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Forbidden Fruit? Jazz in the Third Reich

MICHAEL H. KATER

AT AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM AT THE University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in April 1988, recent progress in the historiography of National Socialism and the Third Reich was reviewed. One significant result of the discussions was the consensus that historians are now in the process of moving beyond the “structuralism”-versus-“intentionalism” debate, which has dominated interpretations of Nazism for over a decade. In this debate, “intentionalists,” led by West German historian Klaus Hildebrand and Swiss historian Walther Hofer, have maintained that events in the course of pre-1933 Nazism and especially the Third Reich were determined mostly by personality factors—above all, by Hitler’s own decisions—and were, indeed, to be viewed within the conceptional framework of conventional politics, not excluding foreign policy. Such a reading of modern history is rooted in the seminal works of pioneering political historians Karl Dietrich Bracher, Carl Joachim Friedrich, and Alan Bullock. On the other side, the “structuralists,” represented in the main by Hans Mommsen from West Germany and Tim Mason from Great Britain, have held that National Socialism and the Third Reich were shaped less by the singular decisions of strong-willed individuals, first and foremost Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, and Himmler, than by forces of chance and an invisible logic inherent in social change. In this view, *grosse Politik* molded by national “leaders” was discounted in favor of, for example, the dynamics of social tension (as between disenchanted workers and farmers and representatives of certain bourgeois interests), dynamics, in fact, that could enter a course of radicalization capable of constantly causing unanticipated events.¹

In sanctioning the dissolution of that frustrating historiographical stalemate,

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¹ The best, if not entirely detached, interpretation of this debate is in Ian Kershaw’s book, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London, 1985), esp. 1–41, 61–81. Kershaw himself sympathized with the “structuralists.” A good defense of the “intentionalist” view is Klaus Hildebrand, “Monokratie oder Polykratie? Hitlers Herrschaft und das Dritte Reich,” in Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker, eds., *Der “Führerstaat”: Mythos und Realität: Studien zur Struktur und Politik des Dritten Reiches* (Stuttgart, 1981), 73–96. The “structuralist” interpretation is convincingly upheld by Hans Mommsen, “Hitlers Stellung im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem,” in the same volume, 43–70. See my critique of that important book in *Journal of Modern History*, 54 (1982): 813–14.

the Philadelphia panelists tacitly concurred with British scholar Ian Kershaw: “‘Intention’ and ‘structure’ are both essential elements of an explanation of the Third Reich, and need synthesis rather than to be set in opposition to each other.”² Besides Kershaw, Mason, and Mommsen, one of several discussants in Philadelphia was the young West German historian Detlev Peukert. In a suggestive volume published in English, he has painted a picture of the Third Reich as populated by “ordinary people,” pushed around by factors both within themselves and beyond their control, into situations sometimes of complicity with the Nazi regime, sometimes of resistance.³ In his book, the question of “intention” or “structure” appeared to be irrelevant as Peukert pursued the end product of whatever process of change was observable, not its origin. Peukert’s main target was not, or not primarily, the patterns of causality accounting for high policy or massive social change but rather what he discerned as a mosaic of seemingly everyday events affecting groupings of Germans as heterogeneous and incompatible as homosexuals, Gypsies, elitist upper-class youths in a large city like Hamburg, and conscripted foreign laborers. And even though one of his ultimate concerns, as with Hildebrand or Mommsen, was the true nature of the Nazi regime, for instance, how it might have interacted with “modernity,” Peukert’s preoccupation with veritable anti-heroes, with persons neither all bad nor all good, neither black nor white (as in oppressor or resistor), but instead with those in territory “grey on grey,”⁴ rendered him capable of some elastic definitions. Peukert even insinuated double meanings when he suggested that actors on the stage of the Third Reich might have been not only of the grey, that is, ordinary, variety, but also black *and* white, bad as well as good. Within this conception, certain acts committed by all manner of Germans under Hitler could have assumed a dual quality of white and black, good and evil, resistance and oppression. In Peukert’s history of everyday life in the Third Reich, until now the most convincing specimen of that new genre of “trivial history” or *Alltagsgeschichte* of people in the Nazi regime, more than ever before, the diversities, complexities, and contradictions of National Socialism as an object of historical scrutiny were being revealed, not least after disclosing certain paradoxes that neither the “intentionalists” nor the “structuralists” had been able to make out, let alone accommodate in their explanatory models.⁵

One of the paradoxes Peukert alluded to is the “fascist ideological mix,” which

² Kershaw, *Nazi Dictatorship*, 81.

³ Detlev Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life* (German edn., 1982; English trans., London, 1987), 14.

⁴ Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 15.

⁵ Peukert is the most convincing but not the only credible exponent of *Alltagsgeschichte*. See, for example, Martin Broszat’s carefully reasoned argument in *Nach Hitler: Der schwierige Umgang mit unserer Geschichte: Beiträge von Martin Broszat*, eds. Hermann Graml and Klaus-Dieter Henke, 2d edn. (Munich, 1987), 238–44; but also, pointing in the direction of an “everyday history,” Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria, 1933–1945* (Oxford, 1983); and William Sheridan Allen, “Die deutsche Öffentlichkeit und die ‘Reichskristallnacht’—Konflikte zwischen Werthierarchie und Propaganda im Dritten Reich,” in Detlev Peukert and Jürgen Reulecke, eds., *Die Reihen fast geschlossen: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alltags unterm Nationalsozialismus* (Wuppertal, 1981), 397–411. Also see the important qualifying critique of Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Aus der Geschichte lernen? Essays* (Munich, 1988), 130–51.

permitted the American cultural medium of jazz, or swing, as it was known after 1936, to be usurped by Joseph Goebbels for tactical exploitation in the regime, while at the same time it remained on some dour censor's index.⁶ This essay analyzes the role of jazz in the Third Reich from the vantage point of "ordinary history," in which it occupied a place in many a German's life. But also, and more important, jazz was one of those paradoxical quantities that could serve, from 1933 on, as a catalyst for those opposing the regime and those conforming to it, as, undeniably, in the "ideological mix," it could also remain entirely neutral. The very existence of jazz, a music redolent of liberty, in the unfree society of Hitler's Germany raises questions about the efficacy of social and cultural controls commonly presumed in dictatorial, not to say totalitarian, systems. Finally, jazz possessed properties—as it possesses them today—that suit it for examination as an object of "popular culture," not of course in conventional history, but with the potential for enriching that history in a multi- or interdisciplinary vein.

Driven by their preshaped *völkisch* ideology, the Nazi leaders were in principle determined to quash jazz, this "bacillus,"⁷ from the beginning to the end of their political rule. As Nazi theorists knew well, the antagonism between National Socialism and jazz was cemented by four factors. Since jazz quintessentially represented the principle of improvisation, equaling musical freedom, it was anathema to a dictatorial system intent on robbing its subjects of their free will and manipulating them toward its imperialistic goals. Second, in the Nazis' racial terms, the originators and disseminators of jazz music were degenerate blacks and Jews, and, to a lesser extent and in Europe, libidinous Gypsies. Third, the syncopated rhythm of jazz, too complex for a steady marching beat, did not lend itself to the transmission of (repetitive) propaganda messages: neither martial nor *völkisch*, jazz sounded alien. Fourth, jazz was so individualistic as to be trivial, compared to the racial-communal, lofty objectives of the Nazi rulers. In its essence, jazz flew in the face of the collectivist ideals of the Nazi party.

Nevertheless, if in Hitler's Germany, jazz could be heard on the airwaves, in live performances, and on records until 1945, it was not because of predetermined decisions on the part of the Nazi politicians but because of their failure to contain and destroy this music under the increasingly adverse circumstances in which they found themselves. It was a consequence of compromises dictated at first by the leaders' initial reluctance to radicalize the dictatorship in peacetime, and then, during the war, by the necessity of balancing radicalization against the need for popular support in the war effort.⁸ But, since the Nazi leaders could not always recognize the "internal enemy," such failure was a function of their own relative ignorance and incompetence, often stemming from insufficient formal education. This ignorance became blatantly obvious in the cultural sphere, in

⁶ See Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 77–79; quotation, 38.

⁷ Hans Petsch, "Der Jazzbazillus," *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 107 (1940): 455–57.

⁸ See Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, *passim*.

which most Nazi leaders were simply not at home.⁹ Hence the twelve-year history of jazz under Hitler amounts to the case study of a phenomenon that, although fastidiously programmed for destruction by dictatorship, survived because of that dictatorship's loopholes, forgetfulness, and operational inadequacies, in short, its personal and structural imperfections.

NAZI INVECTIVE AGAINST JAZZ WAS, first of all, supported by publicist polemics. Until World War II, these polemics occurred in three overlapping phases that were vaguely aligned with and influenced by official racial policy. In the period from 1933 to 1935, jazz, the creation of blacks and Jews, tended to be berated as the inferior product primarily of the Negro race, inferior because of the constituent qualities of atonality and rhythmic chaos that were ascribed to "Niggers."¹⁰ At this particular point in the development of the Nazi regime, certainly as far as music was concerned, an active anti-black policy was more important than an anti-Jewish one. In matters of German culture, the black appears to have been the more immediate racial enemy; yet, even for practical purposes, racial hygienists were concerned with purging the population of the half-black so-called Rhineland Bastards rather than eliminating the Jews.¹¹

To be sure, traditional enemies of jazz, regardless of the racist element affected by the Nazi ideologues, joined the official anti-jazz campaign for their own purposes. For example, Berlin music critics Friedrich Welter and Ludwig Altmann advanced against jazz the argument that this idiom had failed to prove its artistic merits in the Weimar Republic and had lately been dying away.¹² A singularly nasty shot was fired by Frankfurt musicologist Theodor Adorno, who, as a Jew and one-time composition student of Arnold Schönberg, was in the process of losing his teaching privileges at the university but hoped to retain his influential position as critic for various musicological journals. Hence he not only cited approvingly such National Socialist politicians as Baldur von Schirach and Goebbels, he also mounted a scathing attack on jazz, applauding the imminent governmental prohibition against it.¹³

In the fall of 1935, the next phase began, as two significant events exacerbated the fascist war of words against jazz. Anti-Semitic race legislation was passed in

⁹ To a large extent, this characterization of Nazi leaders accords with my portrait of them as willing but incompetent revolutionaries, in my book *The Nazi Party: A Social Profile of Members and Leaders, 1919–1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 169–233.

¹⁰ Fritz Stege, "Randglossen zum Musikleben," *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 100 (1933): 491, 811; Georg Gräner, "Kunst und Künstler von heute," in *Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, 60 (1933): 165.

¹¹ Reiner Pommerin, "Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde": *Das Schicksal einer farbigen deutschen Minderheit 1918–1937* (Düsseldorf, 1979); Hans Macco, *Rasseprobleme im Dritten Reich* (Berlin, [1933]): 13–14; Uwe Dietrich Adam, *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Königstein and Düsseldorf, 1979), 19–113.

¹² Friedrich Welter, "Um die deutsche Musik—Ein Bekenntnis," *Die Musik*, 25 (1933): 728; Ludwig Altmann, "Untergang der Jazzmusik," *ibid.*, 744–49. For jazz in the republic, see Michael H. Kater, "The Jazz Experience in the Weimar Republic," *German History*, 6 (1988): 145–58.

¹³ Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno, "Abschied vom Jazz," *Europäische Revue*, 9 (1933): 313–16. See Fred K. Prieberg, *Musik im NS-Staat* (Frankfurt am Main, 1982): 59–60. Adorno was not just opportunistic. He reiterated his invective as an academic-in-exile: Hektor Rottweiler W. Adorno, "Über Jazz," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 5 (1936): 235–59.

September, and one month later, most certainly as a consequence, the Reich broadcast directorate issued a general prohibition of jazz music on the airwaves. At the behest of Minister Goebbels, these measures also interacted with a more systematic purging of the German music scene of all Jewish influences. From then on, the Jew joined the black more visibly as chief perpetrators of the allegedly degenerate art form called jazz. "Nigger-Jew jazz" became a Nazi catchword.¹⁴ As one Hitler Youth leader attempted to explain in 1936, "The Nigger has a very pronounced feeling for rhythm, and his 'art' was perhaps indigenous but nevertheless offensive to our sentiments. Surely, such stuff belongs among the Hottentots and not in a German dance hall. The Jew, on the other hand, has cooked up those aberrations on purpose."¹⁵

By 1937, in anticipation of the first climactic persecution of Jews during November of the following year, verbal assaults on jazz as a Jewish cultural by-product became more vituperative, without the black's contribution being forgotten. For Max Merz, a fanatically *völkisch* preceptor, the fight against jazz turned into an obsession. He began lecturing audiences far and wide across the nation. For him, jazz was the symptom of an "inner crisis, which has touched the entire white race."¹⁶ By the guidelines of the new pseudo-anthropology that was about to do great harm to Jews, jazz was the antipode to a music anchored solidly in a Nordic heritage.¹⁷ Moreover, in an aura of impending war, jazz, unless cleanly excised, would pose a grave danger to young men and women currently being enjoined to march to the fronts in unison, driven on and motivated by the sound of Teutonic fanfares.¹⁸

Such unbroken invective on the part of leading Nazi theorists accompanied the relative failure of the regime to stamp out jazz before the war. The causes of this failure would eventually be clear: the clash between a catechetic ideology condemning jazz and the plebiscitarian aspirations of a Caesarist Führer impelled to purchase popularity at the price of some tolerance. Nonetheless, before the full impact of that failure struck, the death of jazz was planned and organized at three different levels: radio broadcasting, stage performance, and the recording industry. Broadcasting, which was tightly controlled by Goebbels, held the greatest promise for Nazi zealots. Xenophobic officials of the propaganda ministry such as Fritz Stege were eager to do away with all jazz music on the airwaves; the radio stations in Berlin and Stuttgart appeared the most ready

¹⁴ Das Deutsche Podium (October 16, 1936): 1–3; Frederik Hippmann, "'Neue deutsche Tanzmusik,'" *ibid.* (December 20, 1935): 7–8; Richard Litterscheid, "Nachruf auf den Jazz," *Die Musik*, 28 (1936): 321–27.

