



## CHAPTER 1

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# Jazz and the Divide between Serious and Entertainment Music

If culture functions as a battleground for ideas, jazz provided such a battleground in postwar Germany, just as it did elsewhere in the world.<sup>1</sup> However, it did so for specifically German reasons. In the wake of defeat, Berendt and his fellow publicists sought to legitimate the music they admired, in a context where it had been widely disapproved of by many Germans from across the spectrum—including National Socialist ideologues, cultural conservatives, and critical theorists. This not inconsiderable task took over a decade until, by the late 1950s or early 1960s, jazz had become more or less socially accepted (Berendt 1957c; 1996a: 312; Fark 1971: 237; Schwab 2004: 140). It also took a great deal of energy and a range of resourceful strategies.

### **The West German Jazz Scene (1945–1961): A Sketch**

The social “arrival” of jazz was not simply a result of the activities of jazz publicists. It occurred in the context of a modest boom in interest among many younger Germans during the mid- to late 1950s (Schwab 2004: 137). The scale of this boom ought not be overestimated, however: the historian Michael Kater estimates that fewer than 10 percent of young Germans became jazz enthusiasts in the postwar era (2006).

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1. Cf., e.g., Starr 1994 (on jazz in the Soviet Union); Atkins 2001 (Japan); and Ansell 2004 (South Africa).

Their interest was, in turn, served by various media. Among these, radio was of critical importance. Following 1945, jazz was broadcast both on stations run by the occupying forces and on the newly established West German public broadcasters, including Berendt's employer, the SWF (Lange 1996: 145, 190–1). However, until the mid-1950s, jazz programs were broadcast solely in late-night time slots (Hoffmann 2000: 8). The print media were also important. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, however, most of the jazz periodicals that were established died a quick death (Hoffmann 1994: 91–2; Lange 1996: 192). Longer lived was the *Jazz Echo*, a supplement to *Die Gondel*, a Hamburg “girlie” magazine, which was first published in 1950 and continued into the mid-1960s.<sup>2</sup> Then, in 1952, the still-extant *Jazz Podium* was introduced, first as a supplement to a Viennese magazine and, by the following year, as an independent periodical in its own right (Lange 1996: 193).

At the grass roots level, enthusiasts banded together into so-called Hot Clubs, which were designed to share access to recordings, organize jam sessions and lectures, and—just as importantly—to lobby for the recognition of jazz as an art form. In 1950–51, three such groups formed the German Jazz Federation (DJF), an umbrella organization intended to continue these ministries on a broader scale and act as a “bulwark against [anti-jazz] defamation.” Soon the number of affiliated clubs had risen to forty. In 1952, it launched the *Jazz Podium* as its press organ, and in May 1953 it organized the first annual German Jazz Festival in Frankfurt am Main (“DJF: Bollwerk” 1953; Wunderlich 1968; Lange 1996: 187–9; Hoffmann 1999: 2; 2003b: 22–3).

When it came to live music, West German enthusiasts were entertained by touring American jazzmen—beginning with Duke Ellington's trumpeter Rex Stewart, who flew in to a blockaded Berlin in 1948, and increasing in the early 1950s with Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic and other visitors—as well as by local professionals and amateurs (Pfankuch 1988; Lange 1996: 202–03). German musicians found temporary engagements in a range of locations during the late 1940s and 1950s, including in so-called “Ami-Clubs” catering to U.S. soldiers stationed in the Federal Republic as well as in the clubs and jam sessions run by Hot Clubs and private entrepreneurs (Jost 1988a: 368–70; Lange 1996: 186). Many obtained regular employment in light music orchestras on the payroll of the public broadcasters. These orchestras catered to broad tastes and by no means restricted themselves to “pure” jazz, however that was to be understood. As in other parts of the world, jazz was not understood as just one style, either. In the late 1940s most Ger-

2. This supplement was largely carried by *Die Gondel's* larger non-jazz readership (Lange 1996: 193).

man jazzmen largely played in the Swing style familiar from before the War (Jost 1988a: 367–9). During the 1950s, some adopted earlier-still “trad” (traditional) styles. On the other hand, those interested in modern jazz typically had to undergo a phase of catching up with the rapid stylistic developments in American jazz. Years later, the pianist Michael Naura aptly dubbed this a “plagiatory epoch” (qtd. in Jost 1988a: 371).

Berendt’s relationship with the jazz scene sketched here was a complex one. As the SWF’s so-called “Jazz Editor”—a role he assumed when the position was created in 1949—he was well known to radio listeners. An active writer, he was also no stranger to those interested in reading about jazz. He was the author of numerous books, including the best-selling *Jazzbook* (1953); he edited the *Jazz Echo* under the pseudonym “Joe Brown” (Schwab 2004: 103; Schmidt-Joos 2005); and he contributed regularly to the *Jazz Podium*—except during one period in the mid-1950s when his relationship with its editor soured. Considering himself much too much of an individualist, he resiled from active membership of a Hot Club and also criticized such groups from time to time. However, he was still a member of the DJF and, indeed, acted as its press consultant during the 1950s (“Jazz und theoretische Physik” 1953; Schwab 2004: 118). Berendt was also an active public speaker, and throughout the 1950s he gave numerous talks at Hot Clubs and—perhaps more importantly—at other venues around Germany, including on behalf of the DJF. Through his employment, Berendt also had regular contact with many musicians: the SWF employed a big band, which performed regular radio concerts and, from 1952 to 1957, enjoyed considerable fame under the baton of Kurt Edelhagen (Lange 1996: 156). He was involved with various other engagements and commissions (including for his pioneering television series, *Jazz – Heard and Seen*) and also with awarding jazz prizes. When circumstances permitted, Berendt also engaged American musicians for radio programs, television broadcasts, and other events with which he was associated. Through both the radio and print media Berendt commented on and criticized American and German musicians as well. Hence, as his position as West Germany’s preeminent jazz authority became assured during the 1950s, he had considerable power to “consecrate” musicians. Although it is not entirely clear when the term “Jazz Pope” first emerged, it may well have been during this era.

