“NEW BLACK MUSIC” OR “ANTI-JAZZ:” FREE JAZZ AND AMERICA’S CULTURAL DE-COLONIZATION IN THE 1960S

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ABSTRACT

The 1960s movement in jazz, known as the “New Thing,” “New Black Music,” or “Free Jazz,” marked not only another moment of American jazz music’s evolution of styles seen throughout the century, but on an ideological level, it illustrated a marked shift in perceptions of reality in both the music and society. Using postcolonial theory, Free Jazz musicians represented a movement for de-colonization, akin to the civil rights movement, within jazz and American society. Beyond postcolonialism, a second shift involved Free Jazz’s personification of postmodern culture, specifically its dismissal of genre boundaries and pluralistic outlook toward expression, as well as the inclusion of non-jazz elements into performance.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

> This is the point to which …the attention of our rulers should be directed,—that music …be preserved in their original form, and no innovation made. They must do their utmost to maintain [it] intact ….[F]or any musical innovation is full of danger to the whole State, and ought to be prohibited ….[W]hen modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the State always change with them ….[O]ur guardians must lay the foundations of their fortress in music …[1]
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> Plato, *The Republic*

In January 2001, American Public Broadcasting System aired Ken Burn's documentary *Jazz*, a 10-episode history of American jazz music. Supported by an enormous marketing budget with corporate sponsors and releasing a vast array of supplemental consumer products, *Jazz* brought the story of this genre of music into the lives of millions of people across the country. The documentary helped to renew interest in a music that had declined in popularity in the face of other music trends such as rhythm and blues and rock and roll since the 1960s.[2] The biggest influence guiding the documentary came from a group of jazz scholars and musicians associated with the neo-classicist movement: a group that looked toward a constructed tradition for the

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[1] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. B. Jowett (New York: The Modern Library, N.D.), 134-5. See Book IV, Sec. 424-425.

[2] Steven F. Pond, "Jamming the Reception: Ken Burns, *Jazz*, and the Problem of 'America's Music,'" *Notes* (September 2003): 11-3.

representation of jazz. The primary advisory figures of this movement involved with *Jazz* were composer/trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, and writers Stanley Crouch and Albert Murray. The neo-classicists' central concern since the 1980s had been to control the meaning of jazz by narrowing its representation to the "jazz tradition:" an outlook that views pre-1960s hardbop and its predecessors as the only legitimate version of jazz. In addition, their view of history is a linear narrative that ignores any development in jazz from the 1960s onward.[3] Thus, legitimized through popular reception—via an easily accessible 5-CD box set and book—and then blessed by the curators of this tradition, Burns' documentary has become an important presence in helping to ensure that the neo-classicist version of history take root in the popular and scholarly imagination.

Alongside the positive reception of *Jazz* came criticism from commentators who took exception to what they believed was a de-historicization of the story of jazz. Although he advised on the project, historian Robin D.G. Kelley condemned the documentary's dismissal of the important changes that had occurred in jazz during the 1960s, and cited the misrepresentation of the past as an attempt to freeze jazz's history within the neo-classicist framework.[4] The politically and culturally impassioned music of 1960s Free Jazz, which eclipsed the framework of hardbop and created controversy

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[3] Eric Nisenson, *Blue: The Murder of Jazz* (New York: Da Capo, 1997), 14. Also see Scott DeVeaux, "Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography," *Black American Literature Forum* 25, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 525-31; Catherine Gunther Kodat, "Conversing with Ourselves: Canon, Freedom, Jazz," *American Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (March 2003): 1-28.

[4] Robin D.G. Kelley, "Watching *Jazz* for its High Notes and Low," *New York Times*, 7 January 2001, Arts and Leisure section, quoted from Pond, "Jamming the Reception," 34.

among traditionalists since its inception, ended up as a casualty to the selective memory of Ken Burns' documentary. The 2001 documentary dismissed the collective legacy of Free Jazz as an anomaly in jazz history rather than as a part of the music's evolution, while following instead the traditional narrative of the "Great Man" conception of jazz history.[5] For instance, while not erasing the two most important Free Jazz innovators from history, Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman, their representative tracks from the 5-CD *Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America's Music* box set are examples from 1955 and 1959, respectively.[6] These selections overlook their later and equally important works from the 1960s that questioned the framework of jazz. Instead, within the context of the box set's narrative, they appear only as radicals, playing at the margins of hardbop—still adhering to its expressive boundaries of pre-1960s jazz and reinforcing the historical narrative of the neo-classicists. Cultural critic Hal Foster posits this neo-conservative perspective as a return to the "history of victors; a history, moreover, which denies the historicity of forms and materials—an *a*history, in fact."[7] The neo-classicist model is, in essence, synonymous with the neo-conservative search for an orderly tradition that

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[5] Pond, "Jamming the Reception," 34.

[6] *Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America's Music* (Columbia, 2000), compact disc C5K 61432.

[7] Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 122. Neo-conservative intellectuals were ex-leftists and liberals who had grown disillusioned with the Democratic party and liberals in general. Formed around the ideas of "unyielding anticommunism, merit-based social mobility, and traditionalist values" by intellectuals such as Daniel Bell and Irving Kristol, the neo-conservatives became the right-wing counterweight to liberal and left-wing intellectuals. Michael Schaller and George Rising, *The Republican Ascendancy: American Politics, 1968-2001* (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2002), 66-7.

salvages a historical outlook prevalent before the 1960s' cultural upheavals inaugurated history from below in contrast to the previously hierarchical, "ruling-class style" historical lens.[8] The rise of the jazz neo-classicists in the 1980s helped instigate the "jazz wars" over the definition and representation of jazz, a conflict running parallel to the culture wars between conservatives and liberals. The exclusion of Free Jazz from the jazz canon by the neo-classicists, who are bolstered financially and symbolically by the well-endowed New York City's Jazz at Lincoln Center, is itself a small indicator of a larger phenomenon: the cultural swing to the right in reaction to 1960s multiculturalism after the demise of consensus politics.

This thesis examines the origins of this ideological conflict using the representation by 1960s Free Jazz musicians in order to illustrate the arguments for and against pluralism. The conflict emerged at first as a process of de-colonization from the western musical tenets that governed the harmonic rules of jazz, which then spread into cultural nationalism. Two different conceptions of what constituted jazz competed for legitimacy in the public eye. Those identified with Free Jazz—referred to at the time as "avant-garde jazz," the "New Thing" or "New Black Music"—articulated their idea of jazz as both a pluralist and cultural nationalist identity, which used open-forms, non-hierarchical and non-technical approaches to music. The anti-Free Jazz contingent condemned the music for not conforming to the established tenets of jazz, including form, order, and an African American musical tradition firmly rooted in western musical tenets.

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[8] Ibid. For a neo-conservative critique of American society, see Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: BasicBooks, 1976).

While in no way a comprehensive history of Free Jazz, this thesis instead examines the musical movement from two perspectives. From a global standpoint, postcolonialism relates to the decline of western cultural, political, and economic domination over the non-western peoples. In addition, postmodern culture is itself a product of the collapse of long-held European discourse partly supported through the mechanisms and ideology of colonialism and the dominance over others. The national perspective places Free Jazz in the context of postwar America and the liberal consensus. This period—roughly between World War II and the late-1960s and early-1970s—witnessed an explosion of multiculturalism that questioned the values and hegemony of the liberal consensus. Focusing on how Free Jazz artists articulated themselves in their product and in the media, this thesis examines people reacting to long-term cultural colonization. Moreover, this thesis portrays the competing discourses in the jazz world as microcosms of the discursive formations in society. In its microscopic view of American culture, one sees how culture can implicitly hold allusions either supporting or challenging the dominant discursive hegemony. Conflict arises when an alternative culture attempts to make its voice heard. Furthermore, this cultural history of Free Jazz in the 1960s hopes to shed light on other elements in American society that can also be examined using postcolonial and postmodern theory.

Predominantly African American, Free Jazz musicians came of age during the height of the Cold War consensus in the United States during the late-1950s and 1960s. Fueled by an ever expanding economy and the rise of consumer (mass) culture, postwar America combined optimism for an affluent future with anxiety due to the paranoia of

immanent destruction from nuclear war. Within these larger concerns were great experimentation in the arts seeking freedom from strict artistic canons and increased social activism by an aggressive African American grassroots effort at alleviating racial inequality. At this moment of upheaval in an American society complacent with the unequal status of blacks in both north and south, Free Jazz musicians questioned what had previously been accepted as the natural order of things: jazz's adherence to western musical tenets. In 1961, jazz critic LeRoi Jones noted this imposition of western sensibility:

> Ornette Coleman has had to live with the attitudes responsible for Anton Webern's music whether he knows that music or not. They were handed to him along with the whole history of formal Western music, and the musics that have come to characterize the Negro in the United States came to exist as they do today only through the acculturation of this entire history. And actually knowing that history, and trying to relate to it culturally, or those formal Euro-American musics, only adds to the *indoctrination*.[9]

Placed in this cultural context, Free Jazz artists confronted the previously imposed—by white critics—representations of their genre. Influenced by the Civil Rights movement's questioning of authority, these musicians criticized the dialectic between western and non-western aesthetics, re-examined jazz's institutional and aesthetic constraints, inferred Black Nationalist stances in music, and challenged gender inequality. Together, these strands of thought joined other multicultural threads that confronted the cultural hegemony built upon an unequal relationship between a Euro-American, male, business-led majority and the previously marginalized minorities whose voices were beginning to be heard through activism. Against this assertiveness came the inevitable backlash by

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[9] LeRoi Jones, *Black Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), 70.

conservatives, who felt threatened by their loss of political and cultural hegemony, leading to the culture wars of the latter twentieth century.[10]

Using Free Jazz as a microcosm of this turbulent era, this thesis illustrates the mechanics of discourse and how it shaped debate—what philosopher Michel Foucault calls "discursive practices" or formations.[11] By examining the discourse surrounding Free Jazz—both for and against—one sees how criticism of the music was framed through a particular conception constituting the permissible attributes of "jazz." In the case of Free Jazz, those opposed to the music refused to grant it legitimacy and, especially with the rise of the neo-classicists, tried to exclude or marginalize it from the dominant jazz narrative. Examining the rhetoric of these discursive formations reveals a relationship between the jazz critics' method of musical analysis and the framework of discourse.[12] Emanating from the hegemonic structures in society, these discursive

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[10] See Robert Emmet Long, *Multiculturalism* (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1997); Richard Bernstein, *Dictatorship of Virtue: Multiculturalism, and the Battle for America's Future* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1994); Lawrence W. Levine, *The Opening of the American Mind: Canons, Culture, and History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

[11] Michel Foucault, "History of Systems of Thought," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Donald F. Bouchard, ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 199-201. Foucault writes, "Discursive practices are characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories. Thus, each discursive practice implies a play of prescriptions that designate its exclusions and choices." Also see Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on The Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 31-39.

[12] In using the concept of hegemony, I follow T.J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (June 1985): 567-93; also see Jackson Lears, "A Matter of Taste: Corporate Cultural Hegemony in a Mass-Consumption Society," in *Recasting America: Culture and*

formations adhere to a particular social imaginary—the collectively shared mental frameworks for making sense and representing reality. Hence, viewing the actions and reactions of the two sides of the Free Jazz debate uncovers a significant struggle over the cultural representation of social reality and the connections to a particular discourse. As shown in the politics behind the Burns documentary, regulating the discursive formations of a subject limited the cultural criticism aimed at the dominant discourse, allowing control over the articulation of history. Finally, the dispute generated by Free Jazz in the 1960s elucidates the cultural wars that emerged during the post World War II United States, pre-dating the rise of the Christian Right, the Reagan Revolution, and the tradition-bound neo-classicists in jazz.

While there might be a debate surrounding the status of jazz from the 1960s onward, scholars generally agree about the origins of jazz. Believed to have first appeared in New Orleans at about the turn of the twentieth century, jazz emerged as a product of syncretism between diverse styles of African American music—work and gospel songs, ragtime, rural folk music (including blues and string bands)—and European marching band music. The latter element, introduced by urban creoles with an education in western musical tenets brought to jazz a formal system of rules derived from Europe, specifically tonal harmonic theory.[13] What came to be labeled the New Orleans style was the first recorded example of jazz—commonly referred to today as Dixieland—and spread throughout the country into other urban areas such as Los Angeles, St. Louis,

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Politics in the Age of Cold War, Lary May, ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

[13] Susan McClary, afterword to, Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 150-1.

Chicago, and New York City. After the flurry of innovations by Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton, and Duke Ellington, by the 1930s, New Orleans style jazz had evolved into Swing, or the Big Band era, identified with the late1930s and World War II. While the former style utilized a small group, generally horns, piano, bass, drums, and possibly a banjo or guitar, Swing embodied the industrialized north's factories with its large ensemble of fifteen to twenty-five musicians, organized through broad arrangements, and led by a managerial director. Illustrating the continued discrimination of black Americans in the United States, as Swing became America's popular music white musicians such as Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw eclipsed African American musicians and innovators in both popularity and compensation. The younger generation of African American musicians in the late1930s and early 1940s took into account whites' appropriation of their music as they developed yet another evolution in jazz: bebop.

Bebop's rise in the 1940s, with its fast tempos, complicated playing styles, and the confrontational demeanor of its musicians, symbolized the rising confidence of black Americans as they began asserting their rights in a society which had largely kept them as second class citizens.[14] Using the small-group format of the New Orleans style, bebop's intricate playing kept out musicians unable to play the advanced aesthetics. Innovators Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker's music coincided with other modern art movements as well, namely the Abstract Expressionists in New York City and the early Beats, which essentially brought an avant-garde edge to jazz in the wake of its popular predecessor Swing. Following bebop in 1950, Cool Jazz emerged as a combination of bebop's

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[14] Alyn Shipton, *A New History of Jazz* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 420, 437-38.

smaller group and Swing's ensemble-arrangement playing. While largely identified with white musicians and a more European classical music sound, Cool Jazz encouraged a reaction by black musicians to create hardbop—a reinsertion of the African American blues elements into the bebop format. The years between the recorded beginnings of bebop in 1945 and the height of hardbop in the late 1950s constitute "classic jazz" and are designated as the last legitimate evolution of jazz from its early New Orleans conception.[15] These styles largely retained the harmonic structures and rules identified with the western musical tenets.

In the late 1950s, some younger jazz musicians sought to produce music that embraced aesthetics outside the boundaries of traditional jazz. Free Jazz's radical break from modern bebop, and its derivative hardbop, connected the music to other rebellious American art forms seeking to escape their own genre's confining parameters. Free Jazz became socially and artistically aligned with the American avant-garde of the 1950s and 1960s. In this era, jazz grappled with an internal evolution that split the genre into opposing camps, precipitating a re-appraisal of jazz and its meaning as both a musical form and an expression of African American art. Feeling restless with the over-played and increasingly predictable format of hardbop, Free Jazz players recognized the barriers from the older forms of music as arbitrary constructions within a system they deemed outdated to contemporary expressions. Citing the influences of bebop and Cool Jazz, Free Jazz pioneer Cecil Taylor in 1966 described this restlessness and his strategy for change in the mid-fifties:

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[15] Nisenson, *Blue*, 14.

> I was playing my pieces with an eye to changing things, using what I learned from [Cool Jazz legend Lennie] Tristano and others, getting outside the thirty-two-measure structure [an element of form associated with western musical tenets]. Or trying to come to grips with bebop and at the same time trying to get to a different kind of rhythmic pattern.[16]

The restiveness of the early Free Jazz musicians also reflected an increasingly agitated African American population, which slowly gained civil rights victories after the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*. Alongside Taylor, there emerged a young black musicians from Texas—via Los Angeles—Ornette Coleman, whose influence broadened the possible range of jazz expression. In 1966, saxophonist Joe Henderson stated: "Ornette inspired me to move from the canal-like narrow-mindedness of the '40s through the later '50s, to the later Grand Canyon-like harmonic awareness of the '60s."[17] Coleman's 1959 debut in New York City created a fracture in the jazz world that not only inaugurated another evolution in jazz—Free Jazz—but initiated an early debate over multiculturalism.

While Coleman created a shock, late-1950s jazz had already experienced musical shifts especially in the work of trumpeter Miles Davis and bassist Charles Mingus. Coleman, however, went further outside the boundaries of jazz than the experiments of Davis and Mingus, creating a precedent allowing further exploration outside the parameters of hardbop. Musicians gradually experimented with the freer conception of music. For instance, this new style immediately influenced hardbop legend John

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[16] Quoted in A.B. Spellman, *Four Jazz Lives* (New York: Pantheon, 1966; reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004). 64.

[17] Quoted in Leonard Feather, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties* (New York: Horizon Press, 1966), 21.

Coltrane who used Coleman's group for a recording session, but did not fully embrace freer playing outside jazz's western musical tenets until 1965. Other young artists, such as Eric Dolphy, embraced both styles and successfully maneuvered between them. Free Jazz musicians opened up the aesthetic discourse of jazz to conceptions previously curtailed by western musical tenets. These new open forms, moreover, brought musicians' an awareness of the artificiality of established boundaries, whose construction had been arbitrarily accepted throughout the recorded history of jazz.

Analyzing the discourse used in the debates over Free Jazz reveals social imaginaries outside the esoteric jazz world. Historian Miguel A. Cabrera defines the social imaginary as the "set of assumptions or principles concerning the working and changes of human society through which people make sense of social events, conceive and delimit themselves as subjects, and design and justify their practice."[18] This includes the point of reference used to analyze an object and the predominant discourse framing the expression. Discourse consists of the formal pattern of relationships which categorize concepts using a common "conceptual network" that "limits what can be experienced or the meaning that experience can encompass, and thereby influence—allowing or impeding—what can be said and done."[19] Examining the rhetoric, images, and presentation of Free Jazz illustrates two conflicting views. Free Jazz discourse, a mixture of Black Nationalism and multiculturalisms, found itself in the 1950s at odds with the dominant postwar narrative over the representation of jazz in the 1960s.

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[18] Miguel A. Cabrera, *Postsocial History: An Introduction* (New York: Lexington Books, 2004), 24.

[19] Ibid., 25.

This thesis will employ two theoretical paradigms to reveal the "disparity of power" between the hegemonic culture of the liberal consensus and the counter-cultural Free Jazz which drew on an alternative multicultural expression.[20] Conceptualizing these two approaches as a series of concentric circles, the first theoretical perspective to view Free Jazz culture in this thesis is postcolonial theory (the inner-most circle): How is Free Jazz culture a reaction to colonialism in various racial and gender forms? Postcolonial theory involves examining the texts of peoples with "a history of colonialism," as well as texts from the colonizers.[21] As an aspect of African American culture, specifically that of jazz, Free Jazz originated from black Americans with their legacy of slavery, segregation, and silenced voice within American history. Free Jazz musicians broke with the western musical tenets previously setup for jazz by the forbearers of their former masters.