¹⁵ As quoted in *Das Deutsche Podium* (August 14, 1936): 2.

¹⁶ Merz subsequently published his harangues. Quotation from "Der volkstumszersetzende Einfluss des Jazz," special number, *Die Studentische Kameradschaft*, 10 (Munich, [1937]): 16. Also see his "Der Jazz und wir," *Volkstum und Heimat*, 48 (1939): 151–53, 182–85, 206–10.

¹⁷ Karl Blessinger, "Rassenforschung und rassische Erkenntnis auf dem Gebiete der Musik," *Ziel und Weg*, 8 (1938): 673–79.

¹⁸ See Dietz Degen, "Warnung und Vorschlag," *Musik in Jugend und Volk*, 2 (1939): 258–62; Ludwig K. Mayer, "Unterhaltungsmusik," *Die Musik*, 31 (1938): 163; Friedrich Wilhelm Koch, "Auch das ist unerwünschte Musik!" *Die Volksmusik*, 1 (January 1939): 39.

to help.¹⁹ There was plenty of support from among the ordinary listening public for the removal of the “non-German, slimy Nigger trash.”²⁰

And yet, in the first two and a half years of the regime, the hands of the policy makers were tied. Because there still was a sizable number of Germans devoted to jazz and jazz-like music on the radio, and because Hitler’s lieutenants preferred to use suasion rather than outright force for the solidification of the regime (one reason for the early restraint in official anti-Semitism), Goebbels hesitated to abandon conventional music programs, including jazz, at one stroke. Instead, it was hoped that undesirable broadcast content could be gradually pushed aside in favor of the more astringent German fare.²¹ Also, German radio stations were competing with foreign broadcasts that regularly featured jazz. These stations could be tuned in by all manner of privately owned receivers. Among connoisseurs, France’s jazz hours were just as favored as those of Dutch Radio Hilversum, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and even American shortwave signals.²² In order to deflect German listeners from such stations and hence from possible anti-German propaganda, German broadcasts were forced to maintain a modicum of internationally flavored programing, one ingredient of which was jazz.²³

GOEBBELS’S PROSCRIPTION OF JAZZ MUSIC IN BROADCASTING, issued on October 12, 1935, took its place alongside the Nürnberg Laws that consciously set Germany aside from the rest of the civilized world. In the future, “Nigger jazz” and Jewish argot (*mauscheln*) were to be banned from the airwaves, regardless of international repercussions.²⁴ But difficulties were immediately apparent. What, indeed, was jazz? In order to solve this vexing problem, a committee of “experts” was convened to which each of the German stations had to defer in cases of doubt. Moreover, German composers who wished to have their popular music performed on radio were also forced to seek the advice of that body, if only to be on the safe side.²⁵ To illustrate the possible criteria of this committee, Hanns Otto Fricke, director of Radio Frankfurt, conducted a two-part lecture broadcast

¹⁹ Fritz Stege, “Der nationale Rundfunk—die Forderung des Tages,” *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 100 (1933): 407; Stege, “Randglossen,” 491–92; “Anhang zu Bericht über die Personalveränderungen beim Süddeutschen Rundfunk Stuttgart,” Berlin, March 15, 1933, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (hereafter, BA), R 78/622.

²⁰ Ferdinand Hauer to Reichsrundfunk-Gesellschaft, Bückeburg, January 14, 1934 (quotation); Marg. Fochtmann to Rundfunk-Stelle, Berlin-Friedenau, January 19, 1934, BA, R 78/1141.

²¹ Eugen Hadamovsky, *Der Rundfunk im Dienste der Volksführung* (Leipzig, [1934]): 20–21; Carl Heinz Boese to Fochtmann, Berlin, January 21, 1934, BA, R 78/1141; Paul Graener, “Das Ende des Jazz,” unknown fragment [November 1935], private archive, Dietrich Schulz-Köhn (photocopy with author).

²² Author’s recorded interviews with Hans Klagedmann, Munich, May 24, 1987; Emil Mangelsdorff (Frankfurt am Main), Munich, May 30, 1987; Hans Otto Jung, Rüdesheim, June 5, 1987; Gerd Peter Pick, Toronto, July 10, 1987. Also, *Das Deutsche Podium* (August 14, 1936): 2.

²³ This is the admission of broadcast official Werner Bergold, “Das Problem der Jazzmusik im Rundfunk,” *Preussische Zeitung* (Königsberg), (November 15, 1934).

²⁴ *Das Deutsche Podium* (October 18, 1935): 2.

²⁵ *Das Deutsche Podium* (October 25, 1935): 3–4; *Königsberger Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 5, 1935; *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 103 (1936): 774.

on the German network in which he stressed the difference between “Nigger jazz” (using as one of his examples an American record of “Dinah”) and what was termed “German dance music.”²⁶

But, not least because this body of commissioners included only one true expert on jazz, bandleader Willi Stech, who, if anything, tended to favor jazz, the screening process proved to be inefficient. Only the most obvious British and American jazz titles were readily censored (such as “Christmas Night in Harlem,” by Raymond Scott). On the other hand, quite harmless compositions by German jazz-influenced composers that could have fallen into the desired category of “German dance music,” such as pianist Franz Mück’s *Alle meine kleinen Wünsche*, were suppressed.²⁷ In these early years of the regime, still a time of peace, just as the Reich’s ideological purism had to be adjusted in order to heed domestic priorities, so also foreign policy considerations counseled restraint. German radio had to continue to make certain concessions to the faithful community of jazz listeners because foreign radio stations could not be blocked out. More important was the fact that the Reich was hosting the 1936 Olympic Games, an event that dictated a policy of cultural tolerance, at least on the surface. Goebbels’s staff therefore fashioned a new compromise: to broadcast as much German jazz-like dance music as possible but simultaneously to keep out the genuine article, “hot jazz” numbers and the new “swing” from overseas, in order to placate Nazi fanatics.²⁸ However, the confusion about permissible standards persisted, so that Oskar Joost, one of Germany’s foremost society dance band leaders, who employed some good jazz musicians but was himself a very pedestrian player, was on the verge of being hired as Goebbels’s chief adviser on matters of dance music in radio.²⁹ The culture ministry appeared to be in a quandary. While German jazz purists shunned German hot-style music on the radio because they found it far too derivative, troglodytes kept complaining about “stupid and Niggerish foxtrots.”³⁰ In the opinion of one embittered Nazi party hack, “To a very large extent, our Reich stations have never, ever stopped playing jazz.”³¹

To control the live performances of jazz musicians proved to be an even more dubious proposition. No sooner had the Third Reich commenced than friends and foes of the music alike expected instant injunctions. False alarms were issued, and for a few months the saxophone, that quintessential jazz tool, fell into

²⁶ Hippmann, “Neue deutsche Tanzmusik,” 8; *Die Musik*, 28 (1936): 292.

²⁷ Horst H. Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland: Die deutsche Jazz-Chronik 1900–1960* (Berlin, 1966): 72; Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft, circulars of February 5 and March 13, 1936, BA, R 78/694.

²⁸ This policy is well summarized in *Völkische Musikerziehung*, 3 (1937): 593–95. Also see Reichs-Rundfunk-G.m.b.H. to Ernst Osterwald, Berlin, February 15, 1938, BA, R 78/1162.

²⁹ Oskar Joost, “Denkschrift zur Kultivierung der Tanzmusik in Deutschland,” enclosed with Joost to Hans Hinkel, Berlin, November 16, 1936, Berlin Document Center (hereafter, BDC), Reichsmusikkammer (hereafter, RMK), Oskar Joost.

³⁰ Quotation from anonymous letter to Joseph Goebbels, Westfalia, Easter 1939, BA, R 55/533. Also see the broadcast situation reports for all of Germany (1937–38) collected in BA, R 78/1151. My recorded interview with jazz fan Hans Blüthner, Hembsbach, June 5, 1987, refers to a purist’s taste in radio.

³¹ Herbert Gerigk, “Was ist mit der Jazzmusik?” *Die Musik*, 30 (1938): 686. A doctor of musicology, Gerigk joined the party in May 1932.

such disrepute that the German music instruments industry panicked.³² But there was no prohibition against live jazz at the national level. A ban would have had to have been issued by the Reich Music Chamber (RMK), nominally under Goebbels and, from November 1933 to July 1935, presided over by the celebrated composer Richard Strauss.³³ Strauss, who had Jewish relations and friends, was comparatively liberal and not given to censorship. In many ways, Berlin was still the cultural capital of the world, and it was risky, even for the Nazis, to divest it of its cosmopolitan character overnight by depriving it of one of its chief attractions: live jazz. To a lesser extent, this was also true for Hamburg, but nowhere else, least of all the provinces, never part of the “Roaring Twenties.”³⁴

Under the next president of the Reich Music Chamber, Professor Peter Raabe, Herbert von Karajan’s predecessor as director of the symphony at Aachen, this tolerance disappeared. Raabe was an ardent Nazi who hated jazz. Public performances by visiting black musicians were strictly forbidden. But even Raabe had to tread lightly. It would be long after the Olympics, which engendered much more day-to-day freedom in Berlin than the regime liked, before edicts were pronounced disallowing the performance of certain “alien music,” mostly of course by Jews, and reining in vocalists who crooned in a foreign tongue. In 1939—Benny Goodman had ushered in the swing era in 1936—these edicts also resulted in a suspension of the “swing dance” as a social diversion.³⁵

Apart from Raabe’s efforts, there were regional and local measures taken against jazz. Modern jazz-inspired dances such as the foxtrot or Charleston were prohibited in all western German youth hostels as early as August 1933.³⁶ Some student administrators followed suit in the jurisdictions of universities, such as Tübingen.³⁷ And dowdy Nazi Gauleiters completely forbade jazz performances in Pomerania, Franconia, Thuringia, and Weser-Ems—together, nearly a quarter of Germany’s pre-war territory.³⁸ Hans Severus Ziegler, one of the most deviously influential functionaries of culture in Hitler’s Reich, in 1938 single-handedly organized in Düsseldorf an exposition attacking “degenerate music,” targeting its atonality and dissonance, not excluding “the brutal jazz rhythm and jazz sound.”³⁹

Even in the absence of formal pronouncements, the regime’s henchmen found ample opportunity to harass the performers of jazz music and their

³² See Altmann, “Untergang der Jazzmusik,” 744; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 64–65.

³³ Joseph Wulf, ed., *Musik im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation* (Reinbek, 1966), 97.

³⁴ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 69.

³⁵ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 75, 94; “Amtliche Mitteilungen der Reichsmusikkammer,” Berlin (hereafter, AMR), January 15 and September 1, 1938; July 1 and August 1, 1939, BA, RD 33/1–2, 2–1, 2–2.

³⁶ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 23, 1933.

³⁷ Uwe Dietrich Adam, *Hochschule und Nationalsozialismus: Die Universität Tübingen im Dritten Reich* (Tübingen, 1977), 114.

³⁸ *Ziel und Weg*, 9 (1939): 25; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 89–90.

³⁹ Hans Severus Ziegler, *Entartete Musik: Eine Abrechnung* (Düsseldorf, [1938]), esp. 26. For background, see Prieberg, *Musik im NS-Staat*, 277–79; Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866–1945* (New York, 1980), 651.

patrons. An informal policy of cultural proscription was thus developed by underlings “from the bottom up,” releasing what might be termed a secondary ideological dynamism potentially threatening the official regime line, which in itself was still ambiguous. In search of “distorted” sound, special agents from the Reich Music Chamber swarmed out at night to check and subdue the jazz scene—the many bars in Berlin’s Charlottenburg, such as “Sherbini’s” or “Moka Efti,” that featured small combos. Chief among these men from the RMK was the one-time piano player Erich Woschke; for an ensemble musician to get on his good side was no small achievement.⁴⁰ Creatures like Woschke who might find a band too “hot” could rescind work permits or notify the Gestapo, with more dire consequences.⁴¹ Berlin trumpeter Charly Tabor once had his jazz arrangements confiscated; what saved him was that the RMK official in this case could not read music, and all the English titles such as “Tiger Rag” had been shrewdly camouflaged.⁴² Party comrade Hans Brückner, a fourth-rate composer, admirer of Jew-baiting Nürnberg Gauleiter Julius Streicher, and editor of the semiofficial dance musician’s organ, *Das Deutsche Podium*, was wont to wage journalistic campaigns against anyone he chose; the Swiss bandleader Teddy Stauffer escaped his wrath only by ostentatiously playing Brückner’s pithy compositions.⁴³

Economics may have had a role. Much of the attack on jazz was directed against foreign musicians like Stauffer who were known to be stars and who attracted large German crowds; the German chauvinist musicians were jealous of the foreigners’ success even when the Great Depression, during which ensemble musicians had suffered inordinately, was palpably over.⁴⁴ American guitarist Michael Danzi spoke of increasing xenophobia in the German popular music scene by 1937, and the American black trombonist Herb Flemming, who lived and performed in Berlin only by virtue of an Egyptian passport, left for home in that year, afraid of “the rumblings of war.”⁴⁵

Several successful Berlin entertainment artists happened to be foreign Jews. It was they who became the first victims of anti-Semitism in music circles, triggering a series of anti-Jewish measures against German-Jewish musicians

⁴⁰ See RMK card, BDC, Reichskultkammer (hereafter, RKK), Erich Woschke; and Woschke’s report, “Betrifft: Betriebsführung und Orchester der Skala[sic],” Berlin, May 31, 1937, BDC, RMK, Richard Mohaupt. In a recorded interview, Munich, May 25–29, 1987, swing drummer Fritz (“Freddie”) Brocksieper testified to the power of that man.

⁴¹ See Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 92. For a typical brush with the Gestapo (Stauffer wrongly called it SS), see Teddy Stauffer, *Forever Is a Hell of a Long Time: An Autobiography* (Chicago, 1976), 104–05.