## **Jazz in the Weimar Republic and Nazi Era**

To gain a proper appreciation of the cultural context in which Berendt operated, jazz’s checkered history in Germany needs to be recalled.

What was understood to be “jazz” may have been performed and recorded there in the disordered years following World War I. However, the first American performers were only heard live in the mid-1920s, after the German currency had stabilized (Jost 1988a: 357–9; Robinson 1994: 4). During the 1920s and early 1930s, the music enjoyed a certain vogue, but was never a mainstream success (Poiger 2000: 16).<sup>3</sup>

The new music polarized commentators. Conservatives often associated it with the idea of decadence, suggesting, for example, that it was “socially acceptable barbarism and stimulated propaganda, displaying only inner emptiness and abandonment” (Halfeld qtd. in Poiger 2000: 19). As Poiger points out, leftists “were perhaps most ambivalent about American cultural imports.” The gist of their criticism was that it was a “bourgeois product designed to manipulate the proletariat and to dissipate its revolutionary potential” (2000: 20, 21). On the other hand, there was also considerable enthusiasm for jazz during the Weimar years. Some progressive voices—including Alfred Baresel and H. H. Stuckenschmidt, who both continued to be critics in postwar West Germany—considered jazz to be a new art form worthy of respect. For them, it represented “potential for rejuvenating classical music gone stale in the works of postromantic epigones” (Kater 1992: 16–17). Various younger composers also engaged with jazz during the late 1920s: Ernst Krenek’s popular (1927) opera *Jonny Strikes Up* was influenced by the music, as was Brecht’s and Weill’s 1928 collaboration *The Threepenny Opera* (Jost 1988a: 362; Poiger 2000: 21). From 1928 until 1933, the respected Hoch’sche Conservatorium in Frankfurt am Main even offered a jazz course under the tutelage of the Hungarian émigré Mátyás Seiber, which was the first of its kind in the world (Kater 1992: 17; Steinert 1992: 64–5; Smith Bowers 2002: 121–5, 129).

### “Nigger-Jew-Jazz”

Hitler’s accession to power in 1933 represented a sharpening of tension in the climate surrounding jazz, and it was during this era that Berendt was first exposed to it. Conservative anti-jazz polemic had often been transfused with anxieties about the exaggerated, “primitive” sexuality of the Negro (Kater 1992: 22). However, National Socialist ideologues now included an extra dimension: jazz was also played and marketed by Jews. Accordingly, labels such as “Nigger-Jew-Jazz” and “jewified Nigger-music” were employed (Jost 1988a: 362; Kater 1992: 20, 32). A low

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3. On the “German Jazz Age,” see Kater 1992: 3–28; Robinson 1994: 4–7; Partsch 2000.

point in this Nazi campaign came with the 1938 Düsseldorf exhibition of “degenerate music,” which located jazz alongside the modernist music of composers such as Paul Hindemith and the Jewish Arnold Schoenberg (Dümling and Girth 1988; Dümling 1994).

The objection to “Nigger-Jew-Jazz” was clearly not simply an aesthetic one. The music also symbolized “a Jewish-Negro plot to undermine Germanic culture” (Kater 1992: 24). As Kater observes, Blacks were seen as being naively responsible for the sexual component of jazz, whereas Jews were thought to be using jazz as part of a plan to poison the blood of German women by “seducing them through acts of ‘musical race defilement’” (1992: 33). Indeed, it was partly jazz’s racial indeterminacy that made it so offensive. Tellingly, the National Socialist Richard Litterscheid noted in 1936: “It was only after the ‘white’ American bands picked up the stimulus of Nigger-Jazz, that the actual Anglo-American-Negro hybrid product of jazz came into being” (qtd. in Hoffmann 1996: 99). Jazz was considered dangerous because it was an aural version of—and bodily temptation toward—the miscegenation that the National Socialists sought to outlaw under the Nuremberg Laws and that offended their ideology of “pure” racial (and cultural) essences.

Various piecemeal bans on radio broadcasts and jazz dancing were instituted in the name of National Socialism. Nevertheless, there was never a blanket ban, and the National Socialist position was characterized by both persecution *and* ambivalence, as Poiger observes (Jost 1988a: 362–6; Lange 1988: 391; Fackler 1994: 441–3; Poiger 2000: 22). Indeed, jazz and jazzlike light music were actually used at various times by the Third Reich, both as anti-British propaganda and as so-called “German Dance- and Entertainment Music” (Kater 1992: 111–35; 1994: 72–3; Bergmeier and Lotz 1996; 1997). For various reasons—including economic ones—ideological opposition to jazz was not pursued to the hilt: often jazz was turned into “German Dance Music” simply by changing a song title or swapping a saxophone for a violin (Dümling 1994: 60; Fackler 1994: 452–8).

## **Opposition to Jazz and Postwar Liberalism: A Program**

After the defeat of 1945, many Germans continued to voice their opposition to jazz. The public expression of such views reached an early high-point in 1947–48, when the newly established radio magazine *Hör Zu* published a slew of readers’ letters objecting to broadcasts of the music (Fark 1971: 178–80). Berendt also observed in 1950 that arrogant, ill-informed opposition to jazz manifested itself in many letters received

by the broadcasters (1950a: 89). In the late 1940s he even received a warning from a disgruntled SWF listener stating that unless he stopped broadcasting jazz, “a pair of good German male fists (!) would introduce the right rhythm to him” (Berendt 1996a: 313). In this context, he all but equated Germanness with being opposed to jazz (1950a: 88).

