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## Title

**A Semiotic Study of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's Lyrics**

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## ***Dedication***

*I dedicate this work to my beloved parents,*

*My brother Riad and sisters Dania and Anissa,*

*My grandparents, my uncles and especially my aunts who were a source of  
courage and support,*

*To all the rest of my family.*

*To my best friends Ismail KHALDI and Yani ICHIR who have always been by  
my side, to my dear Friend Nassim MERKAL*

*To my classmate Tinhinane SEDJANE who helped me achieve this work.*

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## **Abstract**

*The present work consists in establishing a semiotic study of a set of lyrics sung by two female singers from two different cultural environments. The two singers are Billie Holiday, an American Blues singer, and Hnifa, an Algerian Kabyle singer. This paper investigates the impact of their respective cultures on their lives and careers. Hence, the study addresses three main objectives. The research aims first to identify the most important cultural elements which affected the two singers' lives and careers. The second objective consists in discovering the way Billie Holiday and Hnifa expressed themselves through their songs. As for the third objective, it aims to discover whether the two singers reacted similarly facing the same situations, by taking into consideration the difference of their cultures. To achieve these objectives, I have selected twenty song lyrics from each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's repertoire, and selected three themes to be studied that are related to love, gender and social relationships. Additionally, to strengthen this research I resort to two reliable sources of information consisting of books and films about the two singers' lives and careers. Moreover, the study is based on Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic theory of sign to unveil the hidden meanings of the song lyrics. The study is qualitative; since it relies on a qualitative interpretation of the song lyrics and also adopts Schein's diagram to better explain the results. The findings of the study suggest that culture influences Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives and careers. Thus, it was found that culture is manifested through the two singers' song's lyrics and that it had a dramatic impact on their lives and careers. The singers used socially marked poetry to express the hardness of their wrecked lives. However, the difference in the cultures of the two artists incited them to react differently towards some common events. Ultimately, the research provides further recommendations to potential students interested in the same theme.*

**Key terms:** *Semiotics, Billie Holiday, Hnifa, Song Lyrics, Culture, Society.*

## **List of Abbreviations**

**QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis

**Hp:** Hypothesis

## Figures

**Figure 1:** The levels of Culture and their Interaction (Minor adaptation of Schein 1984: 4)..14

## List of Tables

<b>Table (1):</b> The Number of Songs Selected for Each Theme from Billie Holiday’s Repertoire.....	31
<b>Table (2):</b> The Number of Songs Selected for Each Theme from Hnifa’s Repertoire .....	32
<b>Table (3):</b> Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Love’ .....	32
<b>Table (4):</b> Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Love’ .....	34
<b>Table (5):</b> Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Love and Gender’.....	36
<b>Table (6):</b> Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Love and Gender’.....	38
<b>Table (7):</b> Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Song Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’ .....	40
<b>Table (8):</b> Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’ .....	41
<b>Table (9):</b> Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Social Relationships’ .....	42
<b>Table (10):</b> Analysis of Hnifa’s Song Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Social Relationships’ .....	43

## **Table of Contents**

Dedication .....	i
Acknowledgements .....	ii
Abstract .....	iii
List of Abbreviations.....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
List of Tables.....	vi
Table of Contents .....	vii

## **General Introduction**

• Statement of the Problem .....	1
• Aims and Significance .....	3
• The Research Questions and hypothesis .....	4
• Research Methodology.....	5
• Structure of the Dissertation .....	5

## **Chapter One: Review of the Literature**

Introduction.....	7
1.1. Semiotics .....	7
1.1.1. Introduction to Semiotics.....	7
1.1.2. The Triadic Semiotic Theory of Peirce .....	9
1.1.2.1. Modes of Being.....	10
1.1.2.2. The Peircean Sign .....	11
1.2. Culture and Society .....	12
1.2.1. Definition of Culture .....	12
1.2.2. Culture and Society .....	12
1.2.3. Culture Manifestation.....	13
1.2.3.1. Layers of Depth.....	13
1.2.3.2. Cultural Artefacts .....	14
1.3. Music as a Cultural Artifact .....	15
1.3.1. Definition of Music .....	16
1.3.2. Musical Genres .....	18
1.3.2.1. Folk Music .....	19
a. Jazz .....	20
b. Traditional Kabyle Music .....	21

Conclusion .....	23
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## **Chapter Two: Research Design**

Introduction .....	24
2.1. Description of the Participants .....	24
2.1.1. Biographies .....	24
a. <i>Billie Holiday</i> .....	24
b. <i>Hnifa</i> .....	26
2.2. Data Collection Procedure .....	28
2.2.1. Limitation of Data Collection Procedures.....	28
2.3. Procedures of Data Analysis .....	29
2.3.1. Qualitative Content Analysis .....	29
2.3.2. Charles Sanders Peirce’s Triadic Theory of Sign .....	30
Conclusion .....	30

## **Chapter Three: Presentation of the Findings**

Introduction .....	31
3.1. The Results.....	31
3.2. Textual Analysis of the Songs Lyrics. ....	32
• The theme of ‘Love’ .....	32
• The themes of ‘Love and Gender’ .....	36
• The themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’ .....	40
• The Theme of ‘Social Relationships’ .....	42
Conclusion .....	44

## **Chapter Four: Discussion of the Findings**

Introduction .....	45
4.1. Discussion of the Textual Analysis .....	45
• The Theme of ‘Love’ .....	46
• The Themes of ‘Love and Gender’ .....	49
• The Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’ .....	53
• The Theme of ‘Social Relationships’ .....	54
4.2. The Impact of Culture on Billie Holiday and Hnifa’s Lives and Careers.....	56
Conclusion .....	59
General Conclusion.....	60
Bibliography.....	62

## **Appendices**

<b>Appendix A:</b> Pictures of Billie Holiday and Hnifa.....	69
<b>Appendix B:</b> Table of the Songs under Study.....	71
<b>Appendix C:</b> Sample from the Songs Lyrics.....	72

# *General Introduction*

## **Statement of the Problem**

Culture can be defined in many different ways. In fact, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) identified no less than 164 different definitions of culture as early as 1952; still, one can only reckon that culture remains an important social phenomenon. Despite the various perceptions of culture, there is an agreement that it is above all, a manifestation of human behavior which undeniably influences our way of conduct, our beliefs, and our way of thinking. However, in order to identify how this influence is manifested, one has first to determine through which artefacts culture can be revealed.

Many studies have demonstrated that culture comprises a huge variety of elements that can be shared by members of a social group. By analyzing culture, scholars like Edgar Shein (1984) have distinguished three layers at which culture manifests itself. The first layer is the observable artifacts; it includes physical items that can be seen, heard, smelt, touched, and even felt. Values is the second layer through which culture is manifested, unlike the observable artifacts, the values are inferred within the behaviors of social members. The third and last layer is the basic underlying assumptions that are completely invisible and unconscious thoughts conveyed by behaviors.

In this research, “*lyrics*” have been selected as a specific element among the observable artifacts belonging to the first layer, through which culture is embodied as an attempt to discover how culture influences our beliefs, thoughts, and behaviors. As defined in Cambridge’s online dictionary (2019), a lyric is a short poem that expresses the personal emotions of the person who wrote it. Lyrical poetry has the form and the musical quality of a song. Thus, the combination of music and poems are used by artists to express and share their feelings, thoughts, views, and attitudes towards life.

Music has always been one of the most spread arts, cultural activity, and the most used means of expressing a thought mixed with poetical language. The art of music that originally was the activity of tone and rhythm production, and the creation of harmonious sound composition (instrumental) uses the means of poetry to transmit the ideas (Mahardika, 2018:2). In addition to that, being eager to know and explore how and what perception a social group has toward life and the real world, initiates individuals to listen to the music of this particular social group. Music transmits many messages in relation to the nature and the

attitudes of a given society, and this is what is meant by Plato's quotation (around 347 B.C) that states that, if one wants to know a community, he has to listen to their music.

In the line with Plato's recommendation, our research aims to study a set of lyrics by two female singers from two different cultures. The study consists in an analysis of some lyrics sung by these two artists to examine how their cultural environment had a direct impact on the management of their personal lives, and to discover to which extent culture affects people's way of thinking and behavior. The study sheds light on how cultural values influence the social status of "a singer" mainly of "a female singer" in both American and Algerian cultures, by considering how can lyrics reflect the life paths of two artists who grew up in two different countries, and lived under two different environments and cultures. These artists are the two singers: Hnifa, the Algerian artist who sings in Kabyle, and Billy Holliday, the American black artist who sings in English.

Twenty lyrics have been randomly chosen from the musical repertoire of the two singers from which three major themes have been selected with the purpose of reveal some effects that the singers' different cultures had on their respective lives. The selected themes are: *love*, *gender* and *social relationships (family)*. The aim is to discover the different ways in which each culture impacts these elements of life.

In order to proceed to the depiction of this relationship between culture and the personal lives of the artists, we will adopt a semiotic analysis of the lyrics. Still, because words used in song lyrics have ambiguous properties, an appropriate way to find the meaning of the songs is to use a semiotic method which is the field of science that studies the sign system (Maudy and Mryna 2020). Therefore it is worth mentioning that our research will basically rely on Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of Semiotics by referring to his *Selected Philosophical Writings* (1998), which accounts for the dynamic cooperation between the sign, the object and its interpretant. Let it be clear from the onset that in our research, the sign corresponds to the lyrics, the object of the sign purports to the different feelings of misery and distress characterizing the personal lives of the two artists, and the interpretant refers to the determinant elements of the culture in which the artists were bred, and which had a considerable impact on their inevitable wretchedness. Songs have hidden meanings that will hopefully be revealed through a semiotic study of the Peircian sign.

While reviewing the literature about the theme under study, two valuable works have been of great help. The first work considered is Mahardika Reza Lesmana's thesis (2018) entitled *"love in Beatles' selected song lyrics"*, which studied the representation and the interpretation of "love" in the Beatles' songs. The author tackled the issue of the poetic signs of love and their meaning using Riffaterre's (1978) theory of semiotics, which focuses on the process of giving meaning to literary work; here the analysis is based on Saussure's dyadic theory of sign. The second work to be mentioned is a semiotic analysis which involves the consideration of the three entities of a sign in a Peircean fashion, namely the index, icon, and symbol in an Indonesian song called *"Ikat Aku Di Tulang Belikatmu"* sang by a young singer named Sal Priadi. This research was conducted by Maudy Ariana Kemuning and Mryna Nur Sakinah (2020) who relied on the Peircean theory of sign; object trichotomy (index, icon, and symbol) for the interpretation of the meaning of the song.

Our study will also make use of the same trichotomy to examine the content and decipher the hidden meanings of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's songs lyrics.

### **Aims and Significance**

We consider that our research is authentic and original because to our present state of knowledge, no other research has ever dealt with the study of two female artists involving a black American blues singer and an Algerian popular singer. Therefore, we intend to focus our attention on the semiotic aspects of the lyrics of both Hnifa, and Billie Holliday to determine the strong connection between the lyrics of a song, the particular culture in which the artists were bred in relation to specific personal events which affected them, and the knowledge the researcher has about the lives of the two singers, by following the theoretical framework offered by the triadic semiotic theory of the sign.

Artistic creations arouse people's curiosity to understand them. This leads us to seek to the most suitable way to get the answers to our questions. Our study focuses on the influence of culture on human behavior, thoughts, and attitudes. This is a fertile area to experience, and this research aims to discover the hidden facets of the Kabyle and the American culture that have deeply impacted the lives of the mentioned artists. In this case, lyrics used as a cultural artifact, are to be considered as the entrance gate (the sign) to the discovery of the cultural

universe (the object) which served as an inspiring background for the artists but which also had a dramatic impact on their personal lives ( the interpretant).

As mentioned previously, the investigation will involve two female singers, two great singers from two different cultures who lived nearly in the same period of time, but in two different countries involving two different cultural environments; Billie Holliday (1915-1959), an African American Blues and Jazz singer, and Hnifa (1924-1981), an Algerian Kabyle popular singer.

This study is a qualitative study as it consists in a semiotic analysis of twenty song lyrics (ten for each singer) to shed light on how some important aspects of the respective cultures of the singers, filter through their lyrics, and which actually caused the two singers to lead a wrecked life. The themes to be studied relate to *gender, love and social relationships (family)*. To strengthen this research some reliable sources of information are used, consisting in films and books written about the two singers' lives and careers. The first book "*Lady Sings the Blues*" (1956), is an autobiography on Billie Holliday's life and career. The book has been adapted to a film which bears the same name as the book. The second book is the one written by a Kabyle journalist Rachid Hammoudi (2008) about Hnifa's live, and just like Billie Holliday's book, this one has been adapted by Ramdane Iftini and Sami Allam into a documentary film called "*Hnifa, Une Vie Brulée*" (Hnifa, A Burnt Life).

## **The Research questions and Hypothesis**

As previously mentioned, this study seeks to highlight how song lyrics illustrate the impact of culture on the lives and careers of two feminine artists, and to reach this objective, the following research questions are raised:

1. What were the important cultural elements which affected the lives and careers of Billie Holliday in America, and Hnifa in Algeria?
2. How did the two singers express themselves through their lyrics?
3. Did Hnifa and Billie Holliday react similarly when confronted to the same situations?

To potentially answer the questions, the following hypotheses are posited:

Hp 1: The impact of culture on the singers' lives and careers was dramatic.

Hp 2: The two singers used socially marked poetry to express the hardness of their wrecked lives.

Hp3: Hnifa and Billie Holliday reacted similarly when confronted to the same situations.

## **Research Methodology**

Our work will consist in a semiotic analysis of twenty song lyrics selected from the two singers' repertoire, ten lyrics for each singer. The corpus chosen is taken from web-sites, some extracted from songs broadcasted on YouTube. Hnifa's songs have been personally translated with the help of a teacher into the English language to be studied. Thus, the study will be a corpus based analysis as the lyrics will be examined according to a Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) through the lenses provided by the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce.

This theoretical framework is based on the triadic dynamic relationship between the representamen (lyrics), the object of the sign (the specific cultural values and events which inspired the lyrics), and the interpretant (our understanding of the lyrics and the context of their production, together with the singer's lives and perceptions of the world). The aim of this study is to sort out the main cultural factors that impacted the artist's lives, taking into consideration the pragmatic conception of C.S. Peirce's theory of semiotics which states that the context has to be taken into consideration while studying signs.

## **Structure of the Dissertation**

The present dissertation follows the traditional simple structure known as IMRAD framework. Thus, this framework includes as a first part a "General Introduction" considered as our research space that gives the reader an insight about the content and the topic of the work. It comprises the statement of the problem, the general aim and significance of the study, the research questions and the hypothesis, the research methodology, and as last the structure of the dissertation. The second part of this dissertation is entitled "The Review of Literature". It aims to introduce not only the theoretical framework to be used in the investigation but also to review the previous researches conducted on the field of the research topic and the particular environment where the two singers evolved. The next chapter is "Research Design and Methodology"; it describes the procedure that has been followed in gathering and analyzing the data of this research. "Presentation of the Findings" is the third chapter to be mentioned where the findings are exposed and then discussed in the next

chapter, the fourth one, called “Discussion of the Findings”. The last part of this dissertation is the “General Conclusion” that intent to provide answers to the research questions and check the validity of the suggested hypothesis. Furthermore this last part opens a space for further investigations in the same area of research.

*Chapter One*  
*Review of the Literature*

## **Introduction**

This chapter intends to provide a detailed review of the literature related to our research consisting in a semiotic study of Billy Holiday, and Hnifa's lyrics. The review comprises an introduction to the field of semiotics, definitions of the major concepts involved in the study, mainly those involving the tight relationships between culture and society, and an account for the major musical features of the musical styles used by the two singers. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section sheds light on the theoretical framework of the study that presents the Peircean theory of the Semiotic Sign. It attends to document the Triadic Semiotic Peircean Sign. The second section deals with the concept of culture in relation to society, and gives a definition of culture then brings out a historical overview of the inter influence of culture and society. As for the Third section, it introduces the main notions of the musical styles comprising definitions of music, and a historical overview of Jazz and traditional Kabyle music that our research is concerned with.

### **1.1. Semiotics**

#### **1.1.1. Introduction to Semiotics**

The Cambridge dictionary (2019) defines semiotics as the study of signs and symbols, their meaning and their use. This broad definition may not be sufficient for a global understanding of the semiotic field, and thus a further documentation is needed for the comprehension of what is actually meant first by semiotics then by signs and their objects.

Daniel Chandler (2007) provides a basic definition of semiotics as "*the study of signs*". Chandler (2007) stresses out the diverse perceptions of semioticians toward the main concern of semiotics i.e., what semiotics involves. He argues that "*semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else*". In other words, signs can be embodied in: concrete objects, words, symbols, photos...etc.

According to Daniel Chandler (2007), the early apparition of the theories of signs and semiotics was in ancient times a branch of philosophy. Chandler (2007) mentions John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) as the first accurate reference. Paul Prior (2014) argued that later on in modern history, semiotics had been part of fields other

than philosophy like literary and cultural studies, language and literacy studies, psychology and even biology.

Despite the several figures who established semiotic theories, two different leading theories have been elaborated; one in Europe conceptualized by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), and the other in America elaborated by the Philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) (Chandler, 2007).

Ferdinand de Saussure named this field “Semiology”. He defines semiology as “*a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life*” (Saussure, 1983). Being a linguist, Saussure’s theory of semiology is principally founded on the basis of linguistics. Thus, his main focus was on the linguistic sign and sign system, as he stressed the primordial importance of the language sign system (Saussure, 1983). Saussure suggests a dyadic model of the sign which is an association of the signifier and the signified. He argues that the signified should be understood as an abstract concept rather than a concrete object, and the signifier as the acoustic image, the mental representation and, the psychological impact that sounds, images, and graphs may have on the brain (Paul Prior, 2014). In other words, the signifier for Saussure is associated with the impact left by sounds in the mind; as for the signified, it is associated with the abstract world of thoughts. Indeed, Saussure clearly stated that sounds and thoughts cannot be separated from one another (Saussure, 1983). So, for Saussure, the sign (or, meaning) is generated from the arbitrary relationship that lies between the signifier and the signified (Paul Prior, 2014).