⁴² Recorded interview with Charly Tabor, Munich, May 28, 1987. Also, Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 76, 78.

⁴³ See Hans Brückner, “‘Jazz’ und ‘Jazz’: Unsere Stellungnahme zum Artikel ‘Gespenst Rhythmus,’” *Das Deutsche Podium* (June 19, 1936): 3; also see *ibid.* (March 10, 1935), 9; Stauffer, *Forever*, 105; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 77.

⁴⁴ Up to 1939, *Das Deutsche Podium* is full of invective against foreign musicians working in Germany. Also see the telling letter by party comrade Albert Breuers to Goebbels, Rio de Janeiro, March 1933, BDC, RMK, Albert Breuers.

⁴⁵ Michael Danzi, *American Musician in Germany, 1924–1939: Memoirs of the Jazz, Entertainment, and Movie World of Berlin during the Weimar Republic and the Nazi Era—and in the United States*, as told to Rainer E. Lotz (Schmitthen, 1986), 90, 108–09; Egino Biagioni, *Herb Flemming: A Jazz Pioneer around the World* (Alphen aan de Rijn, [1977]), 49–53 (quotation, 53); Hans Blüthner, “Sweet and Hot: Blick in die Vergangenheit,” *Jazz-Podium*, 35 (September 1986): 9.

that, for some, culminated in the Holocaust. Early in 1935, James Kok became a *cause célèbre*. This half-Jewish Romanian was then the most popular big band leader in all of Germany and much envied by the lesser, native artists. In the spring of 1935, the Nazis used protestations of sympathy by members of Kok's orchestra for the visiting English bandleader Jack Hylton to drive the Romanian out of the country; Kok sought refuge in Britain.⁴⁶ After 1935, the Reich Music Chamber effectively screened out Jewish musicians and curtailed their employment.⁴⁷ By that time, the "Weintraub Syncopators," once Germany's best jazz combo and almost entirely Jewish, had already emigrated.⁴⁸ Partly Jewish musicians such as Eugen Henkel, the consummate tenor saxophonist, were half-heartedly tolerated, always on the edge of expulsion. Even Fritz Brocksieper, a dynamic young swing drummer, and Hans Berry, a trumpeter, who both were one-quarter Jewish, remained potentially at risk, although they were politically silent.⁴⁹

The manufacture of German recordings and the distribution of foreign records in the Reich were also hard for the Nazis to contain, for commercial reasons and because of their own ignorance. Large recording trusts such as Brunswick were internationally connected, and if the German government wanted to encourage sales of records of the classical baritone Heinrich Schlusnus in France in order to attract hard currency, it had to allow some entertainment music imports from the United States or Britain. This reciprocity favored the influx of foreign jazz.⁵⁰ Hence, until 1938, Jewish and black jazz artists such as Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, and Fats Waller were highlighted on imported singles (RCA Victor, Columbia) as well as on German franchised labels such as Brunswick, to say nothing of white Englishmen like Jack Hylton or Henry Hall.⁵¹ For export as well as home consumption, Berlin studios recorded tamer jazz versions by native artists, such as by Heinz Wehner's big band and Kurt Hohenberger's combo "Golden Seven," which were sponsored by Electrola as well as Telefunken.⁵² Jazz fan Dietrich Schulz of Magde-

⁴⁶ Recorded interview with Fritz Schulz-Reichel (then Kok's pianist), Berlin, May 1, 1987; *Melody Maker*, June 1, 1935; Hans Brückner, "Wie sie lügen! Ein deutscher Artikelschreiber alarmiert den englischen Nationalstolz gegen Deutschland!" *Das Deutsche Podium* (June 13, 1935): 1–3; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 67–68.

⁴⁷ Pertinent correspondence is in the RMK files of the BDC.

⁴⁸ S. Frederick Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917–1980* (New York, 1983), 122.

⁴⁹ Brocksieper interview; "Abstammungsbescheid" for Bruno Hans Friedrich Brocksieper, Berlin, July 24, 1939, private archive, Brocksieper (photocopy with author); Hans Berry's file in BDC, RMK; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 83, 91.

⁵⁰ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 86–87; recorded interview with Dietrich Schulz-Köhn (Liblar), Baden-Baden, September 4, 1986.

⁵¹ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 73–74; "Wir stellen vor" (franchised German-production Brunswick record catalogue), [1936], private archive, Dietrich Schulz-Köhn (photocopy with author); *Das Deutsche Podium* (December 11, 1936): 13; *Skizzen*, 2 (February 1936): 22; 4 (April 1936): 22; 6–7 (June–July 1936): 20; 8–9 (August–September 1936): 20, 22; 2 (February 1937): 22; 10 (October 1937): last cover page.

⁵² *Skizzen*, 2 (February 1936): 22; 8–9 (August–September 1936): 20; Hinrich Schlüter, "Neue Schallplatten: Zu Unterhaltung und Tanz," *Die Musik*, 28 (1936): 379; *Das Deutsche Podium* (July 22, 1937): 3; Wolfgang Muth, *Ernst Höllerhagen: Ein deutscher Jazzmusiker* (Magdeburg, 1964), 20; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 80, 84–85.

burg, who in the mid-1930s was completing a doctoral dissertation on the international recording industry, began in 1934 to advise Brunswick on the kind of American and British jazz music it should produce and market in Germany, and, commissioned by that firm, even gave public lectures on the merits of jazz, intrepidly espousing the virtues of Jewish or black artists such as Goodman, Bert Ambrose, and Cab Calloway.⁵³

This situation changed for the worse in late 1937 when the Nazis finally discovered Goodman's ethnic background and consequently forbade the importation of records with any "Jewish content" whatsoever. (The fact that nothing was ever said about blacks was probably due to the confusion by Nazi experts as to which jazzmen were to be considered black.)⁵⁴ Nevertheless, clever import companies and large music businesses such as the miraculous Alberti store in Berlin continued to import and sell Goodman's music on faked labels or under false names and titles.⁵⁵ Several Jews continued to enter the German jazz scene on recordings, as did swing clarinetist Artie Shaw (real name: Arthur Arshavsky), who the Nazis thought to be a son of the Irish writer George Bernard Shaw, a former music critic! Many of the coveted foreign singles still came in as commercial samples, as travel baggage, or over "neutral" conduits like Czechoslovakia and Sweden.⁵⁶ Even German record outlets still distributed "Jewish" dance and jazz music because the Nazis had trouble identifying all the Jews: in December 1938, one month after the Kristallnacht anti-Semitic excesses, Electrola advertised Duke Ellington's "Caravan," performed by Ady (Adolf) Rosner, a Berlin-born Jew and one-time "Weintraub Syncopator," who had long since escaped to Poland.⁵⁷

DURING THE ENTIRE PRE-WAR PERIOD, NAZI RULERS were at pains to complement their oppressive policies with constructive ones, in order not to alienate the people needlessly; if only for reasons of efficiency, persuasion was preferred over force. And so, to supplement the partial attempts at negating and proscribing jazz, the Nazis also observed a positive policy of creating a German musical equivalent. It harked back to earlier times when high-society and popular dance music had been characterized by the waltz and polka, performed by string orchestras or folk instruments such as the accordion. The emphasis then had been on melody and conventional harmonies rather than on improvisation and the harmonic boldness that the foes of jazz confused with "diss-

⁵³ Schulz-Köhn interview; "Deutsche Grammophon-Aktiengesellschaft, Brunswick-Schallplatten-Abend Swing-Musik . . . im Delphi-Palast," January 20, 1936, speaker's program by Schulz-Köhn; Schulz-Köhn ms., "Classic Swing Album," [November 1936], private archive, Schulz-Köhn (photocopies with author).

⁵⁴ Deutsche Grammophon, "Achtung! Achtung!" [1938], archive of Südwestfunk, Baden-Baden; Blüthner and Schulz-Köhn interviews; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 86.

⁵⁵ Recorded interview with Dieter Zimmerle, Stuttgart, June 24, 1986; Tabor and Schulz-Köhn interviews.

⁵⁶ Ernst Schliepe, "Musik, die wir nicht wünschen," *Die Musik*, 32 (1939): 9; Blüthner and Zimmerle interviews; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 86–89.

⁵⁷ *Skizzen*, 12 (December 1938): 22; Starr, *Red and Hot*, 196–97.

nance." The Nazi ersatz jazz was to be even more "danceable" than the catchy creations of an Irving Berlin or Jerome Kern, and, ideally, it was not to be performed with saxophones and brass but violins, cellos, or harmonicas.⁵⁸ Chief exponents of the desired genre were the Hungarian national and society bandleader Barnabas von Géczy, who stressed string sections, and Nazi party member (1933) Oskar Joost, who liked a homely mix of strings with some brass and saxophones and perhaps the accordion.⁵⁹ Both men were sworn enemies of genuine hot jazz and were thoroughly despised, even hated, by German jazz acolytes, which naturally heightened their new Nazi credibility.⁶⁰

In the spring of 1936, Géczy and Joost were at the center of an officially sponsored radio network contest to find the best hitherto-unknown German dance band that could play in the sanctioned mode.⁶¹ For the regional and national finals, all manner of orchestras, not even excluding Bavarian *Schrammel* groups, played for public audiences and an assortment of ill-qualified judges. Ludicrous and, to the musicians, offensive blunders were committed in the execution of these contests; in Königsberg, for instance, the piano suffered from "shattered strings and several seized-up keys."⁶² In all the performances, hardly any jazz quality could be detected; the entire event was testimony to the wholesale anachronism of National Socialist cultural politics, whose fountain-head was anti-modernism. Accordingly, the affair turned out badly for the Nazi cultural wardens. The winning bandleader, a nobody from Bad Homburg, was blessed with a three-months' radio engagement, 18,000 marks, and was never heard of again.⁶³ As one Nazi critic observed, the competition may have led to the discovery of a worthy orchestra, but had it created a new German jazz style?⁶⁴

The Nazis knew neither exactly what to attack nor what a new German jazz or dance format should consist of, quite apart from the question of preformed taste among the variably educated population. To help solve this dilemma, the ambitious Joost, who enjoyed great prestige in the Nazi movement, devised a plan according to which his very own orchestra would be accorded official status as the model dance band that would set the standard for all the other bands in the land.⁶⁵ In particular, Joost, a stern practitioner of the Nazi leadership principle, wanted to purge German entertainment music of all traces of the Jewish "well poisoners," and, to accomplish that, he claimed for himself the

⁵⁸ See Brückner's remarks in *Das Deutsche Podium* (January 23, 1935): 3; Reinhold Sommer, "Gesellschaftstanz und Tanzmusik," *Die Musik*, 28 (1936): 589–90.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Herzfeld, "Barnabas v. Géczy," *Skizzen*, 4 (April 1937): 11–12; Hans Schnoor, "'Puszta-Fox,'" *Skizzen*, 11 (November 1937): 17–18; *Das Deutsche Podium* (February 23, 1935): 5. On Joost, see nn. 65–66.

⁶⁰ Interviews with Klägemann, Blüthner, Brocksieper, Schulz-Reichel, and Zimmerle.

⁶¹ *Das Deutsche Podium* (March 20, 1936): 3; Fritz Stege, "Gibt es eine 'deutsche Jazzkapelle'? Die Lehren des Tanzkapellen-Wettbewerbs im Rundfunk," *Zeitschrift für Instrumentenbau*, 56 (1936): 251–53.

⁶² *Das Deutsche Podium* (January 24, 1936): 4–5; Fred Malige's complaint, *ibid.* (February 2, 1936): 1 (quotation); Fred Betz, "Tanzkapellen-Wettbewerb in Berlin," *ibid.* (February 14, 1936): 2–4.

⁶³ Fred Betz, "Zum Reichssausscheidungskampf," *Das Deutsche Podium* (April 3, 1936): 1–2.

⁶⁴ Kurt Herbst, "Die Lehren aus dem Tanzkapellenwettbewerb," *Die Musik*, 28 (1936): 533–36. Also see his prescient remarks, 28 (1935): 226–27.

⁶⁵ On the prestige, see "Fragebogen" Joost, Berlin, June 10, 1933, BDC, RMK, Oskar Joost; *Das Deutsche Podium* (June 6, 1935): 6; Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 82–83.

prerogative of a special censor in the Reich Music Chamber.⁶⁶ But his new offices, including the one for radio mentioned earlier, did not materialize, probably because he was thought too immodest and because leaders like Goebbels still dreaded the total disaffection of intellectuals, sophisticated music audiences, and the outside world, at least in the period just after the 1936 Olympics.⁶⁷

Considering all these circumstances, it is not surprising that Nazi rulers were forced to tolerate the performance of live jazz music throughout peacetime, however reluctantly and with whatever caution. It was calculated policy to admit into the country well-known European white bands, because they entered and left as a unit and thus could be well controlled, served admirably in reciprocal arrangements that allowed German artists to give concerts abroad, and, not least, satisfied a sizable section of the German upper middle class at very little risk. Chief among these foreign bandleaders was Jack Hylton, who straddled the borderline between a jazz purist's hot mode and a more commercial melodic style that lent itself well to dancing.⁶⁸ Indeed, the overall quality of Hylton's big band music and his own image as a band leader were so high that Goebbels and Göring, who had political and propaganda uses for internationally acceptable dance music, chose to favor his style above that of all others, if they had to favor any.⁶⁹ Hylton, employing several American-influenced Canadians and famous since the last years of the Weimar Republic, played repeatedly in Berlin and a few other cities. He was a great inspiration to German jazz artists.⁷⁰ A pale copy of Hylton, but still acceptable, was the BBC band of Henry Hall with the attractive singer Molly Morelle, which visited Berlin in 1939.⁷¹ From Switzerland came René Schmassmann and his "Lanigiro [Original] Hot Players," really "quite a hot band," as impresario Dieter Zimmerle remembers, and one that even featured very good German musicians, such as Hans Berry on trumpet and Willy Berking on trombone.⁷² More popular still was the handsome Bern bandleader Teddy Stauffer, future friend of Frank Sinatra and Errol Flynn and even then a ladies' man, who produced reckless swing in the Goodman style, always pushing his luck with the Nazi warders until one day in 1938 he jazzed up the Brown Shirts' "Horst Wessel Song" and was chased out of the country.⁷³

⁶⁶ Joost, "Denkschrift zur Kultivierung der Tanzmusik."