Vehemently anti-jazz attitudes survived well into the 1950s. In December 1953, for example, a correspondent to the *Konstanz Südkurier* referred to jazz as “a music carried primarily by impulses of the blood and the will,” and which was “fundamentally foreign to our being, [it is] subterranean and inflammatory.” It might be appropriate for a “Negro-milieu,” this writer opined, but not for the Occident (Münz 1953). It was only between 1954 and 1958 that anti-jazz tirades gradually tapered off and the balance of media coverage shifted from value-laden position taking such as this to more informative reporting (Fark 1971: 274–5).

In the context of this vociferous opposition, Berendt and others took the understandable view that there was an ideological hangover from National Socialist anti-jazz indoctrination (Berendt n.d.d.; Schreiber 1958; Zimmerle 1960). Overcoming postwar anti-jazz sentiment was therefore practically raised to a moral duty: as Berendt observed in 1950, exposure to radio listeners’ anti-jazz letters was reason itself to be pro-jazz (1950a: 89). Although such moralizing comments were partly just another way of lobbying for the recognition of jazz, the stakes were also understood to be considerably higher.

Indeed, for Berendt, the task of legitimating jazz was located within the project of liberalizing German society after 1945:

It concerned something [that was] societal, [something] fundamentally political. It concerned making the cultural life—and with it the consciousness—in our land more worldly, open and tolerant, [and] less nationally circling around itself, less oriented towards itself. (1996a: 314)

This task was consistent with Berendt’s harrowing personal experience of having lost his father to Dachau, and also with his background as a soldier who witnessed (at least) the atrocities of the Eastern Front.<sup>4</sup> The desire for a new, liberal Germany was also consistent with a characteristically postwar West German *Weltanschauung* conditioned by the trauma of National Socialism. According to Peter O’Brien, this *Welt-*

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4. Unfortunately, it was not possible to uncover official sources relating to Berendt’s career as a junior officer in the *Wehrmacht*. His memoir, however, contains several reflections on his military career and reveals that he participated in the siege of Leningrad (1996a: 269–70, 399).

*anschauung* interprets modern German history as a drawn out struggle between German nationalism and Western liberalism, and is based on an anxiety caused by the memory of the Weimar Republic's failure. Seeking to explain this failure, some West German intellectuals argued that Germans were somehow "philosophically predisposed" to welcome a dictator promising a "utopian community" (O'Brien 1996: 24). Historians and sociologists posited a *Sonderweg* (special path) to modernity, which involved a "modernized society without a modernized (that is, liberal) citizenry" (O'Brien 1996: 30–1). Accordingly, German illiberalism was a "dormant virus always capable of revival" (O'Brien 1996: 39). The result was a strong investment in (technocratic) liberalism and a compulsion to "keep vigilant watch for the slightest traces of nationalist revival" (O'Brien 1996: 3).

This philosophy manifested itself in much of Berendt's discourse about music. However, his arguments often contained paradoxes, and there were contradictions between the liberal position he took as a writer and the practices he sometimes pursued. Berendt was a complex man: if he was touched by a liberalizing zeal, he was also a highly ambitious individual who wished to establish himself as West Germany's leading jazz authority. As will be seen, he wished to provoke thought, and ostensibly embraced the stance of the tolerant liberal humanist, yet he also reacted aggressively to the slightest criticism, and wished to maintain his authority by having the last word in debates.

### **"Jazz in a Tuxedo"**

With a strong emotional attachment to jazz—first sparked when he chanced on a broadcast of Swing music in 1936—and with his liberalizing project and his ambition to motivate him, Berendt answered postwar opposition first and foremost by pointing out jazz's artistic credentials. This is a recurrent theme in his first two books, *Jazz: A Time-Critical Study* (1950) and *The Jazzbook* (1953), the very writing of which was partly an attempt to have the music taken *seriously*.

Berendt's attitude was not without precedent. Indeed, jazz had a history of being treated seriously, both on the continent and at home. During the 1920s and 1930s, the francophone "founding fathers of jazz studies"—Robert Goffin, Hugues Panassié, and Charles Delaunay—had each written about "authentic," "hot" jazz as a folk music with artistic merit (Gioia 1988: 19–49, 28). Weimar writers had also published books devoted to jazz (cf. Pollack 1922; Baresel 1926; Bernhard 1927; Egg 1927). The first Carnegie Hall jazz concert, in 1938, marked jazz's

“coming of age” in the United States and led to increased jazz writing and research there (Gioia 1997: 152. See also Gennari 2006). Stylistic changes in the jazz world also contributed to the trend toward seriousness: indeed the avant-garde beboppers of the 1940s, and many of the modernists who followed them, were increasingly associated with a “*l’art pour l’art*” perspective (Gioia 1988: 71–2).

Berendt’s deadly serious “*time-critical study*” was written in a remarkable year for the 27-year-old. The Federal Republic was only a year old, and, on the personal front, he had married, become a father, and just been appointed jazz editor at the SWF. His was not the first postwar German-language jazz book, but it was the first to be published in Germany (cf. Back 1948; Slawe 1948). It is short—more like an extended essay, really—and deliberately pitched at an intellectual audience, albeit one with no particular love for the nineteenth century and its cultural manifestations. The book is notable for what it avoids, namely any strict musical analysis of jazz pieces—never Berendt’s concern, given his lack of academic training—or any chronicle of jazz musicians or stylistic changes in the idiom. Instead, it is unique in the international jazz literature—an overwhelmingly ambitious and speculative attempt to link jazz with a range of twentieth-century phenomena, including existential philosophy, modern art, literature, historiography, participatory democracy, and—Berendt’s particular hobby horse—theoretical physics!<sup>5</sup> In this way, *Jazz* attempted to gain legitimation for its subject by association.