One of the most interesting approaches to the field of Semiotics was proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce, who defines semiotics as the study of sign and sign using (Chandler, 2007). For Peirce, semiotics is associated to logic and reasoning, but also with the inter-relationship between what we perceive and what we know about it. Peirce says that a sign “*stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity*” (Pierce 1960:135, cited in Paul Prior 2014). Thus, a sign is considered as a sign only when there is a capacity of understanding it, and for this to happen, one has to rely on his/her proper knowledge of reality (Chandler, 2007). In other words, a sign is anything to which meaning can be attributed.

Moreover, semiotics has to do with perception, knowledge construction and “in-formation”; it is a process of meaning making through our interpretations of signs (Ibid). To Peirce, argues Chandler, “*Nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign*” (Chandler

2007). To put it another way, the construction of knowledge is the process of attributing meaning to something that is perceived by some intelligence.

To make it clearer, after perceiving something whether already known or unknown, one tries to link it to something that he/she already knows, which means that the observer relies on his/her previous knowledge of the world to identify the object. If this process leads to the identification of the object to the observer that means that a mental form is attributed to the object. The unknown object becomes a sign to which meaning has been attributed. Otherwise, when the perceived object had not been seen before and the characteristics of this same object are blurry to its observer, it remains unknown, and the object cannot be considered as a sign until some meaning is attributed to it. In more simple words, to have information about something is for someone to give a mental form to what is seen, heard, or felt. It is for the observer, the aptitude to make order out of chaos thanks to previous knowledge.

What motivated both Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce to bring their theories toward the field of semiotics was their common interest in the understanding of the process of meaning-making. Despite their different approaches, semiology is for Saussure what semiosis is for Peirce.

For our research, we chose to adopt Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of semiotics as an approach to textual analysis, because of its generality, pragmatism, and triadicity.

### **1.1.2. The Triadic Semiotic Theory of Peirce**

In contrast to Ferdinand De Saussure who brought a dyadic perception of the linguistic sign, which consists in a combination of the signifier and signified, Charles Sanders Peirce developed a triadic theory of the sign that deals with triadic entities.

Nicole Everaert-Desmedt (2011) pointed out that the semiotic theory of Peirce is at once General, Triadic and Pragmatic. First of all, it is general for three main reasons;

- a) - It takes into consideration not only the emotional but also the practical and intellectual experiences of the human being for the understanding of signs.
- b) – It includes all the components of semiotics, and it broadens the concept of sign so that it can be used for all the fields, contrary to Saussure's theory of sign which is limited only to the linguistic field. Secondly Peirce's theory of semiotics is triadic because it is

founded upon three philosophical categories that Peirce named “the modes of being” implying: firstness, secondness, and thirdness. In addition to that, it brings three concepts into relation: the representamen (or sign), the object and the interpretant.

- c) - It is pragmatic in that it attributes much consideration to the context in which the signs are produced and interpreted; they can be within a political context, an economic one...etc. It is also pragmatic in that it defines the sign by its effect on the interpretant, which means that there is a possibility of having different interpretations of the same sign. (Nicole Everaert-Desmedt, 2011)

### **1.1.2.1. Modes of being**

As previously said, Peirce’s theory of semiotics is triadic. The scholar offered a triadic dynamic and complementary entity that encompasses; firstness, secondness and thirdness. To Peirce (cited in Nathan Houser, Christian Kloesel; 1867-1893)

The first is that whose being is simply in itself, not referring to anything nor lying behind anything. The second is that which is what it is by force of something to which it is second. The third is that which is what it is owing to things between which it mediates and which it brings into relation to each other.

The citation clearly indicates that firstness consists in independent concepts that are in isolation and do not refer to anything. Nicole Everaert-Desmedt (2011) states that, “*Firstness corresponds to emotional experience*”. It is the universe of qualities, as it can be a feeling, a color, a form...etc. It is the world of capacity and potentiality, before being incorporated in the secondness. Thus the existence of secondness depends on firstness.

In contrast to firstness, secondness purports to the world of objects, facts and events; it serves for the embodiment of qualities of firstness. For Everaert-Desmedt (2011), secondness is associated with the individual and practical experiences people have about the world.

Regarding thirdness, Everaert-Desmedt (2011) explains that “*Thirdness corresponds to intellectual experience*”. It is a bridge that mediates firstness and secondness. Thirdness is the world of rules and norms, the world of knowledge. It is the capacity to link between the concepts of firstness to their objects of secondness. (Nathan Houser, Christian Kloesel; 1867-1893)

### 1.1.2.2. The Peircean Sign

Three main components compose the peircean sign; the representamen, the object and the interpretant. According to Peirce, the representamen (sign) is something that can be physically existent, and captured by the human five senses. It is the form that the sign takes which attracts one's attention. Yet, it ought to be borne in mind that the representamen is something that only refers to something else; it is the physical embodiment of the object it represents. The object is "*something beyond the sign to which it refers*" (Chandler, 2007) it is the thing that the signs refer to, and the meaning that one attributes to the sign. In simple words, the object is what the sign represents.

However, the interpretant is the way the sign is interpreted by people, or the meaning that arises from a sign when it is used by people according to their background, knowledge and culture. Yet the same representamen may have an infinite number of interpretations and may differ according to culture, background, etc. (Nicole Everaert-Desmedt, 2011)

Thus the object of the representamen depends on its interpretant. To put all these in practice, an example has to be mentioned. It is inspired from Vidya Narayanan's article entitled "The Incessant Obsession of the Omnipotent Green Dot" (2017). As frequent instagram (the social media) users, we know that the green spot of the chat means that a person (interlocutor) is online. Analyzing this situation, the representamen is the green spot, as it is the physical and visible light that we see. The object of this representamen is the person (interlocutor) online, by doing so; we attributing a meaning to the representamen (the green spot). But one has to question themselves "How did we associate the green spot to the idea of the person being online?" the answer to this question will lead us to the interpretant. As frequent users of social media and instagram we experienced and acquired the knowledge that the green spot means "online". Therefore, each time we perceive the green light, we know the users who are online and who are not.

Charles Sanders Pierce based his theory primarily on logic, mind construction, and reasoning.

## **1.2. Culture and Society**

### **1.2.1. Definition of Culture**

Culture is a term that has been given several definitions. Indeed scholars had different interpretations of this same concept, and there was no agreement for giving it one single definition. Kluckhohn (1962: 73) states that culture “*Consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts*”. In other words, for Kluckhohn culture comprises a set of decipherable and non-decipherable components that are inferred within symbols. This latter is transmitted through the behavior of social group’s members.

However what make us distinguish one culture from another is the way they are represented through their creations named otherwise “*cultural artifacts*”. Matsumoto (1996:16) defines culture as “*the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next*”. Matsumoto views culture as a whole including many factors that are set in a social group. It means that culture emerges with the interaction of individuals within the social life. Yet he points out the fact that the interpretation of the same culture may differ from a person to another, and that culture is transmitted from one generation to the next through the means of communication. To resume, one may say that culture cannot be dissociated from society.

### **1.2.2. Culture and Society**

It is worth mentioning that many socio-cultural studies have been devoted to study the relationship between culture and society. One can mention for instance Matthew Arnold who in *Culture and Anarchy* (1867), attributes possession of culture to only the highest class. Indeed to him only a small part of a whole social group “has” culture, and the members of this small group are deemed intellectuals. He considers the minority possessing a “High Culture” as an elite group, and the rest of the social group as a potential source of anarchy tangled up in their “popular culture”.

Edward Taylor in *Primitive Culture* (1870) came to react against Matthew Arnold’s definition of culture, and stated that culture is an integrated system in which we are trapped. It

means that the individual has not the right to rebel against this system, otherwise he/she would be banned, and this entails rejection from one's own culture and environment.

Another important author to mention in this field is Franz Boas. Whereas the Revolutionists put the emphasis on the universal character of a single culture, Franz Boas contested this belief and brought another definition of culture that stresses the uniqueness of many different cultures. He banished the idea of "high culture" opposed to "low culture" also called "popular culture", and gave each varied culture its own value (Spencer Oatey, 2012)

More recently, one can also mention Spencer-Oatey (2012) who deeply questions the meaning of culture and its manifestation in society, as she argues that culture is shared by the members of a social group and that it influences their behavior, their beliefs and even their interpretation of meanings. But even if she states that culture influences the individual's thought, she highlights the fact that this does not determine people's behaviors (Spencer Oatey, 2012). In other words, the appropriation of culture may somehow become a personal choice, as individuals can either adopt it or adapt it to them, or even reject it at their own expenses.

### **1.2.3. Culture Manifestation**

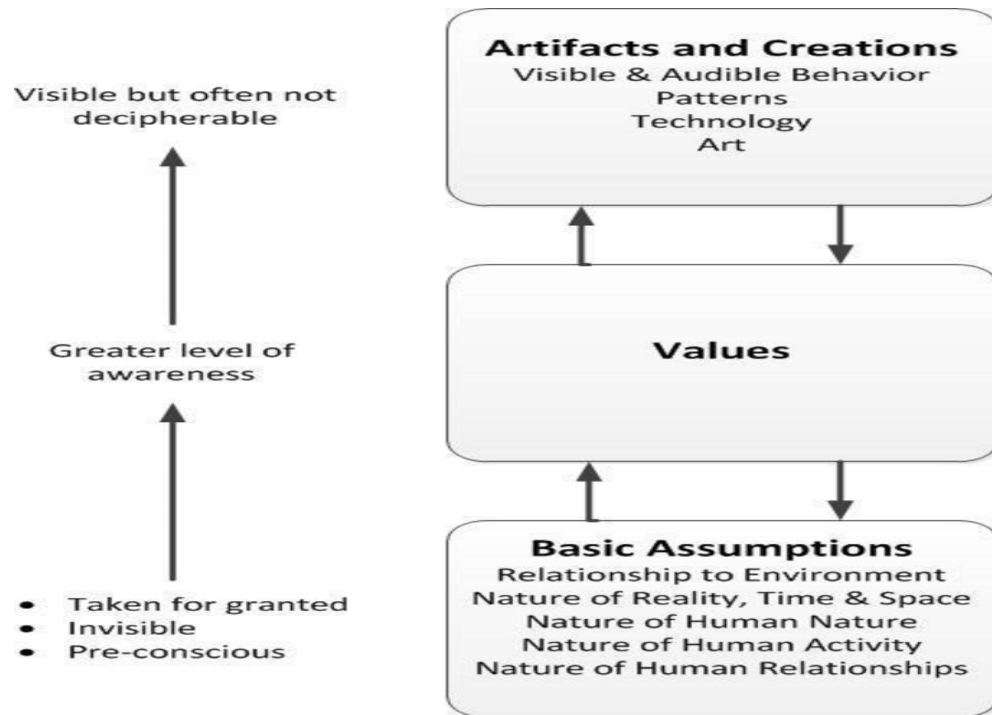
#### **1.2.3.1. Layers of Depth**

In her compilation named "*What is culture?*" Spencer Oatey (2012) discusses some key characteristics proper to culture. Among these aspects, she points out the manifestation of culture at different layers of depth. To Schein (1990:111) the first layer is the observable artifacts which includes physical objects, dress code, people's behavior, the smell and feel of the place, and even products specific to the social group. Despite their visibility, the analysis of these artifacts is complex as the comprehension of the "why" people use these artifacts cannot be deciphered.

The second layer is values; this level is more concerned with the analysis of the why people behave like they do. Unlike the visible artifacts, values are not observable, in order to understand the behavior of a social group, specialists either extract this data by the mean of interviewing members of the society, or analyze some artifacts proper to that society.

The third and last layer is the basic assumptions, which are unconscious thoughts and convictions that determines a social group's perception of things. The basic assumptions are

mainly convictions that are not likely to be questioned. One can immediately recognize that he/she is facing an assumption in a situation where the informants refuse to discuss some ideas that they not only consider as being obvious, but also not dare to tackle (Schein, 1984:3-4).



**Figure 1: The levels of Culture and their interaction (Minor adaptation of Schein 1984: 4)**

### 1.2.3.2. Cultural Artefacts

An artifact as defined in Cambridge’s Dictionary (2019) is an object made by a person, such as a tool or a decoration, especially one that is of historical interest. In other words, artifacts are human creations; they are objects that have underlying meanings. Hilpien (1992) defines artifacts as objects made intentionally, in order to accomplish some purpose. Thus, in social sciences, the term “cultural artifact” is used to define anything created by humans which provides information concerning the social, political, and economic conditions of a society at a particular period of time.

In her article named “Artifact”, Beth Perston (2018) provides a standard definition of an artifact, and identifies three main conditions for an artifact to be. The three conditions are that an artifact must first be intentionally produced; it has actually to involve the modification of materials, and indeed be produced for a purpose. To put it another way, artifacts are originally created by individuals to serve for something. For instance, a piece of raw wood found in a forest, although it is a material but it cannot be considered as an artifact as long as no human being has made any change to it. Indeed, the process of modifying a raw natural material to transform it to something to be used, and having a purpose or a specific utilization like production of wood sculptures, can be considered as an artifact. Now, as our research is particularly concerned with the production of songs as artefacts of culture, the notion of cultural artefact will be extended to involve musical creation.

### **1.3. Music as a Cultural Artifact**

Music plays an important role in the social construction of identity (George Revill, 2000).

Inawat (2015) recalls that music is passionately rooted in any culture, and can not only belong to a specific decade, but also describe an earlier way of life. Despite the fact of being specifically a non-physical artifact, music importantly contributes to the description of culture such as any physical counterparts; a cloth, drawings, sculptures. Contrary to language that creates barriers to people for understanding culture, music opens up and welcomes them. (Elena Mannes cited in Ronald J. Inawat, 2015). An example given by Levitin (cited in Ronald J. Inawat, 2015) clarifies this:

Take, for example, the Kotas, a group indigenous to the Nilgiris mountain range in India. The Kotas have a religious ritual called Devr, a 12-day celebration of winter's first crescent moon. On the first day a ceremony known as omayn begins the festivities with a style of entrance music: unison blasts from the kob (a native bass instrument) accompanied with flutes and drums playing the same tone, exemplifying omayn meaning - “sounding as one.” The intent of the music is an invitation to the gods, welcoming them to enter the village. Following the opening ceremony, the next 12 days revolve around the use of music in their everyday activities, ranging from baths to food gathering. The music played in these instances may not have much meaning when played out of context, but in the context of the celebration, give important insights of a culture paying respects to a higher power.

Another example mentioned by Riley concerns the *Ami* tribes in Taiwan that use music for transcribing their culture's history through oral chant tradition, and describing moments that cannot be explained through the use of language, because of the complexity of transcribing their language in the written form (Angela R. Riley. cited in Ronald J. Inawat, 2015).

More closer to us, another illustration of the use of music as a cultural artefact is the 'Khouan' branch of the Kadiria group who use musical instruments and religious chants in rhythm to heal sick people. The musical groups "Aissawa" in the Moroccan, Algerian, and the Tunisian culture can also be mentioned. According to Mehdi Nabti (2012) "Aissawa" have for mission the dissemination of the "Baraka" which means "Blessing", and the positive divine influx through their religious songs.

### **1.3.1. Definitions of Music**

Music is the fourth art worldwide. It can be defined from several standpoints, but for this research, we have selected three perspectives, namely: the physical, the psychological and neuropsychological, and the anthropological perspectives.

In physics, Gordon Epperson (1967) defines music as *"the art concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony."* As for Gayle Towell (2019), he defines music as a set of vibrations, or waves, progressive, mechanical, periodic, longitudinal and three-dimensional of the acoustic type. In more simple words, music is the art of sounds, consisting in combining sounds and silences over time, for the creation of harmonic melodies pleasant to the ear.

From a psychological point of view, music has always been credited with the ability to manifest and affect humans' emotions. Thus, several studies have been conducted on the influence of music on human behavior, as well as on the emotions that music arouses in the human brain on the psycho-neurological part. In 2014, the neuropsychologist Daniel Levitin gave an interview to the American Psychological Association in which he discussed the impact of music on human health. Levitin asserted that current neurological researches have demonstrated that music can alter mood, heart rate and respiration rate (American Psychological Association, 2014).

Furthermore, Levitin contends that some music affects the body in such a manner that it stimulates the production of adrenaline and other hormones, and makes the organs of the body accelerate the rhythm of their function. The neuropsychologist added that relaxing music, however, has the opposite effect; still this is subjective to the listener.

It is worth mentioning that the distance between music and memory is tinny. Daniel Levitin (2006) argues that “*Some of the extraordinary effects that music has on our brains include the ability to uncover hidden memories, soothe us and move us to tears*”. Levitin (2014) explains that:

Well, songs can function like keys to the mind: unlocking experiences we associate with a song. Neuropsychologically speaking, recognizing a tune requires several complex neural computations that interact with our memory. When listening to a song, it seems that the mind extracts an abstract generalization for later use. Interestingly, that is why we can recognize a song almost right away and accurately, even if it’s been transposed to a different key or the original tune is deformed. The song leaves an imprint in the brain that’s triggered when the song is remembered. Studies that tracked brain waves while people listened to and imagined music revealed that the pattern of brain activity between those actions is indistinguishable. When we hear a piece of music, a distinct set of neurons fire in a particular way, and when we remember it, we recruit that same group of neurons to create a mental image of it. This is called the “multiple-trace memory model,” and it asserts that the traces left in our brains store the abstract and specific information contained within songs. It also explains why we can retrieve an early memory from childhood when hearing an old song.