⁶⁷ See Joost to Hinkel, Berlin, March 17 and April 5, 1937; and Joost to Glassmeier [sic], Berlin, March 22, 1937, BDC, RMK, Oskar Joost.

⁶⁸ *Skizzen*, 6–7 (June–July 1935): first cover page and 17; *ibid.*, 3 (March 1937): 16.

⁶⁹ Hylton's remarks in the *Daily Mirror* (London), March 13, 1937; Martha Dodd, *Through Embassy Eyes* (New York, 1940), 120; Helmut Heiber, *Joseph Goebbels* (Munich, 1965), 242–44. When in need of a small combo (for instance, for light background music at social functions), the two politicians and Hitler preferred the German Peter Kreuder group, including drummer Hans Klagemann (Klagemann interview).

⁷⁰ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 82; Schulz-Reichel interview; entries for February 8, 9, 15, 26, 1937, and February 27, 1938, in Blüthner's Berlin diary of live band performances, 1931–38, private archive, Hans Blüthner (photocopy with author).

⁷¹ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 93.

⁷² Zimmerle and Blüthner interviews; entry for September 3 and 8, 1937 in Blüthner diary; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 82.

⁷³ Entries for July 13, September 4, October 17, 1936; April 1–15, 1937; April 30, 1938 in Blüthner diary; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 77–78; Stauffer, *Forever*, 104–05, 112–14.

Once again, official Nazi policy in matters of jazz was at cross-purposes to the point of being ridiculous: rather than forbid the hated music outright and be done with it, the regime leaders attempted to create their own, watered-down version, and then, failing sadly at this, kicked out harmless foreigners whose originality they found intriguing but pernicious. At this stage before the war, nobody was being satisfied: not the jazz fans, not the fanatical ideologues, not the pitiful music imitators, and least of all musicians of Stauffer's caliber who had thrived on their vast popularity with the big-city acolytes.

The fact that the artistically demanding Stauffer too had in his employ native German musicians—notably, Walter Dobschinski on trombone and Ernst Höllerhagen on reeds—reflects positively on the expertise of those particular artists, and yet they were not typical. As a rule, German jazz players of the 1930s lagged noticeably behind other Europeans, not just the British and the Swiss but also Scandinavians, Belgians, and Dutch (who all trailed the Americans), *because* jazz was officially blacklisted. After 1933, there were no conservatories that taught this idiom, and it could not, after all, be freely indulged so that musicians might learn from one another, which was the great natural music school in the United States.⁷⁴ Germans, not unaccustomed to discipline, tended to read arrangements rather than improvise on the hint of a chord progression; their rhythm was choppy; they lacked an up-to-date repertoire; they were copyists who in the best of cases would manage to sound like Goodman or his pianist Teddy Wilson after clandestine and strenuous listening to imported records or shortwave and faithful memorization of rare, published sheet-music scores. James Kok's sound, best of the early regime bands, was arrested at the level of the North American Casa Loma Orchestra, then a restrained society dance band by American standards.⁷⁵ After January 1933, not enough Americans stayed on in the Reich to show these German musicians a catchy blues ending here and a modern chord progression there.⁷⁶

This having been said, however, it is important to emphasize that there were a few very respectable talents playing in the plush, expensive Berlin bars near Kurfürstendamm and Rantestrasse, in the large dance orchestras of "Haus Vaterland," "Delphi-Palast," or "Femina," or in recording studios. They would have been proficient enough to be welcomed with open arms by the average American jazz band, if given the chance, and they might even have created truly individualistic styles, as British pianist George Shearing was beginning to do in New York in the 1940s.

Among the talented were Dobschinski and Höllerhagen, Munich drummer

⁷⁴ On this important aspect of jazz education, see the marvelous sketches by Whitney Balliett, *American Musicians: Fifty-Six Portraits in Jazz* (New York, 1986).

⁷⁵ Albert McCarthy, *Big Band Jazz* (London, 1974): 192.

⁷⁶ This was the candid criticism of Stuttgart radio big band leader Erwin Lehn, then an aspiring ensemble musician, in a recorded interview with the author on June 23, 1986. It is corroborated by interviews with aficionados Blüthner and Pick and American author-musician Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 90, 95, but uncritically overlooked by discographer Lange.

Brocksieper, and Stuttgart trumpeter Kurt Hohenberger.⁷⁷ Probably the most gifted of them all was Magdeburg pianist Fritz Schulze, commercially promoted after World War II as, unfortunately, "Crazy Otto," who in gymnasium was already able to play simultaneously with any imported jazz record, and in any key.⁷⁸ First with Kok and then as the star pianist of most of the various hot combos that played the Charlottenburg strips, Schulze earned the admiration of Hylton and became known, by America's *Down Beat* magazine and by the French critics Hugues Panassié and Charles Delaunay (the European doyens of jazz criticism), as the "German Teddy Wilson."⁷⁹ In his shadow, there played not only several other German pianists and solo instrumentalists but also big band leaders of varying prolificacy. Among them, Otto Stenzel, perennially featured at the Berlin "Scala" and musical host to international variety acts, and Heinz Wehner, a graduate of the Hanover conservatory who rated a 1937 mention in *Down Beat*, undeniably ranked at the top.⁸⁰

CLEARLY, THEN, WHEN THE NAZIS TRIUMPHANTLY CLAIMED in mid-1933 that jazz was dead because it had lost its audience, they were mistaken.⁸¹ There were audiences, and they were potential threats to the Third Reich. The audience for jazz in Germany was and remained largely elitist, educated, upper middle class. At the base of it were private jazz clubs attended by young men and women who shared an interest not just in jazz per se but also in classical music, modern art, literature, the movies and theater, and, to a certain degree, politics.⁸² The first and most significant of these clubs was founded in 1934 in Berlin; it was the "Melodie-Klub" (in pronouncing this, members would accentuate the first syllable as in "melody," to make it sound English). The members, in their twenties, usually with a secondary-school education, knew English, sometimes French (for the Paris of Django Reinhardt was one of the jazz meccas); some of them attended university, others held jobs that were secure but without prospects for advancement. Ironically (but typical of the brittleness of the Third Reich's social fabric and the inconsistencies of its policies), these were the very persons a dynamic dictatorship needed, but, through their love of forbidden fruit, they were alienated by rather than attracted to the regime.

One or two key members of the Melodie-Klub worked in the recording industry, as did the half-Jewish Gerd Peter Pick, who was with the small but

⁷⁷ A more balanced source than Lange, regarding high-caliber musicians, is Gerhard Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob: Kleine Biographie Walter Dobschinskis* (Menden, 1983). Also see Muth, *Ernst Höllerhagen, passim*.

⁷⁸ Author's telephone conversation with Fritz Schulz-Reichel, Berlin, May 14, 1987; Schulz-Reichel interview.

⁷⁹ Schulz-Reichel interview; Schulz-Köhn interview (Dietrich Schulz[-Köhn] had introduced Fritz to Kok in late 1934); *Down Beat* (December 1937): 15; Biagioli, *Herb Flemming*, 51; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 84.

⁸⁰ *Das Deutsche Podium* (March 10, 1935): 9; *ibid.* (April 24, 1935): 15; entries for May 10 and October 30, 1935; February 25, 1937 in Blüthner diary; *Down Beat* (December 1937): 15; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 74–75; Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 90, 111.

⁸¹ Altmann, "Untergang der Jazzmusik," 749.

⁸² Interviews with Pick, Blüthner, Schulz-Köhn, and Zimmerle.

important Berlin firm of Televox. The club membership congregated regularly in a rented Charlottenburg café room, brought its own record player, and enjoyed the newest records. The latest issue of *Melody Maker*, a British jazz journal, would be studied, and heated discussions would ensue. As in other jazz circles around the world, there would be dissension over style. The “purists” preferred only black artists or very old and original recordings, while the “commercials” were broader, allowed for strings, the dance quality of swing, and paid credit to indigenous musicians, some of whom, like Fritz Schulze, would occasionally drop in. And, of course, they would go to hear the bands perform but only in the afternoons when it was cheaper.⁸³

Schulze’s old Magdeburg school pal, Dietrich Schulz(-Köhn), also tried to visit whenever he passed through from Königsberg, where he was studying economics.⁸⁴ By 1936, the twenty-four-year-old Dietrich, fluent in English and French and already a friend of Delaunay and Panassié and a chartered member of the Paris “Hot Club de France,” had founded a jazz club in Königsberg.⁸⁵ Twenty-year-old Dieter Zimmerle, still in gymnasium, established a similar club in Münster and also came visiting with his sister in Berlin.⁸⁶ Young Kurt Michaelis, whom they called “Hot-Geier” and whose specialty was the collection of “Tiger Rag” sides, started a club in Leipzig. There were smaller groups in other German towns and cities.⁸⁷

It was in these cells that opposition to fascist politics germinated. If anything, the musicians themselves were apolitical; they merely wanted to play.⁸⁸ Only “Scala” bandleader Stenzel, who had close Jewish and American friends, dared to open his mouth and steadfastly favor Jewish tunes, and he suffered for it.⁸⁹ Most of the musicians never joined the Nazi party. As free spirits, they abhorred drill and uniforms, and if they did find themselves in Nazi cadres, they quickly sought to get out again. Schulze had joined the SS troops in Magdeburg in 1933 in the naive hope of having more chances for musical engagements; when he moved to Berlin a year later, he was annoyed by having to do Sunday morning field exercises after having worked all night. Professionally, the SS could do nothing for him, and its sinister reputation may have begun to disturb him. In 1938, an SS general who was a fan of his performances in the “Quartier Latin” bar secured his release from the SS, “in good standing.”⁹⁰

By and large, Schulze’s determination to leave the SS was politically as

⁸³ Interviews with Pick, Blüthner, Schulz-Köhn, and Zimmerle; Blüthner, “Sweet and Hot,” 10; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 69–71, 76–77. On the universal phenomenon of dissension in jazz appreciation, see Rudi Blesh, “This Is Jazz,” *Arts and Architecture*, 66 (March 1944): 20.

⁸⁴ Interviews with Pick, Blüthner, and Schulz-Köhn.

⁸⁵ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 71; Schulz-Köhn interview; Hot Club de France membership card D. Schulz (1935) and postcard D. Schulz to W. Schulz, Château de Gironde [Panassié’s residence], September 23, 1936, private archive, Schulz-Köhn (photocopies with author).

⁸⁶ Zimmerle interview.

⁸⁷ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 71; Reginald Rudorf, *Jazz in der Zone* (Cologne, 1964), 12; recorded interview with Kurt Michaelis in Dreieich-Sprendlingen, June 23, 1988.

⁸⁸ Interviews with Klagemann, Brocksieper, Tabor, and Lehn; recorded interview with Walter Dobschinski, Berlin, May 9, 1987.

⁸⁹ Files regarding Stenzel (1937–38) in BDC, RMK, Richard Mohaupt; Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 119.

⁹⁰ BDC, SS, Fritz Schulze; Schulz-Reichel interview.

ingenuous as his resolve to join it. The jazz clubs, which were starting to take in younger recruits from the secondary schools and even the Hitler Youth, exhibited an attitude of disagreement, dissension, and distrust in the regime that bordered on the rebellious, particularly in Berlin. No jazz club member would ever think of joining a party organization, since jazz clubs were often supported by non-“Aryan” fellows like Franz (“Fanni”) Wolf and Gerd Peter Pick (Berlin). Possibly, jazz was seized on by all of them as a convenient vehicle for sociopolitical protest, their sense of individuality having been violated by Hitler’s ascension to power in 1933. The spiritual leader of the Berlin group was a brilliant writer and artist by the name of Carlo Boger, who, indifferent to the paraphernalia of a bourgeois life, subsisted on red wine and incited his friends to mock demonstrations against Hitler, whom they rambunctiously and nonsensically dubbed “Old Bag Koschwitz.” The potential resistance character of jazz clubs (particularly of the Berlin group) became more obvious after the Nürnberg Laws were promulgated in the fall of 1935, when the non-“Aryan” members were put into a precarious legal status, and even more so after Kristallnacht in November 1938, when only secret meetings of the remaining few were possible. By that time, full Jews like Wolf had left Germany; he emigrated to New York, eventually to co-found the famous “Blue Note” jazz record label.⁹¹ Even before the war, it was true of all these groups, as Dieter Zimmerle, forever society’s rebel, has recently said about Münster, that, by itself, being a jazz fan would not have been a political offense. But the Gestapo was watching, and if anything else that was vaguely oppositional was added to the musical activities, a member’s safety was at stake.⁹²

The nexus between jazz and anti-fascist opposition before the war assumed a more tangible shape among groupings of other youths who resented regimentation in Nazified classrooms and the ranks of the Hitler Youth. They may have been further removed from the actual art form of jazz than either the musicians or the real fans, but they throw into stark relief the secondary function of the music as symbolized revolt.⁹³ In the late 1930s, dedication to jazz and swing dance among German adolescents of both sexes became synonymous with asserting one’s own personality vis-à-vis uniformed ranks, a martial mien, collective blood-and-soil ideology, and the mindless, repetitive drill. Slowly, the ground was being prepared for a more consequential opposition to this regime as it rigidified under increasingly dire circumstances. Since 1934, and noticeably in the winter of 1937–1938, in the traditionally Anglophilic city of Hamburg, patrician and some middle-class youths who knew each other from school or sports clubs convened irregularly for skating parties, met in certain pubs wearing conspicuous clothes, and “demonstrated a preference for English music

⁹¹ Interviews with Pick and Blüthner.

⁹² Zimmerle interview; Zimmerle ms., “Jazz im Nationalsozialismus,” Stuttgart, n.d., private archive, Zimmerle (photocopy with author).