Although *Jazz* received a lukewarm reception from some fans, was rejected by conservative music pedagogues because of its celebration of ecstasy, and Berendt himself was later dissatisfied with it, it was regarded highly enough by the U.S. administration to garner him a three-month trip to the United States as part of the Cultural Exchange Program (Kaestner 1951; Kleber 1953: 63; Berendt 1996a: 291; Lange 1996: 195).<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to overestimate the value of this debut American trip for Berendt. In addition to spurring a taste for international travel that would grow and inform his production activities over the following decades, he gathered valuable experience of jazz in its home environment—like other Europeans before him, including the important critic Leonard Feather, Berendt made a beeline for Harlem. During the trip, he assembled a wealth of material which he then worked through for his epochal *Jazzbook*. It was presumably also at this time that he began to develop his philosophy regarding jazz writing—like Feather and Nat

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5. He actually began to study theoretical physics shortly before his conscription into the *Wehrmacht* in 1941 (Berendt 1996a: 267).

6. On the program, see, e.g., Ermarth 1993: 13–14.



Hentoff, he regarded a proximity to, and indeed intimacy with, the musicians about whom one was writing to be essential (see, e.g., Berendt 1977a: 408 ff). This philosophy would be further cemented on Berendt's second extended trip to the United States in 1960, when he and the Californian photographer William Claxton made a three-month road trip across the country, visiting jazzmen in their home environments. Being a European helped Berendt gain proximity to the musicians too. Claxton observes that "most of [the American musicians whom they encountered] took to him right away. It helped that he was from another country, which made him even more interesting to them" (2005: 28).

The *Jazzbook* differed markedly from its predecessor. A work of greater maturity, and more of a piece with other works of jazz history being written in the United States and Europe during this era, it also seemingly had less to prove. While still avoiding any rigorous musicological approach, it was far more informative about jazz itself—with the result that it was much more readable. Berendt gave clear treatments of what, for him, were jazz's essential characteristics. He also included musicians' biographies, descriptions of the typical jazz instruments and their leading exponents, a discography, and—most importantly—a plausible outline of the way in which jazz had developed in accordance with a "decade-by-decade" model. This quality of stylistic development was, for him, the most imposing thing about jazz: "it has proceeded with the



**Figure 3** | Berendt and the Modern Jazz Quartet's John Lewis enjoy a meal. Courtesy of the Jazzinstitut Darmstadt. Used with permission.

same degree of consistency and logic, necessity and completeness, which signifies the development of genuine art since the beginning” (1953a: 14). The “jazz development” was one of the central bases upon which Berendt made jazz’s claim for high art status. However, this progressivist notion of the jazz tradition was not his alone—as Scott DeVaux shows, it is a common trait of many jazz histories (1997: 5–8). In the United States, it had been advanced during the postwar era both by the Marxist-minded Sidney Finkelstein (*Jazz: A People’s Music* [1947]) and by his fellow critic, Barry Ulanov (*History of Jazz in America* [1952]), albeit to satisfy differently weighted interpretations of the jazz phenomenon (Gennari 2006: 140 ff). In Europe, it was likewise formulated in the Frenchman André Hodeir’s *Jazz: Its Evolution and Essence* (1954). The *Jazzbook*’s eye-catching family tree diagrams, which neatly illustrated the way in which jazz had developed over the years also resembled those used by the American historian of jazz, Marshall Stearns in 1952 (cf. Gennari 2006: 206).

The *Jazzbook* was a cheaply priced Fischer paperback. This, together with its informative nature and authoritative tone, and the fact that it was pitched at both enthusiasts and skeptics, contributed to the astonishing success of the book. Although there were a number of other German-language jazz books by 1953, the *Jazzbook* was the market leader (cf. Finkelstein 1951; Schulz-Köhn 1951; Twittenhoff 1953; Usinger 1953). It clearly struck a chord: as one reviewer noted, it was a book that was long overdue and it became, as Lange observes, the basis for many young Germans’ knowledge about jazz (Harth 1954: 45; Lange 1996: 195). More so than its obscure predecessor, the *Jazzbook* contributed to legitimating jazz. However, Berendt by no means let his pen rest with the *Jazzbook*. Yet another way in which he continued to advance his task was to delineate various links between jazz and “classical” music, extending beyond a shared notion of progressive stylistic development.

## Jazz and New Music

In postwar West Germany, the parameters of debates about jazz were set by a landscape made up of the rigid opposites of *Ernstes-Musik* (“serious” music) and *Unterhaltungs-Musik* (“entertainment” music) (Berendt 1950b: 216; Adorno 1962: 21). As will be shown, there were many reasons why an association between jazz and *U-Musik* was considered undesirable. However, there were also positive reasons for associating jazz with certain types of *E-Musik*—beyond the bald symbolic capital residing in the latter. Firstly, various composers—from Ernest Ansermet, Dar-

ius Milhaud, and Igor Stravinsky to Hindemith, Krenek, and Weill—had engaged with jazz in the past (Berendt 1959f; Widmaier 1966; Schatt 1995). For Berendt, making an association between jazz and *E-Musik* must also have seemed rather natural. For one, he had a modest background in *E-Musik*, having taken piano lessons as a boy, and even occasionally played the organ in his father's church (T. Koch 1985). His work at the SWF also brought him into close contact with Heinrich Strobel, who was head of music there and who resuscitated earlier *E-Musik* institutions, including the highbrow music journal *Melos* (in 1946) and the famed Donaueschingen Music Days (1950) after their demise under the Nazis (Häusler 1996:133–5). Strobel acted as a mentor to the young Berendt, and in all likelihood encouraged his first music criticism, which included several pieces on New Music (Berendt 1996a: 286–9).<sup>7</sup>