From an anthropological perspective, different definitions have been attributed to music, but a whole discipline has been devoted to the study of all the aspects of this field named “Ethnomusicology”. One has to mention that ethnomusicology is the study of music in culture in relation to the mutual interactions of sounds, behavior, and concepts (Merriam 1964). Yet, in 1967, this definition was contrasted by Mieczyslaw Kolinsky (1967). While Merriam put an emphasis on the anthropological aspects of the study, and underestimated the role of the musicologists in this field, Kolinsky (1967) highlighted two distinct disciplines extracted from ethnomusicology; the first that he called “Comparative Musicology” which consists in the study of the different musical styles and systems from different societies, and this is the concern of the musicologists. The second discipline, targets to study the role of music within social groups. He named this discipline “Musical Anthropology”, and this involves more the preoccupations of the anthropologists.

Another anthropologist to cite who adopted a different approach toward this field is Anthony Seeger (1988), instead of applying anthropological methods and concerns to music, he chose to analyze the attitude of social individuals toward music, by focusing on the details of musical performances. In his book entitled “Why Suyá Sing”, Seeger (1988) has extracted from Suyá’s (a character) performances the most important factors of the influence of music in the formation of ideas about divergent themes and even in the construction of social identity.

Another author, John Blacking (1995, p31) wrote a book entitled “Music, Culture, and Experience” where he stressed the importance of music in enhancing the individual experience. To him,

The function of music is to enhance in some way the quality of individual experience and human relationships; its structures are reflections of patterns of human relations, and the value of a piece of music as music is inseparable from its value as an expression of human experience.

This clarifies the importance of music in both shaping social and self-construction.

### **1.3.2. Musical Genres**

Music is humanly engineered. It is conceptual and, auditory and these factors have been present in the music of all styles and in all periods of history, throughout the world. (Gordon Epperson, 1968) There are an incredible number of musical genres, and no one can enumerate them all. Yet there is no distinct limitation for the categorization of the musical genres. A musicologist such as Philip Tagg (1982) has classified music into a trichotomous distinction that he considered as an axiomatic triangle consisting of “art”, “folk” and “popular music”. Others like the ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl (1983) may rely on the cultural context, bringing both anthropological and musicological studies to fix to which genre some pieces of music belong to. Some of the most popular genres can be mentioned like: Pop Rock, Blues, Jazz, Soul, Traditional music, Folk music... etc (Gordon Epperson 1968). Then again, one has to know that sub genres have been subtracted from each genre of music, for instance relying on the basic rules of Jazz, the Bossa Nova, the Swing Jazz, the Cool Jazz and the funk Jazz have been deducted (John Sanders, 2011) Furthermore, most of the time the sub genres are combination of two main genres; and this is called fusion. The Rock-Jazz may be

mentioned as an example that inspired many artists of the both sides like “Miles Davis”, “Steve Marcus” and even “Chick Corea”. (Todd S. Jenkins, 2004)

This research is mainly concerned with the Jazz Music and the Traditional Kabyle music. As it is referred to the musical genres sang by our selected authors; Billie Holliday for the Jazz part and Hnifa for the Traditional Kabyle music, it is worth mentioning that both contain characteristics of Folk Music, in which they are categorized.

### **1.3.2.1. Folk Music**

Before introducing the main notions of Jazz and Traditional Kabyle Music, it is necessary to make first an introduction to “Folk Music”.

In the early 20th century, the term folk music was used to define music made by whites of the European ancestry which is dissociated from the rural South ones. The definition of this term have expanded through time and encompassed the Southern blacks’ music (Robert Santelli and Bonnie Raitt, 2001).

Bruno Nettl (2005) defines Folk music as a traditional and rural music that lives most of the time in oral traditions. Thus, it is transmitted from a generation to another and learned either orally or aurally. He argues that folk music grows in cultures where music is socially shared. In other words, people of the lower socioeconomic classes (mainly) are brought together in a rural context to experience music. Folk music is kept as a tradition and associated to other activities such as rituals, folk religions, work...etc. Robert Santelli and Bonnie Raitt (2001) argued that:

Folk songs communicated the hopes, sorrows and convictions of ordinary people's everyday lives. Increasingly, music made by other groups of Americans such as Native Americans, Mexican-Americans, and Cajuns came under the umbrella of "folk music." It was sung in churches, on front porches, in the fields and other workplaces, while rocking children to sleep, and at parties. The melodies and words were passed down from parent to child, though songs - and their meanings - often changed to reflect changing times....

This actually gives another perspective to the role of music, as it not only vehicles a feeling, an opinion or a state of mind, but also plays an important role in the preservation of traditions and the transmission of messages. In addition to that, the folk songs can give a sample of a historical experience, or a glimpse of a given era.

Traditionally, folk songs are known for all the members of the social group. Significantly, as it is an oral transmitted music, the origins of the songs are rarely known, and

the anonymity of the creative process is one of the major criteria of the identification of folk music. Bruno Nettl (2015) confirms that:

Where a folk song originated is rarely known to its community, and thus the anonymity of the creative process was once considered a major criterion of folk music identification. It has become clear; however, those folk songs and other pieces are the result of individual creation, either by villagers or by professional or church musicians whose work is somehow taken up in the folk culture. The repertoire of a folk community probably always included songs of very diverse origins.

This common feature of folk songs is probably what makes them so popular.

It is worth mentioning that folk music is not exclusively related to countryside but its development led to the introduction of different styles and views of rurality on it. And the urban and rural folk music has obviously been used as a vehicle for political movement and protest (Yarwood, R and Charlton, C, 2009). Cloke (2006) contends that rural folk music should be used for the understanding of rurality as a *“complex interweaving of power relations, social conventions, discursive practices and institutional forces that are constantly combining and recombining”* (Cited in Yarwood, R and Charlton, C, 2009). Thus their representations and their varied life experiences are both interwoven and rational because of the power structures and the political influences. (Halfcaree, 2006, Cited in Yarwood, R and Charlton, C, 2009)

The main focus of our research will be only on the Jazz and traditional kabyle music as folk music.

### **a. Jazz**

Jazz music first appeared in New Orleans, in the U.S states of America, more precisely in Louisiana in the early twentieth century (Piero Scaruffi, 2007). Scaruffi (2007) argues that the frictions of different ethnicities in the New Orleans have enriched the musical field. Michael Morangeli (1999) asserts that the birth of Jazz has been altered by the various musical influences from the travelers that held different nationalities. However, Jazz is the creation of the black musicians (Michael Morangelli, 1999). Bruno Nettl (1989) reminds that: *“One of the truly important developments in the recent history of world music was initiated by the forced migration of great numbers of Africans, as slaves, to various parts of the Americas.”*

Kenyatta D. Berry (2017) wrote an article whose given title is itself a paradoxical definition of what these songs represent for the slaves, but which also sums up the feelings of these latter. “Singing in Slavery: Songs of Survival, Songs of Freedom” discusses the status of singing in the African American slaves. She argues that music was a way for them to communicate and express their feelings, *“whether it was sorrow, joy, inspiration or hope... These songs were influenced by African and religious traditions and would later form the basis for what is known as “Negro Spirituals”*. Berry (2017) also believes that singing helped the slaves navigate between slavery and freedom.

The most relevant characteristic that portrays Jazz music is “Improvisation”. Jazz musicians are often in search of individual, innovative and creative musical expression. That is to say, instead of playing solely notes of the song’s partition, they venture on other notes extracted from the initial melody. The same goes for the singers who vocally improvise singing riffs. Importance is as much given to rhythm in almost all the jazz songs.

Concerning the themes treated in the jazz Lyrics; as previously said, their main influences are religious songs (Negro spirituals) and work songs of black slaves in the cotton plantations. Yet, diverse themes like; love stories, money, and life style are dealt with.

## **b. Traditional Kabyle Music**

Traditional Kabyle music played an important part in the expression of the identity of the kabyle culture in Algeria. It is considered as Folk music. One has to mention the importance of women’s participation in the creation and dissemination of oral literature, either in the form of poetry or songs in the Kabyle culture. Despite the fact of living in a male-dominated society, women are widely represented in the literary space (Hassina Kherdouci, 2008). There are several types of female traditional songs in the Kabyle culture. Some songs are rather identifiable by the ritual they accompany. Specific terms are used to designate each genre, and some of them refer to different types of songs which are: *asbuɣer*, *aserqes*, *aḥiḥa*, *izli*, *ccna uzuzen*, *ccna usendu*, *adekkeɣ*, *acewwiq*, and *urar* (Ibid).

Kabyle music consists mainly in songs sung in a melodious form without any instrument added. As deep and nostalgic, it is performed on a free rhythm, accompanied with poetry and improvised only by women in various events. One of the most representative genres of traditional Kabyle musical culture is “Achewiq” (Algerian Press Service, 2013).

This kind of songs accompanies women in their domestic works. Just like jazz, Achewiq can also be considered as a poetic joust to express joy, sadness, or to exteriorize torments; it includes also an exclusively feminine form of love poetry, and pieces of religious inspiration (Ibid).

The addition of rhythms to the songs and traditional instruments, like “Darbouka”; a percussion instrument, or “Abendayer”; a rounded instrument made of wood and goatskin, to the ancestral songs gave birth to “Urar Lkhalath”. Kherdouci (2008) asserts that, it is in the traditional ceremonies that Kabyle women find the strength to express themselves, vocally and bodily, and where they initiate the start of songs and music by assuming the plural name of “women” in choirs. According to Kherdouci (2008), “Urar” means both playing, meeting, and the fact of sharing moments in group conveying words and music to ensure a momentary euphoria, and “Lkhalath” means women.

Yet, this kind of music almost disappeared because of the lack of transmission between the generations. After the spontaneous anonymous peasant song in a colonial context, came the female radio song (Ibid). So, from the 1940s, thanks to feminine choirs as: Lla Yamina, Ourida, Djamila, Cherifa, and Hnifa who appeared in radio broadcasts, achewiq, became synonym to “secular poetry”, and thus has been revived through musical meetings shared between these women (Mhenna Mahfoufi, cited in *Algerie Presse Service*, 2013). It is also thanks to broadcasting that Kabyle music experienced a gradual transition from women groups of singers named “tirebbae” to individual singers singing in solo “tafennant”. (Hassina Kherdouci, 2008).

Like all music in the world, Kabyle music was immediately opened to instrumental evolution. The integration of guitars, violins, bass, and other instruments is noticeable in most modern Kabyle songs. And as far as the themes are concerned, they vary from women’s conditions of life, celibacy, marriage, and divorce to the theme of exile that was widely treated in most Kabyle songs during the post-colonial period. (Hassina Kherdouci, 2008).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed three main points. The first section has dealt with the theoretical framework to be used for the analysis of the selected lyrics; it was followed by the definition of the main concepts that help clarify the theoretical tools linked to our research area. As for the third and last section, it has tackled the musical domain by first defining music, and has provides some explanations of the main musical genres that are involved in our research.

# *Chapter Two*

## *Research Design*

## **Introduction**

This chapter is methodological as it deals with the research design elaborated to examine and identify, through the analysis of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lyrics, the impact that their respective cultures had on some aspects of their lives. This chapter comprises three main sections. The first one gives a detailed description of the participants of the present research, as biographies of both Billie Holiday and Hnifa are presented. The second section deals with the explanation of the procedure of the data collection consisting of a random selection of the twenty song lyrics of the two artists, ten song's lyrics for each. The limitations faced in the process of data collection are also cited in this part. The third and last section, explains the procedures of data analysis followed in the present study. Since this research is a qualitative one, we opted for the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) to interpret the textual data. It will be also made use of The Peircean Triadic Theory of sign to analyze the data.

## **2.1. Description of the Singers**

### **2.1.1. Biographies**

#### **a. Billie Holiday**

Billie Holiday, nicknamed Lady Day is one of the greatest American jazz singers of all time (Oxford University Press). Known for her unique, rocky and lyrical voice, marked by the sufferings of a painful, excessive and fragile life, the diva found solace in music (Martin Chilton, 2019).

Holiday was born Eleanora Fagan on April 7, 1915, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is the daughter of a professional Jazz musician named Clarence Holiday, and a young lady named Sadie Fagan (Donald Clarke, 2012).

Donald Clarke (2012) reports that Eleanora grew up in a jazzy atmosphere, and has been rocked by Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong's songs. She lived her childhood in the streets of Baltimore Maryland, where she had been confined in the house of the good shepherd for coloured girls twice; Once because she was truant from school, and the other time because of being a victim of statutory rape (Ibid). After a while, she started working as a prostitute in a brothel in Baltimore. She confesses, "I was turning tricks as a call girl, but I decided I wasn't going to be anybody's maid," (Billie Holiday and William Dufty, 1956). But

at that time she had started singing in the back rooms of brothels and taverns. (Donald Clarke, 2012). At the end of the twentieth, Billie and her mother moved to New York City where they had been both arrested for prostitution (Ibid).

Being a teenager, Eleonora worked in a Harlem nightclub and advanced there her singing style that was awakening and personal. And because of her strength of personality, she was nicknamed “Lady” (Billie Holliday and William Dufty, 1956). In 1933, John Hammond produced the first recordings of Eleanor (Donald Clarke, 2012). The originality of her music gave her notorious visibility, and consequently made Ralph Cooper advise Frank Schiffman to book her famously saying: *“It ain’t the blues... I don’t know what it is, but you got to hear her.”* (Cited in Donald Clarke, 2012).

In 1935, Billie realized, with Teddy Wilson, more than 100 recordings that marked her career. She modernized the melodies, enriching her lyrics with languor irony resignation, sexuality, and sometimes some joy adapting each lyric to its song (Donald Clarke, 2012). Her voice was so unique and soft with a deep meaning that it impressed instantly many people. In 1936, Billie Holiday’s sales of her recordings gained momentum. Then she went on to more important stages and lands tours with prestigious orchestras (Ibid).

She started tours with Count Bessie in 1937 and Artie Shaw in 1938 in where she suffered from racism on the road (Ibid). Barbara Marty (2020) mentioned that in 1939, Billie Holliday embodied a cry of outrage against the summary executions of blacks in the United States. Marty (2020) argued that Billie Holiday will be one of the first artists to become explicitly involved in the cause of black people. She performs for the first time her famous piece "Strange Fruit" in the Cafe Society. Unleashed controversy, the title was a huge success and became the emblem of Billie Holiday and the Cafe Society. (Barbara Marty, 2020).

Donald Clark (2012) states that:

Holiday had an addictive personality: she had discovered heroin by the early 1940s and was an alcoholic by the end of the decade. Her husband Jimmy Monroe, whom she had married in 1941, was often accused of introducing her to heroin, but there is no evidence of this, and it is likely that she found it by herself. In 1947 she was sentenced to a year in prison for possession.

Richard Havers (2020) relates that, once released holiday continued to sing and perform in concerts. Havers (2020) added that *“Jimmy Monroe, the man who the federal prosecutor described as the “worst type of parasite you can imagine”, wasted no time in getting Billie back into her old habits”*. Thus she had been arrested another time.

A new man entered in Billie Holiday's life named "John Levy" a club owner who was clearly as bad as Monroe (Richard Havers, 2020). Donald Clark (2012) relates that, "*John Levy regarded her as a business investment, kept her short of money and beat her up*". In the 1954, Holiday met Louis McKay who will become her new husband. Yet Louis McKay was different from her other suitors, since he kept her away from drugs (Richard Havers, 2020).

Richard Havers (2020) reported that, "*her drug habit, fortified by excessive drink, turned her into a pale shadow of herself. When Lester Young – probably her one true friend throughout her life and the one who named her Lady Day – died in March 1959, it was a terrible blow.*" Donald Clark (2012) added that, Holiday was getting worse, she was struggling and drinking at work. Her health and even her plans, have been affected. Her ill-being was felt during her appearances. Clark (2012) supports,

While making the album *Lady in Satin* for Columbia in 1958, Holiday asked for a string orchestra conducted by Ray Ellis. The latter reported that during the session she had trouble learning new material and was drinking on the job. Later that year Holiday appeared at the Monterey Jazz Festival and was clearly not well. Another album with Ellis on MGM was finished just weeks before her final illness, and on some tracks she sounded like a sprightly 70-year-old. She was 43. Holiday collapsed in May 1959 and was taken to a hospital in New York. She never left the hospital, where she was arrested for drug possession at a time when the city was struggling with the police department for more humane treatment for drug addicts.

Billie Holliday's life inspired people through her arduous childhood; she was associated to love disappointments, men's violence, sufferings, alcohol and drug addiction that caused her death. She defeated life's obstacles and lived for music (Donald Clark, 2012). Holiday's complicated life and her genre-defining autobiography "*Lady Sings the Blues*" made her a cultural icon. Billie's voice roared love, pain, injustice and her courageous views on inequality (Ibid). Her most famous recordings were "strange fruit", "fine and mellow", "The Man I love", "God Bless the Child", and "I wish on the Moon". All her sufferings will later filtrate through her songs.

## **b. Hnifa**

Hnifa, whose real name is Ighil Larbaâ Zoubida, was born on April 4, 1924, in Ighil Mahni in the town of Azeffoun. The difficulty of living in Kabylia forced Hnifa's family to seek for a "heaven" and a better life by moving to Algiers. But it didn't last, as they went back to their hometown by the beginning of the Second World War. Hnifa lived a traditional childhood in her Berber village, and soon developed a passion for poetry and singing. (S. Ait

Hamouda, 2016) She first started to be known at wedding parties owing to her beautiful voice before being forced to marry a man imposed by her parents despite her young age.