⁹³ Testimonies of Peter Wapnewski and Ernst Jandl in Marcel Reich-Ranicki, ed., *Meine Schulzeit im Dritten Reich: Erinnerungen deutscher Schriftsteller* (Munich, 1984), 100, 119–20; Geoffrey J. Giles, *Students and National Socialism in Germany* (Princeton, N.J., 1985), 300–02. On jazz as protest, see Francis Newton [Eric J. Hobsbawm], *The Jazz Scene* (New York, 1975), 260–77.

and English dances.”⁹⁴ They were showing the comportment of young men and women wanting to be nobody’s fool, least of all Adolf Hitler’s. These were the forebodings of more unsettling times to come.

THE BEGINNING OF HOSTILITIES IN SEPTEMBER 1939 had a deleterious effect on jazz in Germany. Not only were many ensemble musicians drafted but physical conditions, especially in Berlin, were such that jazz or dance engagements could not be carried out. For example, the blackout policy in the first few weeks of war made music performances at night impossible.⁹⁵ An immediate injunction against public dancing compelled club and dance hall operators to cancel existing contracts with musicians or to stop renewing them. Eventually, the Reich Music Chamber intervened legally on behalf of the musicians, but the initial damage had been done.⁹⁶

Throughout the war, Nazi rulers, notably Joseph Goebbels, vacillated between a policy of tight restrictions on social dancing and the reinstitution of public levity and merrymaking. The first was meant as a tribute to the soldiers at the front and out of respect for the seriousness of this protracted national emergency.⁹⁷ The second was shrewdly rationalized by the propaganda minister on the basis of two seemingly contradictory notions: the rulers realized that, in dreary circumstances of war and deprivation, the civilian population might have to be appeased through certain concessions, such as letting people have as much enjoyment as possible.⁹⁸ Goebbels also wished to lay a smoke screen for the enemy: the more partying the British and (later) the Russians perceived, especially in times of disaster, the more they might be fooled into believing that all was well with the Third Reich and its military capabilities.⁹⁹ As a consequence, the public dance prohibition did not remain consistently in place, at least not until the Stalingrad disaster in early 1943, after which gloom and doom reigned in the land, and there was no dancing.¹⁰⁰ By April 1944, in fact, Goebbels was forced to review the situation, for it was feared that, without opportunities for

⁹⁴ Quotation: “Einzelbeispiele für die Cliquen- und Bandenbildung neuerer Zeit,” enclosed with Reichsjugendführung—Personalamt—Überwachung, “Cliquen- und Bandenbildung unter Jugendlichen,” Berlin, September 1942, BA, R 22/1177. Also, recorded interview with survivor of the Hamburg scene, Hans Engel, Mamaroneck, N.Y., March 5, 1988.

⁹⁵ Interviews with Brocksieper, Tabor, and Zimmerle; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 98; Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 132.

⁹⁶ Brocksieper interview; AMR, September 15, 1939, BA, RD 33/2–2; case of jazz drummer Willy Kettel (September–October 1939), BDC, RMK, Willy Kettel.

⁹⁷ See entry for April 7, 1941, in *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels: Sämtliche Fragmente*, ed. Elke Fröhlich, 5 vols. (Munich, 1987), 4: 574–75; Goebbels on January 1, 1942, in Joseph Goebbels, *Das eherne Herz: Reden und Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1941/42*, ed. M. A. von Schirmeister (Munich, 1943), 158.

⁹⁸ Entries for December 5, 1940 and March 8, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:419, 529.

⁹⁹ See entries for June 10 and 12, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:681–82, 685; entry for June 12, 1941, in *Meldungen aus dem Reich: Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938–1945*, ed. Heinz Boberach, 17 vols. (Herrsching, 1984), 7:2394.

¹⁰⁰ AMR, August 15, 1940; January 15, 1941; April 15, 1941; June 15, 1941; July 15, 1941, BA, RD 33/2–2; Goebbels on February 18, 1943, in Joseph Goebbels, *Der steile Aufstieg: Reden und Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1942/43*, ed. M. A. von Schirmeister (Munich, 1943), 186; Joachim Ernst Berendt, *Ein Fenster aus Jazz: Essays, Portraits, Reflexionen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977): 301.

social dancing, young people would not have a chance to court, marry, and have children. The biological future of the German race was in jeopardy!¹⁰¹

No outright national proscription of jazz took place because Goebbels and other highly placed politicians did not wish to upset soldiers, especially officers, who wanted to hear this music on the airwaves and in live performances.¹⁰² As a matter of necessity, previous regulations were tightened, such as those demanding the deletion of English and then all foreign texts and refrainsinging; the ban on any remotely Jewish material was reemphasized. Foreign stage names for native artists such as “Teddy” or “Nelson” were disallowed, and by early 1940 Gypsy musicians, whose flair for jazz was known, were expelled from the Reich Music Chamber.¹⁰³ In August 1941—during the invasion of Russia—Goebbels came closer to an actual suspension of jazz music than ever before when he expressly forbade “hot and swing music in the original or any imitations.” Musicians who too obviously infringed on this order were severely reprimanded by Raabe’s RMK.¹⁰⁴ Professor Raabe himself, supported by and interacting with the usual anti-jazz diatribes, would have dearly loved to extend such censorship, but he felt encumbered by the continued broadcast of jazz-related music on the radio, which was beyond his jurisdiction.¹⁰⁵

Locally and regionally, matters were often much worse. Since Gauleiters and Kreisleiters indulged in virtually absolute powers in the precincts delegated to them by the Führer, they could do as they pleased.¹⁰⁶ Hence Gauleiter Hartmann Lauterbacher announced an indefinite ban on all social dances for the city of Hanover in March 1941 (on tactical grounds, Goebbels thought that this went too far).¹⁰⁷ In the summer of 1943, Gauleiter Martin Mutschmann imposed a jazz music restriction on all of Saxony.¹⁰⁸ He was immediately imitated by Gauleiter Konrad Henlein of the Sudetenland, and one of his first victims was singer Lale Andersen of “Lili Marlen” fame, who, along with her Belgian jazz band accompanist John Witjes, was hounded down and stopped by Hitler Youth squads while giving a concert in Gablonz.¹⁰⁹ In Partenkirchen, as

¹⁰¹ [Goebbels's] Ministeramt [Reich propaganda ministry] to Eugen Hadamovsky, *et al.*, Berlin, April 25, 1944, BA, R 561/92.

¹⁰² See Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 103.

¹⁰³ “Beilage zu den Amtlichen Mitteilungen der Reichsmusikkammer,” September 1, 1939; AMR, February 15, 1940, BA, RD 33/2-2; *Die Musik*, 32 (1940): 178; *Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, 67 (1940): 119; Peter Raabe, “Das Problem der Unterhaltungsmusik,” *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 107 (1940): 454; Berendt, *Ein Fenster aus Jazz*, 301.

¹⁰⁴ AMR, August 15, 1941, BA, RD 33/2-2; case of infractor Lubo D’Orio in Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 113.

¹⁰⁵ Raabe, *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 109 (1942): 409–10; Raabe to Norbert Salb, Weimar, July 15, 1943, BA, R 561/41. Also see Petsch, “Der Jazzbazillus”; Hans Petsch, “Das zerstörte Orchester,” *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 108 (1941): 573–76; Max Merz, “Deutsches Volkstum und der Jazz,” *Musik in Jugend und Volk*, 3 (1940): 51–58; Carl Hannemann, “Der Jazz als Kampfmittel des Judentums und des Amerikanismus,” *ibid.*, 6 (1943): 57–59; Herbert Gerigk, “Die Judenfrage als eine Rassenfrage,” *Musik im Kriege*, 2 (1944): 41–45; [Gerigk], “Gift bleibt Gift,” *Das Schwarze Korps* (July 27, 1944): 4.

¹⁰⁶ Kater, *Nazi Party*, 213–28.

¹⁰⁷ Entry for March 8, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:529.

¹⁰⁸ *Chemnitzer Zeitung*, July 5, 1943.

¹⁰⁹ Kinzel to Konzertdirektion Knobloch, Reichenberg, October 21, 1943; telegram Kinzel to Knobloch, October 25, 1943; “Sprengkommando HJ-BDM—So etwas gibts auch noch,” December 1943, BDC, RKK Lale Andersen.

late as May 1944, the responsible Kreisleiter was bent on closing café “Hochland” because it liked to employ jazz combos that played “Jewish” and “American” titles such as “Bei mir biste scheen” and “Harlem” as hot jazz.¹¹⁰

The swing bands that offered such amusements were not German but Dutch, Belgian, Czech, and Italian, and they were under official patronage or conscripted, primarily in order to entertain Wehrmacht troops on furlough.¹¹¹ It is yet another irony in the history of the Third Reich that something so hated as jazz survived in large part because it was needed to humor those who were assigned to destroy its originators: the Jews, Americans, and English. Thus the noted Belgian orchestras of Fud Candrix and Jean Omer and the Dutch one of Ernst van’t Hoff were still performing in Berlin in 1943–1944, at the “Delphi” and similar establishments, and, even though night clubs had been greatly reduced in number and dancing was out of the question, circumspect German civilians could still go to hear these bands, despite Gestapo, RMK, and Hitler Youth controls.¹¹²

Moreover, to a certain extent, radio came to the rescue of jazz again, at least until early 1943. More than anything, the reason for tolerance for jazz on the air lay in Goebbels’s personal infatuation with the German front-line soldiers, whom he admired endlessly—possibly because his clubfoot had prevented him from fighting in World War I himself, and he, the frustrated martial hero, experienced what Freudian analysts call “transference” with the Wehrmacht’s men.¹¹³ As much as Goebbels was of the opinion that, during war, the civilian population should have its diversions, the needs of the combat troops always came first. Since he knew that they liked to listen to rhythmically accentuated music—anything from dance tunes to the hottest swing—he was determined that radio stations should broadcast such programs, at the expense of scores of German civilians who craved the classics, traditional light music, tasteless popular songs, or National Socialist tone poems.¹¹⁴

Goebbels’s feelings on this matter were bolstered by his knowledge of the increased power of foreign radio stations to promote propaganda after September 1939. Before the war, non-German, anti-Nazi polemics on the air had only

¹¹⁰ Schiede to Press, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, May 18, 1944, Staatsarchiv München, NSDAP/31.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*; typed remarks on RMK work card for Ernst van’t Hoff, November 1942, BDC, RMK, Ernst van’t Hoff; Hans Otto Jung’s liner notes for record, Harlequin HQ 2051, “Swing under the Nazis” (1986).

¹¹² Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 113–14, 116–17; Pick and Brocksieper interviews; recorded interview with Werner Wunderlich, Baden-Baden, September 5, 1986.

¹¹³ See Heiber, *Joseph Goebbels*, 13–14, 17–18, 36, 273; Joseph Goebbels, “Der Rundfunk im Kriege,” *Das Reich* (June 15, 1941): 1–2; Goebbels on May 17, 1942, *Das eherne Herz*, 319–21; Goebbels on October 18 and 25, 1942, *Der steile Aufstieg*, 39–40, 47–48.

¹¹⁴ Entries for October 27, 1939, and May 20, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 3:623, and 4:650; Goebbels, “Der Rundfunk im Kriege”; Heinrich Glasmeier in minutes of radio station directors’ workshop, Berlin, [October 2, 1941], BA, R 55/695; Goebbels on March 1, 1942, *Das eherne Herz*, 233. For German civilians’ reactions against jazz-like music, see entries for November 18, 1940; March 27, 1941, *Meldungen*, 6:1776, 2151; for February 26, 1942, *ibid.*, 9:3369; for September 17, 1942, *ibid.*, 11:4211; entry for March 9, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:531; “Anmerkungen des Reichssenders Königsberg zum Reichsprogramm,” enclosed with Königsberg station director to Martin Schönicke, Königsberg, June 3, 1942, BA, R 55/696.

been occasional, but now they were the rule, especially from British stations run by the BBC. Whereas the jazz content in British radio before the fall of 1939 may have been accidental, the BBC now made a point of introducing its anti-Hitler messages through hot music and swing, in order to capture the ear of both the ordinary German soldier and officer and weaken their fighting morale. The soldiers could not tune in when firing a mortar or a rifle, it is true, but they had recourse to high-powered field receivers in planes, tanks, and submarines and, naturally, behind the trench lines in their mobile quarters. Civilians critical of the regime were also interested in the foreign broadcasts—most turned to the BBC for the news content, but the diehard jazz fans listened for swing. Goebbels summed up the various facets of the problem when he noted in his personal diary on May 22, 1941, “Our people and our soldiers want light music. Otherwise they will listen to English stations. Never mind the killjoys [of the dogmatic party]. Better light music than alien propaganda.”¹¹⁵

One has to understand this correctly. As we know from his fragmented diary, Goebbels, who played some piano, preferred Mozart and above all Wagner, male choirs, and Viennese waltzes. In true Nazi fashion, he disliked modern experimental composers and also jazz and swing, as he convincingly documented on several occasions.¹¹⁶ Werner Stephan, who worked closely with him for years, reported that he “shared the musical taste of the broadest strata of society”; that would not have meant jazz.¹¹⁷ Goebbels himself said he abhorred the film adaptation of Kurt Weill’s *Three Penny Opera*, a jazz-inspired work.¹¹⁸ As for the claim of contemporary jazz lovers that Goebbels possessed a huge jazz record collection, it was probably without foundation.¹¹⁹ But this cannot detract from the important fact that the little doctor fully recognized the value of this idiom for propaganda purposes.

But the situation changed after the Wehrmacht’s defeat at Stalingrad in early February 1943. In keeping with Goebbels’s proclamation of “total war” in his famous Sportpalast address of that year, program changes to emphasize the prescribed mood of somber heroism were implemented for soldiers and civilians alike.¹²⁰ The new restrictions could have resulted in the end of jazz music on the airwaves in Germany had it not been for the fact that specially established Wehrmacht stations simply carried on with the old schedule, so much

¹¹⁵ Entry for May 22, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:653. Also see entry for November 18, 1940, *Meldungen*, 6:1776; Heinrich Glasmeier in minutes . . . [October 2, 1941] (see n. 114); Pauli, “Tanzmusik im Rundfunk,” October 3, 1941, BA, R 55/695; entry for January 24, 1942, in *The Goebbels Diaries*, ed. Louis P. Lochner (New York, 1948), 58.