The association with Strobel was particularly fruitful (Berendt 1996a: 286–9). Importantly, the older man was open to jazz; during the Weimar era, he himself had written positively about it (Robinson 1994: 7). As editor of *Melos*, he now published articles by Berendt on jazz and a wide range of other subjects, including *U-Musik*, the radio, and “Americana.” As artistic director of the Donaueschingen Music Days, he also welcomed jazz into the program in 1954 and 1957 (Berendt 1996b: 408–9; Häusler 1996: 133–5). “Symphonic Jazz” was also granted a presence at an international music festival hosted by Strobel and the SWF in 1955 (Berendt 1996a: 286). In 1954 and 1955, Strobel and Berendt even commissioned compositions combining jazz and contemporary concert music, an idea that had intrigued Berendt since 1952 at least (cf. Berendt 1952d: 103).

In 1954, they commissioned the Swiss Rolf Liebermann to compose a *Concerto for Jazz-Band and Symphony Orchestra* (Berendt 1996b: 408). This hybrid composition was well received by audience and *E-Musik* press alike, and was subsequently performed in the United States, where the musician and musicologist Gunther Schuller was about to start his own “Third Stream” proselytizing (Ruppel 1954; “Jazz auf den Donaueschinger Musiktagen” 1954; “Jazz News” 1955b; Berendt 1996b: 408).<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, there was debate—including from Berendt himself—about whether the combination was meaningful, given that the jazzmen had been given no room to improvise (“Brown” 1954c; Berendt and Claxton 1961: 238). Regardless, Berendt considered experiments

7. The Jazzinstitut's catalogue of Berendt's articles indicates that many of the articles he wrote between 1947 and 1949 related to New Music rather than to jazz.

8. Schuller developed his famous concept of a “Third Stream” of music independent from—but drawing on—the jazz and concert music traditions in the mid- to late 1950s (see, e.g., Schuller 1961; Kumpf 1975b 16–18; Hellhund 1986).

such as these *necessary*, given that critics—he was uncharacteristically modest enough not to mention himself—had long theorized about the matter (1955b: 11). Putting the question of aesthetic success to one side, the West German jazz press rightly recognized the symbolic importance of the Donaueschingen concert: it marked a victory in jazz’s strive for recognition as an art form (“Brown” 1954c; Lippmann 1954).

Just as important for the acceptance of jazz in West German cultured circles was the performance of America’s Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ) at Donaueschingen and elsewhere in 1957. Berendt had neatly paved the way for this. In 1955, he had championed its sophisticated music to *Melos* readers (1955d). The following year he invited it to perform at a Freiburg concert celebrating the SWF’s one thousandth jazz program, after which it embarked on a lengthy national tour organized by the DJF (Nass 1956; “Jazz News” 1956e; 1957c). That tour culminated in a performance at Donaueschingen in October 1957—where jazz was again squarely featured (Curjel 1957: 328). If the MJQ’s dinner suits, serious demeanor, and performances in high art venues aided the bourgeois acceptance of jazz in West Germany (Schwab 2004: 124), then the presence of jazz at Donaueschingen in 1954 and 1957 surely also contributed to its “arrival.”

While Donaueschingen provided an opportunity for experimentation, a pair of extended articles and accompanying lecture tours gave Berendt the opportunity to theorize extensively on the links between jazz and *E-Musik*. These articles were published in a 1959 volume co-edited by Berendt in which they rubbed shoulders with serious *E-Musik* criticism by the likes of Theodor Adorno (!), a coup that was not lost on jazz critics (Schmidt-Joos 1959b). In “Jazz and New Music” (1959f)—which, in its lecture format, was accompanied by music from the Hans Koller combo, one of West Germany’s leading modern groups—Berendt made perhaps the first sustained attempt to analyze the links between those two idioms (cf. Schmidt-Joos 1959c). In retrospect, the parallels explored—including a joy in playing, and an interest in rhythm and linearity—seem somewhat simplistic. The assertion that some modern jazzmen improvised solos that corresponded closely, yet unconsciously, with Hindemith’s theories in *The Craft of Music Composition* (1941–5) is also highly speculative. Berendt is on much stronger territory, however, when examining the ways in which musicians and composers from each of the two camps had engaged with the other over the years. While critical of these efforts—New Music composers failed to grasp the peculiarities of jazz (i.e., improvisation, an individual tone and “swing”) and jazzmen’s improvisations lacked the superior form of *E-Musik*—Berendt posited that both New Music and jazz were now arriving in similarly

atonal territory. Arguing against a conflation of the two (based on an again somewhat simplistic dichotomy between *emotional* jazz and *intellectual* New Music<sup>9</sup>), he nevertheless urged that each idiom should retain an awareness of and “longing” for the other—whatever that might mean in practice.