Yet, as could be expected, this first marriage ended in divorce. (Bari Stambouli, 2018). After this separation, Hnifa witnessed the progressive crumbling of her family; the accidental death of one of her brothers, then the repudiation of her mother, sometime later, made her universe collapse. And there started her arduous life. Hnifa went back to Algiers and married one of her brother's best friends. From this union was born her only daughter, but unfortunately, this second marriage had also been a disillusion. As being delivered to herself, looking for jobs to support her daughter, Hnifa met Lla Yamina in 1951, and that changed the course of her destiny (S. Ait Hamouda, 2016)

Lla Yamina, who was a leader of the first Kabyle choir who performed in the Berthezène radio, integrated Hnifa into a female choir of which Cherifa, Ourida and Lla Ounissa was part. There she began performing on the radio once a week, sometimes in solo and other times accompanied by the choir, under the direction of Cheikh Noredine's orchestra. Hnifa sang about her life and her sufferings, and success was immediate. (Bari Stambouli, 2018)

In 1957, Hnifa decided to exile to Paris in the hope of a better life, and to free herself from the tutelage of an oppressive society. And there again, she relied on her voice to survive (Ibid). She defeated the prohibitions imposed by the strict code of Kabyle morality and performed in cafes in front of an exclusively male audience. She used her voice to roar her sufferings, the sad conditions of the exile, the pain of the abandoned women, and the misery of her Kabyle sisters. She met there Kamel Hamadi who composed tailor-made songs for her about her life and feelings, that became the heritage of Kabyle songs. (S. Ait Hamouda, 2016) Hnifa went back to Algiers after the proclamation of independence, but in 1973 returned to Paris, and rarely appeared on stage. On September 23, 1981, undermined by loneliness and plagued by disease, Hnifa passed away anonymously. (Ibid)

Just like Billie Holiday, the rebel Hnifa is appreciated by her listeners. She bears the voice of an agonizing woman, hopeless, without protection or concrete life. She died in a Parisian hotel, without knowing happiness, stability, serenity or peace (Ibid). The depth of her miserable life inspired Rachid Hamoudi to portray it in a book that was later turned on a documentary film entitled "Hnifa, Une Vie Brulée" "Hnifa, a Burnt Life" by Ramdane Iftini

and Sami Allam (Merbouti Hacene, 2008). Her songs still resonate in the Kabyle culture, and the most known are “Zzahr-iw anda tensidh”, “D rray-iw”, “Yidem Yidem”, “Mačči d leyna”, “A yelli”.

## **2.2. Data Collection Procedure**

As mentioned previously in the general introduction, the present work seeks to highlight the impact of culture on both Billie Holiday and Hnifa’s lives and careers. It consists of an analysis of some lyrics sung by the two artists to examine how their cultural environment had a direct impact on the management of their personal lives. Thus, three themes have been selected, that are likely to reveal the effect of culture on the artiste’s lives, and these are *love*, *gender* and *social relationships*.

Accordingly, the corpus of the investigation consists of twenty song lyrics. Ten lyrics from each of Billie Holliday and Hnifa’s repertoire randomly selected. Concerning Billie Holliday’s lyrics, they were all obtained through a website named “azlyrics.com”. As for Hnifa’s lyrics, their gathering went through two stages. The first was the collection of lyrics via web-sites like music-berbere.com and YouTube, others were personally transcribed relying on the audio tracks broadcasted on YouTube and the Deezer download platform. The second step stage consists of the personal translation of the lyrics from the Kabyle language into the English language. The analysis of the selected corpus relies on Charles Sanders Peirce’s theory of semiotics which accounts for the dynamic cooperation between the sign, the object and its interpretant.

### **2.2.1. Limitation of Data Collection Procedure**

It is worth mentioning that this study faced some limitations in the collection of the data. The first limitation concerns the unavailability of Hnifa’s song lyrics. On the one hand, this obliged us to transcribe most of them, back on audio tracks. Yet, the sound quality of some of these songs was so low that we could not decipher them. As a consequence, we were compelled to abandon them and replace them with songs bearing more optimal sound quality. On the other hand, the lyrics required a translation, so we opted to translate all Hnifa’s song’s lyrics into the English language. The second limitation that may affect the reliability of this

investigation is the lack of documentation that deals with semiotic analysis of lyrics of singers involving two different cultures. Despite all the limitations, efforts were made to gather the necessary data to conduct this research.

## **2.3. Procedures of Data Analysis**

### **2.3.1. Qualitative Content Analysis**

As previously mentioned the purpose of this work is to identify the impact of culture on Billie Holliday and Hnifa's lives, as female singers, through the analysis of some of their songs lyrics. One has to keep in mind that focus will be on three aspects; gender, love, and family life. Since our research is qualitative in nature, Peirce's semiotic theory of sign is found to be an appropriate method to analyze and interpret the corpus of this present research, which are the song's lyrics. Therefore the semiotic triadic theory will be used to qualitatively analyze the corpus.

The qualitative content analysis received several definitions; Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis as "*a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use.*" (Cited in Mariette Bengtsson, 2016). In more simple words, it is the process of making inferences and interpreting and the collected data. As for Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278), they argue that the qualitative content analysis is one of the methods that deal with the analysis of text data. They state that QCA includes three main approaches; "*conventional, directed, or summative*", and that "*All three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm.*" By way of explanation, the three approaches may be useful for the interpretation of the content of text data. However, the present research will rely on the directed approach. This latter requires the use of a current theory or prior findings which can be adopted for guidance in the process of identifying the key concepts and encoding categories. Hence, for identifying the effects of culture on both Billie Holliday and Hnifa's lives, it will be made use of Peirce's Triadic Semiotic Theory of the Sign for the semiotic analysis of the lyrics, which permits us to reach the objective of this study.

### **2.3.2. Charles Sanders Peirce's Triadic Theory of Sign**

As previously mentioned, the Peircian triadic theory of sign is the principal theory upon which our study is based. It is worth mentioning that the focal point will be on the dynamic relationship that lies between the signs, the object and its interpretant. To make it clearer; the sign corresponds to the songs' lyrics, the object implies the specific cultural values and events which inspired the lyrics, and the interpretant assigns for our understanding of the lyrics and the context of their production, together with the singer's lives and perceptions of the world. The aim through the application of Peirce's semiotic theory is to reveal the hidden meanings of the songs and discover the main cultural elements that impacted Hnifa and Billie Holliday's lives and which finally led to their wretchedness.

Accordingly, the song's lyrics are to be seen as signs, the real events in the context and conditions which triggered their productions are to be seen as the objects of the signs, and the knowledge the researcher has about the personal lives and cultures of the two signers along which the lyrics are to be understood are to be seen as the interpreters of the lyrics.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, this chapter has outlined the methodology adopted in this research. It first provided a detailed description of the participants entailing biographies of Billie Holliday and Hnifa. Secondly, it has introduced the data collection procedures which consist of the gathering of both artists' song lyrics through different platforms, then, the limitations faced during the collection of data. Finally, it has laid out the data analysis procedures used for this investigation through the application of the qualitative content analysis represented by Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic theory of the sign that will reveal the hidden aspects of the lyrics.

*Chapter Three*  
*Presentation of the Findings*

## Introduction

This chapter is empirical in nature. It is devoted to the analysis of the gathered data which encompasses twenty song lyrics extracted from each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's repertoire. The study is carried out in the light of Charles Sander Peirce's theory of sign, and it focuses on two specific categories: vocabulary related to the terminology used to express different themes that have been already selected (love, gender, and social relationships), and semantics consisting in decoding the hidden aspects behind the terminologies used in the lyrics relying on Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic theory of the sign.

Thus, this chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section is related to the presentation of the corpus classified in tables. As for the second section, it presents the findings obtained after the analysis of the selected corpus by means of a Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) through the application of Peirce's semiotic theory. In other words, it will be made use of the dynamic relationship that lies between the sign, the object and its interpretant.

### 3.1. The Results

<b>The themes</b>	<b>Love</b>	<b>Love and Gender</b>	<b>Gender and Social Relationships</b>	<b>Social Relationships</b>
<b>Number of songs</b>	4	3	1	2

**Table 1: The Number of Songs Selected for Each Theme from Billie Holiday's Repertoire**

Table 1 indicates the number of songs gathered from Billie Holiday's repertoire for each of the selected themes. As previously mentioned the chosen themes are; love, gender and social relationships. As clearly shown in the table above, four (4) songs deal with the theme of love, three (3) deal with not only the theme of love but also the theme of gender, one (1) song is concerned with the themes of gender and social relationships, and finally two (2) songs with the theme of social relationships.

The themes	Love	Love and Gender	Gender and Social Relationships	Social Relationships
Number of songs	5	2	2	1

**Table 2: The Number of Songs Selected for Each Theme from Hnifa's Repertoire**

This table presents the number of songs collected from Hnifa's repertoire. As can be seen, most of the selected songs are about love, since five (5) songs out of ten dealing with the theme of love. Two (2) song deal with both love and gender, two (2) other songs merge the themes of gender and social relationships, and finally one (1) song is about social relationships.

### 3.2. Textual Analysis of the Song Lyrics

In order to analyse the song's lyrics, they have been classified according to their themes. Then, the lyrics are analyzed relying on the triadic semiotic theory of Peirce that highlights the dynamic relationship between the representamen (the lyrics), the object of the sign (the specific cultural values and the qualities of the particular events which inspired the lyrics), and the interpretant (our understanding of the lyrics and the context of their production, together with our knowledge of the singer's lives and perceptions of the world).

- **The theme of 'Love'**

<b>Billie Holiday</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of secondness</b>	<b>Elements Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from songs lyrics</b>	A feeling of Love disenchantment.	"I'm Gonna Lock My Heart and Throw Away the Key" <i>I'm gonna lock my heart, and throw away the key</i> <i>Cos I'm tired of all those tricks you played on me</i> <i>I'm gonna turn my back on love</i>	Billie Holiday was constantly looking for true and sincere love, but, unfortunately, facing ill-intentioned men,

		<p><i>Gonna mock the moon above Seal all my windows up with tin So that the love bug can't get in Gonna park my romance right along the curb Hang a sign upon my heart "Please don't disturb" And if I never fall in love again That's soon enough for me I'm gonna lock my heart And throw away the key</i></p>	<p>she chained disappointments, and decided to withdraw into herself so that she would not suffer from love anymore.</p>
	<p>A wish for a romantic encounter.</p>	<p>“Blue Moon” <i>-Blue moon, you saw me standing alone, without a love of my own You heard me saying a prayer for Someone I really could care for And then they suddenly appeared before me, the only ones my arms will ever hold, I heard somebody whisper “Please adore me”, and when I looked, the moon had turned to gold... Blue Moon, now I am no longer alone...</i></p>	<p>Blue Moon refers to the English expression “Once in a blue moon” which means “rarely”. In this song, Holiday almost lost hope in love, but finally came out from her loneliness by meeting a new lover anymore.</p>
	<p>A feeling of deep sorrow felt after a breakup.</p>	<p>“I Can’t Face the Music” <i>-Breeze stop moaning those weird melodies My man has left me, I can't face the music, without singing the blues...Rain, your rhythm on my window pane, drives me insane My heart is so broken It's the bottom of the deep blue sea for me, I'm gonna end this misery I've spoken to the Lord for sympathy, and if he don't help me, so help me</i></p>	<p>Billie Holiday deeply suffered and was saddened by her separation from her man, she expresses her deep pain caused by this breakup by singing the “Blues”.</p>

**Table 03: Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Love’**

The examination of the songs dealing with the theme of love reveals the attitude of Billie Holiday toward “Love”. Yet, one has to bear in mind that the type of love dealt with in the songs is carnal love. The analysis of the lyrics shows that Holiday was constantly

suffering from her love affairs. Taking into consideration the context and the events (the object) that inspired writing and producing the songs (the sign), one can notice that Holiday is mostly concerned with the negative aspects of love. In the first song, being tired of all her disappointments, she refuses to start a new love adventure. Then, overwhelmed by loneliness she started to dream about a lover in the next song. As for the third, she finally met her lucky one, but the relationship did not last long before being disappointed again and returning into her solitude, as voiced in the fourth song.

<b>Hnifa</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from songs lyrics</b>	The deep sadness felt after the marriage of the long waited lovers.	<p style="text-align: center;">“Oh Goodness”</p> <i>Oh my goodness, I hardly believe The one I had always dream of Got married yesterday While he his sun illuminates his day My sun went down leaving me in darkness My heart full of unavowed secrets Oh my god, all my wishes evaporated I loved him, his love is burning my heart Weak every day, awake every night He leads a quit life, enjoy his family I am suffering for him, but he doesn't care He lives in peace, fulfilled his dreams (with whom he loves) While my life is invaded by misfortunes</i>	Being unable to express their feelings, Hanifa sang out loud the sufferings of all women to whom the longed men married other women.
	The feeling of betrayal felt after her second husband deceived her.	<p style="text-align: center;">“May God Hold You to Account”</p> <i>May God hold you to account for your betrayal I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt in turn God will judge you, because you hurt me I was once victim of your words For I thought you were sincere How malicious is your heart Pitiful is he who trust you My love is a crystal clear water</i>	Hnifa was deceived from her second marriage. She trusted her husband who ended up lying and betrayed her trust.

		<p><i>I have been asleep and unaware, but I realized that you lost your mind You are unfaithful I was so stupid believing his lies He despised me and ruined my youth No matter how long I may suffer He will appear before God</i></p>	
	<p>A feeling of blossoming to a new lover.</p>	<p>“Oh my bird” <i>Oh my bird, the one my eyes love Your shadow is always with me, you are so dear to me Your love is hard, and I tremble (my heart is quivering) You are always in my mind You made me suffer Loving you is so harsh You made my heart burn I always think about you I am weak and helpless Your separation is painful I suffered martyrdom For you I have been exiled</i></p>	<p>Hnifa rebelled against the rude and strict traditions of the Kabyle culture that consider all love subjects as taboos. She felt in love with a man that she couldn't be with, she suffered from this love but fully assumes it.</p>
	<p>A feeling of burden towards the exiled lover.</p>	<p>“I forgive you son of my country” <i>I realized it I forgave you partridge's son I remembered then I regretted it You got lost, And you didn't realize it In my miseries, you left me Fever sheltered my heart I forgive you dear to me, Our wounds will be healed What I have is a nice bird who feeds on seed and orange blossom water When I talk to him he listens No one can take him away from me I endured and he covered me But now his heart has changed Its charm has no taste Shows us a few words now I realized it And I forget everything that happened I got deeply lost, I almost drowned like a fish I will not come back to you Giving way to spring</i></p>	<p>In this song Hnifa addresses a letter of forgiveness to her exiled lover.</p>

	A feeling of forgiveness liable to bring back the loved one	<p>“Wholehearted I forgive you”</p> <p><i>Wholehearted I forgive you</i>  <i>Please, just come back for woes are over... Let us forget the past</i>  <i>You apple of my eye...My eyes are eager to see you ...Even if you were mistaken</i>  <i>My loving heart forgave you...Nobody is perfect</i>  <i>We call you, respond if you have heard...Don't make things more difficult</i>  <i>Come back, I wish you only the best</i>  <i>Your return will be the rain of joy</i>  <i>That puts off the fire ranging in my heart</i></p>	In this song Hnifa embodies the characteristics of the Kabyle women showing patience, strength and peacefulness.
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**Table 04: Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Love’**

Table 04 analyses the songs dealing with the theme of love and revealed the attitude of Hnifa toward “Love” within the Kabyle culture, here again, the type of love that has been discussed in the lyrics is carnal love. The first song exposes the facts of long distance relationships at the time of exile. The second evokes her experience with her first marriage. The third song infer to her rebellion against the codes of the Kabyle society by assuming her love to her beloved in public. As for the fourth song, it is a letter addressed to her exiled lover. The fifth and last song involves the personification of the peaceful Kabyle women.

- **The themes of ‘Love and Gender’**

<b>Billie Holiday</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from song’s lyrics</b>	A feeling of defencelessness towards the Infidelity of Holiday’s husband.	<p>"Don't Explain"</p> <p><i>Hush now, don't explain! Just say you'll remain</i>  <i>I'm glad you're back...Skip that lipstick, you know that I love you and what love endures</i>  <i>All my thoughts are of you</i>  <i>For I'm so completely yours</i>  <i>Cry to hear folks chatter, and I know you</i></p>	Holiday’s love for her husband Jimmy Monroe was so deep that she was willing to forgive adultery just to keep him beside her.

		<p><i>cheat</i>  <i>Right or wrong, don't matter when you're with me... You're my joy and pain</i>  <i>My life's yours, love</i>  <i>Nothing rates above you</i></p>	
	<p>A feeling of feebleness felt by a mistreated Women</p>	<p>"Fine and Mellow"  <i>-My man don't love me, treats me oh so mean</i>  <i>He don't love me, treats me awful mean, he's the lowest man that I've ever seen</i>  <i>But when he starts in to love me, he's so fine and mellow</i>  <i>-Love will make you drink and gamble...stay out all night long</i>  <i>Love will make you do things that you know is wrong</i>  <i>-But if you treat me right, I'll stay home every day</i>  <i>But you're so mean to me, baby</i>  <i>I know you're gonna drive me away</i>  <i>-Love is just like a faucet</i>  <i>It turns off and on</i>  <i>Some times when you think it's on... It has turned off and gone</i></p>	<p>In this song, blinded with love, Holiday is lamenting her bad treatment by her boyfriend, Joe Guy. Besides the fact that he introduced her to drugs and making her submissive, he subjected her to domestic violence.</p>
	<p>A feeling of a toxic romantic relationship.</p>	<p>"Billie's Blues"  <i>-I love my man, I'm a liar if I say I don't, but I'll quit my man, I'm a liar if I say I won't</i>  <i>-I've been your slave...Ever since I've been your babe</i>  <i>But before I'll be your dog, I'll see you in your grave</i>  <i>-My man wouldn't give me no breakfast...no dinner, squawked about my supper then he put me outdoors</i>  <i>-I didn't have so many, I ain't good looking, and my hair ain't curled</i>  <i>Some men like me cause I'm happy...cause I'm snappy, Some call me honey, others think I've got money</i>  <i>Some say me...you're built for speed, now, if you put that all together makes me everything a good man needs</i></p>	<p>Worse than Joe Guy, John Levy made her suffer all the miseries; he stole all her money, ruined her, hit her and then left her. However, she was no longer the struck lover or the lonely girl, but became the strong defiant woman putting up with the men who had done her wrong.</p>

**Table 05: Analysis of Billie Holiday's Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of 'Love and Gender'**

Table 05 analyses the songs dealing with both the theme of love and the theme of gender. One can notice in this analysis that Holiday went through several emotions and states of mind. In the first song, she describes the kind of relationship she had with her husband comprising the husband's infidelity. In the second song, Billie Holiday embodies the image of the submissive woman who not only was submitted to her husband but also tolerated his abuse as well. Male dominance is also evident in this last song. However, in spite of being so in love with her men, Holiday refused to submit, and rebelled against him.