¹¹⁶ Entries for November 1, 1935, and June 16, 1936, *Die Tagebücher*, 2:534, 627; doc. of February 1, 1941, in Willi A. Boelcke, ed., *Kriegspropaganda 1939–1941: Geheime Ministerkonferenzen im Reichspropagandaministerium* (Stuttgart, 1966): 610; Goebbels on March 1, 1942, *Das ehrne Herz*, 231.

¹¹⁷ Werner Stephan, *Joseph Goebbels: Dämon einer Diktatur* (Stuttgart, 1949), 39. Stephan’s further claim that because of such taste Goebbels wished to preserve jazz for radio is not logical.

¹¹⁸ Entry for October 10, 1939, *Die Tagebücher*, 3:605.

¹¹⁹ Brocksieper and Zimmerle interviews.

¹²⁰ Goebbels on February 18, 1943, *Der steile Aufstieg*, 167–204; minutes of radio committee meetings (Berlin), January 6 and February 11, 1943, BA, R 55/696; and on August 30, 1944, BA, R 55/556. Also, Hinkel to Goebbels, Berlin, January 25, 1943, BA, R 55/1254.

loved by the combat troops.¹²¹ Right up to 1944, when an army high-command radio station pelted invading U.S. troops on the Italian mainland with “degenerate music,” adumbrating “Axis Sally’s” anti-American propaganda, and *Soldatensender Oslo* highlighted big band swing by the Norwegian-posted Heinz Wehner, German soldiers no less than interested civilians could sample such broadcasts with relative ease.¹²² Growing restless and ever more cynical, Goebbels acquiesced. He realized Nazi impotence over listening habits, and he knew that tuning in a German Wehrmacht station was preferable to turning to enemy broadcasts like the Allied Expeditionary Forces (AEF) programs or Sefton Delmer’s phony, England-based *Soldatensender Calais*, all of which were inundating their fans with jazz.¹²³

GOEBBELS ALWAYS LOVED THE DARING LUFTWAFFE PILOTS best of all the German soldiers.¹²⁴ It was no secret to the minister that the pilots were the most worldly wise, most venal and elitist of the officer corps, and the most bored with German radio content. If anyone did, they had the cultural sophistication and means to listen to a bevy of British stations for their swing, and, since they all knew English, to catch the BBC news as well.¹²⁵ In early 1941, it was the legendary German air force colonel Werner Mölders who, after a casual encounter with pianist Franz Grothe in an Alpine resort, suggested to Goebbels that he establish a German jazz orchestra whose sound could then be systematically aired on radio to keep British competition at bay.¹²⁶

What followed was the creation by the Nazi government of the Deutsche Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester (DTU), the German Dance and Entertainment Orchestra, which may have been a shabby compromise for jazz as an art form but which indubitably resulted in the wartime salvation of many German jazz stars. Backed by a huge budget, maestro Grothe, who had a fair jazz reputation, and pianist Georg Haentzschel, who had a very good one, were commissioned to hire the cream of German swing musicians, insofar as they had not been already and

¹²¹ Hinkel to Hans Fritzsche, Berlin, June 28, 1943; Chef vom Dienst, memorandum, Berlin, February 23, 1944, BA, R 56I/41; Hinkel to Goebbels, Berlin, January 10, 1944, BA, R 55/1254; Tamme to Salb, Berlin, August 23, 1944, BA, R 55/532.

¹²² The latter is corroborated through recorded interview with Joe Viera, Munich, May 31, 1987. Quotation: Minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), August 2, 1944, BA, R 55/556. Also see Abteilung M to Abteilung Rfk., Berlin, August 9, 1944, BA, R 55/559; Bowe to Scharping, Berlin, October 2, 1944, BA, R 55/557; Willi A. Boelcke, *Die Macht des Radios: Weltpolitik und Auslandsrundfunk 1924–1976* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977), 162, 167.

¹²³ Recorded interview with Carlo Bohländer, Frankfurt am Main, June 7, 1987; interviews with Emil Mangelsdorff, Pick, Schulz-Köhn, and Viera. Also see entries for March 20 and November 28, 1943, *The Goebbels Diaries*, 358, 606; minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), September 6, 1944, BA, R 55/556; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 118; Boelcke, *Die Macht*, 167–68. For example, on June 8, 1944, the AEF beamed a program, “Rise and Shine,” featuring Woody Herman and Duke Ellington (BBC Data Inquiry Service to author, London, May 26, 1987).

¹²⁴ See entry for May 7, 1941, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:627; Goebbels on October 18 and December 27, 1942, *Der steile Aufstieg*, 39–40, 96–97.

¹²⁵ Doc. of May 17, 1941, Boelcke, *Kriegspropaganda*, 730–31; Goebbels, “Der Rundfunk im Kriege”; Boelcke, *Die Macht*, 453; Klagemann and Schulz-Reichel interviews.

¹²⁶ Kurt Pabst ms., “Nazi-Kultur: Dokumente über Kunstdpflege im Dritten Reich,” Erfurt, n.d. [1946], BDC, RKK, Kurt Papst (p. 138); Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 31; Dobschinski interview.

irrevocably called to the colors. The salaries were generous, safety in Berlin was guaranteed, and the repertoire to be performed was anything from bearable to satisfying. By April 1942, top players such as trombonists Walter Dobschinski and Willy Berking, drummer Hans Klagedmann, trumpeter Karl Hohenberger (Kurt's younger brother), saxophonists Detlev Lais and Herbert Müller, and redoubtable jazz pianist Franz Mück all found themselves united in this state-sponsored studio orchestra.¹²⁷ The group rarely worked outside the studio, for its main objective was to supply material for the radio stations and perhaps some recordings for foreign export.

The style of the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra was comparatively restrained, for it only used arrangements that did not allow for solo improvisation ("choruses"), and, characteristically, the string players outnumbered the saxophones. Still, by contemporary standards, its mode was hot enough to remind the cognoscenti of the fashionable Glenn Miller and to attract vituperative criticism from the ordinary radio audience.¹²⁸ Slyly, Haentzschel and Grothe, both of whom had been incorporated into the planning staff of the Reich Broadcasting Service by March 1942, camouflaged American numbers and spiced up their own arrangements.¹²⁹ Soldiers at the front waxed enthusiastic.¹³⁰ In 1943, under the cloud of Stalingrad, Goebbels became irritated by the presence of these carefree musicians in the capital. Yet he still could not afford to lose them. Because bombing raids—the first major one on Berlin occurred in early March—endangered the costly venture, the entire organization was evacuated to Prague.¹³¹ In January 1944, the minister was thoroughly disgusted with the swing arrangements, and he replaced both Grothe and Haentzschel with the demure "King of Strings," Barnabas von Géczy, now one of Hitler's new professors, and Willi Stech, an opportunist with a party badge and the potential for playing good jazz.¹³² Although henceforth the quality of the jazz deteriorated, the musicians held fast and most of them survived. After the war, they started the new German jazz in Frankfurt (Berking) and founded radio jazz orchestras, like the one at "Radio im Amerikanischen Sektor" (RIAS) in West Berlin (Dobschinski).¹³³

One of the artists who had been asked to join the Dance and Entertainment

¹²⁷ Reichskultkammer to Goebbels, Berlin, February 25, 1942, BA, R 55/242/1; Hinkel to Goebbels (and enclosure), Berlin, March 10, 1942; Reichskultkammer to Promi-Haushaltsabteilung, Berlin, August 3, 1943, BA, R 56I/34; minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), April 8, 1942, BA, R 55/695.

¹²⁸ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 99; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 32–34; entry for October 15, 1942, in *Meldungen*, 11:4333; Lehn and Dobschinski interviews.

¹²⁹ AMR, March 15, 1942; memorandum RKK, Berlin, January 24, 1944, BA, R 56I/34; Schönicke to Fritzsche, Berlin, July 29, 1944, BA, R 55/557; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 34; author's telephone conversation with Georg Haentzschel (Cologne-Berlin), June 29, 1988.

¹³⁰ Hinkel to Goebbels, Berlin, December 9, 1942, BA, R 55/1254; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 34.

¹³¹ Heiber, *Joseph Goebbels*, 307–09; entries for March 3 and 18, 1943, *The Goebbels Diaries*, 310–11, 354; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 34; Dobschinski interview.

¹³² Büro Staatssekretär to Leiter Pers., Berlin, January 13, 1944; Hinkel to Goebbels, Berlin, January 14, 1944, BA, R 55/200; memorandum RKK, Berlin, January 24, 1944; Sergius Safranow to Tackmann, Prague, March 30, 1944, BA, R 56I/34. On Willi Stech: "Eindrücke vom Konzert des Orchesters Willi Stech am 8. Januar 1943 . . .," BDC, RMK, Wilhelm Stech; Brocksieper interview. Goebbels's disgust is corroborated in conversation with Haentzschel.

¹³³ Interviews with Mangelsdorff, Pick, and Lehn; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 34–35, 38–39.

Orchestra was drummer Fritz Brocksieper, but he declined because, as he later said, he thought it “too commercial.”¹³⁴ A more likely reason was that Brocksieper had himself already been conscripted to support a swinging combo whose music served as bait for foreign listeners to German shortwave propaganda broadcasts. In conjunction with efforts made by “Lord Haw-Haw” and “Axis Sally,” who beamed propaganda texts and false news to England and the United States over shortwave, the propaganda ministry directed other series, including sarcastic skits ridiculing Winston Churchill and, by 1942, the Americans.¹³⁵ Brocksieper’s combo, led by able saxophonist Lutz Templin, introduced these skits musically but also featured male singers (Templin or Karl Schwedler) who, with catchy accompaniment, would perform Anglo-American popular songs and jazz standards in almost-convincing English. First, the tune would be sung straight, then an anti-Allied version manufactured by the ministry would follow right after, and subsequently, one would hear hotly improvised choruses by such well-known pre-war artists as Charly Tabor (trumpet), Eugen Henkel (clarinet), or Kurt Wege (baritone saxophone). Several of those players, in fact, hailed from the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra, as did Mück and Berking, and, over time, as musicians became rarer because of inevitable conscription, foreign artists such as the Italian Nino Impallomeni and the Dutchman Rimis van den Broek (both on trumpet) were added. Brocksieper’s outfit called itself “Charlie and His Orchestra,” after singer Karl Schwedler, and on the notorious propaganda program “Germany Calling,” it would present songs like “Goodnight, Sweetheart,” whose first parodied stanza would deliver this disconcerting message: “Goodbye, England, your golden days are over; Goodbye, England, German guns are shelling Dover.” In the summer of 1943, by the time the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra was preparing to move to Prague, Templin’s group repaired to Stuttgart and carried on haphazardly from there, until that city was bombed beyond recognition in early 1945.¹³⁶

The effect of those renditions on the receiving public is not certain; probably, they were too comical to have the desired impact. Several of the hate songs were recorded and distributed to British and (later) American prisoners of war, yet apparently not one of these records prompted an Allied POW to defect to the Nazi side.¹³⁷ Templin’s combo was also used for broadcasts to Latin America, and, judging from responses there and in the United States, the reaction was not very favorable. As the German functionaries could not help but agree, jazz, after

¹³⁴ Brocksieper interview.

¹³⁵ Brocksieper interview; John Alfred Cole, *Lord Haw-Haw—and William Joyce* (London, 1964), 110–13, 166; entry for May 23, 1942, *The Goebbels Diaries*, 263.

¹³⁶ Brocksieper and Tabor interviews; liner notes for double-record album, Discophelia DIS 13/UT-C-1/2, “Charlie and His Orchestra” (n.d.) (music cassette with author); cassette of single 78 r.p.m. records (e.g., “Goodnight, Sweetheart”) from Brocksieper’s private collection with author; Schönicke to Heinz Drewes, Berlin, August 24, 1944, BA, R 55/558; Martin Schönicke, “Abgrenzung der Aufgabengebiete der musikalischen Programmgruppen,” Berlin, January 17, 1945, BA, R 55/559.

¹³⁷ Brocksieper interview and liner notes (as in n. 136).

all, was an American affair and, however distasteful, was much better handled by the Americans themselves.¹³⁸

Most German soldiers would not have been able to tell the difference. The Wehrmacht's need for behind-the-lines entertainment afforded jazz musicians yet another chance of making it through the war alive, for many players were claimed by the German Supreme Command for battlefield tours (*Truppenbetreuung*). In this, they shared the fate, or perhaps the good fortune, of other Reich artists, not just musicians but also actors from radio, screen, and stage, and circus acrobats. Organized and financed by Robert Ley's "Strength through Joy" agency and later by Organisation Todt, groups ranging from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra to the Weimar State Theater as well as popular shows traveled to occupied Denmark, Norway, the French Channel coast, and, eventually, to the Russian front.¹³⁹

Society orchestras like the compliant von Géczy's participated in these ventures as readily as smaller and hotter bands, like the pioneering Hohenberger combo.¹⁴⁰ Trumpeter Kurt Hohenberger, with Schulze on piano, Lais on reeds, and Willy Kettel on drums, went on tour, sometimes with the temperamental Chilean singer Rosita Serrano, to the Channel coast, Scandinavia, and the "Protectorate" of former Czechoslovakia. In 1942, Schulze left this group for Otto Stenzel's skeleton "Scala" orchestra in Poland and then for Heinz Wehner's big band in Oslo, until early 1943.¹⁴¹ Brocksieper had to take time out from his shortwave broadcasts to make several entertainment forays into France.¹⁴² Dr. Dietrich Schulz-Köhn, a Luftwaffe ground crew officer stationed in France in those years, has testified that such groups performed the jazziest numbers, without any official constraints whatsoever.¹⁴³ Brocksieper told the story of a Goebbels aide who, after the audience had begun to shout "Tiger Rag! Bei mir biste scheen!" declared in a solemn voice that American and Jewish numbers were out of the question. He was immediately bombarded with apples and hurriedly left the scene, not without instructing his musicians, "Play what you want!"¹⁴⁴

This last anecdote graphically illustrates that service in these bands was not without its risks, for, often, the fun-loving musicians found themselves between the devil and the deep blue sea. There were a few wits among them who had

¹³⁸ Promi memorandum, Berlin, January 24, 1943, BA, R 78/1000a; Reichs-Rundfunk, Buenos Aires, "Vorschläge . . .," July 1944; Hinkel to Goebbels, Berlin, December 11, 1944, BA, R 55/557.