The fact that Berendt and his co-editor Jürgen Uhde won an article from Adorno for the same volume in which such ruminations appeared is remarkable, given that they would have been anathema to the older man. Only a few years earlier, Adorno had taken Berendt to task in the journal *Merkur* for allying jazz with Stravinsky’s and Hindemith’s modernism, and with the avant-garde generally. There he argued that autonomous *E-Musik*—in particular his favored school of Viennese modernism—was far more advanced than jazz in just those areas that Berendt claimed it was “modern,” namely tonal variation, atonality, and polyphony. By comparison, jazz was thoroughly “tame” (Adorno 1953a: 891–2. See also 1962: 25).

## Jazz and Old Music

Berendt’s other attempt to link jazz with the *E-Musik* tradition was similarly controversial, but clearly struck more of a chord among the populace. “Jazz and Old Music”—the brainchild of pianist Wolfgang Lauth—was a collaboration between Berendt and the music historian Dr. Josef Tröller, with music from Lauth’s combo, J. S. Bach, and the MJQ. The lecture tour, which teased out parallels between jazz and Baroque music, quickly became a success. After premiering in Mannheim in January 1956, it toured throughout the rest of the year. A commercial recording was released and won the German Critics’ Prize in 1957–8, and a film version was even made and selected to represent West Germany at the Venice Biennale (Lauth n.d.: 22–5; “Debatten um” 1956; “Jazz News” 1956a; 1956f; 1957a; 1957c; 1958b; Berendt and Tröller 1959). *Jazz Podium* praised the record highly and stressed its value as a tool for the jazz enlightenment of (older) cultured citizens: “[It is a] record which one ought to own, in order to play it to one’s parents and teachers, during discussions at universities and in [one’s] circle of friends, simply everywhere where a lack of clarity about jazz exists” (Rev. of *Jazz und Alte Musik* 1958).

However, the project also had its critics within the jazz scene. Some complained that the parallels identified—such as the commonality of

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9. Cf. Gioia 1988: 33.

improvisation—tended to be superficial. Others perceptively observed that the whole concept implied that jazz only had value insofar as it could be related to art music (“Debatten um” 1956; Ganns 1956). While Berendt strenuously dismissed this criticism at the time, it did have a grain of truth to it; he later confessed that the comparisons he made with Bach et al. were indeed a strategy intended to “justify” jazz (“Jazz News” 1956b; Berendt 1996a: 154).

## Jazz and Musical Romanticism?

If Berendt was keen to draw parallels between jazz and New and/or Baroque music, then he showed a distinct ambivalence toward the Romantic concert music of the nineteenth century. Musical Romanticism was, according to one musicologist, not so much a “definable style” as a “spiritual attitude.” In this scheme, the composer was revered as all-important, an artistic genius able to transform primal sound into music. Particularly in late Romanticism, the performer was supposed to submit unquestioningly to the free artistic will of this composer (Blume 1979: 103, 112). It was about just such Romantic precepts that Berendt expressed his distaste (see, e.g., Berendt 1957d: 23–4). In general, he took the view that jazz evaded the *Weltanschauung* that beleaguered Romantic music. In his first book, he even opposed jazz to the Romantic conception of music (1950a: 91. See also Berendt and Tröller 1959: 174, 182; Berendt 1957d: 26; 1959f: 184; 1959h).

The critical attitude toward Romantic music was possibly inherited from Heinrich Strobel, who himself was decidedly anti-Romantic (Häusler 1996: 134). It may also have been too much of a stretch to simultaneously profess one’s interest in modernist New Music *and* the Romanticism against which it rebelled. But the distaste was also typical of a postwar West Germany, in which some considered that Romanticism had contributed to the rise of National Socialism (O’Brien 1996: 24). Late German Musical Romanticism did have distinct nationalist connotations (Blume 1979: 175–6, 178; Longyear 1988: 212, 283). Moreover, the music and anti-Semitism of the Romantic composer Richard Wagner had directly influenced National Socialism (Sontag 1980: 149–50; Van der Will 1995: 133–5). As Susan Sontag puts it: “Hitler has contaminated Romanticism and Wagner, . . . much of nineteenth-century German culture is, retroactively, haunted by Hitler” (1980: 151). It is therefore unsurprising that Berendt was uncomfortable with the concepts of a Romantic composer dictating a performer’s interpretation, or pre-programming a listener’s emotional responses (see, e.g., Berendt and Tröller 1959: 174).

Nevertheless, his interpretation of jazz was not without its Romantic elements. In 1963, his fellow critic Baldur Bockhoff diagnosed a thoroughly Romantic tendency in Berendt's and others' focus on "truth," "vitality," and "authenticity" in jazz: "What is this if not a weak echo of that Romantic longing for the Blue Flower?" (1963: 916). As Ted Gioia has also shown, it can certainly be argued that jazz—with its focus on the individual musician and the way in which improvisation is thought to lay bare his or her soul—is a thoroughly Romantic art form (1988: 81–4).

### **Jazz and *U-Musik***

Berendt's 1950s discourse about the aesthetic location of jazz had another complicating dimension. While negotiating a complex line in relation to the links between jazz and *E-Musik*, he was also involved in shoring up a by-no-means-clear distinction between jazz and *U-Musik*.

Initially, the distinction was one that seemed to be of comparatively little interest to him. From 1946 until 1949, he was responsible for all *U-Musik* programming at the SWF and even penned several would-be *Schlager* (pop songs) in the era (Berendt 1996a: 290–91). Around this time he also professed a desire to remove what he called the "theoretical, to all intents and purposes 'bureaucratic' cleavage" between *E-Musik* and *U-Musik* (1950b: 216). Indeed, he noted in 1953, "it does not so much depend on the distinction between 'culture' and 'entertainment' as that between good and bad music, and there is good and bad in both fields" (1953c: 44).