Chapter One examines Free Jazz through a postcolonial lens to place the movement into the context of not only the Civil Rights movement and Black Nationalism, but also global trends. The mid-twentieth century witnessed the collapse of control by a relatively small part of the world—Europe and America—over most of the globe through colonial coercion, culture, and economic policy. The era of rapid de-colonization after World War II illustrates how significantly the colonized peoples of non-European nations disliked the frameworks imposed upon them by European-derived, capitalist nations. From a global perspective, postcolonial culture emerging in the post-

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[20] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 191.

[21] John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 33.

World War II period looked to counter the discourse of European and American thought. The writings from the colonized and formerly colonized challenged the "power of description, of naming"—or as Edward Said states, the power over representation, which allows the cultural hegemony of European or American culture to command legitimacy in its observations over those of the other: non-western peoples, minorities, and women.[22] Free Jazz offered not only another evolutionary strand within jazz, but also provided another voice of resistance against the "language of Empire," presenting a model of expression beyond the "dominant languages of power."[23] Free Jazz portrays the cultural element of this de-colonization process, as middle-class African American musicians veered from the long accepted notions of western musical tenets and embraced an alternative paradigm. This thesis portrays these tenets as colonial vestiges culturally imposed upon the musicians whose descendants were colonized through their forced relocation to North America and subsequent slavery. Moreover, the discourse of Free Jazz musicians and critics fits into the dialectic of postcolonial theory.

Early postcolonial scholar Edward W. Said conveys the process holding together the ideas of colonialism in his definition of Orientalism, suggesting it is "a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable

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[22] Ibid., 20; Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 21. Voices celebrating and explaining methods of gaining freedom from western colonialism appeared in English in the early sixties, offering alternative voices to the Cold War liberal consensus, including the publications of Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth: The Handbook for the Black Revolution That is Changing the Shape of the World* (New York: Penguin, 1961); Vo Hguyên Giap, *People's War People's Army: The Viet Công Insurrection Manuel for Underdeveloped Countries* (New York: Bantam Books, 1961); Che Geuvara, *On Guerilla Warfare* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1961).

[23] McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, 19, 22.

material investment."[24] For Free Jazz, this involves its questioning of the imposition of western musical tenets on African American music. Said cites Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony as the binding force holding this construct of western consciousness together. According to historian T.J. Jackson Lears, Gramsci's model of hegemony acts through consensus binding "values, norms, perceptions, beliefs, sentiments, and prejudices that support and define the existing distribution of goods, the institutions that decide how this distribution occurs, and the permissible range of disagreement about those processes."[25] A world view conforming to the above attitudes is articulated by a historical bloc, which possesses "both cultural and economic solidarity."[26] The postwar consensus politics provides an example of Gramsci's historical bloc, with the relationships between government and the business elite—culled during World War II—as well as the press and, to a large measure, academia that intersected into an agreement upon the national goals of economic growth through free enterprise, industrial techniques for problem solving, and anti-communism.[27] Consequently, this bloc's power lies primarily in the realm of legitimating knowledge through their definition of permissible boundaries of debate or expression—Foucault's

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[24] Said, *Orientalism*, 6.

[25] Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," 569.

[26] Ibid., 571.

[27] Godfrey Hodgson, *America In Our Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 69-77.

discursive formations—"labeling deviant opinions 'tasteless' or 'irresponsible.'"[28] Therefore, culture—in this case Free Jazz—embodies an area where hegemony can be expressed or contested within the public sphere. Conflicts occur when a tradition outside the control of the dominant cultural hegemony challenges the latter's accepted parameters or assumptions. A "categorical grid" holds together this hegemony, mediating the relationships between social action and meanings in reality.[29] Moreover, it expresses associations between institutions and their authority, social needs and arrangements, and contemporary beliefs that help determine meaning.[30] Thus, in the antagonistic relationship between colonizer and colonized, postcolonial culture attempts to dismantle the cultural hegemony of the colonizer through what Said calls "cultural resistance."[31] Cultural resistance can occur when the colonized demand the right to produce their own traditions and history outside the boundaries of the colonizer's cultural hegemony. Along with the ideals of cultural pride and the organization of a national culture, the cultural resistance seeks to reclaim and rename contested territory, create a "national identity,"

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[28] Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony," 572, 574.

[29] Miguel A. Cabrera, "On Language, Culture, and Social Action," *History and Theory* 40, no. 4 (December 2001): 87.

[30] Robert Wuthnow, et al., *Cultural Analysis: The Work of Peter L. Berger, Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 154.

[31] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 215.

and "search for [cultural] authenticity" and "a new pantheon of heroes and (occasionally) heroines, myths, and religions."[32]

After establishing the postcolonial culture of Free Jazz in chapter one, a second and related lens will be used to note the music's postmodern characteristics. Postmodernity describes western culture after the upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s had unbalanced the previously dominant Eurocentric discourse.[33] Postmodernity denotes the era after the modern—a period of time that characterized culture between approximately 1850 and 1950.[34] Once the narrative of progress and rationality—mainstays of Eurocentric discourse since the Enlightenment—encountered resistance by colonized peoples, the calls for autonomy questioned the righteousness of the western world's "enlightened" culture. Moreover, the violent resistance of European and American nations to the resistance of non-western worlds called into question the moral "superiority" of their "civilizations," thus precipitating a crisis of meaning—whose

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[32] Ibid., 226, 267.

[33] See Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism*, trans. Russell Moore (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989).

[34] Daniel Joseph Singal, "Towards a Definition of American Modernism," *American Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 7, 8, 11, 14. Modernism as a culture evolved out of the mid to late nineteenth century as a response to modernization, which included the industrial and urbanization of society. Modern art tried to reconcile the dehumanizing affects of modernity with an admiration of technology in "an attempt to restore a sense of order to human experience." The foremost tendency of modernism is "the desire to heighten, savor and share all varieties of experience." Modernism created devices such as "paradox (which joins seeming opposites) and ambivalence (the fusing of contradictory emotions, such as love and hate)," with one particular result of "multiple overlapping harmonies and rhythms in contemporary music, especially jazz." Also see Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982); Robin W. Winks and Joan Neuberger, *Europe and the Making of Modernity: 1815-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

meaning and whose history is legitimate? The postmodern condition emerged in the United States with the collapse of the liberal consensus in the 1960s from the initial cracks produced in the 1950s by the Civil Rights movement.

Alongside this postcolonial movement for black equality in America came an internal questioning of the ruling frameworks by the successors of empire: the American avant-garde artists. Coming of age in the wake of World War II and the rise of the liberal consensus, these artists reinvigorated radicalism into their art, replacing the overtly socialist or communist overtones of the thirties with an attack on the discursive frameworks in which debate was framed. The boundaries separating artistic genres dissolved as artists used interdisciplinary approaches in their work, which sometimes influenced artists from different genres, such as the classical composer John Cage, who incorporated the philosophy of Zen into his craft which, in turn, influenced theatre groups. Forms disappeared as the process of making art eluded a firm definition, precipitating a loss of consensual meaning in art and later culture that had previously been controlled by the hierarchical standards of institutional galleries, museums, and universities.

Free Jazz facilitated a crisis in the representation of jazz at the dawn of the sixties by drawing inspiration from a wider body of sounds and expression: from bebop and the experimentalism of European and American avant-garde artists to the rhythm and blues of African American popular music. Erasing the modern stylistic boundaries and aiding in the collapse of the consensus meta-narrative, the resulting postmodern condition raised the questions of “the status of the subject and its language, of history and its

representation."[35] As successors to a colonized group of people—African Americans—who finally gained a voice in society, Free Jazz musicians questioned the arbitrary acceptance of musical parameters forced upon them during their previous state of subjugation. Through their expression, Free Jazz musicians self-consciously reflected upon the nature of their art and its relationship to society, and reoriented the aesthetics of jazz in order to properly represent their version, and their perception of society. Throughout the 1960s the conflict between conservative and radical voices in American culture reverberated in jazz discourse. Viewing Free Jazz through these frameworks identifies the dominant discursive formations and their origins with and reactions to the cultural hegemony. As with avant-garde artists, Free Jazz through its de-colonization of jazz helped inaugurate the collapse of these meanings as they re-configured the acceptable models of jazz to one of a pluralism of styles. In addition, they also offered a critique to the social imaginary informing the liberal consensus, especially the technocratic approach to managing society.

The 1950s and 1960s search for symbols celebrating American freedom and individual expression during the Cold War aided in the institutionalization of art, such as abstract art and jazz. Influenced by mass-consumerism, a homogenous culture emerged in the 1950s that reflected the liberal consensus and embrace of the technocratic management style of corporate America.[36] The technocratic approach emerged in the

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[35] Foster, *Recodings*, 132.

[36] See Lears, "A Matter of Taste: Corporate Cultural Hegemony in a Mass-Consumption Society," 38-57; Alan Brinkley, "The Illusion of Unity in Cold War

twentieth century through scientific management, fordism, and the ascension of corporate power into the American government—providing "experts," such as Robert McNamara, to efficiently operate government.[37] Termed the "technological society" by French sociologist Jacques Ellul in 1954, this phenomenon was largely the outgrowth of industrial capitalism and its systematic method of rationality, efficiency, and procedure through the use of science and technology to solve problems.[38] Moreover, this approach sought the "one best means [to solve problems] in every field."[39] This hegemony compartmentalized society into efficient, categorical units, binding them together with an infrastructure and social values based upon a mixture of tenets drawing from traditional family life before World War II and the relatively newer phenomena of the corporate business world. Formed around the idea of the "organization" associated with the new

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Culture," in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert, ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 61-73.

[37] Glenn Porter, *The Rise of Big Business, 1860-1920* (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1992), 105-06; David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 338; Gabriel Kolko, *Main Currents in Modern American History* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 311-13.

[38] Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), xxxvi, 21. See author's preface to the French edition in 1954. Also see Hodgson, *America In Our Time*, 76.

[39] Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 21. Emerging from the corporate management model, historian Glenn Porter notes that technocracy gained ascendance in America because "it was the most effective instrument yet devised to organize and coordinate productive economic activities in a nation where material progress was the purpose of life." Porter, *The Rise of Big Business*, 117. After World War II, the size and scope of the American economy, with its reach around the globe, demanded the incorporation of efficient management of its resources, resulting in large bureaucracies and a culture of rational efficiency through the adherence to procedure. Ellul, *The Technological Society*, xxv.

white-collar corporate lifestyle, social critics, writes historian Alan Brinkley, derided the conformity which influenced employees to "dress alike, to adopt similar values and goals and habits, to place a high value on 'getting along' within the hierarchical structure of the corporation."[40] Streamlining society became a goal of technocracy because of the overriding need for "predictability and…exactness of prediction."[41] Ellul alludes to the de-humanizing effects of technocracy:

> It is necessary, then, that technique prevail over the human being. For technique, this is a matter of life or death. Technique must reduce man to a technical animal, the king of the slaves of technique. Human caprice crumbles before this necessity; there can be no human autonomy in the face of technical autonomy. The individual must be fashioned by techniques, either negatively (by the techniques of understanding man) or positively (by the adaptation of man to the technical framework), in order to wipe out the blots his personal determination introduces into the perfect design of the organization.[42]

Because of the artificial, socially constructed sense of being identified with the technological adaptation of people to method, historian Theodore Roszak posited that "social engineering" was instilled in culture, politics, leisure, and education through the

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[40] Brinkley, "The Illusion of Unity in Cold War Culture," 70. Illustrating early cracks in the consensus, the following works critiqued the perceived alienation caused by the immense growth of organizations—business, government, labor, university—and their affect upon Americans. David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (n.p.: Yale University Press, 1950; reprint, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953); C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951; C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956); William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956).

[41] Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 138.

[42] Ibid.

efforts of "purely technical scrutiny and of purely technical manipulation."[43] Roszak cites the scientific philosophy of the "one best answer" as enforcing a unitary view of society sanctioned by science: "And beyond the authority of science, there is no appeal."[44] Derived from European ideas from the nineteenth century regarding science and rationality, this dominant way of analyzing the world and explaining differences in phenomena was based on a system of belief where professionally trained experts observed and categorized objects and people: a methodology founded on the dialectic of questions and answers supported by empirical evidence. Thus, to succeed in life, one needed to adhere to the rules—the social imaginary—implied by the technocratic approach to life. For example, William H. Whyte, Jr.'s "organization man" vied for a position within an ordered and collective institution where an established hierarchy specified one's place and duty, as well as a conditioned conformism to an organization's policies. "[I]t rationalizes," posits Whyte, "the organization's demands for fealty and gives those who offer it wholeheartedly a sense of dedication in doing so—*in extremis*, you might say, it converts what would seem in other times a bill of no rights into a restatement of individualism."[45] The singularity and efficiency-driven characteristics—form, order, and predictability—of technocracy provided the leadership in a postwar socio-economic United States. It also provided a rallying point for avant-garde artists

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[43] Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), 6.

[44] Ibid., 8.

[45] Whyte, *The Organization Man*, 6.

who critiqued what they saw as technocracy's de-humanizing effects. Expressing this sentiment in the *Village Voice* in 1959, beat poet Allen Ginsberg wrote:

> Recent history is the record of a vast conspiracy to impose one level of mechanical consciousness on mankind and exterminate all manifestations of that unique part of human sentience, identical in all men, which the individual shares with his creator….At the same time there is a crack in the mass consciousness of America—sudden emergence of insight into a vast national subconsciousness netherworld filled with nerve gases, universal death bombs, malevolent bureaucracies, secret police systems, drugs that open the door to God, ships leaving earth, unknown chemical terrors, evil dreams at hand.[46]

Thus, aligned with the avant-garde with its postcolonial, multicultural outlook, Free Jazz epitomized the postmodern art expression. However, a reaction to 1960s pluralism by conservatives—who railed against the breakdown of order and the expansion of rights—precipitated the culture wars of the final quarter of the twentieth century. Essential to this conflict is the role of power and knowledge, and the ability to control the intermediary discourse between them. Free Jazz illustrates one such arena of conflict between those offering a pluralistic vision of society and those holding to the old hegemony of a singular, ordered, narrative extolling submissiveness to tradition, authority, and nationalism. While trivial on the surface, the control over representation that Free Jazz fought against the keepers of musical tradition has important consequences in the regulation of society. Jacques Attali suggests a relationship between music—defined by

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[46] Allen Ginsberg, "Poetry, Violence, and The Trembling Lambs," *The Village Voice*, 26 Aug. 1959, 1.

as "noise given form according to a code…that is theoretically knowable by the listener"—and the ordering of society:[47]

> Listening to music is listening to all noise, realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that is essentially political. All music, any organization of sounds is then a tool for the creation or consolidation of a community, of a totality. It is what links a power center to its subjects, and thus, more generally, it is an attribute of power in all of its forms. Therefore, any theory of power today must include a theory of the localization of noise and its endowment with form.[48]

In order to understand the dispute occurring in culture and successfully map the motivations, one needs to embrace the postmodern critique of representation and the power exercised through discursive formations.

To understand the social imaginary influencing the Free Jazz musicians and their critics, one must examine the outlets through which they could verbally and visually express themselves: album covers and reviews, liner notes, lyrics, and interviews.[49] Most of theses primary sources are directed toward the public in the hopes of selling a product or relating an opinion, and thus they generally rely upon non-technical language to describe the music—i.e., they generally exclude musical notation. While analyzing musical notation might reveal interesting dichotomies between Free Jazz and hardbop,

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[47] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 25.

[48] Ibid., 6.

[49] The analysis will include an assortment of Free Jazz albums throughout the sixties. Also see Graham Marsh, Felix Cromey, and Glyn Callingham, eds. *Blue Note: The Album Cover Art* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991).

this thesis studies the language describing Free Jazz and its relationship to social imaginaries in 1960s American culture.

Album covers presented a visual accompaniment to the music in the album. The cover sets the immediate tone for the listening experience since it is the first artistic representation offered to the listener. Album covers provide a visual juxtaposition to the music, which reveals the characteristics of this thesis's theoretical viewpoints. Generally written by jazz critics or sometimes musicians, Free Jazz liner notes set up a particular context for the listener in the guise of a verbal explanation of the musical contents. Complementing the album cover, these notes impose a frame of reference between the music and the listener. Liner notes usually articulate the artists' particular aesthetic approach to the music, provide brief biographical material, and highlight the other musicians who played on the album. While often exaggerated or subjective, these notes present the musicians' thoughts in conjunction to their art that often do not contain verbal articulation. Along with the album covers, and the liner notes, I examine statements made during interviews by the artists when they recorded and released the album. Thus, these interviews offer a perspective of what Free Jazz artists were thinking at a particular time. The lyrics of Free Jazz also offers a representation of the music's meaning, much like other musical genres such as folk, blues, or country. The most articulate reference emanating from the artist, not including the album cover and liner notes, lyrics provide a direct statement within the context of music. These primary sources portray the artists' intent and social philosophy and are used in this thesis to construct their social imaginary.

Articles and interviews of Free Jazz artists from *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Village Voice*, and the jazz periodical *Down Beat* offers widely distributed statements of artists and their critics. These periodicals set the context in which to read the evidence within my two theoretical prisms. This thesis also draws on edited compilations of articles and interviews, most notably Pauline Rivelli and Robert Levin's *Giants of Black Music*, which contains articles from the defunct magazine *Jazz and Pop*.[50]

In order to understand the musical structures of Free Jazz, this thesis relies upon a wide range of secondary materials. Works that specifically cover the Free Jazz movement of the 1960s generally follow a musicological approach, confining their analysis to shifts in musical aesthetics in comparison to previous styles in jazz, as well as adding biographies of artists and the musicians' opinions regarding the Civil Rights movement and the club environments where they performed. Black Arts poet and jazz critic A.B. Spellman's *Four Jazz Lives* is generally considered the first book with an explicit focus on the 1960s developments occurring in jazz, specifically focusing on Ornette Coleman and Cecil Taylor.[51] The importance of Spellman's work lays in its long excerpts of interviews with the artists in the middle of the decade. Fellow African American poet and jazz critic Amiri Baraka published a collection of essays and columns

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[50] Pauline Rivelli and Robert Levin, eds., *Giants of Black Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979).

[51] A.B. Spellman, *Four Jazz Lives* (New York: Pantheon, 1966; reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

under the title *Black Music* in 1968.[52] While not a traditional narrative like Spellman's, *Black Music* presents the observations and opinions of one of the most important cultural nationalist figures in Free Jazz. Marxist historian Frank Kofsky's *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s* establishes Free Jazz as a revolutionary force within the upheavals of the 1960s.[53] Kofsky portrays jazz as a socio-economic struggle between musicians and the "jazz establishment" with a heavy emphasis on the cultural influence of Black Nationalism and its revolutionary implications. Published four years after Kofsky's work, and less a political tract and more of a scholarly work, Ekkehard Jost's *Free Jazz* presents the story of Free Jazz through a musical chronology of the development of the style from hardbop, with some contextual background information.[54] Jost outlines the history of Free Jazz through a biographical and musicological analysis. Though an important source to bridge the gap between a purely musical study and non-musical interpretation, Jost leaves out the socio-political context of the musicians of Free Jazz, which makes the music appear within a contextual vacuum. Published in 1977, Valerie Wilmer's *As Serious as Your Life* examines Free Jazz using biographical sketches and discussions of the social context of the music, though without the musical analysis of Jost.[55] Written in a similar journalistic manner as Spellman's 1966 survey, Wilmer's

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[52] Jones, *Black Music*.