¹³⁹ Ludwig Körner, Raabe, Carl Froelich, Goebbels, "Aufruf! Deutsche Künstler!" Berlin, August 8, 1940, in AMR, August 15, 1940, BA, RD 33/2-2; Fritz Reipert, "Gleichklang zwischen Front und Heimat," [1940]; newspaper fragment, "Deutsche Künstler von Narvik bis Bordeaux," August 9, 1940, BA, R 561/114; Rudolf Sonner, "Kriegsauftrag von 'Kraft durch Freude,'" *Die Musik*, 33 (1940): 9-13.

¹⁴⁰ See Befehlshaber der deutschen Truppen in Dänemark, memorandum, headquarters, June 19, 1940, BA, R 561/114; Sonner, "Kriegsauftrag," 13.

¹⁴¹ Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 109; Schulz-Reichel interview; author's telephone conversation with Fritz Schulz-Reichel, Berlin, May 9, 1987; Reichskultkammer to Raabe, Berlin, March 2, 1940, BDC, RMK, Karl Hohenberger.

¹⁴² Brocksieper interview.

¹⁴³ Schulz-Köhn interview. Also see the characteristic report in *Meldungen*, 16:6439-40.

¹⁴⁴ Brocksieper interview.

trouble holding back their contempt for the regime, such as the cabaret artist Peter Igelhoff, capable of playing excellent jazz piano, who was withdrawn from his entertainment junkets in December 1942 and sent to serve at the front.¹⁴⁵ Whether or not this was a punitive measure, the surrender at Stalingrad a few weeks later demanded that the entire scheme of battlefield tours be reduced substantially to add more soldiers to the army.¹⁴⁶ Not all jazz groups were disbanded: Wehner's held out in Oslo, and Stech continued to travel with an assortment of artists in the Greater Reich until the beginning of his mandate in Prague.¹⁴⁷ Other forms of troop entertainment were further tolerated but within tighter bounds, usually supplied by older or disabled personnel and, increasingly, by conscripted foreigners.¹⁴⁸ Thus some of Germany's best jazz musicians could not help being sent into battle, among them Schulze and Tabor.¹⁴⁹ The only other way out of these conundrums was to be contracted by one of several record companies still situated in Berlin that pressed jazz singles for export to the neutral and occupied countries as a source of hard currency; but such jobs usually fell to conscripted foreign musicians like Candrix and those Germans who could, with difficulty, be retained by the shortwave and administrators of the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra.¹⁵⁰

On balance, one can therefore justify the statement that jazz prostituted itself, or at least allowed itself to be prostituted, during World War II. But prostitution being a mutual act, it was, after all, persons for and against this music who were involved in the abuse. Since the ideological antagonism between fascism and jazz was irreconcilable, Nazi politicians remained determined to extirpate what they perceived as a fundamental evil, even though they used jazz for diplomatic banquets and propaganda. As for jazz artists, even if they served the purposes of the regime, they also assumed risks for their lives. A West German historian of jazz, Joachim Ernst Berendt, who was a young soldier then, has recently impressed on his readers that everyone in the jazz community of those years knew about musicians and jazz aficionados suddenly vanishing, if in some cases for only a few weeks, and about military penal companies in which they were forced to serve. Individual case histories of musicians bear this out.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ Minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), December 9, 1942, BA, R 55/696. See Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 69.

¹⁴⁶ Goebbels on February 18, 1943, *Der steile Aufstieg*, 191.

¹⁴⁷ "Verzeichnis II. Noch nicht eingezogene Wehrpflichtige," [1943], BDC, Promi-Freigaben-Liste 41, Pos. 11; list "Fronttheater," November 1, 1943, BA, R 56I/84; minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), June 30, 1943, BA, R 55/696; Abteilung M to Abteilung Rfk., Berlin, August 9, 1944, BA, R 55/559.

¹⁴⁸ Walther Camerer to Hinkel, Im Osten, May 23, 1943, BA, R 56I/83; Grabs to Hinkel, O.U., August 15, 1943, BA, R 56I/85; Basso and Hanke, "Engagementsvertrag für Artisten," Lüneburg, April 17, 1944; Wollnik to Gerd Hanke, [Berlin], May 25, 1944, BDC, RMK, Alfredo Basso.

¹⁴⁹ Tabor and Schulz-Reichel interviews.

¹⁵⁰ Double-record album, Teldec 6.28360, "Swing tanzen verboten" (reissue 1976); Black Jack LP 3014 Limited Edition, "Fud Candrix and His Orchestra on the Air" (orig. 1943; no reissue date); Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 101–03, 106–08, 110–11, 115–17; *Jazz-Podium*, 6 (1957): 21; Conrad, *Posaunen-Dob*, 35–36; Brocksieper and Wunderlich interviews.

¹⁵¹ Berendt, *Ein Fenster aus Jazz*, 301; recorded interview with Joachim Ernst Berendt (Baden-Baden), Klappholttal/Sylt, June 15, 1988. One who so served was Zimmerle (Zimmerle interview).

SINCE WOMEN IN THE NAZI REICH generally were a disadvantaged lot, it comes as no surprise that the combination of womanhood and jazz artistry under Hitler was a detrimental one. Singer Rosita Serrano had the doubly good fortune of being beautiful and endowed with a phenomenal voice, which facilitated astounding feats in musicals and, singing with Teddy Stauffer or the Hohenberger combo, in jazz. Well into the war, she was popular with a broad listening audience and, for her undeniable charm, with Goebbels. But, by 1941, the average listener came to dislike her frequent jazz broadcasts and suddenly remembered her Chilean origins. Xenophobia had conquered the public mood. By 1942, Serrano was ordered out of radio; a year later, she was *persona non grata*, left the Reich for Sweden, and there performed in benefit concerts to help Danish-Jewish refugees. In Germany, her records were banned, and, had she returned, she would have been tried for espionage.¹⁵²

Beguiling, dark-voiced Swedish singer and film actor Zarah Leander, one of Goebbels's early favorites, also lost her popularity because of xenophobia. Her connection with jazz, however, was more tenuous. She did not perform in that idiom as often as Serrano, although she was a friend of, and later married, Swedish big band leader Arne Huelphers, who often visited the Reich.¹⁵³ On the other hand, German singer Lale Andersen, who had a strong affinity with jazz and always liked to work with jazz musicians, was severely censored by the ministry because her former Jewish lover, Rolf Liebermann, was Swiss, and, through him, she was in contact with German-Jewish refugees in Switzerland.¹⁵⁴ Under such pressures, it was next to impossible for the young aspiring singer Margot Hielscher, who as a teenager had been enamored of Stauffer and His Original Teddies, to develop her own jazz personality; she was criticized for her vocal style.¹⁵⁵

Yet another singer, Margot Friedländer, was even more endangered because she had been a member of the Heinz Sandberg combo, a group that was caught in 1944 in Hamburg clubs, playing hot American melodies. Friedländer was earmarked for expulsion from the Reich Music Chamber but survived the regime well enough to participate in the beginnings of West German jazz.¹⁵⁶ Her co-musician Sandberg, a twenty-three-year-old accordionist and veteran of the

¹⁵² Entry for December 13, 1940, *Die Tagebücher*, 4:431; entries for December 9, 1940, and March 13, 1941, *Meldungen*, 6:1849, 2105; November 20, 1941, *ibid.*, 8:3011; minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), November 24, 1941; September 24, 1942; January 28, 1943, BA, R 55/695–96; Leiter Personalabteilung to Fritzschke, Berlin, November 4, 1943, BA, R 55/125; Hinkel's remarks on RMK work card for Serrano, May 5, 1944, BDC, RKK, Rosita Serrano; recorded interview with Rosita Serrano, Hohenroda, June 17, 1988.

¹⁵³ Entries for February 8, 1937, January 11 and November 24, 1940, *Die Tagebücher*, 3:37, and 4:10, 410; entries for December 9, 1940, and March 13, 1941, *Meldungen*, 6:1849, 2105; Heinrich Peter to Goebbels, June 17, 1943, BA, R 561/27.

¹⁵⁴ Lale Andersen, *Leben mit einem Lied*, 5th edn. (Munich, 1981), *passim*, esp. 200; Andersen case (1941–43) in BDC, RKK, Lale Andersen; minutes of radio committee meetings (Berlin), September 16, 1942, and May 5, 1943, BA, R 55/696.

¹⁵⁵ Hielscher's remarks in West German First Channel TV (ARD) video "Alles oder Nichts" (Hamburg, 1986); Pick and Brocksieper interviews; minutes of radio committee meeting (Berlin), May 5, 1943, BA, R 55/696; recorded interview with Margot Hielscher, Munich, June 4, 1988.

¹⁵⁶ RMK to Haussmann, Berlin, June 12, 1944, BDC, RMK, Heinz-Wilhelm Sandberg; author's telephone conversation with Fritz Schulz-Reichel, Berlin, May 9, 1987.

Hitler Youth, fared miserably. Ostracized by the RMK, he was drafted into the army after his Gestapo interrogation. None of these musicians ever saw him again; he deserted and was probably shot.¹⁵⁷

These events suggest that, during the war, the Third Reich's musicians became somewhat more conscious of the legacy of liberty and protest associated with jazz music. It is interesting that all the genuine jazz players in the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra were under suspicion because almost none of them had yet joined the party, and that the violist charged with spying on them, a member of the party, was the worst musician of the lot.¹⁵⁸ Bandleader Otto Stenzel, who had been suspect before 1939, at the beginning of the conflict ostensibly drank a toast to the "Fourth Reich." Denounced by a witness, he endured three weeks in Sachsenhausen concentration camp but was then released because of the painful shortage of good musicians. Henceforth he remained under Gestapo surveillance and more than once risked his safety by performing all the wrong songs.¹⁵⁹

It was a mixture of a jazz artist's love of freedom and bravado, bolstered by alcohol, that prompted trumpet man Karl Hohenberger of the Dance and Entertainment Orchestra to declare loudly his disgust for the Third Reich. One evening in September of 1943, he walked into a Berlin café, demanded "Jewish music" from the piano player, and insulted the proprietor, who wore a party badge: "Take it off, Hitler is finished!" Even though this notorious troublemaker was, as usual, inebriated, the Gestapo anticipated an automatic death sentence. It is probable but not yet certain that the Nazis did murder him, after he had served months in Sachsenhausen camp and Brandenburg penitentiary.¹⁶⁰

It seems that, at the climax of the war, when least popular with a totalitarian regime that was fighting multiple outside enemies, jazz finally asserted its original character as a medium of protest—and not just among musicians. Such protest now had the potential for turning into outright political resistance. Jazz was enthused over in circles of gymnasium students, among the upper-middle-class teenagers conscripted to assist the Wehrmacht (*Flakhelfer*), and in Hitler Youth groups openly oppositional toward their higher echelons.¹⁶¹ Werner Wunderlich, a pupil of the Potsdam Napolia, one of the elite SS cadet schools,

¹⁵⁷ Sandberg's case is in BDC, RMK, Heinz-Wilhelm Sandberg. The last document there, recording his second flight, is from August 1, 1944.

¹⁵⁸ Memorandum Rückert, Berlin, April 1, 1943; Safranow to Tackmann, Prague, March 30, 1944, BA, R 561/34; Klägemann interview.

¹⁵⁹ Danzi, *American Musician in Germany*, 137; SS-Obersturmführer Fischer to Gauleitung Berlin, Berlin, September 20, 1940; Chef Sicherheitspolizei to Reichspropagandaministerium, Berlin, May 26, 1944 (including enclosure); remarks Reichssicherheitshauptamt of October 14, 1942, on RMK work card for Stenzel, BDC, RMK, Otto Stenzel; recorded interview with former Stenzel band singer Gertie Schönfelder, in whose apartment the toast occurred, Lindau, June 2, 1988.

¹⁶⁰ Memorandum Rückert, Berlin, September 20, 1943, BA, R 561/34; court file (1943–44) in BDC, RMK, Karl Hohenberger. On the cause of death, different versions, apparently spread by his (now deceased) older brother Kurt, abound in West German musicians' circles. One has it that the Russians, another that the Americans, shot Karl *after* May 1945, by mistake (Brocksieper and Dobschinski interviews). So far, neither of these is credible.