Berendt might have occasionally opined during the late 1940s and early 1950s that "authentic" jazz bridged the divide between *E-* and *U-Musik* (see, e.g., 1950b: 217). Under pressure, however, it clearly fell for him on the *E-Musik* side, particularly as the 1950s progressed. And so he went to lengths to distinguish between "true" jazz and the commercial *Schlager*. The former was said to be emotionally honest, the latter insincerely sentimental. Jazz also had the swing, improvisation, and individual tone that the *Schlager* lacked. In fact, the *Schlager* was nothing more than a commercialized derivative of true, artistic jazz (1950a: 38–43; 1953a: 10; 1959f: 188).

This theoretically clear dichotomy between art and commerce broke down, however, not only if one took the past into account but also within the context of the 1950s West German jazz scene, as even Berendt was sometimes forced to concede. For example, while he considered George Gershwin to have been a purveyor of commercialized "lemonade-like" symphonic jazz (that is, not true jazz), he acknowledged that Gershwin's

melodies still had artistic merit (1951: 80; 1959f: 189–91). He also had to admit that jazz had often had a very close relationship with popular music. Notably, the jazz of the 1930s “Swing” era had been very popular, as he conceded to Adorno in 1953 (1953b: 888).

No wonder, then, that not all members of the West German jazz scene wished to make—or were capable of making—a sharp distinction between “true” jazz and popular music. Some older jazz authorities such as Alfred Baresel were accused of being unable to distinguish between the two (“Brown” 1953c). To make matters worse, musicians refused to respect the border, “straying” from jazz into the pop domain despite the imperious protestation of critics like Berendt.<sup>10</sup> By performing quite mixed repertoires, the radio orchestras, too, did not alleviate the situation (cf. Jost 1988a: 367–8). As the first *Gondel* readers’ poll—conducted in late 1952—indicated, there was considerable confusion among fans as to whether particular musicians might be counted as jazz musicians or not. Prior to the poll, “Brown” urged readers to bear in mind the difference between jazz and dance or *Schlager* music. Despite this, he acknowledged that the *Gondel* team could not afford to be too harsh on those who got it wrong, particularly when it came to selecting singers in the “German” category (“Brown” 1952a: 62). In 1950s West Germany, the distinction between popular music and jazz was therefore clearly not as demarcated as Berendt might have declared. Why then was it insisted upon?

## The Stigma of *U-Musik*

There were several reasons why Berendt eschewed links between jazz and *U-Musik*. He was interested in installing jazz on the same level as *E-Musik*, which militated against elaborating links with *E-Musik*’s schematic opposite, in a context where *U-Musik* was a priori second-rate (see, e.g., Berendt 1950b: 215). Secondly, the established jazz literature already exhibited a deep anticommmercialism. In addition, since the advent of bebop, many musicians and critics were interested in distancing modern jazz from dance and the mass market (DeVeaux 1997: 8, 12–15). There was also a pragmatic motivation to dissociate jazz from

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10. Cf “Brown’s” urging that Caterina Valente ought to keep her jazz and her *Schlager* singing strictly separate (“Jazz News” 1954b: 45) or his warning to Wolfgang Sauer that once jazz singers started singing *Schlager*, they damaged their ability to sing jazz (“Jazz News” 1954c). Paradoxically, Berendt himself enthused occasionally about singers such as Lena Horne, who crossed the line and succeeded in singing *Schlager* without disowning the jazz tradition (1952b: 26).



popular music: in the Federal Republic, concerts and film screenings were taxed at different rates depending on the artistic rating assigned to them. If jazz could be designated the status of art music, it would be exempt from the entertainment tax.<sup>11</sup> Another important reason militating against too close an association between jazz and popular music was the notorious position taken by Theodor Adorno, who steadfastly located jazz as a form of popular music within an insidious Culture Industry.

Adorno comprehensively registered his opposition to jazz in 1932, and his last major word came thirty years later. However, there is an internal consistency within his essays, which justifies their being considered together (Schaal 1983: 19; Robinson 1994: 2; Partsch 2000: 250–1). The essays have caused much consternation and, as Heinz Steinert observes, the secondary literature on Adorno tends not to take them altogether seriously (1992: 22–3). Hence, they are often dismissed as racist, elitist, and ignorant (Schönherr n.d.: 2). Adorno's interpretation has several dimensions: a musicological analysis investigating jazz's relationship with *E-Musik*; a sociological study of jazz's affinity with totalitarianism and its relationship with the Culture Industry; and a psychoanalysis of the jazz musician and recipient (Schönherr n.d.: 4). Adorno's interpretation of the relationship between jazz and *E-Musik* has been considered above, and his sociological study and psychoanalysis will be examined in the next chapter when I analyze postwar debates about young Germans' "jazz enthusiasm." Here I will focus solely on his positioning of jazz as a form of *U-Musik*.

For Adorno, "even in its more sophisticated forms jazz is popular music" (1962: 33). He established this by noting that jazz often employed a *Schlager* melody (or something similarly banal) and that the same basic rhythm was to be found in both jazz and popular music (see e.g. 1953a: 891–2). Moreover, jazz was produced and distributed by the commercial music industry: hence, it was "a commodity in the strict sense" (1936: 473). Jazz was also properly to be seen as a functional (dance) music, rather than as having any inherent aesthetic value: "Jazz is not what it 'is' ... it is what it is used for" (1936: 472). Despite jazz's ostensible stylistic change (codified in Berendt's "decade model"), Adorno considered it static, a "perennial fashion": with "the periodic revivals of hot jazz under different names merely vitamin injections into the monotony of mass production" (1953a: 891; 1953b).