[53] Frank Kofsky, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pathfinder, 2000).

[54] Ekkehard Jost, *Free Jazz* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981);

[55] Valerie Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life: The Story of the New Jazz* (Westport: L. Hill, 1980).

narrative rests on personal interviews with musicians, providing their account of the jazz industry's intricate politics. Wilmer is one of the only authors to focus on women. Litweiler's *The Freedom Principle* was published in 1984, and encompasses the history of Free Jazz from 1958 until the early 1980s.[56] This study balances the story of the musicians' approach to playing Free Jazz with the musical jargon of Jost (though without Jost's notated analysis). Moreover, Litweiler only examines in passing the connections to black consciousness and other aspects of counterculture, focusing instead upon themes similar to Wilmer's. *Avant-Garde Jazz Musicians Performing 'Out There'* by ethnomusicologist David Such approaches Free Jazz through an anthropological and linguistic viewpoint.[57] Such work focuses on the second-generation Free Jazz performers (late-1970s and 1980s) and provides little of periphery contexts of the 1960s generation, and generally serves as a text to help mediate misunderstandings about the music. Finally, John D. Baskerville—influenced by the work of Kofsky—explores the relationship between Free Jazz (labeled "New Black Music" in his work) and the modern Black Nationalist movement in the sixties and seventies, focusing largely on "black nationalist discourse" and viewing the musician as a "microcosm" and leader within this community.[58]

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[56] John Litweiler, *The Freedom Principle: Jazz After 1958* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1984).

[57] David G. Such, *Avant-Garde Jazz Musicians Performing 'Out There'* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993).

[58] John D. Baskerville, *The Impact of Black Nationalist Ideology on American Jazz Music of the 1960s and 1970s* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), ix. Baskerville notes the influence of Frank Kofsky in his work. Also see Daniel Walden,

Ronald M. Radano's *New Musical Figurations: Anthony Braxton's Cultural Critique* examines Free Jazz using postmodern theory.[59] His book views the music of Free Jazz saxophonist Braxton as an element of postmodern culture and an example of the collapse of the representational consensus defining jazz. Moreover, Radano's work counters the neo-classicist silencing of the radical innovations of 1960s Free Jazz.

For the postcolonial framework of this thesis, I draw on Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. Moreover Robert Blauner's "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt" observes the colonial characteristics of blacks in America, while Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, helps elucidate the structures of colonialism. Finally, my discussion on gender is aided by the insights of Joan W. Scott.[60] The second theoretical framework, postmodernity, relies heavily on the definitions of the avant-garde by Peter Bürger, as well as Sally Banes' book on the avant-garde in 1960s Greenwich Village and the reflections of cultural-intellectual historian Howard Brick.[61]

"Black Music and Cultural Nationalism: The Maturation of Archie Shepp," *Negro American Literature Forum* 5, no. 4 (winter 1971): 150-54; John D. Baskerville, "Free Jazz: A Reflection of Black Power Ideology," *Journal of Black Studies* 24, no. 4 (June 1994): 484-97.

[59] Ronald M. Radano, *New Musical Figurations: Anthony Braxton's Cultural Critique* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[60] Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," in *Black Liberation Politics: A Reader*, Edward Greer, ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971); Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (Dec. 1986): 1053-75.

[61] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Sally Banes, *Greenwich Village: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Howard

Free Jazz musicians' representation of their art as postcolonial culture, its anticipation of postmodernity, and the reaction by critical opponents illustrates what historians Donald M. MacRaild and Avram Taylor refer to as the "different layers of meaning in cultural history."[62] Using the theoretical prisms of postcolonialism and postmodernism, this thesis attempts to map out the relationship between historical actors and how they articulate their reality—hence the emphasis on 1960s postcolonial culture, its resistance to residual colonial domination and the struggle over meanings, and the subsequent shift to postmodernity.

Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought & Culture in the 1960s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). For definitions and characteristics of postmodernity see Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1986); Foster, *Recodings*; Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Hal Foster, ed. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983); Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1997); Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Charles Jencks, *What is Post-Modernism?* 4th ed. (London: Academy Editions, 1996); David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

[62] Donald M. MacRaild and Avram Taylor, *Social Theory and Social History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 138; cf. Peter Burke, "Overture. The New History: Its Past and its Future," in Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992; reprint, 2004), 3: "The philosophical foundation of the new history is the idea that reality is socially or culturally constructed."

CHAPTER TWO

"NEW BLACK MUSIC:" THE POSTCOLONIAL CULTURE OF FREE JAZZ

> Those were trying times in the 60s. We had the civil rights thing going on, we had [Martin Luther] King, we had Malcolm [X], we had the [Black] Panthers. There was so much diversity happening. People were screaming for their rights and wanting to be equal, be free. And naturally, the music reflects that whole period…that whole time definitely influenced the way we played. I think that's where that really free form came into it. Everybody wanted to get away from the rigid thing, away from what was happening before; they wanted to relate to what was happening now, and I'm sure that music came out of that whole thing.
>
> Rashied Ali, Free Jazz drummer.[1]

> [Free Jazz] Music of this kind is extremely difficult for many listeners to empathize with. One distinguished [classical music] composer in the audience commented, "Having to listen to this is our punishment for what we have done to the Negroes."
>
> Jazz critic Leonard Feather, 1966.[2]

In the years following World War Two, de-colonization occurred around the world in areas previously controlled by European nations. This process of shifting the control of non-western lands, including their culture, from European colonizers' hands to those of the "native" inhabitants has been characterized as the most spectacular "series of

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[1] Alyn Shipton, *A New History of Jazz* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 797-8.

[2] Leonard Feather, "Shepp Jazz Blends Modernity, Malice," *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1966, C13.

events of the twentieth century."[3] De-colonization generally involved the dismantling of the colonist's systems of control over the colonized, such as legal constraints or control over economic and cultural development, through an active engagement by the colonized through either violent resistance or cultural pursuits. French-Algerian Dr. Franz Fanon, who influenced American Black Nationalists and third-world revolutionaries, notes this phenomenon in his, *The Wretched of the Earth*:

> Decolonization never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity.[4]

The de-colonization of culture occurred on many levels—in language, politics, food, dress, customs, and art. The activity of anti-colonial participants rejected the colonizers' culture and attempted to reclaim a form of their indigenous traditions. While some choices may have been explorations of art outside colonial varieties (unconscious of overt political purpose), the most outspoken articles of reclaimed culture appeared along with

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[3] Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, eds, "Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: An Introduction," in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1.

[4] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth: The Handbook for the Black Revolution That is Changing the Shape of the World* (New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1968), 36. Frantz Fanon was a psychologist who was born in 1925 in the French Antilles. Educated in France and Martinique, Fanon eventually worked for the French government in Algeria where he was put in charge of the Psychiatric Department in Blida-Joinville Hospital. Fanon's experience with racism as a French citizen, as well as his disgust with French colonialism in North Africa led him to join the Algerian rebels fighting the French authorities. His first major work *Black Skin, White Masks,* was published in 1952. John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 19-20.

explanatory political programs, manifestos, or slogans. In the case of American Free Jazz in the 1960s, there existed both unbounded artistic discoveries and explicitly articulated positions espousing opposition to the perceived colonial culture of mainstream, white-defined jazz. In the context of de-colonization, therefore, culture is an important field of contention between those in a position of authority and those finding a voice to break through the discursive formations of that authority which guided discussions of race, aesthetics, and gender.

Emerging in the United States in the late-1950s and early-1960s, Free Jazz can be viewed as an embodiment of postcolonial cultural resistance due to the music's African American origin, the musicians' overt rejection of western musical forms, and its articulated cultural nationalist aesthetics. Primarily performed by African Americans, Free Jazz developed during the rise and blossoming of the 1950s and 1960s Civil Rights movement, a movement to end colonial restraints in America.[5] Historian Ben Sidran comments on the cultural significance of Free Jazz, labeling it "a confrontational music of the most basic type: it challenged the individual, at the fundamental level of perception, to put down his prejudices and preconceptions."[6] In this description, Sidran implies that Free Jazz operated outside the categorized grid of the liberal consensus,

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[5] Charles Hersch notes the connection between Free Jazz's "musical enactment of the ideas of freedom in the growing civil rights movement. Free jazz broke musical convention to increase individual expression, mirroring the efforts of civil rights leaders to lift rules and conventions constricting the lives of blacks." Charles Hersch, "'Let Freedom Ring!': Free Jazz and African American Politics," *Cultural Critique*, no. 32 (winter 1995-1996): 114.

[6] Ben Sidran, *Black Talk* (New York: Da Capo, 1981), 142.

forcing the listener to make sense of, or reject, the radical aesthetics. Confronting the cultural hegemony of western musical tenets, Free Jazz expression offered in its place a more plural expression through postcolonial culture.

Encouraged by the activism of the Civil Rights movement and Black Nationalism, many Free Jazz artists embraced an activist role as community organizers, teachers, and spokesmen for the African American community in the quest to improve their legal status.[7] The Civil Rights movement confronted the "separate but equal" treatment of African Americans, attempting to end what Robert Blauner calls the "internal colonialism" in the United States.[8] Blauner asserts that the colonization and the social oppression of African Americans developed in four ways. First, blacks were brought into American society through the force of slavery. Second, through the institution of slavery and later segregation, this colonization influenced the "cultural and social organization" of African Americans through a "policy which constrain[ed], transform[ed], or destroy[ed] indigenous values, orientations, and ways of life."[9] Third, "in terms of ethnic status," blacks experienced colonization through the manipulation and management by whites outside their community.[10] Finally, racism, the most obvious component of colonialism experienced by African Americans and other colonized non-western people,

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[7] Eric Porter, *What is this Thing Called Jazz?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 205-11.

[8] Robert Blauner, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," in *Black Liberation Politics: A Reader*, Edward Greer, ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), 348.

[9] Ibid., 351.

[10] Ibid.

justified the domination. Thus, American colonialism and its hegemony channeled African American music into western frameworks that provided the basis for jazz in the twentieth century.

As the ideology of the liberal consensus slowly favored the de-segregation of African Americans—in light of its image of freedom during the early Cold War—it still retained many aspects of an Eurocentric cultural hegemony.[11] Black Nationalism sought to confront this hegemony through a program of cultural revitalization or what black music historian Samuel A. Floyd labels "a new cultural awakening."[12] This cultural de-colonization encouraged the expression and representation of "black aesthetics," which emphasized African American cultural attributes. Rising out of the 1950s and exploding into the 1960s, this socio-political environment largely framed the artistic consciousness of African American Free Jazz musicians and illustrated the fragility of the liberal consensus that advertised individual freedom and expression of its inhabitants to the rest of the world.

By viewing the dissolution of consensus politics through postcolonial theory, this chapter examines the representations of Free Jazz cultivated by artists and critics through

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[11] See Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) for the liberal consensus' shift for support of de-segregation in order to alleviate charges of racism from the Soviet Union during the Cold War in the 1950s.

[12] Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). 184. Historian Clayborne Carson coined the Civil Rights movement as the "Black Awakening." Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

their interaction with the anti-colonialist nature of cultural nationalism and the rejection of western musical tenets. Observing 1960s Free Jazz through a postcolonial lens exposes Burke's "multiple-viewpoint narratives" revealing aspects of resistance and cultural renewal struggling against the consensus hierarchies in American society, ranging from the racist colonial attitudes surrounding segregation to sexism within jazz and society in general.[13]

These postcolonial attributes appear on several levels of interpretation. First, it reflects the trend toward freer musical expression in the domain of jazz music initiated earlier by bebop in the forties, and the later experiments of Miles Davis, Ornette Coleman, Charles Mingus, and Cecil Taylor in the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, on an aesthetic level, these actions questioned the dominant western musical tenets governing jazz. Second, Free Jazz musicians also cultivated an identity through the construction of their own standards of aesthetic appreciation which identified Free Jazz as an explicitly black cultural product connected to the rise in cultural and political Black Nationalism. This combination of art and the outspoken challenge to *de jure* and *de facto* segregation represented Free Jazz as a radical exemplar of what they termed the "black aesthetic," consequently acquiring the label New Black Music—distancing itself from the term "jazz" or the European connotations of "avant-garde jazz." In the case of the cultural nationalism of Free Jazz, notes Brian Ward, they searched for a "hermetically sealed 'African' culture in America—a culture untainted by any white social, intellectual,

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[13] Peter Burke, "Overture. The New History: Its Past and its Future," in Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992; reprint, 2004), 20.

economic, and artistic influences."[14] Third, the critical debate over Free Jazz in the jazz press resulted in a decisive split between pro and anti-Free Jazz critics and musicians, illustrating a dichotomy in the evaluation of jazz music. Conforming to the postcolonial model, anti-Free Jazz critics rejected the aesthetics of Free Jazz because it failed to reflect the adherence to the system of western musical tenets that the older styles of jazz did. Fourth, the militant expressions of Free Jazz musicians toward the African American struggle for equality in the United States also represented a challenge to cultural hegemony. These expressions manifested themselves in the forms of record titles, song names, and images of Free Jazz musicians provide a discourse of resistance. Lastly, the Free Jazz movement experienced its own de-colonization in the form of its women performers, who expressed themselves in provocative ways that distanced them from the traditional role of women jazz singers. Concurrent with cultural nationalism, women jazz singers foreshadowed the sentiment of the women's movement as their lyrics and methods of expression evoked more inflammatory feelings than previous models from the 1950s and before. Thus, these women helped reconfigure the female jazz singer's "place" in the genre.

An early expression of African American postcolonial culture, 1940s bebop formed the aesthetic foundation for 1960s Free Jazz. The fast, sporadic, and confrontational nature of bebop in the 1940s provided an alternative to the conservative

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[14] Brian Ward, "Jazz and Soul, Race and Class, Cultural Nationalists and Black Panthers: A Black Power Debate Revisited," in *Media, Culture, and the Modern African American Freedom Struggle*, Brian Ward, ed. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 164.

and sterile nature of 1930s Swing, which had become overly commercialized and predictable and identified with white "stars." Noting this reaction to swing, Jones—in *Blues People*, the first history of jazz written by an African American—suggests that these musicians in post-World War II America assumed a more conscious African American attitude as they reclaimed jazz by infusing the music with "the basic blues impulse."[15] Jones saw this as the re-establishment of the non-western African elements of music: polyrhythms, the "subjugation of melody to these rhythms," as well as the re-emphasis of the blues under the new melodic lines and rhythmic patterns.[16] Finally, bebop separated jazz musicians by playing ability or merit by fostering a playing environment that facilitated individual expression which was suppressed by the rigid ambiance of swing. This allowed the younger African American musicians of bebop to assert themselves in the new world opened to them after their participation in World War II, both as soldiers and workers.

Free Jazz extended bebop's innovations, including an emphasis on melody and an unfixed rhythm over that of harmony and fixed rhythms. While most jazz musicians continued playing in the pre-1960s styles, Free Jazz musicians looked to a less structured approach to their music. They dismantled the framework of jazz, specifically the areas of

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[15] LeRoi Jones, *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music that Developed from it* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963), 194.

[16] Ibid.

western-based musical tenets centering on harmony, melody, and rhythm.[17] Essentially a discursive formation, harmonic rules provided a fixed number of options for jazz musicians to choose from when soloing, according to the chord structures of a song. Each chord structure limits the possible "right" notes that a player could execute, within the jazz's harmonic framework. Re-evaluating the need to follow chord changes, Free Jazz musicians transcended these limitations. Musicians such as Ornette Coleman negated the authority of chords by ignoring its harmonic rules, and instead followed a continuously improvised melody planned and executed by the musician in the moment of playing. Free improvisation replaced the order of functional harmony, abandoning the tonal center upon which chord-based harmonic rules were based and allowing a fluctuating tonal center that relied upon the whims of the improviser's melody.[18]

Along with the alteration of melody, the changed ideas of rhythm included "[e]xperimentation with irregular meters," the dismissal of the need for a regular pulse, and shifts in tempo.[19] This last factor resulted in the loss of "swing," one of the defining characteristics of jazz from its inception. The rejection of swing, the "essence" and "vital ingredient" of jazz—as characterized at the time by jazz critic John Tynan—resulted in

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[17] Shipton, *A New History of Jazz*, 790-91; Peter Townsend, *Jazz in American Culture* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000), 6.

[18] Michael J. Budds, *Jazz in the Sixties: The Expansion of Musical Resources & Techniques* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1978), 59.

[19] Ibid., 68-9.

the rejection of Free Jazz's place within the jazz tradition by anti-Free Jazz critics.[20] In reality, Free Jazz musicians rejected the demand for constant swing, not its total disappearance. Moreover, their aesthetics called for an expanded musical palette which broadened the older, more narrowly defined aesthetics of jazz. Many Free Jazz musicians, including Archie Shepp and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, continued to incorporate the older forms and compositions of jazz with swing into their repertoire, but reinterpreted them with their freer aesthetics.[21]

In addition to these structural changes in jazz, multiple instruments (some non-western) and expanded vocal techniques added a diversity of color (the range of different sounds) to 1960s Free Jazz.[22] In his work on the changes in jazz in the 1960s, musicologist Michael J. Budds notes:

> Musical color in jazz [was] …enriched by the use of exotic instruments from non-western musical traditions, the use of African concepts of tone production and vocal practice, the acceptance of all European instruments, the use of procedures

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[20] John Tynan, "Take 5," *Down Beat*, November 23, 1961: 30.

[21] Archie Shepp incorporated Duke Ellington compositions into his albums throughout the 1960s whereas the Art Ensemble of Chicago incorporated various styles of jazz including swing, New Orleans, bebop, and funk. The influence of bebop pianist/composer Thelonious Monk on Free Jazz musicians is explored by historian Robin D.G. Kelley, "New Monastery: Monk and the Jazz Avant-Garde," *Black Music Research Journal* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 135-68.

[22] Some Free Jazz musicians utilized non-western instruments, such as Don Cherry, *"Mu" First Part/"Mu" Second Part* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Fuel 2000), compact disc 302 061 147 2, where Cherry uses an Indian flute and bamboo flute; and Art Ensemble of Chicago, *A Jackson in Your House/Message to Our Folks* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Charly, 2001), compact disc SNAP 066 CD, where Roscoe Mitchell uses conga drums, logs, and a steel drum, and Malachi Favors uses a log drum cythar.

> adopted from the fine-art music avant-garde…and the use of new orchestrational combinations.[23]

Along with color, Free Jazz also emphasized the unorthodox treatment of timbre. In 1961, jazz critic LeRoi Jones connected the rough-sounding playing techniques heard from young Free Jazz players such as Archie Shepp and Wayne Shorter, with the sound of African American rhythm and blues bands of the 1950s, who played their music with a rough treatment of timbre in order to create a hard-driving effect. This coarse sound contrasted with the technically proficient (in the western sense) playing of mainstream jazz musicians such as Miles Davis. Using these unorthodox approaches to timbre, Free Jazz artists sought to express a wider variety of emotions with the dynamic execution of shrieks. In turn, these late-1950s and early-1960s practices stretched the boundaries of permissible expression in jazz, fostering a playing environment built around collective interaction with an explicit dismissal of western rules concerning harmony, melody, and rhythm.