<b>Hnifa</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from song lyrics</b>	A feeling of a complete wreckage after a failed first marriage.	<p>“Oh Heart”</p> <p><i>Oh, my heart won't you be patient And accept your fate? Oh! My eyes stop shedding tears Oh! My heart let me in peace That is, now, all what I need My health has been affected By long-lasting miseries I near I ought to accept my sufferings For it is my fate Time has abducted my youth My beauty faded, is now a shriveled rose Because darkness is my destiny The summer drought Swept across the spring My joy is always, nipped in the bud, These are my miseries That will never give up I cried so hard that I hurt my eyes And I could feel my tears Forming rivers on my cheeks That is what worries me</i></p>	Hnifa fell victim to an oppressive tradition in which her father forced her to marry a man she didn't want

	<p>A feeling of neglect felt by woman whose husband had to emigrate to earn living.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“The Migrant’s Wife”</p> <p><i>To Sidi Hlal I swear, in fire I’d put my hand, your husband in Paris dates his mistress, as you remain the forgotten shepherdess, Oh, patient Kabyle women! How much longer can you with stand?</i></p> <p><i>Your husband in Paris parenting a child, while you are tasked to gather the grass</i></p> <p><i>You ladies and sisters...In sane is she who henceforth trusts a man...Remember that men are great talkers...Take their words with a grain of salt...For god’s sake, why would they do that? Oh poor wives, how innocent you are</i></p> <p><i>Your husband in Paris dates his French Mistress, As you remain the forgotten shepherdess</i></p>	<p>This song marks the period of exile and immigration of Algerians to France, especially men. Hnifa reveals what exiled men actually did in France at that time. While they leave their wives struggling with all the chores they have to do, the husbands mostly tend to betray them dating or founding another family with French women. Thus, Kabyle women with all the strict conditions find themselves trapped between an exiled husband and the in-laws and often also the many children to breed.</p>
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**Table 06: Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Love and Gender’**

In this sixth table, Hnifa approached the themes of love and gender from another angle; in the first song through her personal experience with male dominance, and within the phenomenon of exile in the second song. By referring to the kabyle sociocultural context, it is worth mentioning that the term “love” in this song is not used in its literal meaning, but refers to “marriage”.

- The themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’

Billie Holiday			
Three entities of signs	Elements of Firstness	Elements of Secondness	Elements of Thirdness
	Object	Sign	Interpretant
Extracts from song lyrics	A feeling of assumed depravity.	<p>"Love For Sale"</p> <p><i>When the only sound on the empty street, is the heavy tread of the heavy feet...I open shop</i></p> <p><i>When the moon so long has been gazing down, on the wayward ways of this wayward town, that her smile becomes a smirk, I go to work. Love for sale.</i></p> <p><i>Appetizing, young love for sale.</i></p> <p><i>Love that's fresh and still unspoiled, Love that's only slightly soiled...who will buy? Who will like to sample my supply? Who's prepared to pay the price for a trip to paradise?</i></p> <p><i>...I know every type of love</i></p> <p><i>If you want the thrill of love</i></p> <p><i>I've been through the mill of love, old love, new love, every love, but true love.</i></p> <p><i>If you want to buy my wares, follow me and climb the stairs.</i></p>	Being young, Billie was introduced to prostitution by her mom Sadie because of poverty, misery and lack of money. The title is paradoxical, because in principle, no one can sell love. In this context, it is associated with making love for money.

**Table 07: Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Song Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’**

Table 07 analyses Billie’s song that tackles the themes of gender in relation to social relationships. Here, Billie Holiday addresses a type of abuse she was subjugated to as child by her own mother, and which is child prostitution. In the real sense of this song Holiday praises her body and affection in exchange for pennies to survive. She puts her femininity at the disposal of men.

<b>Hnifa</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from song lyrics</b>	A feeling of maternal responsibility.	<p style="text-align: center;">“Oh my daughter”</p> <p><i>Oh my daughter, you're the one for whom I sacrificed my youth I beg you... not to forget my words -You do know what your mom endured, I told you that, level headedness is a virtue...vigilant you must be....being naïve may be dangerous Be crafted, your job is your life armament...Be ready and on the alert, don't be so Candide We are living in a ruthless time Good hearts are so scares For you my daughter, I suffered martyrdom, I loved you with my eyes while you were playing around, I conferred you about this life and how it is, now up to you to decide what to do You are the one I love, your face makes me happy, I raised and educated you to be equal to the children of your age About these times I advised you Now up to you to choose your own path</i></p>	<p>Hnifa turned to her daughter, who was the only family she had, to guide and advise her. Living in a society that was and still is actually hard on women, she wanted to transmit to her daughter the necessary values that would guide her in the hard times that were awaiting her.</p>
	A feeling of defencelessness toward destiny.	<p style="text-align: center;">“My Decisions”</p> <p><i>It is the fault of my decisions It's neither my fault nor people's It's the fault of my decisions When chance came to me I was on the field, Women were mowing wheat while I was mowing lavender This is my misfortune added to my bad decisions When chance came to me I was on an island, Women were mowing wheat and while I was mowing rose marry, that's what was predicted in my destiny</i></p>	<p>Being misfortuned, Hnifa laments her unhappy life and fate that she inflicted on herself because of her own bad decisions. She compares herself to young girls of her age who were lucky enough to have a better life.</p>

		<p><i>If it was a matter of acceptance , I would write “Yes” in a letter</i>  <i>If it was an enigma, I would ask people for solutions</i>  <i>But, it is my fate, How bad it is</i></p>	
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**Table 8: Analysis of Hnifa’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’**

The table displays two songs dealing with different situations. The first song dedicated to Hnifa’s only daughter to whom she shows the right path to choose, as for the second she laments on her situation and bad decisions.

- **The Theme of ‘Social Relationships’**

<b>Billie Holiday</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from song lyrics</b>	<p>Racism</p> <p>The feeling of horror experienced after the lynching and strangulation of African Americans.</p>	<p>“Strange Fruit”</p> <p><i>Southern trees bear a strange fruit...black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze, strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees</i>  <i>-...Scent of magnolias sweet and fresh, then the sudden smell of burning flesh</i>  <i>Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck, for the rain to gather, for the wind to suck, for the sun to rot, for the tree to drop</i>  <i>Here is a strange and bitter crop</i></p>	<p>“Strange Fruits” is initially a poem written by Abel Meeropol in 1937, in reaction to the lynching, who decided to put it in music and gave the lyrics to Billie Holiday to sing it. Billie Holiday and even her father had been victims of racism.</p>

	A feeling of bitterness.	<p style="text-align: center;">“God Bless the child”</p> <p><i>Them that’s got shall have, Them that’s not shall lose</i>  <i>So the Bible said... Mama may have, Papa may have, but God bless the child that’s got his own...the strong gets more while the weak ones fade</i>  <i>Empty pockets don’t ever make the grade... Money, you’ve got lots of friends, they’re crowding around your door, but when you’re gone and spending ends they don’t come no more</i>  <i>-Rich relations give crust of bread and such you can help yourself, but don’t take too much</i>  <i>Mama may have, Papa may have</i>  <i>But God bless the child that’s got his own...</i></p>	After having financial problems, Billie turned to her mother to ask her for help, but her mother refused to lend her money. She referred to the biblical citation “God bless the child that got his own.” Because of her anger over the incident.
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**Table 9: Analysis of Billie Holiday’s Songs Lyrics Involving the Theme of ‘Social Relationships’**

As can be noted from table 9 above, two songs carrying different objects and associated with the theme of ‘social relationship’ have been analysed. The lynching and murders undergone by African Americans in the south of the country, motivated Billie to carry the cry of all these victims through singing the first song. Besides, Holiday also suffered from racism during her tours. As for the second song, Holiday describes the nature of the relationship she had with her mom. One can immediately understand that Billie argued with her mother who refused to provide her with financial assistance.

<b>Hnifa</b>			
<b>Three entities of signs</b>	<b>Elements of Firstness</b>	<b>Elements of Secondness</b>	<b>Elements of Thirdness</b>
	<b>Object</b>	<b>Sign</b>	<b>Interpretant</b>
<b>Extracts from song lyrics</b>	A feeling of imperative need to express pain.	<p style="text-align: center;">“This is not Merely a Song”</p> <p><i>This is not merely a song</i>  <i>But rather my real life’s sad story</i>  <i>Even my little daughter, was not spared its harshness</i>  <i>In exile I’m a drifter, Considered among the dead</i></p>	Struggling with her life and the prejudices of the kabylian society Hnifa decided to exile in Paris with her, young daughter.

	<p><i>Like a bat I'm stayed through the darkness</i>  <i>For my beloved mother, I wandered all over the world</i>  <i>In exile I'm a drifter, considered among the banned</i>  <i>Like partridge I am, stayed through the darkness</i>  <i>For my beloved mother, a burden of woes exhausted me</i></p>	<p>Unfortunately the Parisian life was not easy, she suffered martyrdom looking for work and trying to earn some money for living.</p>
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**Table 10: Analysis of Hnifa's Song Lyrics Involving the Theme of 'Social Relationships'**

The table above exposes the analysis of Hnifa's song lyrics addressing the theme of social relationship. One can notice that she was describing the sufferings endured during her exile in France, dragging her daughter with her, and bearing the prejudices that the Kabyle society engraved on her.

## **Conclusion**

The present chapter has presented the findings of the study. First, it has presented the corpus of the research consisting in twenty song lyrics from Billie Holiday and Hnifa's repertoire. It is worth mentioning that the lyrics have been classified according to the themes they involved mainly; love, gender and social relationships. Then, the corpus was analysed through Pierce's Triadic Semiotics to unveil the hidden meaning of the song lyrics. Thus, we extracted passages from each of the chosen songs that we considered as "signs" (representamen), before deducing the object of the signs relying on the cultural values, or the specific events that inspired the production of the lyrics. Then we interpreted the meaning of the songs according to our understanding and the context of the production of the lyrics. Thereby, a detailed interpretation of the findings is presented in the discussion chapter.

***Chapter Four***  
***Discussion of the Findings***

## **Introduction**

This chapter aims to discuss the findings presented in the previous chapter which were obtained from the analysis of the song lyrics. The discussion, then, follows the theoretical framework inspired from Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of sign involving the three entities; representamen (sign), the object, and its interpretant. The chapter also attempts to present answers for the research questions asked in the 'General Introduction' with the view to checking the validity of the advanced hypotheses as well. For this to happen, it is worth mentioning that it will be made use of Shein's theory of organizational culture to understand the way culture is reflected through Billie Holiday and Hnifa's songs.

Therefore, the first section discusses the findings resulting from the textual analysis of the songs' lyrics and depicts, through the three chosen themes, the main cultural elements that influenced Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives and careers by drawing on the triadic semiotic theory of Peirce. The second section refers to Shein's theory of cultural organization to provide answers to the research questions previously asked in the general introduction about the impact of the cultural environment on the management of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives.

### **4.1. Discussion of the Textual Analysis of the Song Lyrics**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the song lyrics have been analyzed on two levels; at the vocabulary level, terminologies related to the chosen themes have been extracted from the lyrics, and on the semantic level, it was made use of Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of sign to decipher the hidden meaning of the lyrics.

We recall that the selected themes on which our research focuses are mainly love, gender, and social relationships. It is worth mentioning that the song lyrics have been classified in the previous chapter according to their release date. Thus, for the interpretation of each song we refer to the events that happened to the two singers in each period preceding the release of the titles to infer their motivations to write these songs. Accordingly, to go further in the analysis of the lyrics and see how the themes are presented and conceptualized by the two artists, taking into consideration the context in which the songs had been produced and what had motivated their production, we analyzed each theme considering the background information we have on each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives.

- **The Theme of ‘Love’**

The theme of love is the most frequent theme discussed in the songs under study especially for Hnifa (5 songs out of 10). However, it must be borne in mind that the two artists, Billie Holiday and Hnifa, come from two distinct cultures whose vision and practice of love is totally different.

Billie Holiday was born in the South of the United States of America, within a society where love is not taboo, sings carnal love in all its splendor. She sings the crazy ardent love, the desire without any discomfort, but she also sings the harshness of loneliness and the heartbreak of ruptures. Four songs from her repertoire tackle the theme of love. Noting that the songs were chronologically classified, the first song *“I’m Gonna Lock My Heart and Throw Away the Key”* shapes Holiday’s emotional and love setbacks. Her autobiographical book *“Lady Sings the Blues”*, is perfectly clear about it: Billie Holiday has difficulties in love. Early in her prime, she had many romantic relationships that all ended badly. Tired of love disappointments, Holiday was determined to reject love and close all doors to her heart. She explicitly expressed it saying; *“I’m gonna lock my heart, and throw away the key...I’m tired of all those tricks...I’m gonna turn my back on love...Seal all my windows...So that the love... can’t get in...Hang a sign upon my heart ‘Please don’t disturb’”*.

However, this determination went away immediately. Overwhelmed by loneliness, Holiday evokes *“Lover Man”*, her second song, where she voices the hope of finding a lover. The song also emphasizes her need for the affection of a man by declaring; *“Never had no kissing, Oh, what I’ve been missing, Lover man, oh, where can you be?”* she longed for the coming of her lover man to supply her love desires and fill her with attention and affection, using the phrases; *“The night is cold”*, *“I go to bed with a prayer that you’ll make love to me”*, *“Someday we’ll meet”*, *“...then whisper sweet little things in my ear”*, *“Hugging and a-kissing”*.

Some years later, Holiday’s dream became true, when she finally encountered her long-awaited lover. *“Blue Moon”* is the song that illustrates this romantic encounter. One has to remember that the title of this song alludes to an English expression *“Once in a Blue Moon”*. This expression refers to a second full moon in the same calendar month, a phenomenon that only occurs once a year and called *“Blue Moon”*. In this song, Holiday expresses a stroke of luck so improbable that it could happen only on a blue moon occasion,

*“Blue moon... You heard me saying a prayer for someone I could care for, and then they suddenly appeared before me, the only one my arms will ever hold, I heard somebody whisper “Please adore me”... Now I am no longer alone...”* However, despite the unexpectedness of such an encounter, her love adventure did not last long. Billie Holiday immediately fell into sadness when she broke up with the one she had dreamed of so much.

The fourth and last song “I can’t face the music” says a lot about this break up. She confesses: *“My man has left me, I can’t face the music without singing the blues”*. One has to bear in mind that the “Blues” is an African American musical style that emerged in the rural southern of the United States of America toward the end of the 19th century, finding a wider audience in the 1940s, as black people (Slaves) migrated to the cities. This music is associated to melancholy, sadness, and nostalgia (Oxford Dictionary). Being deeply moved by this rupture, Holiday could not sing without showing her pain, sadness, and this is expressed in her song “Billie’s Blues” through metaphors like; *“Rain, your rhythm on my window pane, drives me insane”* as we tend to associate sadness with rainy weather. It is also shown in straightforward sentences like; *“My heart is so broken”*.

In contrast to Billie Holiday who had no difficulties to tackle the theme of love in her songs without being judged by the members of her society, Hnifa took the risk of rebelling against an overtly conservative society. Camille Lacoste-Dujardin (2005) draws attention to the fact that Kabyle society has always been harsh when it comes to talking about topics such as “love” and especially “carnal love” that Kabyles deem to be taboo. They consider this inappropriate and shameful to the point that no one dares to speak about it publicly. One has to mention that for a Kabyle, revealing his/her love for a person could not be assumed in public by members of the Kabyle society, without having to suffer from the moral consequences of these hard traditions. Such a public claim would be considered most of the time, as an attack to the honour of the family (Camille Lacoste-Dujardin, 2005).

Tassadit Yacine, Kherdouci, and Belgasmia acknowledge that Kabyle females tend to use ploys like elements of nature such as; plants and animals to address carnal love in song lyrics. Even though the metaphors (comparison with nature, flowers...etc.) used by women, only to indirectly express themselves on different topics including love, sexuality, polygamy..., the lyrics blithely violate the social rules which does not allow women, and even

men, to express this type of feelings. Thus, the lyrics have to confirm to very accurate codes. (Tassadit Yacine-Titouh, 2006, Hssina Kherdouci, 2008, Nora Belgasmia, 2017).

At the risk of alienating her community, Hnifa broke the codes of tradition, and just like Billie Holiday, she sang about carnal love, with its joys but above all with its drawbacks, pains, despairs, and betrayals. One has to remember that owing to her personal love disappointments (her three marriages ended in total wreckage), Hnifa soon became the spokesperson of many Kabyle women who endured in silence misery in their oppressive society.