¹⁶¹ The various testimonies in Reich-Ranicki, 101, 111–12, 121–22, 124, 149–50, 160, 168; Ernst Kaltenbrunner to Sicherheitspolizei, *et al.*, Berlin, October 25, 1944, BA, R 22/1177; entries for March 3 and September 25, 1944, in Klaus Granzow, *Tagebuch eines Hitlerjungen 1943–1945* (Bremen, 1965), 85–86, 111.

was caught listening to jazz on the BBC and found himself in mortal danger until he could enlist.¹⁶² By 1943, tuning in enemy stations for news or for the condemned music could easily fetch a death sentence.¹⁶³

At that time, the Anglophile Hamburg “Swing Youth” posed a real threat to security as Himmler’s Gestapo defined it. Since its modest beginnings in 1934, it had grown and now comprised several hundred juveniles of both sexes. Jazz and the BBC occupied only some of their time. A number of “swings” devoted themselves to the distribution of anti-Hitler handbills and other conspiratorial activities.¹⁶⁴ In 1943, Himmler had many of them arrested, clapping them into prisons and concentration camps where some died: Kurt Hirschfeld, for instance, and Hans Scharlach, both of them half-Jewish.¹⁶⁵ But the crackdown did not stop similar groups in Leipzig, Dresden, Hanover, and smaller German towns like Chemnitz and Saarbrücken, from carrying on with jazz.¹⁶⁶

One of the youth groups the Gestapo managed to dissolve early in the war was the Frankfurt “Harlem Club,” which, like all the other upper-school protest cells, had a strong jazz orientation.¹⁶⁷ But the club was far from dead; jazz as a symbol of freedom remained resilient. Former members and new ones gathered informally in one of Frankfurt’s better bars, the “Rokoko-Diele.” By 1942, an amateur jazz band was playing there irregularly, staffed by pianist Hans Otto Jung, a Frankfurt economics student, drummer Horst Lippmann, whose parents owned a hotel, and accordionist Emil Mangelsdorff—the only proletarian in this upper-middle-class group. They were joined occasionally by Carlo Bohländer on trumpet, who was somewhat older and already serving in the Wehrmacht at nearby Giessen.¹⁶⁸

In retrospect, this cell appears unique but not for the acts of civil sabotage its members committed (such as disabling Frankfurt streetcars in rush-hour traffic); other urban swing groups did that, too.¹⁶⁹ Rather, if we look on its musician members as potential recruits to the active German jazz scene, it is clear that, in

¹⁶² Wunderlich interview.

¹⁶³ Entry for July 8, 1943, *Meldungen*, 14:5447; Boelcke, *Die Macht*, 445–46, 451–56; Werner Schwipps and Gerhart Goebel, *Wortschlacht im Äther* (Berlin, [1971]), 18–19.

¹⁶⁴ Testimony of former “Swing-Jugend” member Thorsten Müller in *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, March 13, 1984; “Einzelbeispiele . . .” (n. 94); “Jugendliche Cliques und Banden,” enclosed with Reich justice minister to Oberlandesgerichtspräsidenten, Berlin, June 10, 1944, BA, R 22/1177.

¹⁶⁵ Artur Axmann to Heinrich Himmler, January 3, 1942; Himmler to Axmann, and to Reinhard Heydrich, Führer-Hauptquartier, January 26, 1942, BA, NS 19 neu/219; memorandum Berendt, [March 1982], archive of Südwestfunk, Baden-Baden. Victims’ names according to Engel interview.

¹⁶⁶ The 1950s bebop jazz pianist Jutta Hipp, now residing in New York, was a graduate of the Leipzig group surrounding “Hot-Geier.” See Richard W. Fogg, “Jazz under the Nazis,” *Down Beat*, (February 1966): 98–99; Marlis G. Steinert, *Hitlers Krieg und die Deutschen: Stimmung und Haltung der deutschen Bevölkerung im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Düsseldorf, 1970): 117–18; “Einzelbeispiele . . .” (n. 94); entry for August 10, 1942, *Meldungen*, 11:4054–57; Lange, *Jazz in Deutschland*, 100; Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 166–69.

¹⁶⁷ “Einzelbeispiele . . .” (n. 94); “Jugendliche Cliques und Banden.”

¹⁶⁸ Jung liner notes as well as record, Harlequin HQ 2051, “Swing under the Nazis” (1986); interviews with Mangelsdorff, Jung, and Bohländer. In his book, *La Tristesse de Saint Louis: Swing under the Nazis* (New York, 1985), 43–50, Mike Zwerin has recounted some of this, after similar interviews. But aside from several factual errors, Zwerin underestimated the political significance of the Frankfurt group.

¹⁶⁹ Mangelsdorff interview; see “Betr.: Beschädigung von Fernmeldeanlagen,” Berlin, April 12, 1944, BA, R 22/1176.



A historic photograph taken on March 22, 1944, in Frankfurt am Main, the same day the town was destroyed by bombs. Hans Otto Jung on piano, Carlo Bohländer, trumpet, Horst Lippmann (today of the Lippmann and Rau Concert Agency) on bass, Hans Podehl, drums, Charlie Petty, clarinet, guitarist unknown. Courtesy of Dr. Hans Otto Jung.

the Frankfurt environs, a new, politically conscious generation of jazz players and aficionados was growing up, the likes of which had not existed before. Jung's entire family—wealthy Catholic vintners from Rüdesheim—had always hated the Nazis, and in 1944 his father suffered for listening to the BBC news.¹⁷⁰ The Lippmanns were anti-Hitler, and so were the Mangelsdorffs, solidly rooted in German Social Democracy.¹⁷¹ Bohländer's anti-fascism was such that, eventually, he embarked on a hunger diet to force his release from the army.¹⁷²

Perhaps as a consequence of such attitudes, the Frankfurt group soon came to be linked with other exponents of jazz music in Germany, particularly those of ideological import. By 1944, these cross-connections were significant, suggesting a conspiratorial network to which jazz imputed the salient oppositional flavor. Jung was introduced to ex-Melodie-Klub members Hans Blüthner and Gerd Peter Pick in Berlin, because he desired a rare Benny Goodman record that he knew those experts could acquire for him. Through them, he also met Dietrich Schulz-Köhn, who, though a Luftwaffe officer, had not stopped his jazz activities—quite the contrary. Once or twice, Jung made difficult journeys to Berlin, to meet with Schulz-Köhn, Blüthner, or some of the regular jazz musicians still in the capital. Schulz-Köhn, crossing over from France, would come and visit in Frankfurt.¹⁷³ All the while, these unofficial “Harlem” members were being watched by Heinz Baldauf, a surly Gestapo officer and former printer only a little older than they were, with no appreciation of jazz. Baldauf especially harassed Lippmann and Mangelsdorff, who suffered Gestapo incarceration until he was drafted for the eastern theater of war.¹⁷⁴

Jazz-inspired opposition inside Hitler's armed forces perhaps represents the ultimate stance that an acolyte could take on behalf of the art form and against the regime. Schulz-Köhn is on record as having done this; today, he is one of the living legends of international jazz history.¹⁷⁵ When stationed in France, he would manage to get to Paris and visit his beloved “Hot Club.” A photograph exists of him in Luftwaffe uniform in front of the Hot Club, showing Django Reinhardt on his right and four unidentified blacks on his left. On the farthest left stands Henri Battut, a Jew, to whom Schulz-Köhn gave ration coupons.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, this lieutenant kept up his contact with Panassié and Delaunay, and

¹⁷⁰ Jung and Blüthner interviews.

¹⁷¹ Mangelsdorff interview.

¹⁷² Jung and Bohländer interviews.

¹⁷³ Interviews with Jung, Pick, Blüthner, and Bohländer.

¹⁷⁴ Interviews with Mangelsdorff, Jung, and Bohländer; BDC, SS, Heinz Baldauf; Rudorf, *Jazz in der Zone*, 20–21.

¹⁷⁵ See only Josef Skvorecky, *The Bass Saxophone: Two Novellas* (London, 1978): 137, 183; Newton [Hobsbawm], *Jazz Scene*, 260. However, as with all legends, historical truth tends to get sidetracked. It is not true that Schulz-Köhn “concealed an escaped black POW in his [Paris] apartment” (Skvorecky, *Bass Saxophone*, 137; correction according to personal communication by Schulz-Köhn to the author, Liblar, May 16, 1987). Schulz-Köhn did not engage in his well-publicized records swap talks with U.S. officers “when captured at Lorient” (Newton [Hobsbawm], *Jazz Scene*, 260), but during armistice negotiations (Schulz-Köhn interview). Zwerin's chapter on Schulz-Köhn, *La Tristesse de Saint Louis*, 31–42, is fraught with generalizations and mistakes.

¹⁷⁶ Schulz-Köhn interview; Schulz-Köhn, “Conférence au ‘Hot Club de France’ le 27–3–43,” private archive, Schulz-Köhn (photocopy with author). The photo is published near p. 55 in Zwerin. I saw the original in Dr. Hans Otto Jung's private photograph collection.

he broadcast a public lecture about Reinhardt at Nîmes radio station, not as a civilian but in full regalia.¹⁷⁷

The most dangerous jazz-related act of resistance occurred when, in 1942–1943, Schulz-Köhn designed, manufactured, and distributed to interested fellow soldiers a clandestine jazz journal entitled *Jazz News*. Only a few sequels appeared. In them, accolades for contemporary French, Belgian, and Dutch jazz musicians were printed; American black players like Benny Carter were lionized in absentia. One and a half pages were devoted to a feature on the Jewish clarinetist Artie Shaw. That particular article had been written by Blüthner, who, along with Pick, was assisting Schulz-Köhn in the venture. To cap it off, regional anti-jazz edicts were reproduced without comment, as if to mock the Nazis.¹⁷⁸

This journal was unmitigated treason, far worse than switching on the BBC. The fact that *Jazz News* was never intercepted and its three authors never caught amounts to one of those strange accidents of history. Had Pick, Blüthner, and Schulz-Köhn been tried, they would surely have been executed. But since it did not happen, jazz was deprived of what could have passed for martyrs in Hitler's Germany. Doubtless this is one of the reasons why the story of jazz under fascism has never been fully told before.

AN ACCOUNT OF JAZZ IN THE THIRD REICH provides opportunities for the cultural anthropologist, more specifically, the musicologist, to trace the development of a human art in times of unusual stress. In this case, the stress was caused by a fascist German regime, and what has been reported about the resiliency of this music under Hitler is apt to revise the dictum that dictatorship and jazz are mutually exclusive. But this dictum has been qualified before, in Frederick Starr's pioneering study of jazz in the Soviet Union, in which he demonstrated that, in certain developmental phases, jazz symbolized for the revolutionary Russian rulers the sort of modernism they wished to realize for their society.¹⁷⁹ More recently, the brilliant Cuban saxophonist Paquito d'Rivera averred that, when jazz is openly performed on Fidel Castro's island, "they keep an eye on you" but do not directly forbid it.¹⁸⁰ The flower of jazz, once blooming, over time has clearly proved itself to be a strong and vital plant resisting extinction. This is a remarkable judgment about an art form that has at times been known for its affinity with the *demi-monde* and with crime, as during Prohibition in the United States, hence acquiring an immoral tinge.

In the reactionary Third Reich, that particular tinge of jazz was expunged, for it was in the world of villainous Nazis that jazz had to struggle heroically: in the most impressive situations, jazz was employed by men and women motivated by the desire to assert their modernism and to resist tyranny. This use ascribes to

¹⁷⁷ Schulz-Köhn interview.

¹⁷⁸ ["Jazz-Mitteilungen"], [1942–43], 33 pp., private archive, Schulz-Köhn (photocopies with author).

¹⁷⁹ Starr, *Red and Hot*.

¹⁸⁰ D'Rivera in an interview with an unidentified disc jockey on FM 88 National Public Radio, Buffalo, N.Y., December 13, 1986.

jazz that shade of “white” referred to at the beginning, as opposed to the “blackness” of the fascist regime. But jazz was also a pliable tool that could be usurped by the other side, as in those instances of its prostitution by regime leaders for radio propaganda and an official Nazi dance band. This duality calls into question the moral character of the musicians themselves: if, in the worst of cases, they proved to be opportunistic in their collusion with Nazi politics, they must have been impervious to the strong tradition of jazz as a commitment to freedom and social justice.¹⁸¹

Jazz as practiced in the “black” mode, to remain with Detlev Peukert’s imagery, though not a frequent and certainly not a typical occurrence in the Third Reich, still happened often enough. Much more common, of course, was jazz as a “grey” activity, with neither the political undertones of resistance nor the compromising overtones of regime propaganda. No doubt most German protagonists of jazz held what may be defined as a neutral place in Hitler’s Reich. Why, then, was it so difficult to stamp out? Quite apart from the issue of what sort of Germans enjoyed jazz, of whatever political disposition, the Nazis had early on decreed that “Nigger-Jew jazz” and National Socialist dogma were unalterable opposites—this ruling was carved in stone.¹⁸² Yet, despite categorical condemnation of the music, not only was there, from 1933 to 1945, no clearly enunciated and therefore nationally binding prohibition of jazz, but there existed, throughout, a confusing mix of tolerance, acquiescence, indictment, and policy reversal that today allows for fundamental doubts about the consistency of the Nazi regime both in its theory and practice.

In conclusion, a statement on method seems in order. It is true that, thus far, the medium of jazz has not provided the only looking glass through which to focus on the polycratic and often contradictory structures of the Third Reich; in this context, it is salutary to be mindful of the meritorious work of the “structuralists.”¹⁸³ Nonetheless, the heuristic use of jazz could point to an interesting new range of subjects for future analyses of Nazi Germany. It is apparent that culture in its broadest sense, and jazz as a part of it, has hardly ever interested historians of the Third Reich. Now might be the time to change this. There are other facets of culture, such as sports, leisure, or the art academies, indeed of “everyday” life in Nazi Germany, that lend themselves to historical inquiry. While beyond a conventional political approach, in scope and methodology, these topics are still available to orthodox social historians.¹⁸⁴ Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary methods and some adventurous model-building would constitute not necessarily better, but complementary, avenues toward understanding Hitler’s Germany.

¹⁸¹ Again, see Newton [Hobsbawm], *Jazz Scene*.

¹⁸² Obviously, this condition cannot accommodate the simplistic theory of Hans Dieter Schäfer that jazz in the Third Reich coexisted peacefully with tyranny because Hitler consciously used it as a palliative for the population: *Das gespaltene Bewusstsein: Deutsche Kultur und Lebenswirklichkeit 1933–1945*, 2d edn. (Munich, 1982), esp. 114, 132–37.

¹⁸³ In particular, see the pathbreaking essay by Peter Hüttenberger, “Nationalsozialistische Polykratie,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 2 (1976): 417–42.

¹⁸⁴ See the critical remarks by Wehler, *Aus der Geschichte lernen*, 133–34, 137–39.