Alongside the aesthetics of Free Jazz came a growing distrust in the "liberal and integrationist principles at the core of jazz music's Cold War identity."[24] Free Jazz's questioning of the cold war identity of jazz stemmed from the 1950s propaganda war with the Soviet Union and the contradictory image of the United States' refusal to address the inequality facing African Americans during the 1950s. Eric Porter writes, "Jazz

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[23] Budds, *Jazz in the Sixties*, 15.

[24] Iain Anderson, "'This is Our Music': Free Jazz, Cultural Hierarchy, and the Sixties" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2000), 87. This dissertation will be released as a book by University of Pennsylvania Press. http://www.dana.edu/faculty/anderson.iain.html.

discourse often erased the artistic contributions and economic struggles of African American musicians" because of the "Cold War consensus ideology" and an American nationalism that portrayed jazz, not as an African American cultural expression, but as "a respectable expression of American democracy."[25] The United States cultivated this identity by turning jazz into a "cultural ambassador" through government-sponsored tours around the world—especially Africa after 1960—to illustrate the positive attributes of American society and culture.[26] According to the *New York Times* in 1955, jazz, "America's secret weapon," symbolized the "individuality of expression" of America and its superior cultural attributes.[27] Furthermore, writes historian Lisa Davenport, "Jazz's improvisatory nature, and the fact that jazz was an art form which when performed displayed spontaneity and teamwork … suggested that jazz was an analog of the freedom

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[25] Porter, *What is this Thing Called Jazz?* 110. Kofsky, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, 107-35. For a discussion on consensus politics, see Alan Brinkley, "The Illusion of Unity in Cold War Culture," in *Rethinking Cold War Culture*, Lary May, ed. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 64-5; Godfrey Hodgson, *America In Our Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 67-98.

[26] Burton W. Peretti, *Jazz in American Culture* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 115. Lisa E. Davenport, "Jazz and the Cold War: Black Culture as an Instrument of American Foreign Policy," in Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod, eds., *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 283, 285. Also see Penny M Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Elizabeth Vihlen, "'Satchmo blows up the world': Jazz, Race, and Empire during the Cold War," in Reinhold Wagnleitner and Elaine Tyler May, eds., *Here, There, and Everywhere: The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000).

[27] Felix Belair, Jr., "United States Has Secret Sonic Weapon – Jazz," *New York Times*, November 6, 1955, 1.

America itself professed."[28] The use of jazz as a foreign policy instrument that expounded on the virtues of individual freedom, did not favorably juxtapose with the real conditions of *de jure* and *de facto* segregation at home. This hypocritical relationship between the United States Government's use of African American culture as a Cold War weapon, while at the same time black citizens were pummeled by fire hoses in the South, discredited the liberal integrationist idea.

The skepticism of jazz's Cold War identity heightened when musicians highlighted the poor working conditions of nightclubs—the traditional haven for jazz music—which symbolized to many that jazz's real place, as an African American art form, rested near the vulgar folk arts and not a viable contemporary of the more respected classical music.[29] The notion that jazz's "place" in American culture, when not being touted around the world as a symbol of freedom and individuality, lay in seedy nightclubs disturbed many Free Jazz artists who saw themselves as serious artists. Thus, they demanded the same respect given to white composers such as Bartok and Schoenberg.[30] Archie Shepp noted his dissatisfaction with the nightclub scene in 1965, when he referred to them as "crude stables where black men are groomed and paced like thoroughbreds to

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[28] Davenport, "Jazz and the Cold War," 304.

[29] Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?* 202.

[30] Anderson, "This is Our Music," 119-20. Bebop musicians first asserted their need to be viewed as artists and not mere entertainers. By the 1960s, notes Anderson, "More than any other generation of jazz musicians, free improvisers saw themselves as artists. When they compared their treatment by white club owners, record executives, and booking agents to the privileges enjoyed by classical performers, many attributed their inferior circumstances to racism."

run till they bleed or else are hacked up outright for Lepage's glue."[31] Moreover, this Cold War identity also rested on the notion of consensus within jazz that "enshrined freedom within the discipline of group constraints such as chords, bar lines, rhythmic meter, and pitch"—in effect, an institutionalization of jazz's permitted aesthetics.[32] As noted above, the aesthetics of Free Jazz ignored the tenets of 1950s jazz, creating an early crack in the jazz consensus through its act of questioning and discarding the elements forming America's Cold War weapon.[33] Therefore, the aesthetics assumed a postcolonial characteristic as it refused the containment of western musical tenets.

Accompanying the aesthetic shift was the more militant shift toward a cultural nationalist representation via Free Jazz's association with the Black Arts Movement (BAM). This renaissance of African American literary activity in the 1960s embraced Black Nationalism with its rhetoric of black power, the politics of liberation, cultural pride, and the rejection of the white establishment. In their attempt to reclaim and redefine African American cultural heritage, black nationalists developed an essentialist attitude toward black culture that dissolved any white ties or influence in order to create a

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[31] Archie Shepp, "An Artist Speaks Bluntly," *Down Beat*, December 16, 1965, 11, 42.

[32] Anderson, "This is Our Music," 88.

[33] According to John F. Szwed, *Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 217, Voice of America disc jockey Willis Conover played records by Free Jazz artist Sun Ra in his jazz show in Europe.

strict separation between races.[34] Historian Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. cites the beginning of this black cultural awakening when pro-Free Jazz critic LeRoi Jones' play *Dutchman* opened at the Cherry Lane Theater in New York on May 1, 1963.[35] The play presented a "shocking treatment of the race problem in America," and was "considered one of the season's best off-Broadway dramas."[36] The more explicit rhetoric denouncing racism influenced other black artists, such as Ishmael Reed, Larry Neal, Nikki Giovanni, Don L. Lee, Addison Gayle, Jr., and the Last Poets. BAM formed in the spring of 1964 seeking to reinforce the idea of Black Nationalism through its artistic output.[37] This more explicit Black Nationalist framework placed Free Jazz as an element of African American cultural resistance against its colonized state in the United States.

BAM cultivated an identity over the next couple of years, leading to black arts writer Larry Neal's reflection upon the changes occurring in African American art. In his

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[34] "Essentialism" can be defined as a "fixed and unchanging" definition of an object that rejects multiple meanings or influences. Joseph Childers and Gary Hentzi, *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 100.

[35] Samuel A. Floyd, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 185.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ann Charters, "Out of the Fire," in *The Portable Sixties Reader*, Ann Charters, ed. (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), 444. Also see Lorenzo Thomas, "Ascension: Music and the Black Arts Movement," in *Jazz Among the Discourses*, ed., Gabbard; Lorenzo Thomas, "The Shadow World: New York's Umbra Workshop & Origins of the Black Arts Movement," *Callaloo*, no. 4 (October 1978): 53-72. For important anthologies from BAM, see LeRoi Jones and Larry Neal, eds., *Black Fire: An Anthology of Afro-American Writing* (New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1968); Addison Gayle, Jr., ed., *The Black Aesthetic* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971).

1968 article, he summarized the "black aesthetic," writing "Black Art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept," which called for a "radical reordering of the western cultural aesthetic," including all notions of critique, symbolism, and iconology.[38] In developing this "black aesthetic," which spoke to "the spiritual and cultural needs of Black people," Neal suggested a "cultural revolution" to overthrow the perceived western aesthetic, confronting the contradictions surrounding the black experience in the racist United States.[39] The black aesthetic was thus rooted in "African American cultural traditions," and based on what Neal describes as an "ethical movement."[40] This cultural revolution challenged black intellectuals to combine their ethics and their aesthetics into a single force by destroying the "white thing," its ideas, and "white ways of looking at the world."[41] In an appeal to his readers to dismiss the "white thing" and retrieve the ideals of black heritage, Neal asks, "Whose vision of the world is finally more meaningful, ours or the white oppressors'? What is truth? Or more precisely, whose truth shall we express, that of the oppressed or the oppressors?"[42] Taking a postcolonial stance, black

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[38] Larry Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," in *The Black Aesthetic*, Addison Gayle, Jr., ed. (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971), 272. This essay originally appeared in *Drama Review* in the summer of 1968. Ann Charters, ed., *The Portable Sixties Reader* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), 446.

[39] Ibid., 273.

[40] Ibid., 275.

[41] Ibid., 274.

[42] Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," 274.

artists would no longer passively accept the white establishment's definition of art. Thus, they opened the chasm of pluralistic expression within the liberal consensus.

Whether writers, poets, or musicians, this radical stance helped foment antagonism, especially on the part of an older generation of art critics, who questioned the artistic product of Black Nationalist artists. In its attempt to counter the sensibilities taught to the older generation of African American artists, BAM demanded the cleansing of the Eurocentric sensibility from the psyches of Black artists and thinkers. A new black consciousness would replace the white one, facilitating true African American artistic expression. In the early 1960s, representations of Free Jazz emphasized the connection to more "authentic" African American aesthetics and the newer attitudes surrounding the BAM. For example, Archie Shepp wrote the liner notes to his 1966 release, *Mama Too Tight*, calling his album an "interpretation of a slave and neo-slave experience," and thus he heavily relied upon drums because "rhythm is the essence of African music."[43] In 1967 an interviewer asked pianist Richard Abrams, one of the founders of Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) in Chicago, if his organization had anything to do with "Black Power." He responded, "Yes … It does in the sense that we intend to take over our own destinies, to be our own agents, and to play our own music."[44] Though Free Jazz developed independently, its association with BAM became

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[43] Archie Shepp, *Mama Too Tight* (Impulse! 1966; reissue 1998), compact disc IMPD-248.

[44] Bill Quinn, "The AACM: A Promise," in *Down Beat's Music '68* (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1968), 46. In "The AACM: A Promise," the stated aims of the AACM were: To cultivate young musicians and to create music of a high artistic level for

pronounced as exceptional examples of Black Art through writers and jazz critics such as A.B. Spellman and LeRoi Jones.[45]

Along with its reestablishment of African musical heritage emphasizing rhythm and melody over harmony, Free Jazz's cultural connections to African American music embodied the black aesthetic.[46] In *Blues People*, Jones insisted,

> What these [Free Jazz] musicians have done is to restore to jazz its valid separation from, and anarchic disregard of, Western popular forms. They have used the music of the forties with its jagged, exciting rhythms as an initial reference and have restored the hegemony of blues as the most important basic form in Afro-American music. They have also restored improvisation to its traditional role of invaluable significance, again removing jazz from the hands of the less than gifted arranger and the fashionable diluter (though no doubt these will show up in time).[47]

Jones asserted that Free Jazz's eschewing of perceived "Western popular forms" and emphasis upon African American attributes such as the blues echoed the black aesthetic

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the general public through the presentation of programs designed to magnify the importance of creative music. To stimulate spiritual growth in creative artists through participation in programs, concerts, recitals, etc. To create an atmosphere conducive to artistic endeavors for the artistically inclined by maintaining a workshop for the expressed purpose of bringing talented musicians together. To uphold the tradition of elevated cultured musicians handed down from the past. To provide a source of employment for worthy creative musicians." Ibid., 47-9.

[45] Jones described Shepp as "one of the most committed of jazz musicians, old or young, critically aware of the social responsibility of the black artist, which, as quite as it's kept, helps set one's esthetic stance as well. In this sense, ethics and esthetics are one." LeRoi Jones quoted by Nat Hentoff, liner notes from, Archie Shepp, *Fire Music* (Impulse, 1965), compact disc IMPD-158.

[46] Most Free Jazz musicians continued to use European instruments, including the drum set, saxophones, trumpets, standup basses, etc.

[47] LeRoi Jones, *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music that Developed from it* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963), 225.

ideals. In addition, Jones' slighting of the jazz music's arranger (an important component in swing) hints at further animosity toward the "ordered" setting of jazz, which implies the opposite of the African American ideal of the (black) musician improviser. Furthermore, Jones' charge of diluting jazz implies that the arranger sought to make the music less colorful (away from black), and more fashionable to the tastes of the wider mass audience—i.e., white.

The transitional process from the western categorical grid defining jazz to the broadened black aesthetic exemplified the reclamation of African elements of jazz.[48] Tenor saxophonist Archie Shepp described the impact of Free Jazz pioneer Cecil Taylor upon his conception of jazz music, stating:

> Playing with [Cecil] Taylor, I began to be liberated from thinking about chords. …it was frightening. It called the whole foundation of what I knew into question. But then I became very conscious of the rhythm section. …with Cecil, because there's no steady pulse going, you have to be really conscious of what's going on rhythmically. Cecil plays the piano like a drum, he gets rhythms out of it like a drum, rhythm and melody. And this new music is about a melodic and rhythmic approach to the music. In a way it's more of a throwback rather than a projection into some weird future. A throwback in the direction of the African influences on the music.[49]

Shepp's eclipse of the discursive formations from his musical education—his "foundation"—illustrates the de-colonization of culture that Free Jazz encouraged.

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[48] For allusions to Africa by jazz musicians, see Norman C. Weinstein, *A Night in Tunisia: Imaginings of Africa in Jazz* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1993). Among others jazz artists, Weinstein examines some of the use of African imagery by John Coltrane, Archie Shepp, and Sunny Murray.

[49] LeRoi Jones, *Black Music* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1968; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 152.

Moreover, once outside the categorical grid, new conceptions and approaches to older instruments become apparent, as do connections to Shepp's renewed African heritage. Jones denotes these long-term African American cultural attributes when he portrays the unorthodox treatment of timbre as an "*unmeasured* harmonic diversity," a technique that reaches back as far as the musical syncretism of Creoles and rural blacks in the nineteenth century (which created jazz).[50] This altering of traditional timbre—exemplified by the "proper" technique of western tenets—to include a more uninhibited expression of sound from the musician's instruments created an anxious or troubled sound, producing an emotional sense similar to hearing a human voice. The renewed emphasis on imitating the human voice through the manipulation of an instrument followed a distinct line of African American musical traditions, explained Jones, "since the whole concept of Afro-American music is hinged on vocal references."[51]

Constituting a rejection of western musical tenets and a constructed connection to an African heritage, black aesthetics led to Free Jazz's identity as "New Black Music." Used by Black Nationalists to denote the music after 1965, replacing the terms "jazz avant-garde" or the "New Thing," symbolized the cultural nationalist interpretation of Free Jazz and the separatist intentions of many BAM and jazz artists who held strong

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[50] Ibid. Author's emphasis.

[51] Ibid., 77.

Black Nationalist attitudes.[52] This shift in the representation of Free Jazz could also be found in the changes of book titles by authors writing about Free Jazz. For instance, A.B. Spellman published his 1966 work under the title *Four Lives in the Bebop Business*, later changed to *Black Music: Four Lives* (1970), and eventually reprinted in 2004 as *Four Jazz Lives*. Frank Kofsky's 1970 *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music* changed to the reprinted 1998 edition, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*. Both authors, twenty-five years after the sixties, appear to have de-emphasized the cultural nationalism of the music with their change in titles, as the historical context shifted.[53] This shift in emphasis, according to Free Jazz musicians and their supportive critics, gave an air of authentic African American musical expression which went beyond the stricter conventions of previous jazz styles—what adherents of the black aesthetic would label the Eurocentric notions of music structure. Thus, postcolonial identity assumes a key role in musicians' and critics' representation of Free Jazz exemplified by the rejection of western musical tenets and the cultural nationalist character of the music. Consequently, BAM and sympathetic musicians presented the techniques associated with Free Jazz as separate vestiges of pure and separate African American expressions (though

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[52] Ibid., 69, 172. In 1961 Jones (aka Amiri Imamu Baraka) wrote an essay entitled "The Jazz Avant-Garde" describing the Free Jazz. Four years later, in 1965, Jones re-defined Free Jazz in a set of liner notes as "New Black Music."

[53] Jones, *Black Music*; A.B. Spellman, *Four Lives in the Bebop Business* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1966); A.B. Spellman, *Black Music: Four Lives* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970); A.B. Spellman, *Four Jazz Lives* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004); Frank Kofsky, *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970); Frank Kofsky, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution in the 1960s* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1998).

still played with European instruments), and in this process becoming an element of postcolonial struggle.

Free Jazz's initial act of moving past the musical boundaries of bebop/hardbop in the early '60s elicited a reaction from critics who rejected it as a continuity with and extension of jazz. With Free Jazz's deviation from the precepts of jazz, the response of some critics echoed those of a "colonizer's" attitude toward control over his colony. Fanon notes this unequal relationship between the colonister and the colonized: "apartheid [legal segregation] is simply one form of the division into compartments of the colonial world. The first thing which the native learns is to stay in his place, and not to go beyond certain limits."[54] In other words, to avoid conflict, one should stay within the accepted discourse. Fanon's theory can be applied to the situation of Free Jazz musicians. Interestingly, Fanon applied this model to postwar bebop:

> On the whole such changes are condemned in the name of a rigid code of artistic style and of a cultural life which grows up at the heart of the colonial system. The colonialist specialists do not recognize these new forms and rush to the help of the traditions of the indigenous society. It is the colonialists who become the defenders of the native style. We remember perfectly, and the example took on a certain measure of importance since the real nature of colonialism was not involved, the reactions of the white jazz specialists when after the Second World War new styles such as be-bop took definite shape. The fact is that in their eyes jazz should only be the despairing, broken-down nostalgia of an old Negro who is trapped between five glasses of whisky [sic], the curse of his race, and the racial hatred of the white men. As soon as the Negro comes to an understanding of himself, and understands the rest of the world differently, when he gives birth to hope and forces back the racist universe, it is clear that his trumpet sounds more clearly and his voice less hoarsely. The new fashions

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[54] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 52.

> in jazz are not simply born of economic competition. We must without any doubt see in them on of the consequences of the defeat, slow but sure, of the southern world of the United States.[55]

The discourse among reviewers clearly demonstrates how the anti-Free Jazz critics longed for the "good old days" of apolitical, formalized jazz—in essence, rushing to defend the now institutionalized "native style." According to Fanon bebop indeed became *the* model of jazz, underscoring that the misunderstanding of bebop in its initial stages was now repeating itself in the mid-sixties with Free Jazz.[56] Free Jazz musicians and their supporters portrayed the misconception by anti-Free Jazz critics of their music as an extension of the same mistreatment toward blacks who tried to exercise their right to vote in the South—in effect, trying "to go beyond certain limits" (to use Fanon's

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[55] Ibid., 242-43.