In the first song "Oh Goodness", Hnifa embodies the voice of the many women who have experienced the misfortune of seeing their long waited lovers marrying other women. Actually, written by Kamal Hammadi, this song doesn't refer to Hnifa's experience but to the lives of several Kabyle women who had to live up silently to this type of treason. Hnifa dared to voice out loud the hidden sufferings of these women. She highlighted the silent sufferings of these women, and this can be illustrated through the following verse; *"My heart full of unavowed secrets."* Hnifa used contrasts to reveal the depth of these women's pain like; *"While he his sun illuminates his day, my sun went down leaving me in darkness"*, *"He leads a quit life, enjoy his family, I am suffering for him, but he doesn't care"*, *"He lives in peace, fulfilled his dreams (with whom he loves), while my life is invaded by misfortunes."*

The next song "May God Hold You to Account" refers to a situation that Hnifa personally experienced. Being divorced from her first husband, she encountered a man who soon became her second husband. Even though he already had a child from a first union that he hid to Hnifa, they loved each other and had their only girl named Leila. Sometime later, the first wife of Hnifa's new husband reappeared and dubbed Hnifa "Husbands' Robber" (Rachid Hamoudi). Being chocked by this betrayal, Hnifa decided to break the relationship and divorce. The following verses are sung to evoke this betrayal: *"My God hold you to account for your betrayal, I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt in turn"*. Hnifa also blamed herself of being so candid in trusting her husband. She kept regretting: *"I was once victim of your words, for I thought you were sincere, how malicious you are"*, *"I have been asleep and unaware"*, *"I was so stupid believing his lies"*.

As previously mentioned, Kabyle women tend to resort to elements of nature and personify them in their poetry or lyrics. For example, in the third song, where instead of using

the term “Lover”, Hnifa compared her lover to a bird, “*Oh my bird, oh my bird, the one my eyes love*”. This song can be considered as a love confession, in which Hnifa admits the painfulness of her love to this person saying “*Your love is hard, my heart is quivering... you made me suffer...loving you is so harsh, you made my heartburn, I am weak and helpless, your separation is painful, I suffered martyrdom*”.

Kamel Hammadi testified in the documentary film made on Hnifa’s life that she had a lover who lived in France and who became her fourth and last husband. It may be inferred from the fourth song “*I Forgive You Son of My country*” that Hnifa addresses a letter of forgiveness to her beloved who exiled and left her in the homeland. Yet, this situation was also the lots of many women in the country during the period of exile (1954-1962) while their husbands were strayed in France forgetting them. This is illustrated through Hnifa’s song; “*You got lost, and you didn’t realize it*”, “*in my miseries, you left me, fever sheltered my heart*”, “*Now I realized it and I forget everything that happened, I got deeply lost I almost drowned like a fish.*” Despite all these hard but true feelings, Hnifa forgives her exiled man.

The last song “*Wholehearted I Forgive You*” is somehow a representation of a Kabyle women who embodies strength, patience, wisdom, honor, and forgiveness. In this song, Hnifa decided to erase her sorrows and her rancor to give way to forgiveness and bring back the loved one. This can be illustrated in the following extracts; “*Wholehearted I forgive you, please, just come back for woes are over*”, “*Even if you were mistaken, my loving heart forgave you*”.

- **The Themes of ‘Love and Gender’**

The songs under study deal with the role of the different genders within romantic relationships, as three songs analyzed from Billie Holiday’s repertoire and two from Hnifa’s repertoire have revealed the issues of women’s submission and man’s dominance over women.

As previously mentioned, Billie Holiday’s several romantic relationships all failed. “Don’t Explain” is the first analyzed song that revealed this imbalance between men and women within couples. Billie Holiday wrote this song, after she caught her first husband, Jimmy Monroe, with lipstick on his collar. Her love for her husband was so strong that she was able to forget and forgive his adultery instead of blaming him. This may be seen in the

following extracts; *“don't explain! Just say you'll remain, I'm glad you're back...”*, *“Skip that lipstick, you know that I love you and what love endures”*, *“Cry to hear folks chatter, and I know you cheat, Right or wrong, don't matter”*. Holiday put herself in a lower position than her husband, and this is shown in the following verses; *“All my thoughts are of you, for I'm so completely yours”*, *“My life is yours”*.

After her divorce with Jimmy Monroe, Billie Holiday fell in love with a young musician named Joe Guy, who became her boyfriend. This latter had introduced her to drugs and heroin, and to make matters worse, he mistreated her and subjected her to domestic violence. Hence, blinded by love, she laments her bad treatment from her awful men. She confessed it in the second analyzed song *Fine and Mellow* saying; *“My man don't love me, treats me oh so mean”*, *“treats me awful mean, he's the lowest man that I've ever seen...”*, *“You're so mean to me”*. Being crazily in the love of her boyfriend, and fully aware of this miserable situation, she assumed it through these verses; *“Love will make you drink and gamble”*, *“Love will make you do things that you know is wrong”*, *“I know you're gonna drive me away”*. Yet, that did not prevent her from completely submitting herself to this miserable man and tolerate his abuse, as explicitly said in this verse: *“But if you treat me right, I'll stay home every day”*. Thus, Billie Holiday embodied the image of a weak submissive women.

The last song “Billie’s Blues” shapes another toxic romantic relationship that Billie Holiday experienced. Male dominance is evident in this last song as, worse than her previous boyfriend, Billie Holiday encountered another man, John Levy, who became her manager and boyfriend. Beside the fact that he mistreated her, John Levy stole all her money, ruined her to the last penny, and above all put her outdoors. She openly refers to this in: *“My man wouldn't give me no breakfast...no dinner, squawked about my supper then he put me outdoors”*. Having a poor choice of men, she wrote this song to finally highlight her spunk putting an end to her submission to men. She was no longer the struck lover or the lonely girl anymore, but became the fatal and rebellious woman putting up with the men who had done her wrong. And this is illustrated in the following extracts; *“I love my man, I'm a liar if I say I don't, but I'll quit my man, I'm a liar if I say I won't”*. Holiday’s rebellion is also illustrated in these

verses; *“I’ve been your slave...Ever since I’ve been your babe, but before I’ll be your dog, I’ll see you in your grave”*.

After highlighting Billie’s style, we shall now turn to Hnifa. Hnifa’s songs dealing with the themes of love and gender in a particular way. The first song *“Oh heart”* refers to her own misfortunes inflicted by her first marriage at the hand of a dominant and violent husband. As for the second song *“Migrant’s Wives”*, Hnifa exposes to married women whose men exiled in France, the real life that their husbands lead in France while they left them homeland.

As previously said when referring to the Kabyle society as being an over conservative one, and taking into consideration the socio-cultural context, the term “love” refers directly to “marriage”. Camille Lacoste-Dujardin (2005:34) wrote about the conception of love in the kabylian culture and argued that marriages are essentially a matter of family strategies, and that little priority is given to personal feelings. Oualhadj Nait Djoudi (2001) added that marriage in Kabyle society is an act of sale, as the father has immeasurable powers over his wife and his female offspring. Thus, the father disposes of his daughter as he pleases, he grants her hand to whomever he sees fit, without consulting her on the choice of her husband. It can be deduced from this that the dominance of men over women starts from family.

Tassadit Yacine Titouh (2006) declares that in Kabyle society female poetry and lyrics plays a double role; the consolidation of the dominant authority (male dominance), and that of denouncing its dysfunction, injustices and its hypocrisies. Thus, despite of themselves, the women represent this dominated body which reveals a collective history inscribed in the social and mental structures of the whole group. They highlight these differences through their oral lyrics or poetry.

In the documentary film made by Ramdane Iftini and Sami Allam about Hnifa’s life, an acquaintance of Hnifa’s family, named Fatma Laour, avowed that Hnifa had been forced to marry her father’s friend. Hnifa confided to Fatma, who then reported, that Hnifa was mistreated by her husband as she rebelled against his dominance. Rachid Hamoudi argued that this first marriage ended briefly because Hnifa did not support her husband’s oppression.

The first song analysed in the previous chapter, dealing with the themes of love and gender, was *"Oh Heart"*. This song evokes Hnifa's bad situation, in which she addressed to her heart by asking it to be patient with the sufferings she was enduring and telling it what the miseries have made of her. This can be illustrated through the following extracts; *"Oh, my heart won't you be patient and accept your fate? My eyes stop shedding tears, my heart let me in peace, my health has been affected."* Hnifa laments over her face and sad life; *"by long-lasting miseries", "I ought to accept my sufferings for it is my fate", "darkness is my destiny the summer drought."*

We recall that Hnifa voiced Kabyle woman's silent sufferings and misfortunes through most of her songs. In the second song analysed *"Migrant's Wife"*, Hnifa unveils the real life of the migrants who exiled in France and left their wives struggling with all the chores and sometimes even holding children and in-laws. Nevertheless, while Kabyle wives thought their dear husbands exiled to earn a living, they soon sank into despair when they knew they were either cheating on them or founded another family. Hnifa reveals that saying in: *"To Sidi Hlal I swear, in fire I'd put my hand, your husband in Paris dating his mistress", "Your husband in Paris parenting a child," "Your husband in Paris dating his French Mistress"*. It is worth mentioning that in addition of being submitted to male dominance, women in Kabyle society has not the right of defeating this authority (Lacoste-Dujardin, 1992).

As mentioned previously, the Kabyle woman is under the authority of her father, and once married, the authority passes to her husband. Thus, Kabyle women are trapped and undergo constant male repression. In *"Migrant's Wife"*, Hnifa highlights the discrimination of the Kabyle women within her social group since they are treated as servants to whom they entrust chores. As an illustration; *"as you remain the forgotten shepherdess, Oh, patient Kabyle women! How much longer can you withstand?" "While you are tasked to gather the grass"*, amply testify to this horrible condition. In this song Hnifa also attempts to awaken women about capricious men singing; *"Insane is she who henceforth trusts a man...Remember that men are great talkers...Take their words with a grain of salt...For god's sake, why would they do that? Oh poor wives, how innocent you are"*.

- **The Themes of ‘Gender and Social Relationships’**

In this part of the study, the differences in the respective cultures of Billie Holiday and Hnifa is shown in the way each singer deals with these themes in her songs.

Billie Holiday’s Song “Love for Sale” deals with a social phenomenon that is prostitution. One has to bear in mind that Billie Holiday had been sexually assaulted by her neighbor when she was only 9 years old. After she moved into New York and having no issue for earning money, Sadie Faugan (Holiday’s mother) integrated the sphere of prostitution and introduced her daughter Billie to these practices. The song doesn’t refer to selling love in its own but into the fact of making love for money. Billie Holiday assumes her depravity and compares her practice to a store opening at night, as can be illustrated through the following extracts; “*When the only sound on the empty street, is the heavy tread of the heavy feet...I open shop*”, “*When the moon so long has been gazing down, on the wayward ways of this wayward town, that her smile becomes a smirk, I go to work.*”. In this song, Billie Holiday enhances her femininity to sell her affection, “*Appetizing, young love for sale. Love that's fresh and still unspoiled, Love that's only slightly soiled...who will buy?*”, “*Who will like to sample my supply? Who's prepared to pay the price for a trip to paradise?*” It can be inferred that Billie Holiday did not refer to real love through the following extracts; “*I know every type of love, if you want the thrill of love I've been through the mill of love, old love, new love, every love, but true love.*”

Living in a more conservative community, Hnifa chooses to treat the gender from another perspective. In her first song title “My daughter”, Hnifa gives a set of advices to guide her daughter in the right way to behave in life. Being divorced, Hnifa had to bring up her only daughter without a father in an inhospitable society. Hnifa was victim of social harm, and did everything to protect her only daughter, she confessed it in her song “*Oh my daughter, you’re the one for whom I sacrificed my youth I beg you... not to forget my words.*”, “*For you my daughter, I suffered martyrdom, I loved you with my eyes*” “*I raised and educated you to be equal to the children of your age*”. Knowing the harshness of the Kabyle society toward women, Hnifa wanted to prevent her daughter from the rudeness of time and folks counselling “*Be ready and on the alert, don’t be so Candide We are living in a ruthless time Good hearts are so scares.*” Then, Hnifa attempts to persuade her daughter to walk in the right path; “*I*

*told you that, level headedness is a virtue...vigilant you must be....being naïve may be dangerous”, “Be crafted, your job is your life armament...”, “About these times I advised you, Now up to you to choose your own path”.*

Feeling defenseless in her second song “*My Decisions*”, Hnifa laments her miserable life and fate that her bad decisions inflected on her, blaming herself “*It is the fault of my decisions, It’s neither my fault nor people’s It’s the fault of my decisions*”. The Kabyle society is actually inhospitable towards women and even worse when it comes to a divorced woman carrying a child with her. Hnifa bears the prejudices of her entire social group. In this song Hnifa compares herself to blooming women of her age envying them for their happier life. She confesses; “*When chance came to me I was on the field, Women were mowing wheat while I was mowing lavender this is my misfortune added to my bad decision*”, “*When chance came to me I was on an island, Women were mowing wheat and while I was mowing rose marry, that’s what was predicted in my destiny*”.

- **The Theme of ‘Social Relationships’**

Now, two songs from Billie Holiday’s repertoire involving two different perspectives will be discussed. The first song, “*Strange Fruits*” denounces the lynching of the African Americans in the United States of America. As for the second song, “*God Bless the Child*” confesses Billie Holiday’s relationship with her mother Sadie Faugan.

The south of the United States of America witnessed a strong wave of African American lynching since 1877 and which lasted until the end of the 1950s. During this terrific period, African Americans were unfairly sentenced without trials, and they were sometimes found struggled and hanged under trees. “*Strange Fruits*” was a poem written, in reaction to this lynching by Meeropol in 1937. The author converted it into a song that he entrusted to Billie Holiday who immediately cooperated. One has to bear in mind that Billie Holiday was an African American originated, thus she was dark-skinned. Billie Holiday herself was victim of racism in her tours as she was banned from performances halls while she was the headliner, because of the color of her skin. This is not all, because when dating her white musician Orson Welles, Billie Holiday suffered harassments from people blaming her and pretending

that she would ruin his career by being seen with him. In addition to that, her father died of pneumonia after being repeatedly refused from hospitals because of his skin color.

This song divulges an overview of the racism and marginalization that the African Americans were enduring at that time. In this song, the victims are compared to strange fruits *“Southern trees bear a strange fruit...black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze, strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.”* Billie highlights the horror of the scene by using contrasts such as; *“Scent of magnolias sweet and fresh, then the sudden smell of burning flesh.”* Billie Holiday denounce the horror of this practice *“Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck, for the rain to gather, for the wind to suck, for the sun to rot, for the tree to drop Here is a strange and bitter crop.”*

The second song, *“God Bless the Child”* confesses an argument that Billie Holiday had with her mother. In her autobiographical book *“Lady Sings the Blues”*, Billie Holiday recounted that thanks to her tour in which she had done several shows, she won thousands of dollars that she loaned to her mother to open a new restaurant. After a while, Billie became penniless thus, she went to her mother in the hope that she would help her and give her back the money she loaned her. However, her mother refused to give her back the money, during the argument, Billie uttered a biblical citation *“God bless the child that's got his own”*. The anger over the incident led Holiday to use that line as the starting point of her song. She sang; *“So the Bible said... Mama may have, Papa may have, but God bless the child that's got his own”*, *“the strong gets more while the weak ones fade Empty pockets don't ever make the grade”*. Holiday evokes in the same song her relationship with her friends once she had no money in pockets *“Money, you've got lots of friends, they're crowding around your door, but when you're gone and spending ends they don't come no more”*, *“Rich relations give crust of bread and such you can help yourself, but don't take too much”*.

Turning back to Hnifa, her song *“This is not Merely a Song”* evokes her social situation. We recall that after three failed marriages, Hnifa kept her little daughter with her and suffered from people's gaze, *“This is not merely a song, but rather my real life's sad story, even my little daughter was not spared its harshness.”* Therefore, she decided to flee the prejudices and exiled in France bearing in mind the idea of a better life. However, she suffered martyrdom to earn a living and prejudices of the Kabyle society continued to follow

her. This can be illustrated in the following extracts; *“In exile I’m a drifter, considered among the dead”*, *“In exile I’m a drifter, considered among the banned”*

#### **4.2. The impact of Culture on Billie Holiday and Hnifa’s Lives and Careers**

As previously explained in the literature review, culture and society are intricately related. Spencer Oatey (2012) highlights culture’s influence on society and more precisely on the individual’s thoughts, beliefs and behaviours. Shein (1990) provided his perception of culture which states that the manifestation of culture occurs at three different layers of depth. The first layer is the observable artefacts, the second layer relates to the values, and the third layer is the basic assumptions. Relying on Shein’s diagram, the layers of depth of culture are reflected in both Billie Holiday and Hnifa’s songs. In the present study, Billie Holiday and Hnifa’s song lyrics are used as cultural artefacts to draw attention to the understanding of the values and the basic assumptions of both the American culture and Algerian and more precisely the Kabyle culture.

Following the results displayed in the previous chapter, it is demonstrated that the respective cultures of each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa had a decisive and critical impact on their lives and careers. Indeed, when analysing the lyrics focusing on only three elements of their respective lives involving their love life, their female status, and their social relationships, it is found that the influence of culture is revealed through their lyrics.

On the one hand, in terms of love, the relative open-mindedness of the American culture made Billie Holiday tackle openly the subjects of her amorous relationships in her songs. She did not hesitate to reveal intimate details of her desires, joys, and especially of her sufferings by using socially marked poetry. Holiday used direct sentences to express her love sufferings like; *“I’m tired of all those tricks you played on me”*, *“I’m feeling so sad”*, *“My man has left me”*, *“My heart is so broken”*, *“I can’t face the music, without singing the blues”*. She confesses her desires; *“Never had no kissing,”*, *“you’ll make love to me”*, *“...then whisper sweet little things in my ear”* *“Hugging and a-kissing, oh, what I’ve been missing”*, *“...the only ones my arms will ever hold.”*

As regards the status of women in romantic relationships, despite the emancipation of American culture, the status of women has always remained inferior to that of men.