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11. I thank Bernd Hoffmann for pointing this out to me. On this topic, see Hoffmann 2003b. This was a live issue for Berendt: his 1953 short film *Jazz – Yesterday and Today* fell foul of the tax, in that it was unable to get an artistic rating high enough for West German movie houses to be interested in showing it ("Brown" 1954b).

As Cornelius Partsch observes, the strength of Adorno's jazz essays is his analysis of the production side of what he and Max Horkheimer in 1947 called the Culture Industry (2000: 268 n.137). This term refers to "the standardization and rationalization of the methods of dissemination and not ... to the actual process of cultural production" (Burns 1995b: 2). The standardization ensured that cultural products were the same despite the appearance of individuality. Hence, the totalizing Culture Industry promised consumers an escape from everyday drudgery, yet it was the same old drudgery they found in culture (Adorno and Horkheimer 1947: 150). Art renounced its own autonomy and proudly took its place among consumer goods (Adorno and Horkheimer 1947: 166). Moreover, fusions of *E-* and *U-Musik* abounded (Adorno and Horkheimer 1947: 144). On the reception side, the "dumbing-down" effect was clear: "the mass phenomenon of popular music undermines the autonomy and independence of judgment" (Adorno 1962: 38). This was a matter of no little concern in postwar Germany: my next chapter will show how the Culture Industry (and jazz in particular) was understood to link in with authoritarian behavior and fascist potential.

## Berendt versus Adorno

While this interpretation seems dated now, it commanded serious attention in postwar Germany and elicited a prominent response from Berendt. After Adorno's return from the United States, he made a renewed contribution to West German jazz discourse in a June 1953 article in the highbrow journal *Merkur* (1953b). Berendt—who had already contributed an article on racial discrimination in the United States to the journal in 1952 (1952e)—was encouraged by the editor Hans Paeschke to respond and agreed not only because he wanted to establish jazz's credentials, but also because it represented another prestigious publication for him. He may even have had in mind the publicity that the controversy might create for his forthcoming *Jazzbook*. However, the tussle with Adorno and the fact that Paeschke gave the elder man the final word upset Berendt. Nor did the exchange cause Adorno to revise his ideas about jazz, despite Berendt's latter suggestion to the contrary (Broecking 2002: 43–9). Indeed, Adorno may well have had Berendt in mind when he spoke disparagingly of the "Jazz Expert" type of fan in his 1962 *Introduction to the Sociology of Music* (1962: 12–14).<sup>12</sup> More importantly, the *Merkur* debate represented an opportunity to think through

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12. Cf. Adorno's comments about Berendt in 1953 (1953a: 891).

Adorno's theory about the Culture Industry, yet Berendt did not make the most of that chance (Steinert 1992: 20).<sup>13</sup>

Berendt's reply consisted mainly in invoking the distinction between "true" jazz and commercialized *Schlager* music. Hence, "true" jazz was neither dance music nor the stuff of the hit parade: "Since the beginning, jazz has been a music of the few for the few, whereas *Schlager* music has perhaps the largest audience that anything existing today has." Having thus created a special place for "true" jazz, he then paralleled it with *E-Musik*, particularly the music of Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Bach (1953b: 887–9). He did not engage in any significant way with the idea of the Culture Industry itself. As Steinert asserts, Berendt's type of argument does not challenge the inherited notion of art, it simply reapplies it. Moreover, it erects a false divide between "true" jazz and "pure" commerce (Steinert 1992: 137). There is, however, a dialectical relationship between jazz, art, popular music, and commerce. Jazz is, in David Horn's words, "in a dialogue with both 'art' and popular culture" (1991: 103).

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In 1950s West Germany, jazz was in the process of legitimation. This was partly a result of the rise of a new habitus held by a segment of educated young West Germans, who were well disposed to (certain) American popular culture (Maase 1992: 177). Jazz's potential to challenge some of the received conceptions of high art was immanent within the music itself. As Nicholas Evans notes, "jazz's aesthetic status cannot easily be labelled. ... [It] blurs the lines between commonly accepted ideas about ... art, thereby raising questions about those ideas" (2000: 11). However, in the 1950s, the high/low dichotomy remained influential with opponents of jazz as well as with lobbyists like Berendt, even if, occasionally, they were critical of it or suggested that jazz might transcend the border. The strategy of allying jazz and *E-Musik* was more than understandable given the symbolic capital residing in the latter, yet the attempt was fraught with ambivalence and a sense that the rules of *E-Musik* did not really apply (see e.g. Berendt 1953b: 889. Cf. Adorno 1953a: 891; Bockhoff 1963: 914–6, 919). It also had the whiff of an inferiority complex. The distinction between jazz and *U-Musik* was also problematic in that it failed to take into account the links between jazz and the music industry. In retrospect, it can be seen that a new mode of legitimation was required: a critical vocabulary for talking about those qualities that gave the music equivalent artistic status to that of *E-Musik* while maintaining

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13. Note that later in the 1950s, Berendt did attempt to critique Adorno's theory about the authoritarian nature of the Culture Industry recipient—see chapter 2.

that jazz was not *E-Musik* in the traditional sense (cf. Bockhoff 1963: 919; Steinert 1992: 18–19). But this may have been asking too much in the 1950s.

As we will see, during the course of the 1960s these earlier debates quickly became historical. While Adorno's views became more and more outdated after jazz had "arrived," a new generation of musicians and critics also began, by the mid- to late 1960s, to view the attempts of Berendt and his colleagues to "force [jazz] into a tuxedo [and] onto the concert hall podium" and to rope it off from *U-Musik*, as dated and having unfortunate consequences (Bockhoff 1963: 919. See also Schmidt-Joos 1965a: 321; Brötzmann 2004).