[56] Calling the bebop players "crazy," "dishonest frauds," and "misguided," the mainstream media's reaction to bebop in the 1940s generally followed the pattern outlined in a review by jazz critic Rudi Blesh in the *Herald Tribune*: "…the irrelevant parts of bebop are exactly what they seem; they add up to no…unity…A capricious and neurotically rhapsodic sequence of effects for their own sake, [bebop] comes perilously close to complete nonsense as a musical expression…Far from a culmination of jazz, bebop is not jazz at all, but an ultimately degenerated form of swing, exploiting the most fantastic rhythms and unrelated harmonies that it would seem possible to conceive." Jones, *Blues People*, 189-90. During jazz's formative years in the 1920s and early 1930s, harsh criticism appeared in mass media, such as negative assertions labeling jazz "not necessarily music," its role as an "atrocity in polite society," and finally an act that should be suppressed because its musical value was deemed "nil, and its possibilities of harm [were seen as] great." "Jass and Jassism," *New Orleans Times-Picayune,* 20 June 1918, cited in Levine, "Jazz and American Culture," in Robert G. O'Meally, ed., *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 436. Derogatory remarks from the *New York Times* described jazz as being "without the structure and form essential to music," and "merely a return to the humming, hand-clapping, or tomtom beating of savages." "A Subject of Serious Study," *New York Times*, 8 October 1924; "His Opinion Will Not Be Accepted," *New York Times*, 13 November 1924, cited in Levine, "Jazz and American Culture," in O'Meally, ed., *The Jazz Cadence*, 437.

words) imposed by post-slavery apartheid.[57] This battle for legitimacy took on characteristics similar to the nation's Civil Rights/Black Nationalist movements—America's own postcolonial movement similar in nature to that of Fanon's Algeria.

Reflecting the antagonism between the two camps, the anti-Free Jazz critics attacked the broadened aesthetics Free Jazz musicians brought to jazz. Illustrating Fanon's defense of the "native style," John Tynan, the co-editor of *Down Beat*, in 1961 complained about the early-Free Jazz of John Coltrane and Eric Dolphy, noting:[58]

> At Hollywood's Renaissance Club recently, I listened to a horrifying demonstration of what appears to be a growing anti-jazz trend exemplified by these foremost proponents (Coltrane and Dolphy) of what is termed avant garde music. – I heard a good rhythm section…go to waste behind the nihilistic exercises of the two horns…Coltrane and Dolphy seem intent on deliberately destroying (swing)…They seem bent on pursuing an anarchistic course in their music that can but be termed anti-jazz.[59]

Tynan's account exemplifies what could be considered the colonialist response to the rise of Free Jazz. Viewing the music through the 1950s jazz consensus, Tynan voices his

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[57] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 52.

[58] George Hoefer's account for *Down Beat* (quoted in Anderson, "This is Our Music," 92) portrayed the split reaction to Coleman's entrance onto the New York jazz scene: "Some walked in and out before they could finish a drink, some sat mesmerized by the sound, others talked constantly to their neighbors at the table or argued with drink in hand at the bar. It was for all this the largest collection of VIP's in the jazz world seen in many a year….This special preview for the press arranged by the Five Spot brought forth real mixed-up comments: "He'll change the entire course of jazz." "He's a fake." "He's a genius." "I can't say, I'll have to hear him a lot more times." "He has no form." "He swings like HELL." "I'm going home and listen to my Benny Goodman trios and quartets." "He's out – real far-out." "I like him but I don't have any idea what he is doing."

[59] Quoted from Ekkehard Jost, *Free Jazz* (New York: Da Capo, 1981), 31.

contempt for the non-swing components of their music. Furthermore, since the music evaded the discursive formations he characterized its execution as "anarchistic," denoting a perceived lack of order within the music. Addressing the lack of understanding within consensus discourse, in his 1963 article "Jazz and the White Critic," LeRoi Jones charged that many white critics only understood the formal idea of music, and not the attitude behind it. Jones asserts: "Usually the critic's commitment was first to his *appreciation* of the music rather than to his understanding of the attitude which produced it…he did not need to understand or even be concerned with the attitudes that produced it, except perhaps as a purely sociological consideration."[60] Jones then challenged the "anti-jazz" reference by quoting fellow critic A.B. Spellman, who asked, "'What does anti-jazz mean and who are these ofays who've appointed themselves guardians of last year's blues?'"[61] Jones continued: "It is that simple really. What does anti-jazz mean? And who coined the phrase? What is the definition of jazz? And who was authorized to make one?"[62] What divided the observations of Tynan and Jones was their divergent insights—their categorical grids deciphering social action and meaning—into what constitutes critical assessments. The former based his critique on the standardized aesthetics laid out by the 1950s jazz consensus and its adherence to western musical tenets. Jones, one of the first black jazz critics, cites the attitude and emotion of the musician as the standard of critical assessment. This divide characterized the debate between proponents and opponents of

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[60] LeRoi Jones, "Jazz and the White Critic," *Black Music*, 13.

[61] Ibid., 18. "Ofay" is pig-latin for "foe."

[62] Ibid.

Free Jazz for the remainder of the decade, which epitomized the early cracks in the liberal consensus and the impending collapse of its discursive authority.

A confrontational relationship developed between groups for and against Free Jazz. In the eyes of many pro-Free Jazz artists and critics, this conflict reflected the larger struggle in the United States between a restive and activist black population and a white establishment bent on preserving segregation.[63] In an article for *Down Beat's Music 65'*, music critic Tom Scanlan revealed the animosity between the jazz establishment and Free Jazz musicians by launching a tirade against Free Jazz and its "angry, pounding, repetitious noise—dripping with self-conscious intensity, squealing with emotional immaturity, and scowling with intellectual pretentiousness."[64] He continued:

> Even most of the highly publicized "new thingers" involved in nonharmonics, nonchord progressions, nonmelodies and nonsongs failed to titillate, suggesting that their run of luck in the jazz press may be running out, that a little woodshedding on tunes might be in order to please even their slim audience, a tight little group of humorless, pompous, and word-heavy folk who see revolution where revolution is not, who view the entire history of jazz as a series of revolutions, and who sneer at foottapping music as Neanderthal stuff.[65]

Scanlan highlighted the changed socio-political context, noting the shift away from the pre-1960s jazz he reminisced about during his praise of the older generation of jazz

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[63] Kofsky, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution*, 107.

[64] Tom Scanlan, "1964: Color it Dull and Spell it Help," in *Down Beat's Music '65* (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1965), 15.

[65] Ibid.

musicians from the twenties, thirties, and forties, such as Ellington, Armstrong, Gillespie, and Ella Fitzgerald; all artists who presented themselves without an overtly militant posture and performed jazz within the basic structures of western musical tenets.[66] Addressing this new political assertiveness, Scanlan wrote, "Jazz was once characterized by joy, by its hell-for-leather spirit of fun and games….'Important' jazz [Free Jazz] has come to mean anger, social consciousness, intellectual posturing."[67] Scanlan's apolitical jazz world reflected his firm grounding in the 1950s jazz mainstream and the relative political passivity of its musicians.[68]

Down Beat's Music '66, the annual review of the year's jazz scene, illustrates the widening rift between the critical discourse in jazz. *Down Beat* asked ten critics to review *The New Wave in Jazz*—a collection of works performed by various Free Jazz musicians from a 1965 benefit concert for the Black Arts Repertory Theater/School at the Village Gate.[69] Each critic, without knowing others were reviewing the album, evaluated the album and awarded it up to five stars. Five critics gave the album negative reviews and five gave *The New Wave in Jazz* positive reviews. Those sympathetic to Free Jazz

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] There were of course exceptions including Charles Mingus, Max Roach, Abbey Lincoln, Randy Weston, and Sonny Rollins who were considered activist musicians and expressed their support for the Civil Rights movement and African independence movements in the late 1950s.

[69] *The New Wave in Jazz* (Impulse! 1965, 1994), compact disc GRD-137. Album included groups led by the following artists: John Coltrane, Archie Shepp, Charles Tolliver, Grachan Moncur III, and Albert Ayler.

supported the album with an average of 4.3 stars. These critics approached the music from a socially conscious and sometimes nationalist perspective, describing the connections to "contemporary black culture" and the "musical communication" of the "new language"—explaining the attitude of the music.[70] They also noted the emotional "experience" that the music induced, stating that a musician's solo "is like a dawn"; "[one] can literally break into a sweat listening to him."[71] Finally, another reviewer described a particular moment when "the eddying cries of the careening horns produce a fascinating, shifting circle of sound, a continually changing texture that is thoroughly engrossing to follow."[72]

Those who disliked *The New Wave in Jazz* equated the brashness of the music to "shock tactics" and a "rage against [jazz] tradition"—implicitly citing the music as a threat against the 1950s jazz consensus.[73] The album received an average of 2.4 stars from these reviewers. Critic Harvey Siders noted that "[Sunny] Murray's drumming

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[70] "10 on 1: One avant-garde recording is reviewed by 10 critics," in Don DeMicheal, ed., *Down Beat's Music '66* (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1966), 14, 16. Bill Mathieu: "contemporary black culture"; Don DeMicheal: "musical communication," "new language."

[71] Ibid., 14-5.

[72] Ibid., 14-16. Mathieu: "experience," "is like a dawn"; Harvey Pekar: through the playing "[one] can literally break into a sweat listening to him"; Pete Welding: "the eddying cries of the careening horns produce a fascinating, shifting circle of sound, a continually changing texture that is thoroughly engrossing to follow."

[73] Ibid., 15. These comments were from Gilbert M. Erskine.

resembles a neighbor next door intermittently banging on the wall to hang a picture."[74] Dan Morgenstern, interestingly enough, also portrayed Murray's drumming as "occasional hammering patterns that sound like a desperate neighbor banging on the wall."[75] These critics, like many other negative reviewers, evaluated the music based on the standards of the 1950s jazz canon, applying the roles and labels of the previous generation's notion of jazz and western musical tenets. Anti-Free Jazz critics measured the worth of the music through strictly Eurocentric structures of interpretation—a trend stretching back from the nineteenth century through the early years of jazz, bebop, and Free Jazz. Hence, the hostile reactions by Free Jazz critics were similar to Fanon's model of the "colonist's" attitude toward the "colonized." Moreover, the divergence offers a glimpse of the power of discursive formations and their ability to provide meaning to objects. As Jacques Attali comments on the relationship between music and noise, "[In] the liquidation of codes and value, there is no direction or meaning, no project discernable to the observer. All the observer sees is noise in relation to the code, a crisis in relation value."[76] As Free Jazz's discourse moved past the older codes of the liberal consensus' categorical grid, it became interpreted as noise by those unable to cope with the changed context.

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[74] Ibid., 16.

[75] Ibid., 18.

[76] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1985), 44.

The third postcolonial element of Free Jazz appears in record albums, cover art, song titles, liner notes, and lyrics. Just as the Civil Rights movement did not become publicly "militant" until Stokely Carmichael's famous "Black Power" chant in 1966, Free Jazz musicians' cultural products became more provocative and representative of the black struggle for equality, especially after Malcolm X's assassination in February 1965.[77] The cover art of Free Jazz pianist Andrew Hill's 1963 album *Black Fire* (recorded in November) signaled this new trend. Its abstract black and white cover depicting what looks like a crowd possibly provided a subtle reference to the March on Washington or the unrest in Birmingham, Alabama.[78] Album references to African American activism escalated over the next two years, especially in the work of Archie Shepp, whose album entitled *Fire Music* echoed the connotations of Hill's, though Shepp's album included a eulogy to Malcolm X entitled "Malcolm, Malcolm, Semper

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[77] Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?* 129. As noted earlier, the works of Mingus, Roach, Lincoln, and Rollins influenced many Free Jazz musicians and brought both explicit and implicit political activism and rhetoric into their product. Mingus had recorded a version of his song "Fables of Faubus" with lyrics condemning Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus and his refusal to desegregate Little Rock schools after the Supreme Court decision that ruled the unconstitutionality of segregation. Columbia records censored Mingus and allowed only a version without lyrics to be released, illustrating the corporate timidity to musician assertiveness. Porter provides an excellent account of this resistance by politically active jazz players in the 1950s in the third and fourth chapters of *What is This Thing Called Jazz?*

[78] Andrew Hill, *Black Fire* (Blue Note, 1963), compact disc BST 84151. Hill fit into the middle ground between the radical musicians fully embracing Free Jazz and those musicians who continued the hardbop style of the 1950s. Cf. David H. Rosenthal, *Hard Bop: Jazz and Black Music 1955-1965* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 159-67.

Malcolm."[79] In the liner notes Shepp explains his use of the Latin word *semper* meaning always or forever: "I call it Malcolm forever…because of my belief in his immortality. I mean he was killed but the significance of what he was will continue and will grow. He was, among other things, the first cat to give actual expression—though he didn't act it out—to much of the hostility most American Negroes feel."[80] Four months after recording this song Shepp participated in the 1965 Newport Jazz festival, playing songs entitled "Call Me by My Rightful Name" and "Rufus (Swung His Face at Last to the Wind, Then His Neck Snapped)," overt references to African American struggle for equality and references to the history of lynching by whites.[81] Nevertheless, only a minority of outspoken Free Jazz musicians used phrases or words signifying the struggle for equality or celebrating African American heritage. Their quasi-revolutionary musical products were part of what became known as "the movement," including self-taught

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[79] Archie Shepp, *Fire Music* (Impulse! 1965), compact disc IMPD-158. A protégée of Cecil Taylor, and influenced by players as diverse as John Coltrane and Ben Webster, Archie Shepp was a playwright, poet, and tenor saxophonist who graduated from Goddard College in 1959. Shepp joined Cecil Taylor's group in 1960. After his apprenticeship with Taylor, Shepp co-led a group with Bill Dixon from the end of 1961 untill 1963. Under the sponsorship of John Coltrane, Shepp recorded his first full album as a leader, appropriately entitled *Four For Trane*. Cf. Jost, *Free Jazz*, 105-111.

[80] Shepp, liner notes to *Fire Music*.

[81] John Coltrane / Archie Sheep, *New Thing At Newport* (Impulse! 1965), compact disc 314 543 414-2. "Rufus (Swung His Face at Last to the Wind, Then His Neck Snapped)" also appeared on Archie Shepp, *Four for Trane* (Impulse! 1964, 1997), compact disc IMPD-218. Billy Taylor's introduction to Shepp's set counseled the audience to be weary of the complexity involved with the "new music," so as to ease the potential misunderstanding of the music by the listeners: "One of the things that must become obvious to anyone listening to the new music is that in order to literally hear what's going on, the audience has to be very aware in terms of musical lines and rhythmic lines. It's not easy listening, but we're glad you're out to make the effort."

reeds player, painter, and audio engineer Marzette Watts' "Backdrop For Urban Revolution" (1966), Charles Tyler's "Black Mysticism" (1966), Andrew Hill's "Ghetto Lights" (1965), the Art Ensemble of Chicago's "Get in Line" (1969), and Pharaoh Sander's homage to pan-Africanism, "Red, Black & Green" (1970).[82]

The album cover of percussionist Sonny Murray' 1965 record *Sonny's Time Now* provides an example of a politically charged cover.[83] While the majority of cover artwork for Free Jazz albums remained consistent with those from the fifties—a photograph of the musician or musicians or maybe a painting—Murray added the allusion of militancy.[84] The album title is written in a stenciled typeface reminiscent of military labels and we see Murray peering out from behind a defensive barricade with a stern look of defiance. The liner notes describe Murray's approach to music as "Freedom energy and strength" and generally lack a militant tone. Still, the song titles and recited

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[82] http://www.espdisk.com/; Bobby Hutcherson, *Dialogue* (Blue Note, 1965), compact disc CDP 7 46537 2. Andrew Hill wrote and performs on "Ghetto Lights"; Art Ensemble of Chicago, *A Jackson in Your House / Message to Our Folks* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Charly, 2001), compact disc SNAP 066 CD; Pharaoh Sanders, *Thembi* (Impulse! 1971), compact disc IMPD-253.

[83] Sonny Murray, *Sonny's Time Now* (Jihad Records, 1965; reissue, DIW Records (import), 1965), compact disc DIW-355. The album was recorded in November 1965.

[84] A quick perusal through Graham Marsh, Felix Cromey, and Glyn Callingham, eds., *Blue Note: The Album Cover Art* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991), illustrates that most covers from 1950s and 1960s jazz albums were basically photos of the musicians. For Free Jazz albums using traditional photographs, see Archie Shepp, *Mama Too Tight* (Impulse! 1967, 1998), compact disc IMPD-248, John Coltrane, *Meditations* (Impulse! 1966, 1996), compact disc IMPD-199, Ornette Coleman, *The Ornette Coleman Trio at the "Golden Circle" Stockholm* (Blue Note Records, 1966, 2002, and Pharoah Sanders, *Tauhid* (Impulse! 1967, 1993), compact disc GRP-129.

poetry by LeRoi Jones suggest an unambiguous stance on what Murray deemed as important attributes, with titles such as "Virtue" and "Justice." Solidifying his ties to BAM, Murray composed "Black Art" and added LeRoi Jones to the lineup, who recited poetic verse to the music. Black Nationalist in content, Jones sought to stir the emotions of the black community through his poetry. He asserted that "Poems are bullshit unless they are / teeth or trees or lemons piled / on a step. Or black ladies dying / of men leaving nickel hearts / beating them down."[85] Jones suggested that poetry should take on more physical traits, such as the engaging in a poetic act or using poetry (in the manner of propaganda) as an instigator of action. Jones was most likely reflecting on the August 1965 Watts Riots in Los Angeles (the album was recorded in December). In coursing stanzas filled with racist and anti-authoritarian criticisms of "owner-jews," "cops," and "dope selling wops," Jones expressed his impatience with black leaders who advocated non-violence, and continued to acquiesce to white authority. He wrote: "[A]nother negroleader / on the steps of the white house one / kneeling between the sheriff's thighs / negotiating coolly for his people."[86] With the brash intensity of the music, the fuming tone of Jones' poem, and the implied readiness for violent conflict envisioned on the album cover, *Sonny's Time Now* brings together the facets of Black Nationalist/Black Arts movement in a fusion of ethics and aesthetics that spoke to the black community.

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[85] Murray, *Sonny's Time*. Cf. Amiri Baraka, *The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader*, ed. William J. Harris (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1991), 219-20.

[86] Ibid.

Moreover, the musical aesthetics in *Sonny's Time Now* explicitly rejected western musical tenets.

Customers who picked up *Sonny's Time Now* in the winter of 1965-66 possibly drew similarities between the image of Murray's determined stare from behind a barricade with the emotions of African Americans who had grown frustrated with the pace of the non-violent path to equality. The year leading up to the recording session for the album saw Malcolm X assassinated in February 1965, the Selma-to-Montgomery demonstration in March that turned into a violent clash with state troopers, and the Watts Riots in Los Angeles in August. Furthermore, the song titles and poetry evoked feelings that challenged the listener's prevailing bias regarding what was happening in the struggle for racial equality. The BAM aimed for this direct interaction between the artist and listener. Thus, the product of the more outspoken Free Jazz musicians exemplified the cultural nationalist program of black aesthetics, narrowing the meaning of Free Jazz to terms of race and resistance to the dominant white culture.

Receiving little attention by scholars, women in Free Jazz represented a fourth element of postcolonialism within the male-dominated sphere of Free Jazz and jazz in general.[87] Women, as they had been throughout the history of jazz, were minorities, often victims of sexism, and generally relegated to complimenting roles such as singing.[88]

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[87] David Ake, "Re-Masculating Jazz: Ornette Coleman, 'Lonely Woman,' and the New York Jazz Scene in the Late 1950s," *American Music* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 27.