Interestingly, it is reflected through Holiday's lyrics that this phenomenon had impacted her love life and that she experienced male domination over women in her romantic relationships. She assumed her feeling of defencelessness toward her husband's infidelity; *"I'm glad you're back...Skip that lipstick, you know that I love you, "Right or wrong, don't matter when you're with me...You're my joy and pain."* She revealed the feebleness and submission caused by her mistreatment; *"My man don't love me, he treats me awful mean,"*, *"you're so mean to me"*, *"I've been your slave...Ever since I've been your babe."* And finally, her rebellion against this male dominance; *"But before I'll be your dog, I'll see you in your grave"*, *"I love my man... but I'll quit my man."*

Billie Holiday reveals a hidden facet of the American society which concerns the status of women within the American society, by assuming publicly her depravity singing *"Love for Sale"*. She puts in table one of the facts that many American women lived at that time despite of themselves which is prostitution, that Billie considered as an employee that saved women from poverty. She confessed in her autobiographical book *"Lady Sings the Blues"* that the prostitutes took refuge in a house where they give a percentage of what they earn from their practices to the house owner, a Madame named Florence. Holiday added that it was the only place where black and white people could meet without suffering from any racist discrimination.

As far as the social relationships are concerned, at the social level, Billie Holiday as all the African Americans living in the south, found it difficult to impose their existence or simply to live in peace in a racist society which discredits them and that favours white people. Thus, that impacted both her personal life as she had harassments when dating a white person, and also her career as she was banned from shows and tours because of skin colour. At the familial level, lacking the masculine presence of her father, Billie Holiday had a strong relationship with her mother who tried to raise her daughter as she could. It can be said that her mother was the only family she had.

On the other spot, the Kabyle society, Hnifa reacted to some situations in the same way as Billie Holiday. For instance, concerning her love life, we mentioned previously that Hnifa went against some codes of the Kabyle traditions which though not written, prohibit to talk publicly about love, by assuming overtly her perception toward love. She openly revealed

the hardness of her love sufferings and the ones of many Kabyle women by singing; *“He got married his day is blissful while me, my sun went out and it’s all over”*, *“My heart enduring silently weeping”*, *“I wanted him, and my heart is burning for him”*, *“Misfortune fell on me”*, *“You made me suffer, Loving you is so harsh, You made my heart burn”* ...

The repressive practices of the Kabyle society toward women is felt through Hnifa’s songs as it was the theme that is constantly repeated through her songs. Thus, it can be noticed that the relation between men and women in the Kabyle society is so different and hierarchical in favour of men. One may infer that even within couples women were neglected. However, Hnifa, at the risk of being marginalized and excluded from her social group, rebelled against male dominance and voiced it in her songs; *“I will not come back to you”*, *“No matter how long I may suffer, he will appear before God”*.

However, contrary to Billie Holiday who assumes her depravity, Hnifa had another vision toward the status of women, although being a divorced woman within an over-conservative society. This can be inferred through the song she addressed to her daughter in which Hnifa educates her daughter to not to have the same fate as herself, because she knew that the Kabyle society would be hostile to her. Thus, Hnifa confessed her sufferings and instructed her daughter in the hope of having a better fate.

At the level of social relationships, just like Billie Holiday who had troubles living in a racist society, Hnifa faced troubles living in a harsh and conservative society. As previously mentioned she beard all the social prejudices because of her failed marriages, her rebellion against the traditions and social rules, she found herself struggling for living within her social group. Therefore, she exiled to France to flee the torments. And just as Billie Holiday whose family is reduced to only her mother, Hnifa had only her daughter that she dragged into her miseries despite of her very young age.

Accordingly, it can be noted that the difference in the manner Sadie Fagan educated Billie Holiday and Hnifa educated her daughter Leila reflects their thoughts and the basic assumptions and the values instilled in their social environments by their two different cultures; the American for Billie Holiday and the Algerian Kabyle one for Hnifa.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the main results of the study for the purpose of answering the research questions. The first section interpreted the textual analysis of the song lyrics of both Billie Holiday and Hnifa's repertoire. Exploiting Peirce's theory of the sign, the first part has shed light on the influence of culture on both artists' lives and careers by focusing on only three elements of their life involving; love, gender and social relationships. It is worth mentioning that we particularly relied on two important documents: on Billie Holiday's autobiographical book "Lady Sings the Blues" and on the Hnifa's documentary film "Hnifa, Une vie brulée" (Hnifa a Burnt Life,) to reveal the inferred meaning of the song lyrics. The second section, for its part, has provided answers to the research questions asked in the general introduction and revealed the dramatic impact that culture had on Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives and career by referring to Shein's model of organizational culture. The results have demonstrated that culture had a dramatic impact on the management of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's lives and careers, who used a socially marked poetry to express their sufferings toward the different situations they faced.

# *General Conclusion*

## General Conclusion

The present dissertation has attempted to examine the impact of culture on two great singers' lives and careers through the analysis of a set of their song lyrics. The two singers were the American Blues singer Billie Holiday, and the Algerian Kabyle singer Hnifa, who lived under a different culture. As presented in the previous chapters, the study has addressed three main objectives. The first objective has been to discover the important cultural elements which affected the lives and careers of Billie Holiday in the America and Hnifa in Algeria. The second objective has aimed to explore the way Billie Holiday and Hnifa expressed themselves through their lyrics. As for the last objective, it aimed to determine whether Billie Holiday and Hnifa reacted similarly when confronted to the same situations.

The corpus of the study was twenty song lyrics selected from each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's repertoire. They were classified according to three selected themes; love, gender, and social relationships. The twenty song lyrics have been analyzed following the basis of the QCA and mainly the Directed Content Analysis. Accordingly, it has been made use of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory of sign, which accounts for the dynamic cooperation between the sign (representamen), the object and its interpretant, to analyze the corpus of our study. More precisely, the song lyrics were taken as signs with inferred meanings that we deciphered through the object which referred to the artists' life and experiences. We recall that we relied on two major primary sources to conduct this research, the first was; Billie Holliday's autobiography and film both entitled "Lady Sings the Blues". And the second was; Hnifa's documentary film entitled "*Une Vie Brulée*" (a burnt life) by Ramdane Iftini and Sami Allam, inspired by a book written by Rachid Hamoudi. As for the interpretant, it referred to the respective cultures of both Billie Holiday and Hnifa which has a considerable impact on their lives.

It has also been made use of Shein's theory of organizational culture to discern the way culture influenced Billie Holiday and Hnifa. And based on the outcomes of the two previous chapters (results and discussion), it is found that each of Billie Holiday and Hnifa's cultures is reflected through their songs. Thus, many instilled values of their respective cultures have been revealed through their songs, like; male dominance over women and women repression. Both Billie Holiday and Hnifa had been influenced in a way or another by their cultural and social environment, they struggled to live in peace within their social

groups. It may be enlightening to confirm the first research hypothesis which states that culture had a dramatic impact on the singers' lives and carrier.

It has been found that Billie Holiday and Hnifa took their passion for music as a way of confessing their feelings and especially their own experiences over life. They used their singing to vehicle their struggles and voiced hundreds of silent thoughts. Billie Holiday and Hnifa, as female artists, revealed the sufferings of women and even the hidden parts of their cultures and societies by using a socially marked poetry. Therefore, relying on the outcomes of the two previous chapters, we confirm the second hypothesis which states that Billie Holiday and Hnifa used socially marked poetry to express the hardness of their wrecked lives.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, this research focused on three main elements of life including; love, gender, and social relationships. Thus, the selected lyrics entail situations lived by the two singers about these three elements. However, the differences in the cultural values, and assumptions made Billie Holiday and Hnifa tackle some topics in a quite different way. Here again, appears the setbacks of each one's culture. This leads us to disconfirm the third and last hypothesis which states that Billie Holiday and Hnifa reacted similarly when confronted to the same situation. This hypothesis infirm for gender and social relationships affairs. The difference in beliefs and cultural codes could not allow some visions. For instance, Hnifa could not be able to tackle topics such as depravity in her songs as it goes against the Kabyle social constructed thoughts.

While conducting this research, we faced two main limitations. The first limitation was the unavailability of Hnifa's lyrics, thus we were compelled to transcribe them back on the audio tracks, and some were replaced by other songs because of their low-quality sound. In addition to that, Hnifa's lyrics required translation so we translated them into the English language. The second limitation concerns the lack of documentation in the field of semiotic analysis of lyrics.

For this purpose, the future researchers who might be interested in this field of research could extend this study focusing on other aspects of culture through the semiotic analysis of lyrics. For instance, they may choose two artists living in two different cultures who defend a political or humanitarian cause and explore through the lyrics the perception of the same cause from the two different cultures. It is also hoped that further studies around the same topic, would give more attention and importance to the Kabyle culture.

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# *Appendices*

# *Appendix A*

## *Pictures of Billie Holiday and Hnifa*



**Billie Holiday on August 29, 1944. This stirring photo was taken by Robin Carson only after asking her to sing Strange Fruits acapella to him.**



**Ighil Larbaâ Zoubida (Hnifa)**

# *Appendix B*

## *Table of the Songs under Study*

### Billie Holiday's songs

Songs' Titles	Year of realization
<i>I am gonna lock my heart and throw away the key</i>	1938
<i>Strange fruit</i>	1939
<i>God bless the child</i>	1941
<i>Don't explain</i>	1946
<i>Lover man (oh where can you be?)</i>	1951
<i>Blue moon</i>	1952
<i>Love for sale</i>	1952
<i>I can't face the music</i>	1953
<i>Fine and mellow</i>	1954
<i>Billie's blues</i>	1956

### Hnifa's Songs

Original Song's Titles	The Translated Titles	Year of Realization
<i>D rray-iw</i>	<i>My decisions</i>	1953
<i>Đebber tura</i>	<i>Migrant's Wife</i>	1953
<i>A yul-iw</i>	<i>Oh Heart</i>	1953
<i>Mačči d ley na</i>	<i>This is not Merely a Song</i>	1953
<i>A yelli</i>	<i>Oh my Daughter</i>	1965-1967
<i>Ah ya mali</i>	<i>Oh My Goodness</i>	1965-1967
<i>A mmi-s tmurt</i>	<i>I forgive you Son of my Country</i>	1965-1967
<i>Ay afrux-iw</i>	<i>Oh my Bird</i>	1969
<i>Semħay-ak seg ul yesfan</i>	<i>Wholehearted I Forgive You</i>	2013
<i>Kelfay-ak Rebbi</i>	<i>May God Hold You to Account</i>	2013

# *Appendix C*

*Samples from  
The Song Lyrics*

## Billie Holliday

### *"I Can't Face the Music"*

Breeze, stop moanin' those weird melodies  
My man has left me  
And I can't face the music  
Without singin' the blues

Rain, your rhythm on my window pane  
Drives me insane because  
I can't face the music  
Without singin' the blues

My heart is so broken  
I've spoken to the Lord for sympathy  
And if He don't help me, so help me  
It's the bottom of the deep blue sea for me

I'm gonna end this misery  
My man has left me  
And I can't face the music  
Without singin' the blues

My heart is so broken  
I've spoken to the Lord for sympathy  
And if He don't help me, so help me  
It's the bottom of the deep blue sea for me

I'm gonna end this misery  
My man has left me  
And I can't face the music  
Without singin' the blues

I can't face the music

### *"Blue Moon"*

Blue moon  
You saw me standing alone  
Without a dream in my heart  
Without a love of my own

Blue moon  
You knew just what I was there for  
You heard me saying a prayer for  
Someone I really could care for

And then they suddenly appeared before  
me

The only one my arms will ever hold  
I heard somebody whisper  
Please adore me  
And when I looked  
The moon had turned to gold

Blue moon  
Now I'm no longer alone  
Without a dream in my heart  
Without a love of my own

Blue moon  
You saw me standing alone  
Without a dream in my heart  
Without a love of my own

Blue moon  
You knew just what I was there for  
You heard me saying a prayer for  
Someone I really could care for

And then they suddenly appeared before  
me

The only one my arms will ever hold  
I heard somebody whisper  
Please adore me  
And when I looked  
The moon had turned to gold

Blue moon  
Now I'm no longer alone  
Without a dream in my heart  
Without a love of my own

*"Strange Fruit"*

Southern trees bear a strange fruit  
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root  
Black bodies swinging in the Southern  
breeze  
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Pastoral scene of the gallant South  
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth  
Scent of magnolias sweet and fresh  
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck  
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck  
For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop  
Here is a strange and bitter crop

*"Love For Sale"*

When the only sound on the empty street  
Is the heavy tread of the heavy feet  
That belong to a lonesome cop  
I open shop  
When the moon so long has been gazing  
down  
On the wayward ways of this wayward  
town  
That her smile becomes a smirk  
I go to work

Love for sale  
Appetizing, young love for sale.  
Love that's fresh and still unspoiled.  
Love that's only slightly soiled.  
Love for sale.  
Who will buy?  
Who will like to sample my supply?  
Who's prepared to pay the price  
For a trip to paradise?  
Love for sale.  
Let the poets pipe of love  
In their childish way.  
I know every type of love  
Better far than they.  
If you want the thrill of love  
I've been through the mill of love.  
Old love. New love.  
Every love, but true love.

Love for sale.  
Appetizing young love for sale.  
If you want to buy my wares,  
Follow me and climb the stairs.  
Love for sale.

***"I'm Gonna Lock My Heart and  
Throw Away the Key"***

I'm gonna lock my heart  
And throw away the key  
Cos I'm tired of all those  
tricks you played on me  
I'm gonna turn my back on love  
Gonna mock the moon above  
Seal all my windows up with tin  
So that the love bug can't get in  
Gonna park my romance right along the  
curb  
Hang a sign upon my heart  
"Please don't disturb"  
And if I never fall in love again  
That's soon enough for me  
I'm gonna lock my heart  
And throw away the key  
  
And if I never fall in love again  
That's soon enough for me  
I'm gonna lock my heart  
And throw away the key

***"God Bless the Child"***

Them that's got shall have  
Them that's not shall lose  
So the Bible said and it still is news  
Mama may have, Papa may have  
But God bless the child that's got his own,  
that's got his own

Yes, the strong gets more  
While the weak ones fade  
Empty pockets don't ever make the grade  
Mama may have, Papa may have  
But God bless the child that's got his own,  
that's got his own

Money, you've got lots of friends  
They're crowding around your door  
But when you're gone and spending ends  
They don't come no more  
Rich relations give crust of bread and such  
You can help yourself, but don't take too  
much

Mama may have, Papa may have  
But God bless the child that's got his own,  
that's got his own

Money you've got lots of friends  
They're crowding around your door  
But when you're gone and spending ends  
They don't come no more  
Rich relations give crust of bread and such  
You can help yourself, but don't take too  
much

Mama may have, Papa may have  
But God bless the child that's got his own,  
that's got his own

Here just don't worry about nothing cause  
he's got his own  
Yes, he's got his own

*"Fine and Mellow"*

My man don't love me  
Treats me oh so mean  
My man, he don't love me  
Treats me awful mean  
He's the lowest man  
That I've ever seen

He wears high-draped pants  
Stripes are really yellow  
He wears high-draped pants  
Stripes are really yellow  
But when he starts in to love me  
He's so fine and mellow

Love will make you drink and gamble  
Make you stay out all night long  
Love will make you drink and gamble  
Make you stay out all night long  
Love will make you do things that you  
know is wrong

But if you treat me right, baby  
I'll stay home every day  
If you treat me right, baby  
I'll stay home every day  
But you're so mean to me, baby  
I know you're gonna drive me away

Love is just like a faucet  
It turns off and on  
Love is just like a faucet  
It turns off and on

Some times when you think it's on, baby  
It has turned off and gone

*"Don't Explain"*

Hush now, don't explain  
Just say you'll remain  
I'm glad you're back  
Don't explain

Quiet, don't explain  
What is there to gain  
Skip that lipstick  
Don't explain

You know that I love you  
And what love endures  
All my thoughts are of you  
For I'm so completely yours  
Cry to hear folks chatter  
And I know you cheat  
Right or wrong, don't matter  
When you're with me, sweet

Hush now, don't explain  
You're my joy and pain  
My life's yours, love  
Don't explain

You know that I love you  
And what love endures  
Nothing rates above you  
For I'm so completely yours  
Cry to hear folks chatter  
And I know you cheat  
Right or wrong, don't matter  
When you're with me, sweet

Hush now, don't explain  
You're my joy and pain  
My life's yours, love  
Don't explain

***"Billie's Blues"***

I love my man  
I'm a liar if I say I don't  
I love my man  
I'm a liar if I say I don't  
But I'll quit my man  
I'm a liar if I say I won't

I've been your slave, baby  
Ever since I've been your babe  
I've been your slave  
Ever since I've been your babe  
But before I'll be your dog  
I'll see you in your grave

My man wouldn't give me no  
breakfast  
Wouldn't give me no dinner  
Squawked about my supper then he  
put me outdoors  
Had the nerve to lay a matchbox on  
my clothes  
I didn't have so many  
But I had a long, long ways to go

I ain't good looking  
And my hair ain't curled  
I ain't good looking  
And my hair ain't curled  
But my mother, she gave me  
something  
It's going to carry me through this  
world

Some men like me 'cause I'm happy  
Some 'cause I'm snappy  
Some call me honey  
Others think I've got money

Some say me Billie  
Baby, you're built for speed  
Now, if you put that all together  
Makes me everything a good man  
needs

***"Lover Man (Oh, Where Can You Be?)"***

I don't know why but I'm feeling so sad  
I long to try something I never had  
Never had no kissin'  
Oh, what I've been missin'  
Lover man, oh, where can you be?

The night is cold and I'm so alone  
I'd give my soul just to call you my own  
Got a moon above me  
But no one to love me  
Lover man, oh, where can you be?

I've heard it said  
That the thrill of romance  
Can be like a heavenly dream  
I go to bed with a prayer  
That you'll make love to me  
Strange as it seems

Someday we'll meet  
And you'll dry all my tears  
Then whisper sweet  
Little things in my ear  
Hugging and a-kissing  
Oh, what I've been missing  
Lover man, oh, where can you be?

