from the written score alone, overlooking the fact that music, as certain authorities are now pointing out, cannot be written down in all its setting. For instance, boogy-woogy piano playing taken down on Thursday will be an entirely different thing from the music taken down on Friday, because the man is feeling different. I have an instance of the boogy-woogy who taught a white musician his music; but this white man was astonished to hear, two days later, the boogy-woogy player playing the same piece in an entirely different manner. The man said, “You didn’t teach me that.”

The pianist said, “When did I teach you?”
He said, “Thursday night.”
The first man said, “This is Saturday.”
The problem is also complicated by the introduction of the phonograph into Africa, isn’t it? I understand Dr. Bunche took “Flat Foot Floogie” and left it with one of his Kikuyu friends.

MR. HERSKOVITS: Certainly the problem is not an easy one. It must be studied from all points of view. What Mr. Frazier says is perfectly true; we must look for correspondences all along the line, and I suspect the answer to our problem is going to be cast in terms of the varying degrees of dilution in which African elements will be found in various parts of the New World.

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