[88] As Wilmer points out, women instrumentalists have historically been excluded from jazz except in the complementary role as singers. Free Jazz composer/pianist Sun

However, female jazz vocalists had prospered since the 1920s (Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith), Billie Holiday from the 1930s to the late-1950s, and Abbey Lincoln and Nina Simone into the 1960s.[89] Eric Porter notes:

> Although jazz artistry was primarily defined through the work of male instrumentalists, jazz singing was the one area in which women's contributions to the genre were widely recognized and appreciated—indeed, their work as usually deemed superior to that of their male counterparts.[90]

Holliday's version of "Strange Fruit," while not the first jazz protest song, provided an explicit account of southern lynching and it inspired other jazz artists, such as Lincoln, to delve into more political material.[91] Lincoln, politicized by the 1950s civil rights movement, sought to give black women dignity through her art. She set out to confront the degrading manifestations of black women's sexuality and portrayed herself as an

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Ra sought to exclude women from the Jazz Composers Guild collective because of their propensity to "curse" projects. Valerie Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life: John Coltrane and Beyond* (London: Allison & Busby, 1977; reprint, London: Serpent's Tail, 1992), 204-05, 215. Hettie Jones, LeRoi Jones' wife in the early 1960s describes the situation for women in the Lower East Side: "If contemporary black art, as defined by our husbands, had brought us together, a world of contemporary black women came to me in Dorothy's [a neighbor in East Village] company. Some were the wives of painters and musicians, many had children, most had subverted ambitions; and given the prevailing racism and sexism, all of them were in for a hard time." Hettie Jones, *How I Became Hettie Jones* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 173.

[89] Nina Simone was especially outspoken against racial inequality with the song "Mississippi Goddam," off Nina Simone, *Nina Simone in Concert* (Philips, 1964), LP PHS-600-135.

[90] Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?* 155.

[91] Shipton, *A New History of Jazz*, 604-05.

artist and not an entertainer.[92] In addition, Lincoln integrated non-verbal emotional singing into jazz—i.e., screaming—in a 1960 album (*We Insist! The Freedom Now Suite*) that addressed the historical experience of African Americans.[93] Jazz critic Nat Hentoff labeled her expressions as "rage and anger."[94] Her 1961 album *Straight Ahead* incorporated some of the aesthetics later associated with Free Jazz.[95] However, as radical as she appeared, throughout the rest of the 1960s Lincoln embraced the notion that black men should redeem their manhood in American society before the rights of black women could be addressed.[96] By the end of the decade, women performing in Free Jazz groups began to question these gender relationships as well as put into practice the screaming methods of Lincoln.

In the late 1960s, women in Free Jazz drew attention to the patriarchal limitations of society through more explicit lyrics. The condition of what Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford describe as "a double colonization," is reflected in the fact that women (particularly African Americans) are "twice colonized—by *colonialist* realities and representations, and by *patriarchal* ones too."[97] Comments by Black feminist Michele

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[92] Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?* 160.

[93] Ibid., 167-9

[94] Ibid., 169.

[95] Ibid., 170.

[96] Ibid., 160-1.

[97] As quoted in McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, 175. These quotes are paraphrased by McLeod.

Wallace reflect this sensibility: "It took me three years to fully understand that Stokely [Carmichael] was serious when he'd said my position in the movement was 'prone,' three years to understand that the countless speeches that all began "the Black man …" did not include me."[98] Becoming conscious of "Blackness" slowly involved the stripping of Wallace's "newfound freedoms":

> No I wasn't to wear makeup but yes I had to wear long skirts that I could barely walk in. No I wasn't to go to the beauty parlor but yes I was to spend hours cornrolling my hair. No I wasn't to flirt with or take shit off white men but yes I was to sleep with and take unending shit off Black men. No I wasn't to watch television or read *Vogue* or *Ladies' Home Journal* but yes I should keep my mouth shut. I would still have to iron, sew, cook, and have babies."[99]

Women in Free Jazz who faced this double bias utilized the notions of freedom emanating from the civil rights movement and inherent in their genre to assert their own strength and dignity, just as Billie Holliday and Abbey Lincoln had done earlier.[100] Here, I will focus on female vocalists due to the fact that lyrics (and screaming) can be read as a

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[98] Michele Wallace, "Becoming a Black Feminist," in Roy E. Finkenbine, ed., *Sources of the African American Past: Primary Sources in American History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson-Longman, 2004), 214-216. Originally from Michele Wallace, "A Black Feminist's Search for Sisterhood," in *All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us are Brave: Black Women's Studies*, ed. Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scot, and Barbara Smith (Old Westbury: The Feminist Press, 1982).

[99] Ibid.

[100] For an example of early jazz/blues women's assertion of empowerment, see Hazel V. Carby, "It Jus Be's Dat Way Sometime: The Sexual Politics of Women's Blues," in O'Meally, ed., *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 469-82.

text with implied social meaning more so than music.[101] Moreover, women's lyrical content illustrates the concerns facing women in the western world as the Women's Liberation Movement gained momentum in the mid-1960s.[102]

According to Valerie Wilmer, the traditional role for women in Free Jazz was to "support the man" through financial means and maternal roles.[103] Female instrumentalists were rare: most could be found playing the more feminine piano, discouraged from taking up the more masculine horns such as the trumpet or saxophone.[104] Noting the chauvinistic tendencies of Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X,

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[101] It is important not to discount female instrumentalists completely, such as pianist-trumpeter Barbara Donald and pianists Carla Bley and Alice Coltrane. Pianist/harpist Alice Coltrane (wife of John Coltrane), went on to influence directions in jazz and continued to attract attention well after her famous husband's death in 1967. See Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 204-09. Moreover, Alice Coltrane's work fits more into the connection with Counter-culture because of her interests in Non-European philosophy.

[102] Early murmurs within the Civil Rights movement for an appreciation of women's rights came from Casey Hayden and Mary King in 1964 with their SNCC Position Paper: Women in the Movement. Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 147. Also see "SNCC Position Paper: Women in the Movement," Judith Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert, eds., *The Sixties Papers: Documents of a Rebellious Decade* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 114-6; Casey Hayden and Mary King, "Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo," Albert and Albert, eds., *The Sixties Papers*, 133-6. Originally published as Sandra Hayden and Mary E. King, "Sex and Caste," *Liberation*, April 1966, 35-6.

[103] Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 191.

[104] Ake writes that the "prevailing images of masculinity in the bop world were closely tied to the notions of physical strength (faster, louder, longer, tougher), and complexity (intricate lines, dense harmonic structures), but also an implacable demeanor." All of this, of course, was carried out through duals or cutting contests using horns. Ake also notes that even jazz legend Jelly Roll Morton had second thoughts about

who sought to inform women of their "prone" role in boosting their "man's self-esteem" in the name of the "movement," Wilmer addresses not only the importance of the support women offered their (often underemployed) Free Jazz musician husbands, but also the sexual connotations involved in the making of jazz and the relationships between men and women in the field.[105] The success of musicians such as pianist Alice Coltrane, among others, expanded the range of permissible female roles, initially restricted to either caretaker or "groupie." As a result, the barriers to women instrumentalists in the 1960s began to dissolve.[106] Wilmer credits the importance of women's "participation in musical endeavours" as

> not only a reflection of the changing role of women in Western society, it is directly connected with the growing acknowledgement by Black men of their failure to respect the contributions that have been made by the women in their lives. This omission results from their own lack of self-esteem, itself conditioned by various forms of enslavement and disenfranchisement.[107]

The idea of postcolonialism figures prominently in Wilmer's observation, as women in the latter-half of the 1960s working in civil rights and student activist groups sought to include their own liberation within the spectrum of debate.[108]

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taking up the piano because of its effeminate qualities. Ake, "Re-Masculating Jazz," 29-30.

[105] Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 191. Cf. Carson, *In Struggle*, 148.

[106] Ibid., 206.

[107] Ibid., 207.

[108] See historian Arthur Marwick's chapter "Women's Turn," in Marwick, *The Sixties* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1999), 679-724.

Two women—one white, one black—broke through the male-dominated world of Free Jazz and offered their own vocal commentaries on their times. These vocalists present only a glimpse into the sparse field of female Free Jazz singers and represent just a sampling whose diversity, representing white and black as well as the working and middle class, allows a depiction of artistic differences along lines of race and class.

Born in Iowa in the 1940s, Patty Waters' vocal intensity was often deemed as "protest" by critics. A white woman influenced by Billie Holiday and Nancy Wilson, Waters came to the attention of the avant-garde record label ESP (specializing in Free Jazz and other avant-garde music recordings), by Free Jazz tenor saxophonist Albert Ayler.[109] A track on her 1965 debut album, the thirteen-minute traditional, "Black is the colour of my true love's hair," begins with hushed vocals over the subtle playing of Free Jazz pianist Burton Greene, percussionist Tom Price, and bassist Steve Tintweiss.[110] Quietly singing the title of the song, with intermittent assertions such as he has "the prettiest eyes" and "the warmest hands," Waters gradually escalates into a crescendo of wordless screams to the free improvisation of the bass, drums, and piano. While not overtly political, the lyrics praising Water's "true love" turn into what music critic Richie Unterberger describes as "hair-raising screams and vocal improvisations," spiraling this romantic ballad into an ambiguous, uneasy outburst of shrieks, shouting "black."[111] While her quieter vocal parts remain within a stable harmonic framework, her screams

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[109] See http://www.espdisk.com/esp1025.html, accessed July 3, 2005.

[110] Patty Waters, *Sings* (ESP-DISK, 1966), LP ESP 1025.

[111] See http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll, accessed July 3, 2005.

evade these boundaries, creating an unsettling sense in the listener amidst piercing shrieks. When one contrasts the evolution of the song from beauty to chaos with the gentle black and white picture of Waters on the album cover, a complexity emerges possibly regarding the taboo of interracial relationships, miscegenation, or perhaps a lyrical translation of the shift toward greater militancy occurring after 1965.[112] In a review of a concert in 1966, where Waters sang in Giuseppe Logan's quartet, jazz critic Howard Taubman perceived her expression as that of torment:

> The quartet of sax, piano, bullfiddle and percussion started a new number, and at once it was in full cry again. Then the soloist [Waters] entered. She moaned. She shrieked. Her eyes closed tight, her fists clenched, she seemed to be racked by pain as her voice explored the outmost limits of some undefinable (sic) anguish….There were no words to the song, at least none that this listener could identify.[113]

Although Patty Waters does not represent black women, her status as a woman in a male-dominated jazz world adds relevance to her importance as an aspect of 1960s postcolonialism. Within the context of jazz, she portrayed (white) women as serious, assertive artists capable of maintaining just as much "edge" in performance as the male musicians in her midst. Waters and vocalists like her countered the previous image of "passive and victimized" female jazz singers.[114]

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[112] Patty Waters, *Patty Waters Sings* (ESP-DISK, 1965), compact disc ESPCD 1025.

[113] Howard Taubman, "Arts Council Way Out," *New York Times*, May 19, 1966, 52.

[114] Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?* 158.

While other female vocalists adopted this style of screaming/singing, most African American women singers approached their vocals in a more traditional fashion, with some expressing their opinions regarding their condition as black women.[115] For example in the late-1960s/early 1970s, vocalist Jeanne Lee worked with Archie Shepp on his 1969 album, *Blasé*.[116] Born in 1939 in New York and signed to RCA records in the early 1960s, Lee approached her songs with an experimental approach like Waters and had worked with Cecil Taylor as well as avant-garde musical legend John Cage.[117] The song "Blasé" is a quiet, suspenseful ten-minute jazz-blues piece. A black and white picture from the recording session shows Lee, with Afro and large sunglasses, leaning into the microphone with an outstretched hand either reaching to grip or forming a fist—visually denoting the fact that this is not entertainment but an ultimatum.[118] Lee sings:

> Blasé, ain't you daddy.
> You, who shot your sperm into me, but never set me free.

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[115] One notable example is African American vocalist Linda Sharrock, and her contributions to her husband's group (Free Jazz guitarist Sonny Sharrock). Sonny Sharrock, *Black Woman* (Vortex, 1969), LP 2014; Sonny Sharrock, *Monkey-Pockie-Boo* (BYG, 1970), LP 37. Also see Linda Dahl, *Stormy Weather: The Music and Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 181.

[116] Archie Shepp, *Blasé/Live at the Pan-African Festival* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Fuel 2000, 2001), compact disc 302 061 152 2. Musicians include Archie Shepp (tenor sax), Jeanne Lee (vocals), Lester Bowie (trumpet, flugelhorn), Chicago Beau and Julio Finn (harmonicas), Dave Burrell (piano), Malachi Favors (bass), and Philly Jo Jones (drums). Shepp entitled another album from this same time period *Yasmina, A Black Woman*. Archie Shepp, *Yasmina, A Black Woman*/*Poem For Malcolm* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Charly, 2003), compact disc SNAP 162 CD.

[117] Dahl, *Stormy Weather*, 180.

[118] *Jazzactuel: A Collection of Avant Garde/Free Jazz/Psychedelia from the BYG/Actuel catalogue of 1969-1971* (Charly, 2001), compact disc SNAJ 707 CD.

> This ain't a hate thing, it's a love thing; if love was ever really love that way, the way they say.
> I give you a loaf of sugar, you tilt my womb till it runs.
> All of Ethiopia awaits you, my prodigal son.
> Blasé, ain't you big daddy, but mama loves you; she always has.[119]

Described as a "soliloquy on sexual politics" in the liner notes to the anthology of Jazzactuel (one of the French record labels recording the Free Jazz expatriates), Lee's song presents a dilemma confronting women with their relationships with men.[120] Calling her man "Blasé" immediately levels the charge that he has an unconcerned, cool attitude toward her, an insult following sexual intercourse. In the next line Lee asks the question "if love was ever really love that way." Wanting her to embrace the role as a provider of sexual pleasure, Blasé fails to give her any dignity or freedom; even after the potential rewards are offered ("All of Ethiopia awaits you, my prodigal son"). Nonetheless, Lee concludes that despite his faults, she still loves him—offering the listener an example of love towards one's oppressor in the hopes of changing them for the better.

Through the assertive condemnation of the sexist actions of men, as well as the vocal experimentation, Lee and Waters illuminate Free Jazz's postcolonial revolt within western society and the African American community. Furthermore, their actions expanded the gender roles inherent in jazz, beyond even those of the somewhat radical Lincoln. The unfeminine elements involved in Waters and Sharrock's screaming along to the other band members—in effect, competing with the intensity of the blowing horns

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[119] Shepp, *Blasé/Live at the Pan-African Festival*.

[120] Thurston Moore and Byron Coley, liner notes to *Jazzactuel*.

or flailing at the drums—repositions their artistic roles away from the sensitive ballad singers whose topic revolves around the loss of a man.[121] Additionally, the condemning lyrics toward man's insensitivities towards his partner reject a woman's subservient position in society. Incorporating Joan W. Scott's model of gender, first, these female vocalists broke out of the "culturally available symbols" apparent throughout jazz history by expressing themselves in the manners mentioned.[122] Second, the "normative concepts that set forth interpretations of the meanings of these symbols, [screaming and assertive lyrics] that attempt to limit and contain their metaphoric possibilities," are largely thwarted through the artists' brashness.[123] The reaction to Waters' performance by the male critic and Lee's lyrics illustrated this thwarting of expectations. Third, these relationships, at least in Waters' case, occur outside the home and in the "labor market," which of course is employment in the guise of a recording session or concert.[124] Finally, Scott's construction of the "gendered identities" surrounding female jazz singers are dismantled—even Lincoln's support for black men's equality before black women's—within the explicit aesthetics of Waters and Lee.[125] The gentle and victimized (through drug abuse) identity of Billie Holliday—largely the model for female jazz singers after

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[121] See Ake, "Re-Masculating Jazz," 29-30, for characterizing the blowing of horns to masculinity.

[122] Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (Dec. 1986): 1067.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid., 1068.

[125] Ibid.

the 1950s—are destroyed with Waters' unnerving screams and Lee's condemnatory lyrics.

From its radical reinterpretation of acceptable musical standards, its cultural nationalist stance of the "black aesthetic," its defense of these aesthetics against critical attacks, and its representation as a product, the postcolonial characteristics embodied by Free Jazz confronted the cultural hegemony of the dominant liberal consensus alongside the Civil Rights movement and Black Nationalism in the 1960s. Moreover, postcolonial theory reveals other voices of resistance in Free Jazz next to the representations of black liberation and celebration of African American musical heritage. Mirroring the actions of women on the national level, the voice of female jazz singers emerges in this prism with their own charges of inequality and contributions to the radical aesthetics of Free Jazz. The idea of sexism forced its way into the discourse revolving around race and equality. Postcolonialism highlights the different levels of conflict and resistance. Thus, Free Jazz is placed into 1) a context with global postcolonial movement, as they sought to end the control of western conceptions of music over jazz; 2) on the national level, as an extension of the Civil Rights movement, and the cultural nationalist representation; 3) within the domain of gender relations. Free Jazz embodied a multiple affront to the hegemonic culture of the liberal consensus, and its colonial structures. As the historical context emphasizing the affects the historical actor, the workings of this process—in this case in consciousness and aesthetics—illustrates how Fanon's "native" voice shifts from colonial representations (older, unequal stereotypes) into new, confident assertions of a new identity. Fanon asserts

> Decolonization never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity.[126]

In effect, de-colonization helps dismantle the older meanings of the colonizers' categorical grid, thus undermining its discursive formations. Within this active and confrontational process of constructing an identity, artists may pass through a change of consciousness via the process of de-colonization, in much the same way Fontella Bass (a member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) went from her 1965 hit "Rescue Me,"

> Rescue me
> Take me in your arms
> Rescue me
> I want your tender charm
> Cause I'm lonely
> And I'm blue
> I need you
> And your love too
> Come on and rescue me,[127]

where she demands for the strength and love of a man to make her complete, to the pro-Feminist lyrics of "Thème De Yoyo" from a 1970 Paris session with the Art Ensemble of Chicago, where she states:[128]

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[126] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 36. Note Fanon's male-centric observations.

[127] Fontella Bass, *Rescued: The Best of Fontella Bass* (Mca Int'l, 1992), compact disc 9335.

Your head is like a yoyo,
your neck is like the string,
Your body's like a camembert
oozing from its skin.

Your fanny's like two sperm whales
floating down the Seine
Your voice is like a long fuck
that's music to your brain.

Your eyes are two blind eagles
that kill what they can't see
Your hands are like two shovels
digging in me.

And your love is like an oil-well
Dig, dig, dig, dig it,
On the Champs-Elysees.[129]

Bass' move from the helpless, patriarchically colonized mind that yearns for her gendered superior to "rescue" her, to the later assertive, critical cultural resister, is a microcosm to the larger picture of postcolonial resistance to the liberal consensus. It helped to break the consensus' grip upon artistic expressions and intellectual thought, easing the way to what came to be called multiculturalism. Moreover, a part of this idea of de-colonization of African Americans and the search for gender equality during the second half of the twentieth century is critical theorist Robert Young's definition of post-

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[128] The author of the song, Noreen Beasley, cites "rage" as her motivation when writing the song which she characterized as "a rather satisfying diatribe against my then boyfriend who'd turned out to be a self-satisfied blob of deceit and ugliness." Email correspondence between Noreen Beasley and the author 8 Jul 2005.