## *Hnifa*

### *“Ay afrux-iw”*

Ay afrux-iw ay afrux-iw  
A win i ħubent wallen-iw

Lexyal-ik yezga yur-i

Açhal i ezized fell-i

Lemħiba-k tewear

Tassa-w tergigi

Ay afrux-iw ay afrux-iw  
A win i ħubent wallen-iw

Dima tezigđ di lbal-iw  
Fell-ak idub ukessum-iw

Lemħib-k tewear

Tesseħraq ul-iw

Ay afrux-iw ay afrux-iw  
A win i ħubent wallen-iw

Teswira-k tezga yur-i  
Aaksum n ifadden-iw yeqli

Lemfareq-ak tewear

Rwiγ lemħani

Ay afrux-iw ay afrux-iw  
A win i ħubent wallen-iw

Amer ħsiγ ad iyi-tselked

Bu laeyun tizerqaqin

Fell-ak tyereb-ay

Kecmay timdinin

Ay afrux-iw ay afrux-iw  
A win i ħubent wallen-iw

### *“Oh my Bird”*

Oh my bird, oh my bird  
The one my eyes love

Your shadow is ever with me

You are so dear to me

Your love is hard

And I tremble (my heart is quivering)

Oh my bird, oh my bird  
The one my eyes love

You are always in my mind  
You made me suffer  
Loving you is so harsh

You made my heart burn

Oh my bird, oh my bird  
The one my eyes love

I always think about you  
I am weak and helpless

Your separation is painful

I suffered martyrdom

Oh my bird, oh my bird  
The one my eyes love

If I knew you could save me  
You blue eyed one

For you I have been exiled

And seen many countries

Oh my bird, oh my bird  
The one my eyes love

### *“A yelli”*

A yelli a yelli  
A tin iyef i rehnay temzi-iw  
Ttxilem a yelli ur tettü lahdur- iw

A yelli yak tehsid  
Yemmam d acu tetteb  
Nniy-am ma tecfid  
Nniy-am yelha uhezab  
D tahedrit ad tilid  
Win yettamen yegrareb

Seu sena deg fus  
Yis ad tqableđ zman  
Ebgas qwem agus  
Ur tktetir laman  
Lwaqt n tura ixus  
Andat wul hninen

Yef liđal-im a yelli  
Swiy timerzuga  
Reybey-kem s tmuyli  
Tetteleabed di tesga  
Hderiy-am kem wali  
Yef ddunit amek i tegga

D kemm i seiyy hemmley-kem  
Iyi-yesebrahen d udem-im  
Rebbay-kem seyray-kem  
Tecbid tiziywin-im  
Yef zman wessay-kem  
Kemm tura ay abrid-im

### *“Oh my Daughter”*

Oh my daughter, oh my daughter  
You're the one for whom I sacrificed my  
youth  
I beg you, my daughter, not to forget my  
words

Dear daughter, you do know  
What your mom endured

I told you if you remember  
I told you that, level headedness is a virtue

And vigilant you must be  
And being naïve may be dangerous

Be crafted,  
Your job is your life armament

Be ready and on the alert

Don't be so Candide

We are living in a ruthless time

Good hearts are so scares

For you my daughter,  
I suffered martyrdom

I loved you with my eyes

While you were playing around

I conferred you about this life

And how it is, now up to you

To decide what to do

You are the one I love  
Your face makes me happy

I raised and educated you

To be equal to the children of your age

About these times I advised you

Now up to you to choose your own path

***“Mačči d leyna”***

Mačči d leyna ay tтыenny  
Dayen iæddan fell-i

Wwiy yelli d tamectuht  
Terwa yidi lemḥani

Aqliyi deg lyerba  
Nan-as medden temmut  
Teḍra-iyi am tṭir llil  
Yettbaddan tawwurt tawwurt  
Yef tmeezuzt n yemma  
Fell-as ur ḡḡiy tmurt

Mačči d leyna ay tтыenny  
Dayen iæddan fell-i  
Wwiy yelli d tamectuht  
Terwa yidi lemḥani

Aqliyi deg lyerba  
Nan-as medden tenfa  
Teḍra-iyi-d am tsekkurt  
Yettbaddan yef tewwura  
Yef tmeezuzt n yemma  
Fell-as rwiḡ lmeḥna

Mačči d leyna ay tтыenny  
Dayen iæddan fell-i  
Wwiy yelli d tamectuht  
Terwa yidi lemḥani

***“This is not Merely a Song”***

This is not merely a song  
But rather my real life’s sad story

Even my little daughter  
Was not spared its harshness

In exile I’m a drifter  
Considered among the dead  
Like a bat I’m  
Stayed through the darkness  
For my beloved mother  
I wandered all over the world

This is not merely a song  
But rather my real life’s sad story  
Even my little daughter  
Was not spared its harshness

In exile I’m a drifter  
Considered among the banned  
Like partridge I am  
Stayed through the darkness  
For my beloved mother  
A burden of woes exhausted me

This is not merely a song  
But rather my real life’s sad story  
Even my little daughter  
Was not spared its harshness

*“debbar tura”*

Ma tebyiḍ ad am neggal aḥeq sidi Hlal  
Argaz-im deg lpari ilaḥu d m userwal  
Taqbaylit aḥal tesbar, a yerra-tt i lmal

Debbar tura

Ma tebyiḍ ad am neggal aḥeq sidi Eic  
Argaz-im deg lpari la yettrebbi aqcic  
Taqbaylit aḥal tesbar, yerra-tt i laḥcic

Debbar tura

Ayen a tiḥdayin,  
A yessetma allah ya rebbi  
Tin yumnen argaz texla  
Ayen a yessetma yettak iles  
Ayen a lwaed-ik ya llah  
Ayen afus ixeddem lfeela ah  
Ayen a tigellilt a tin ufan d nniya

Ma tebyiḍ ad am neggal aḥeq tiqerrabin  
Argaz-im deg lparis la ilaḥu d trumyin  
Taqbaylit aḥal tesbar yerra-tt i tzemrin  
Debbar tura

*“Migrant’s Wife”*

To Sidi Hlal I swear, in fire I’d put my  
hand  
Your husband in Paris dating his mistress  
As you remain the forgotten shepherdess

Oh, patient Kabyliaian women!

How much long can you with stand?

I could swear to Sidi Aich in fire I put my  
hand

Your husband in Paris parenting a child  
While you are tasked to gather the grass

Oh, patient Kabyliaian woman!

How much long can you withstand?

You ladies and sisters

In same is she who henceforth trusts a man

Remember that men are great talkers

Take their words with a grain of salt

For god’s sake, why would they do that?

Oh poor wives, how innocent you are

To Tiqerrabin, I swear, in fire I’d put my  
hand

Your husband in Paris dating his French  
Mistress

As you remain the forgotten shepherdess

Oh, patient Kabyliaian woman!

How much long can you withstand?

***“Semħay-ak seg ul yesfan”***

Ma ttruy a medden d lheq-iw  
Ayen izad lxiq-iw  
Liħala-w ay tettyiđi  
Felbent-iyi lemħayen-iw  
Yeqbar wul-iw  
S imetți la ad yettfiđi  
Ayen akka ay tebyiđ a lbext-iw  
Tensa tafat-iw  
D tawenza ila iy-d-fkiđ  
Semħay-ak seg ul yesfan  
Dayen ettu ayen ieeddan  
  
Semħay-ak seg ul yesfan  
Xas ass-ed kfant lemħan  
Semħay-ak seg ul yesfan  
Dayen ettu ayen ieeddan  
  
A win ezizen fell-i  
Ncedha-k ak nwali  
Gas tyelteđ idelli  
Isemmaħ-ak ul ik-yebyan  
  
Lazem d uħdiq ad tiliđ  
Anwa wa læbd ur neyliđ  
Nessawel-agd ahat tesliđ  
Ur da-iy-d rennu lemħan  
  
D lewqam kan ik nebya  
Xas ass-ed sefraħ-ay dya  
Ur d ay-d-ttağğa ul yerya  
Yella smaħ ger imawlan

***“Wholehearted I forgive you”***

Don't fault me for my crying  
My repression has come to a head  
Pathetic, pitiful is my state  
The burden of woes exhausted me  
Beneath my chest a heavy heart  
Shedding rivers of tears  
What a misfortune! Why would you  
want that?  
My candle went out  
It is the fate predicated to me  
Wholehearted I forgive you  
Let us forget the past  
  
Wholehearted I forgive you  
Please, just come back for woes are over  
Wholehearted I forgive you  
Let's forget the past  
You apple of my eye  
My eyes are eager to see you  
Even if you were mistaken  
My loving heart forgave you  
  
Mindful you should be  
Nobody is perfect  
We call you, respond if you have heard  
Don't make things more difficult  
  
Come back, I wish you only the best  
Your return will be the rain of joy  
That puts off the fire ranging in my heart  
Wholehearted I forgive you

***“D eṛṛay-iw”***

D eṛṛay-iw i t-ixedmen d eṛṛay-iw  
Macci d nekk macci d medden d eṛṛay-iw

Asmi d-yussa eẓẓheṛ-iw nekk yufa-yid di  
lexla  
Lxalat meggrent irden nekk la meggrey  
tazudla  
Yessetma wagi d eẓẓheṛ Yerna-yas eṛṛay  
yexla

D eṛṛay-iw i t-ixedmen d eṛṛay-iw  
Macci d nekk macci d medden d eṛṛay-iw

Asmi d-yussa eẓẓheṛ-iw nekk yufa-yid di  
tegzirt  
Lxalat meggrent irden nekk la meggrey  
tamezirt  
Yessetma tid eezizen ay gura-tid af tenyirt

D eṛṛay-iw i t-ixedmen d eṛṛay-iw  
Macci d nekk macci d medden d eṛṛay-iw

A yessetma lukan d aneam a taruy di  
tebratin  
Yessetma lukan d lmaena ar neffey ar  
medden ar nissin  
A yessetma wagi d eẓẓheṛ ay gura di  
tgunziwin

D eṛṛay-iw i t-ixedmen d eṛṛay-iw  
Macci d nekk macci d medden d eṛṛay-iw

***“My Decisions”***

It is the fault of my decisions  
It’s neither my fault nor people’s  
It’s the fault of my decisions

When chance came to me I was on the  
field  
Women were mowing wheat while I was  
mowing lavender  
This is my misfortune added to my bad  
decisions

It is the fault of my decisions  
It’s neither my fault nor people’s  
It’s the fault of my decisions

When chance came to me I was on an  
island  
Women were mowing wheat and while I  
was mowing rose marry  
That’s what was predicted in my destiny

It is the fault of my decisions  
It’s neither my fault nor people’s  
It’s the fault of my decisions

If it was a matter of acceptance  
I would write “Yes” in a letter  
If it was an enigma  
I would ask people for solutions  
But, it is my fate  
How bad it is

It is the fault of my decisions  
It’s neither my fault nor people’s  
It’s the fault of my decisions

***“A mmi-s n tmurt”***

Semmḥey-ak a mmi-s n tmurt

Wwiḍ- d s lexbar-nney

Ssmaḥ a mmi-s n tsekkurt

Mmektaḍ- d tura ndemmey

Tewwi-k lhawa dayen

Mazal-ik deg lyeḥla

Teḡḡiḍ-iyi deg lemḥayen

Deg wul-iw tezga tawla

Ssmaḥ a win ḡlayen

Lḡerḥ-nney ncallah yeḥla

Ayen ay seiḡ itbir d ukyis

Ayen lmakla-s d absis

Tissit-is d aman n zzher

Asmi i as-hedrey yettḥessis

Hedd ur iyi-t-yekkis

Nekk ččiy netta yesser

Ma d tura ibeddel wul-is

Messus zzin-is

Mel-d kra n lehduḥ

Ma d tura dayen faqey

Ma d ayen ieddān ttuy-t

Ruḥey di lhawa ḡemqey

Qrib ḡerqey am lḥut

Fur-k ur n-ttuyaley

Tusa-d nuba n tefsut

Nekk ḡur-k ur n-ttuyaley

Tusa-d nuba n tefsut

***“I Forgive You Son of my Country”***

I forgive you, son of my country,  
I realized it

I forgave you partridge’s son

I remembered then I regretted it

You got lost

And you didn’t realize it

In my miseries, you left me

Fever sheltered my heart

I forgive you dear to me

Our wounds will be healed

What I have is a nice bird

Who feeds on seed

And orange blossom water

When I talk to him he listens

No one can take him away from me

I endured and he covered me

But now his heart has changed

Its charm has no taste

Shows us a few words

Now I realized it

And I forget everything that happened

I got deeply lost

I almost drowned like a fish

I will not come back to you

Giving way to spring

I will never come back to you

It’s springtime.

***“Kelfay-ak Rabbi”***

Kelefey-ak Rabbi tebniḍ-tt yef leyder

Imi-k netḥibi txedmeḍ lmenkar

Rebbi d awakil-ik a win iyi-ḍelmen

Umnay awal-ik ḥessbay-k d lmumen

A ziy yeqḥeḍ wul-ik yettyiḍ win ik-  
yumnen

Kelefey-ak Rabbi tebniḍ-tt yef leyder

Imi-k netḥibi txedmeḍ lmenkar

Lemḥibba-w tesfa zeddiget am waman

Tewwi-iyi tnafa tteudduy lliy deg ṭṭlam

Ziy rray-ik yenfa ur tessiḍ laman

Kelefey-ak Rabbi tebniḍ-tt yef leyder

Imi-k netḥibi txedmeḍ lmenkar

A nekk ur neḥric umney bu leklam

Felli yettnefcic a temzi-iw yessexreb

Ad sebrey maelic Rabbi ar tiaeaqeb

Kelefey-ak Rabbi tebniḍ-tt yef leyder

Imi-k netḥibi txedmeḍ lmenkar

***“May God Hold You to Account”***

May God hold you to account for your  
betrayal

I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt  
in turn

God will judge you, because you hurt me

I was once victim of your words

For I thought you were sincere

How malicious is your heart

Pitiful is he who trust you

May God hold you to account for your  
betrayal

I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt  
in turn

My love is a crystal clear water

I have been asleep and unaware, but I  
realized that you lost your mind

You are unfaithful

May God hold you to account for your  
betrayal

I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt  
in turn

I was so stupid believing his lies  
He despised me and ruined my youth  
No matter how long I may suffer  
He will appear before God

May God hold you to account for your  
betrayal

I gave you all my love, you gave me hurt  
in turn

*“A yul- iw”*

Sber a yul- iw i wayen iketben  
Eħbess a yizri-iw berka imetṭawen

Henni-iyi a yul byiy lehna tura  
Lehemm-iw idul tezmert meḍura  
Leetab-iw mqabul d aya- agi i yura

Anda-tt temzi-iw tinna akken ezizen  
Andat zin-iw winna akken ifazen  
Iri n tenyirt-iw d tṭlam iyi-iħussen

Tafsut yerza-tt unebdu  
kulec ad ifuk akken ara yebdu  
Lhemm-iw ttu-t ar ad yehdu

Ttruy yef lemħan jerbant wallen-iw  
imeṭṭawen lhan yak yejreḍ wudem-iw  
D ayen iyi-rhan sber-as a yul-iw

*“Oh Heart”*

Oh, my heart won't you be patient  
And accept your fate?  
Oh! My eyes stop shedding tears

Oh! My heart let me in peace  
That is, now, all what I need  
My health has been affected  
By long-lasting miseries I near  
I ought to accept my sufferings  
For it is my fate

Time has abducted my youth  
My beauty faded, is now a shriveled rose  
Because darkness is my destiny

The summer drought  
Swept across the spring  
My joy is always, nipped in the bud  
These are my miseries  
That will never give up

I cried so hard  
That I hurt my eyes  
And I could feel my tears  
Forming rivers on my cheeks  
That is what worries me  
Oh my heart be patient

**“Aḥ ya mali”**

Aḥ ya mali d acu ay nettwali  
Aeziz ttraḡuy izweḡ idelli

Netta yezweḡ, ass-is ifeḡḡeḡ  
Nek fell-i taewej itij-iw yeḡli

Aḥ ya mali d acu ay nettwali  
Aeziz ttraḡuy izweḡ idelli

Ul-iw yettæebbi, di sser yettyebbi  
I yexdem rebbi, kra i umnay yeḡli

Aḥ ya mali d acu ay nettwali  
Aeziz ttraḡuy izweḡ idelli

D nek it-yebyan, d ul-iw i yeryan  
Helk-aḡ deg ussan, tteawaz-aḡ lyali

Aḥ ya mali d acu ay nettwali  
Aeziz ttraḡuy izweḡ idelli

Ihenna wul-is, ieemar axxam-is  
Rḡiy ḡef lḡal-is ur d iy-id-yettwali

Aḥ ya mali d acu ay nettwali  
Aeziz ttraḡuy izweḡ idelli

Netta ihenna, d ayen imenna  
Ma d nekki leybina temmar-d fell-i

**“Oh my Goodness”**

Oh my goodness, I hardly believe  
The one I had always dream of  
Got married yesterday

While he his sun illuminates his day  
My sun went down leaving me in darkness

Oh my goodness, I hardly believe  
The one I had always dream of  
Got married yesterday

My heart full of unavowed secrets  
Oh my god, all my wishes evaporated

Oh my goodness, I hardly believe  
The one I had always dream of  
Got married yesterday

I loved him, his love is burning my heart  
Weak every day, awake every night

Oh my goodness, I hardly believe  
The one I had always dream of  
Got married yesterday

He leads a quiet life, enjoy his family  
I am suffering for him, but he doesn't care

Oh my goodness, I hardly believe  
The one I had always dream of  
Got married yesterday

He lives in peace, fulfilled his dreams  
(with whom he loves)

While my life is invaded by misfortunes