[129] Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Americans Swinging in Paris* (EMI, 2002), compact disc 7243 539667 2. Orginally release as Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Les Stances a Sophie* (Universal Sound, 2004), compact disc B00004Y1YH. This soundtrack was recorded in 1970.

modernity: "European culture's awareness that it is no longer the unquestioned and dominant center of the world."[130] Described as the collapse of the "Enlightenment project" by David Harvey, the postmodern world ushered in the multicultural expression emanating from the various de-colonized voices in the world, including women, formerly colonized non-western people, and in America's case, their ex-slaves.[131] Based on the idea that questions contained only one answer, the Enlightenment project believed the "world could be controlled and rationally ordered if we could only picture and represent it rightly. But this presumed that there existed a single correct mode of representation which, if we could uncover it (and this was what scientific and mathematical endeavours were all about), would provide the means to Enlightenment ends."[132] As a successor to the ideals of the Enlightenment, the cultural hierarchy of the liberal consensus fell victim to the strains of other meta-narratives emerging from de-colonization—recognized by Free Jazz trumpeter Leo Smith as helping to "eliminate the political dominance of euro-america [sic] in this world."[133] Moreover, other voices from within America's own middle class began expressing themselves outside the discursive formations of the liberal

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[130] Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge Press, 1990), 19.

[131] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1989), 27. Also see introduction to Walter Truett Anderson, ed., *The Truth about the Truth: De-confusing and Re-constructing the Postmodern World* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).

[132] Ibid.

[133] Leo Smith, "Creative Music and the AACM," in *Keeping Time: Readings in Jazz History*, Robert Walser, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 316.

consensus: the avant-garde. The idea of breaking free from constraints such as inequality and from the dominant western cultural hegemony of the consensus leads us to a second prism in which Free Jazz can be viewed: the postwar avant-garde in the 1950s and 1960s and the shift from the modern to the postmodern.

CHAPTER THREE

THE "NEW THING": FREE JAZZ, THE 1960S AVANT-GARDE, AND THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

> I think one day…music will be a lot freer. Then the pattern of the tune, for instance, will be forgotten and the tune itself will be the pattern, and won't have to be forced into conventional patterns. The creation of music is just as natural as the air we breathe.
>
> Ornette Coleman, liner notes to *The Music of Ornette Coleman: Something Else*, 1958.[1]

> [The avant-garde] *is not a movement but a state of mind.* It is a thorough denial of technological precision and a reaffirmation of *das Volk.*
>
> Archie Shepp, "A View from the Inside: Archie Shepp," 1966.[2]

> The entire history of tonal music, like that of classical political economy, amounts to an attempt to make people believe in a consensual representation of the world…In order to stamp upon the spectators the faith that there is a harmony in order. In order to etch in their minds the image of the ultimate social cohesion, achieved through commercial exchange and the progress of rational knowledge.
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> Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, 1985.[3]

As cited in the previous chapter, Robert Young's definition of post-modernity emphasized the collapse of European cultural preeminence in the postwar years,

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[1] Ornette Coleman, liner notes to *The Music of Ornette Coleman: Something Else* (Contemporary, 1958), compact disc OJCCD-163-2.

[2] Archie Shepp, "A View from the Inside: Archie Shepp," *Down Beat Music '66* (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1966), 39.

[3] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 46.

characterized as the "postmodern condition."[4] The dissolution of cultural hegemony was most visible as former colonies dislodged European power from their countries and attempted to de-colonize their culture through programs of cultural nationalism. Thus, voices from outside the western world confronted the assumptions and meanings that European imperialism and domination had described as rationalism, progress, and civilization—ideas set forth by eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers. What philosopher Jean-François Lyotard termed as the "incredulity toward metanarratives," postmodernity describes a transitional period during which these grand stories collapse in the face of alternative discourses.[5] Alongside the challenge of non-western peoples against enlightenment-derived governments, the postmodern condition that appeared in the 1960s emerged in the form of avant-garde artists who questioned the legitimacy of institutions and agitated the discursive formations supporting established cultural boundaries. With their eye on shattering the boundaries of the liberal consensus—America's dominant discourse during the postwar period (1945-68)—the avant-garde re-examined the discursive relationship between art and society.

For Free Jazz artists in the 1960s, their postcolonial culture coincided with their role as avant-garde artists who helped precipitate postmodern cultural shifts in the United States—historiographically articulated as cracks in the postwar liberal consensus. Jazz critic Dan Morgenstern described Free Jazz in 1964:

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[4] See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

[5] Ibid., xxiv.

> The "new thing" is an expression of dissatisfaction with the status quo, a refusal to accept existing conventions, a restless, often furious assault on the present and most of the past. But withal, it is infused with underlying romantic yearning for joy, acceptance, and the indefinable something called 'freedom.'[6]

The experimental nature of Free Jazz musicians aligned them with the emerging American avant-garde made up of painters, dancers, the spontaneous theatre of "happenings," experimental classical composers such as John Cage, and the Beat poets who cohabitated in similar communities such as New York City's Lower East Side during the 1950s and early 1960s.[7] As avant-garde artists, Free Jazz ignored categorical and aesthetics boundaries associated with the modern jazz of hardbop and its association with the liberal consensus. Free Jazz musicians bridged jazz with that of spoken-word poetry and theatre, and also embraced an approach to music that broadened the musical possibilities through dismissal of western musical tenets and the incorporation of a broad array of world music styles, as well as incorporating components of the European tradition within their new, unstructured (non) paradigm. Free Jazz evolved through the 1960s, beginning with its radical aesthetic break in the early part of the decade, into a

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[6] Dan Morgenstern, "The October Revolution: Two Views of the Avant Garde in Action," *Down Beat*, 19 Nov. 1964, 33.

[7] See Sally Banes, *Greenwich Village: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Jazz Scene* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1959; reprint, New York: Penguin, 1961; reprint, New York: Pantheon, 1993); Daniel Kane, *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Daniel Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998); Diana Crane, *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde: The New York Art World, 1940-1985* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987); Jon Panish, *The Color of Jazz: Race and Representation in Postwar American Culture* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997).

multidisciplinary form of jazz that became represented after 1965 as a mixture—depending upon the individual artist—of cultural nationalism, experimental avant-garde, and music for metaphysical enlightenment.[8] Thus, this ambiguous nature of Free Jazz assumed the name, "the New Thing." At the close of the decade, Free Jazz was a boundary-less variant of jazz, appropriating aspects of older styles of jazz—from New Orleans to swing to bebop—as well as non-western forms of music, the performance art of theatre and spoken word poetry, and finally the assimilation of popular forms of African American music (R&B and funk). Contrasted against the formalism, order, and specialization of the liberal consensus, notes philosopher Lee B. Brown, Free Jazz appeared "disordered, chaotic, and musically confused," thus failing to satisfy the "formalist criteria of aesthetic excellence."[9] For example, in 1963 pro-Free Jazz music critic Don Heckman wrote that Ornette Coleman "has jeopardized the jazz establishment's most valuable possession, security….For the establishment…Coleman's soulsearing freedom is threatening," and thus "an anarchist."[10] Against the discourse of the establishment, Free Jazz musicians redefined the guidelines of jazz to attain a freer, more collective expression of music without the programmed discipline of their genre's

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[8] For albums with a spiritually connoted direction, see John Coltrane, *Meditations* (Impulse! 1966), compact disc IMPD-199. For a more experimental avant-garde approach using tape loops, see Bob James Trio, *Explosions* (ESP-DISK, 1965), LP ESP-DISK 1009.

[9] Lee B. Brown, "'Feeling My Way': Jazz Improvisation and Its Vicissitudes – A Plea for Imperfection." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 58, no. 2 (spring 2000): 113.

[10] Don Heckman, "Way Out There," in *Down Beat's Music '63* (Chicago: Maher Publications, 1963), 47.

doctrine. The postwar avant-garde embraced these notions of dismantled boundaries, collective projects, and the embrace of disorder with its "contest between systems and the suspicion of order."[11]

With few exceptions, the postwar American avant-garde of the 1950s and 1960s built upon European traditions beginning with Dada in the early twentieth century and surrealism in the 1920s and 1930s, labeled the "historical avant-garde" by art historian Peter Bürger.[12] According to Bürger, the historical avant-garde engaged in the "self-criticism" of "art as an institution" through the form of shock in their artwork, which was largely a political reaction to what they felt was "bourgeois" society's tendency to separate art from its function as an expression of one's alienation in society, or the

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[11] Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought & Culture in the 1960s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 136.

[12] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 22. Centered in Zurich, Dadaism formed in 1916 out of protest of the society that created World War I. The group of exile artists rejected traditional art and its formal characteristics and generally favored any artistic aesthetic that offended bourgeois artistic inclination through shock. Dadaist Hans Richter describes the movement as "not an artistic movement in the accepted sense; it was a storm that broke over the world of art as [World War I] did over nations…and left behind it a new day in which the stored-up energies released by Dada were evidenced in new forms, new materials, new ideas, new directions, new people." Hans Richter, *Dada: Art and Anti-Art*, trans. David Britt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 9-11. Surrealism emanated from France in the twenties and was also an art of protest where shock and incomprehensibility were the measure of success. Historian Eric Hobsbawm states, "What counted was to recognize the capacity of the spontaneous imagination, unmediated by rational control systems, to produce cohesion out of the incoherent, an apparently necessary logic out of the plainly illogical or even impossible." This included stream of consciousness art. Eric Hobsbawn, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 178-80.

"praxis of life."[13] By reconnecting art to the praxis of life, the historical avant-garde hoped to encourage the public to see the socially constructed roles and frameworks that they perceived to be imposed by the bourgeoisie. In his 1924 "Manifesto of Surrealism," André Breton declares:

> Man proposes and disposes. He and he alone can determine whether he is completely master of himself, that is whether he maintains the body of his desires, daily more formidable, in a state of anarchy. Poetry teaches him to. It bears within itself the perfect compensation for the miseries we endure. It can also be an organizer, if ever, as the result of a less intimate disappointment, we contemplate taking it seriously. The time is coming when it decrees the end of money and by itself will break the bread of heaven for the earth! There will still be gatherings on the public squares, and *movements* you never dared hope participate in. Farewell to absurd choices, the dreams of dark abyss, rivalries, the prolonged patience, the flight of the seasons, the artificial order of ideas, the ramp of danger, time for everything! May you only take the trouble to *practice* poetry.[14]

The results of this engagement with art, supposed Breton and the historical avant-garde, were a self-criticism of the institution of art: the bourgeois system of classifying and valuing art. An early technique used by both Dada and Surrealism, the use of shock, aimed to "deliberately juxtapose the unexpected as a means of challenging their

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[13] Ibid., 22, 48-9. The "praxis of life" describes the relationship between the concept of a person as a human being, and their socially defined role within the economic framework of society—their "means-ends activity" such as a clerk, soldier, or laborer. In other words, Bürger is asserting that in bourgeois society, an individual is no longer a human being, but a subject within the socio-economic system cultivated by the bourgeoisie that assigns a function to the individual that entails strict obedience to a specialized role within mass society, benefiting the system more than the individual.

[14] André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1969), 18.

audience's preconceptions."[15] The avant-gardiste hoped that a rupture in meaning by the recipient would instill a sense of self-criticism in the representations society creates. Furthermore, a desired break in consciousness in the individual would occur, thus reconnecting art to the praxis of life and allowing the person to see herself as a human being outside the socially constructed existence of bourgeois society. Bürger explains this new development in art and its reception:

> In the process of reception, the avant-gardiste work thus provokes a break, which is the analogue of the incoherence (nonorganicity) of the work. Between the shocklike experience of the inappropriateness of the mode of reception developed through dealing with organic works of art and the effort to grasp the principles of construction, there is a break: the interpretation of meaning is renounced….The recipient's attention no longer turns to a meaning of the work that might be grasped by a reading of its constituent elements, but to the principle of construction.[16]

According to the historical avant-garde, disrupting the senses sought to make the institution of art's internal mechanisms self-conscious to the viewer. According to Bürger, the historical avant-garde was the first art movement to make this consciously apparent in their work through their dismissal of artistic "means according to a stylistic principle."[17] With the coming of the World War II, many European avant-garde artists migrated to the United States, bringing with them their subversive practices which influenced the postwar American avant-garde.

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[15] Philip Nel, *The Avant-Garde and American Postmodernity: Small Incisive Shocks* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), x.

[16] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 81.

[17] Ibid., 19.

Utilizing the historical avant-garde's premise of attacking institutionalized art, the 1950s and 1960s American avant-garde used participatory aesthetics, spontaneity, chance, and improvisation to express their sense of the world.[18] From the use of non-traditional musical and environmental sounds by Cage, to the non-elitist, public oratory approach of Ginsberg's *Howl*, artists in the postwar avant-garde sought to thrust the world of art back onto the streets and away from the institutionalized lecture halls and museums.[19] The actions and rhetoric of Free Jazz assailed the tenets of jazz in this avant-garde fashion. Moreover, this period of seeking alternatives from canonized institutional art coincided with the postcolonial cultural discord of the Civil Rights movement. The impetus for rebellion against codified modern art, including classical literary modernism, serial music, abstract expressionism, and of course jazz, came from artists sensing a new social context which made the older artistic expressions seem obsolete.[20] In addition, a "participatory ethos" instilled by the grassroots participation of Civil Rights activists provided the avant-garde with an alternative approach to the technological mindset of the

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[18] Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986), 168.

[19] John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writing* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 4; Allen Ginsberg, *Howl and Other Poems* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1956).

[20] Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought & Culture in the 1960s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 70, 139, 175.

liberal consensus.[21] The avant-garde looked to linking art with the praxis of life so as to mitigate the de-humanizing effects of the modern world.

In response to the formal values of the liberal consensus, the postwar avant-garde generally approached their art with an eye toward spontaneity, improvisation, and unconsciousness or chance expression in their art. These artists offered what historian Daniel Belgrad labels "an oppositional version of humanism," antithetical to the liberal consensus' technological objectivity.[22] Belgrad cites spontaneity as possessing social meaning that renounced the western conception of rational progress, organization, efficiency, and technology, and instead offered the observation of the unconscious mind as an alternative.[23] Labeled by Brick as a "distrust of order" and "antisystematic sentiment," this affront to the values of the liberal consensus was a reaction to the formal conception of art by establishment critics drawn to strict artistic boundaries.[24] Indeed, the

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[21] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, 164. Banes characterizes this ethos as "participatory democracy." Banes, *Greenwich Village*, 39. A shared values belief system between business elites and government, the liberal consensus promoted "an unprecedented class and cultural consensus as the very essence of the American way" against the rising threat of Soviet communism. Lary May, "Making the American Consensus: The Narrative of Conversion and Subversion in World War II Films," Erenberg and Hirsch, eds., *The War in American Culture*, 73; Gary W. Reichard, *Politics as Usual: The Age of Truman and Eisenhower* (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1988, 2004), 96-7.

[22] Daniel Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity: Improvisation and the Arts in Postwar America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 5.

[23] Ibid., 15.

[24] Brick, *Age of Contradictions*, 124, 131; Roszak characterized the late-1950s and early 1960s Beat culture—exemplified by Allen Ginsberg—as a "critique of the conventional scientific conception of man and nature," and that this evolved into the

avant-garde tried to articulate a "revolt in the WAY of thinking," to cite beat poet Gregory Corso.[25] The avant-garde critiqued the specialized, planned processes embodied by the technical approach to life and art, and through their methodology embraced aesthetics contrary to the measurable "objective" forms espoused by the art establishment with their bent toward an ordered tradition. As characterized by postmodern theorist Andreas Huyssen, this new sensibility "rejected the congealed canon and interpretive practices" of establishment critics.[26]

Free Jazz and their avant-garde brethren viewed the technocratic approach as an inhibitor of individual expression and encouraged a conformist approach to art—an ideal antithetical to living an authentic life outside proscribed boundaries. Accordingly, various genres embraced similar aesthetics, often influencing one another's development. Bebop's emergence in the mid-to-late 1940s influenced the European-derived classicalists, whose works, in turn, were then re-absorbed by Free Jazz artists in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[27] Radical experimentation in classical music after 1950, cites George E. Lewis, led the way to the embrace of open forms and "more personally

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"beginning of a youth culture that continues to be shot through with the spontaneous urge to counter the joyless, rapacious, and egomaniacal order of our technological society." Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, 137.

[25] Gregory Corso quoted from W.J. Rorabaugh, *Kennedy and the Promise of the Sixties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 178.

[26] Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986), 164.

[27] George E. Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives," *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (spring 1996): 99-100.

expressive systems of notation."[28] Experimental composers such as Cage approached music in a similar fashion 1940s bebop—though he denied the influence—using chance operations, natural sounds, an unconscious approach to compositions, and the role of indeterminacy.[29] Essentially, Cage's aesthetics disrupted the listener's expectations, and he helped prepare the way for using methods that relied on chance and the unexpected moment. Brick notes that Cage represented the growing distrust of order in the 1960s, specifically his desire to give up controlling sounds, allowing instead a democratic, non-hierarchical approach to producing sounds, and an unconventional approach to playing instruments.[30] Cage tested the orthodoxy of western instrumentation by manipulating the inner workings of a piano in which he "prepared" the strings with an assortment of foreign objects that would produce unconventional sounds and textures when the piano was played.[31] His actions inverted the ordered form of playing the piano, thus questioning and then dismissing the traditional technique and radically breaking with

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[28] Ibid., 91.

[29] Lewis suggests that Cage was indeed influenced by bebop's development, particularly because "the historical timeline shows that Cage's radical emphasis upon spontaneity and uniqueness—not generally found in either American or European music before Cage—arrives some eight to ten years after the innovations of bebop." Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950," 99; Arthur Marwick, *The Arts in the West since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 91, 94. Pierre Boulez used precise mathematical formulas to map out the direction of his compositions, applying innovations such as electronic music, *musique concrète*, inclusion of non-western musical elements, as well as the use of chance. Ibid., 92; Matthew Sanson, "Imagining Music: Abstract Expressionism and Free Improvisation," *Leonardo Music Journal* 11, (2001): 29.

[30] Brick, *Age of Contradiction*, 138; Banes, *Greenwich Village*, 28.

[31] For example, see John Cage, *Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano (1946-48)* (Naxos, 1998), compact disc 8.559042.

European conventions and redefining the musical use of the instrument according to the terms of the musicians and not defined methodology.

Aesthetic similarities existed between Free Jazz and Abstract Expressionism, most notably between Coleman's work, and his own statements concerning it, and that of abstract expressionist painter Jackson Pollack.[32] Both artists created art without a plan, leaving the interpreted meaning to emerge at the conclusion of the act. This engagement redistributed the relationship between artist and his medium by allowing the medium to challenge the artist in the moment of spontaneous creation. Painter William Baziotes added: "What happens on the canvas is unpredictable and surprising to me…. There is no particular system I follow when I begin a painting. Each painting has its own way of evolving….As I work or when the painting is finished, the subject reveals itself."[33] Once finished the artist stood back and viewed the work as a collaboration between the medium and the artist's unconscious manipulation of that medium's particular qualities and constraints. The approach to the artwork became the measurement of success, not the "objective" outcome after painstaking calculations to create a "masterpiece." In the process of approaching art, the artist relied upon intuition, unconsciousness, and the manipulation of traditional boundaries as the rules surrounding art shifted from conformist objectivity to pluralistic subjectivity—a process in which the stated technique and form fluctuates according to the musician's whim.

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[32] Robin D.G. Kelley, "New Monastery: Monk and the Jazz Avant-Garde," *Black Music Research Journal* 19, no. 2 (fall 1999): 137.

[33] Diana Crane, *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde: The New York Art World, 1940-1985* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 50.

Along with jazz in the 1950s, the liberal consensus canonized abstract expressionism as a sign of American freedom in the 1950s, nevertheless, its aesthetics heralded the early cracks in the consensus and the cultural shift to postmodernity formally initiated by avant-garde artists in the late 1950s and 1960s.[34] The most salient characteristic described by postmodern art commentators is the break from, or reaction to, the dominant forms of art, celebrated in the institutions of the museum, university, and network of art galleries in the first fifteen years after World War II—a period described as "high modernity."[35] Consequently, 1950s and 1960s avant-garde artists revitalized the historical avant-garde's project of bringing art back to social relevance—the "praxis of life"—through aesthetics antithetical to the various institutions of art.[36] The boundaries postmodern artists erased included distinctions between the audience and artist (Cage's use of environmental noise), hierarchical separations between high culture and low (incorporating various genres of art), and the transcendence of constructed limits between

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[34] Erika Doss, "The Art of Cultural Politics: From Regionalism to Abstract Expressionism," in *Recasting America*, 198; Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1997), 124.

[35] Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Hal Foster, ed. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 111. Definitions and characteristics have been considered from the following: Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"; Best and Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn*; Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*; Charles Jencks, *What is Post-Modernism?*4th ed. (London: Academy Editions, 1996); Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*; David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

[36] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, 193; Best and Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn*, 128.

different art forms and genres (beat's theatrical spoken-word poetry, poetry combined with jazz).[37] An erosion of institutional art boundaries helped to destroy the realm of prestige and commodification separating high and low culture, resulting in a "rejection of structure, order, continuity, and cause-effect relations in favor of disorder, chaos, chance, discontinuity, indeterminacy, and forces of random or aleatory play."[38] Moreover, these distinctions also led to the use of pastiche, or the imitation and incorporation of various styles that inaugurated a multi-perspective and pluralistic sensibility granting "no single perspective" primacy over others.[39]

The change from order and form—technical proficiency—to non-form, accident, and a stress on imperfection created a new aesthetic paradigm calling into question the idea of objective and subjective criticism. Hence, this led to distinct divisions between the rational "objective" art world of liberal consensus, and that of the more "subjective" art world of the avant-garde—an example being chapter one's diverging reviews of *The New Wave in Jazz*. Instead of offering absolutes ("universal order") in the diagnosis of the work of art, the new aesthetics opened the way for conceptualizing multicultural perspectives. A re-orientation in criticism appeared in the court victories of both William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, whose works were previously deemed obscene by

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[37] Best and Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn*, 132.

[38] Ibid., 136.

[39] Ibid.

authorities and rejected as works of literature.[40] Hardbop musicians unable to grasp the expanded boundaries of Free Jazz continued to view their music through the consensus framework. For instance, alto saxophonist Julian Adderley viewed Ornette Coleman's music through the formalism of hardbop, and noted its failure to adhere to western musical tenets: "the improvisation seemed inconsistent with both the implied chords of the melodic line and those played in accompaniment by the pianist."[41] A subjective approach, adds Belgrad, "suggests that there is no ultimate truth to be arrived at—only differing perspectives that can perhaps be synthesized."[42] Avant-garde artwork embraced "pluralism," which pushed its aesthetic boundaries and often bridged other genres.

Expressing this pluralistic view, Free Jazz musicians questioned the criticism directed at them as well as the limits imposed by conforming to an existent form. For instance, Cecil Taylor declared in the notes to the 1963 album *Trance*:

> If a man plays for a certain amount of time—scales, licks, what have you—eventually a kind of order asserts itself. Whether he chooses to notate that personal order or engage in polemics about it, it's there. That is, if he's saying anything in his music….But that order is not necessarily related to any single criterion of what order should be as imposed from the outside. Whether that criterion is the song form or what some critic thinks jazz should be. This is not a question, then, of "freedom" as opposed to "non-

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[40] See Kane, *All Poets Welcome*, 10-1; William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch* (New York: Grove Press, 1959, 1990). The 1990-edition has a section entitled *Naked Lunch* on Trial.

[41] David C. Hunt, "Coleman, Coltrane, and Shepp: The Need for An Educated Audience," in *Giants of Black Music*, 91. The article appeared in October 1968.

[42] Belgrad, *The Culture of Spontaneity*, 111.

> freedom" but it is rather a question of recognizing different ideas and expressions of order.[43]

In 1966 Free Jazz tenor saxophonist Pharoah Sanders expressed displeasure of the closed form of jazz: "These days, the opponents of what's happening now seem to be charging that too much emotion is erupting in this music. And that it is exploding without form. But too much emotion for whom? And what are the norms of form?"[44] Constrained and "objectively" perceived boundaries dissolved with emotional expression of Free Jazz musicians and other avant-garde artists, as they no longer presumed absolutes as genres opened to free interpretation, inter-disciplinary collaborations, and experimental aesthetics.

In the process of reconfiguring the aesthetics and representation of jazz, Free Jazz music embodied the essence of postmodern art. First, Free Jazz radically broke from the dominant tenets of hardbop and the jazz tradition, especially in terms of following western musical tenets. This first aspect allowed a self-conscious de-conditioning through the rejection of the form and order of mainstream jazz, which led to the second aspect of postmodernity: Free Jazz musicians hoped to bring the music back into the praxis of life through the use of spontaneity and improvisation. Consequently, these two actions entailed the de-conditioning of the reception of music by both the artist and the audience, a self-conscious recognition that western musical tenets were but one version of presenting music in a multicultural world filled with various modes of aural

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[43] Cecil Taylor, *Trance* (Black Lion, 1963, 1996), compact disc BLCD 760220.

[44] Pharaoh Sanders, *Tauhid* (Impulse! 1966), compact disc GRD-129.

expression. Moreover, a third aspect of postmodernity lay in Free Jazz musicians' dissolving boundaries that separated their art from other artistic genres, including experimental classical music and spoken word poetry, as well as the inclusion of Asian, African, and African American popular music. Therefore, Free Jazz's confrontation with the precepts of technocracies' categorization and its representational control over art allowed a diverse presentation of styles incorporating elements from outside the traditionally restrictive boundaries of jazz.

In the act of avoiding western musical tenets and liberating 1950s jazz from its technical constraints, Ornette Coleman's music disrupts the listener's expectations. His questioning and reversing of the relationship between of the pattern (chord progression) versus the tune (played melody), or form and order versus unbounded creativity personified the practices of the late-1950s and 1960s avant-garde. In 1965 Coleman noted, "My [approach to] playing is spontaneous, not a style….A style happens when your phrasing hardens."[45] In his search for a non-patterned direction, Coleman embraced a freer interpretation of music that redirected improvisation away from harmonic chord sequences of previous jazz styles, and instead aimed toward a method weighted primarily on the artist's improvisation of melody and rhythm.[46] Thus, like the abstract expressionists Coleman's aesthetic approach toward his group and compositions aspired

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[45] Valerie Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life: John Coltrane and Beyond* (N.p.: Allison & Busby Limited, 1977; reprint, London: Serpent's Tail, 1992), 63.

[46] Shipton, *A New History of Jazz*, 774, 778.

to express art as an unpredictable moment by abandoning the pattern and engaging in a constant reinvention of the tune outside a scripted path.

For Coleman, beauty lay in the unexpected and the personal contributions of each musician—a sort of carnival ride with varied shifts in mood, intenseness, and destination. In the liner notes for his fourth album in 1959, *Change of the Century,* Coleman states:

> When our group plays, before we start out to play, we do not have any idea what the end result will be. Each player is free to contribute what he feels in the music at any given moment. We do not begin with a preconceived notion as to what kind of effect we will achieve. When we record, sometimes I can hardly believe that what I hear when the tape is played back to me, is the playing of my group. I am so busy and absorbed when I play that I am not aware of what I'm doing at the time I'm doing it.[47]

Blurring the boundary linking the artist and the medium, Coleman believed a musician's moment of improvised creation within a collective atmosphere determined the success or failure of the song. This break with routine, cliché, and ritual sought to erase the anticipated results and expectations of both the audience and the performer.

Coleman expected confusion from the listener from this radical break in aesthetics:

> With my music, as is the case with some of my friends who are painters, I often have people come to me and say, "I like it but I don't understand it." Many people apparently don't trust their reactions to art or to music unless there is a verbal *explanation* for it. In music, the only thing that matters is whether you *feel* it or not. You can't intellectualize music; to reduce it analytically often is to reduce it to nothing very important. It is only in terms of

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[47] Coleman, liner notes to *Change of the Century* (Atlantic, 1959), compact disc 7 81341-2.

> emotional response that I can judge whether what we are doing is successful or not.[48]

Pressing listeners to trust their feelings and instincts—devoid of conditioned societal norms—illustrates Coleman's preoccupation with an audience's conditioned reaction to jazz in the 1950s. Coleman's method implied that there was a need for musicians and their audiences to adopt a different mindset regarding the playing and listening to jazz, where strict form and technical proficiency—the ideal notions of technocracy—were deemed secondary to the cultivation of a collective environment conducive to creative expression. Moreover, by pressing the audience to identify with an expression outside the normal boundaries of art, Coleman compelled the listener to participate in making meaning. Free Jazz musicians were cognizant of the idea of social conditioning. For example, Archie Shepp suggested to listeners: "Unless you strip yourself of outside interferences, almost all your reactions will be social. (Like a man who digs Mozart because it is 'high class,' dig it?)"[49]

A sense of an active de-conditioning exists in Free Jazz's aural assault, as rules and notions of order are ignored and replaced with aesthetics based around a freer expression outside boundaries most westerners were familiar with. Drummer Sunny Murray relates this situation:

> Our ears play a greater role in this music than our minds do. Because of our inhibitions our music has to [be] heard over and over until the sensitivity in the listener's ear is finally broken through to so that it can respond to natural sounds. For a while this

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Archie Shepp, *Four For Trane* (Impulse! 1964), compact disc IMPD-218.

> music may put you into a bag that you don't understand because it's your unconscious mind that's digging it and not your conscious mind, which is trying to cut it off. But once you're into this music you'll find that you're much more aware and able to cope with the world around you."[50]

Murray's explanation also articulates the re-connection of art with the praxis of life, with the music alerting the audience to the constructed discursive formations in society. An illustration of this process is seen in vocalist Leon Thomas's assertion in 1970, after he began working with Free Jazz musicians: "I began to hear all kinds of possibilities as I got rid of a lot of prejudices I had had about the limitations of the voice."[51] The idea that a person had to be retrained in what to listen for exemplified the subversive nature of Free Jazz as an avant-garde art: the cultural product, as hoped for by the historical avant-garde, would present a critique of society spread over into other aspects of life outside the field of art. Understood in this light, art could possibly lead to a new consciousness through its ability to re-direct the audiences' consciousness away from the singular truth of the technocratic mindset of the liberal consensus and toward the counter-cultural aesthetic recognizing "multiple truths and multiple cultures."[52]

The liner notes that accompanied the records were largely responsible for communicating the non-mechanical, subjective aspects of Free Jazz music, especially its

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[50] Sunny Murray, quoted in Robert Levin, "Sunny Murray: The Continuous Cracking of Glass," in *Giants of Black Music*, Pauline Rivelli and Robert Levin, eds. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 58. Article originally published in *Jazz and Pop*, April/May 1969.

[51] Nat Hentoff, "Leon Thomas: Spirits Known and Unknown," in *Giants of Black Music*, 115. Article appeared in February 1970.

[52] Banes, *Greenwich Village*, 255.

humanistic qualities relating to the spiritual and physical essence musicians interpreted from the music. The notes to *Sonny's Time Now* related how the drummer, Sonny Murray, "swoops, and floats, hovers, lunges, above and into the drums, its is immediate…his body-ness his physicality in the music. Not just a drum beater, but as a conductor of energies, directing them this way, and that way."[53] Trumpeter Don Ayler explained his approach to listening to Free Jazz, dismissing the technical elements of the music and instead focusing on the subjective emotions: "One way not to…is to focus on the notes and stuff like that. Instead, try to move your imagination toward the sound.…Follow the sound, the pitches, the colors, you have to watch them move."[54] His brother Albert, an early Free Jazz pioneer, elaborated: "You have to try to listen to everything together….what moves—within itself and as a mass—is a dense, multiple erupting thicket of sound. And feeling."[55] This subjective listening versus the objective measurement of mechanics such as proper technique, illustrates how these artists responded to the formalism of the liberal consensus. Both the artist and listener relate to the work on the terms of the artist, and not the terms of the genre's institutionalized rules. Ignoring the boundaries and tenets of the established form created a crack in the legitimacy of the consensus' ability to represent reality in an objective sense and illustrates the discursive formations guiding its assumptions. About Coleman, jazz critic

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[53] Sonny Murray, *Sonny's Time Now* (Jihad Records, 1965; reissue, DIW Records (import), 1965), compact disc DIW-355.

[54] Don Ayler, quoted in Nat Hentoff, liner notes to *Albert Ayler in Greenwich Village* (Impulse! 1966), LP AS-9155.

[55] Ibid.

Heckman noted in 1963: “Order and logic are quite evident in Coleman’s music but in a way that suits his own particular needs. That this order happens to be different from what has gone before does not imply that it lacks worth. But it must be heard with its own point of reference in mind.”[56]

These elements of freedom and the transcendence of established form are also illustrated in the mechanics of free improvisation. In his article from a collection of works on jazz discourse, John Corbett analyzes the structures holding together western music and free improvisation.[57] He describes a coded system of western classical music where chord changes are analyzed in relation to a previous tradition of theoretical terms that denote abstract musical concepts such as resolution, harmony, tension, and cacophony. Regulated outside the actual composition through its canonistic doctrine, this formal system is the superstructure of western music.[58] Within this system are two written components of notation and music theory, both of which are based on “accumulated written knowledge of music” and emphasize definability and delineate

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[56] Heckman, “Way Out There,” 47.

[57] A music journalist from Chicago, where is also an Adjunct Associate Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (since 1988), John Corbett’s main field of research is post-1955 jazz, improvised music, and other avant-garde music such as electronic music, radiophony and audio art. With his interest in material history of recorded music, Corbett has written on this topic in many journals: *Discourse*, *October*, and *TDR*. He also writes for *Down Beat* magazine and has published a book entitled *Extended Play: Sounding off from John Cage to Dr. Funkenstein.* Accessed 12 May 2004, http://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/jazzfest/2002/english/corbett.html.

[58] John Corbett, “Ephemera Underscored: Writing Around Free Improvisation,” in *Jazz Among the Discourses,* ed. Krin Gabbard (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 218.

boundaries of musical discourse.[59] This older structure governs the formal rules of western music. Conversely, Corbett acknowledges two aspects of free improvised music related to Free Jazz: risk and the "repositioning of knowledge in relation to the musician."[60]

Improvisation not only defies stated musical rules, but it also enables the possibility of creating a new code of musical disorder.[61] The aspect of knowledge in free improvisation rests in the relationship between the concepts of existing musical codes, which contain pre-made charts of desirable outcomes, and the temporal edge of "disfigured or defiled codes" caused by free improvisation where a new liberated language is based on the expanded desirable outcomes of the improvising musicians.[62] The performance context influenced the ambiance affecting the musician's improvisation, which allowed the language to become an indefinable dialogue of unrepeatable and unique musical presentations. Therefore, the discipline and technique of musicians built up by the traditional western musical canon became, in a sense, subverted by free improvisation and replaced with a temporary, personalized expression of the performer. In turn, this transition for free improvisers allows a new non-static paradigm to update the techniques, gestures, and responses of the older paradigm without relinquishing its new

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 222.

[61] Ibid., 222-23.

[62] Ibid., 223-24.

structure.[63] Corbett states, "Structure is not abandoned, it is personalized; it reads history written on the body of the performer. It exists not at a level of the 'score' or the 'tradition,' but in the friction between the player's body and culture."[64] Since the free improviser's emotions change as often as his ambience, these personal and temporary expressions were the creative situations of Free Jazz musicians in late 1950s and 1960s who had become restless with western musical tenets. Therefore, in abandoning the constraints upon 1950s hardbop, and existing outside the "forms of stifling institutionalized order," Free Jazz broke with the liberal consensus which proposed a formalistic approach to artwork based upon previous concepts weighted in the Eurocentric conception of music.[65]

As suggested by Corbett's analysis and the aspect of de-conditioning, Free Jazz attempted to close the gap between art and the praxis of life. Critic David C. Hunt observed that Free Jazz musicians questioned the prevailing ideology of the liberal consensus' technocratic mindset by dramatizing the "human condition" and "awaken us to the artificial living patterns of our society...all that reeks of sterility."[66] Shepp emphasized the social functionality of Free Jazz, especially its unbounded expression, which might lead to a new consciousness:

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[63] Ibid., 228.

[64] Ibid., 228-29.

[65] Sansom, "Imagining Music," 33.

[66] David C. Hunt, "Today's Jazz Artist: His Communication and Our Technological Age," in *Giants of Black Music*, Pauline Rivelli and Robert Levin, eds. (New York: Da Capo, 1979), 66.

> Music must at times terrify! It must shake men by the throats. It must extol the inevitable triumph of full stomachs and fat laughing babies. It must bring social as well as aesthetic order to our lives. Sometimes we must bludgeon beauty to seeming death; make it ugly; simply because life itself is at times ugly and painful to behold.[67]

A desire to represent their music as an expression of feelings, through unplanned, spontaneous and unconscious aesthetics, entered early into the discourse of musicians such as Cecil Taylor who in 1959 asserted, "Maybe my playing is difficult, I don't know. I've never been concerned with that. I'm only concerned with playing how I feel."[68] In his liner notes to the prophetically entitled album, *The Shape of Jazz to Come* (1959), Ornette Coleman added, "Music is for our feelings. I think jazz should try to express more kinds of feeling than it has up to now."[69] Questioning this framework in 1966, saxophonist Albert Ayler explained: "I've lived more than I can express in [hardbop] terms. Why should I hold back the feeling of my life, of being raised in the ghetto of America? It's a new truth now. And there have to be new ways of expressing that truth."[70] However, as much as Free Jazz artists dismissed the perceived restraints derived from the western cultural heritage that culminated with the liberal consensus, the musicians' search for a broader pallet of expression also included lessons from the European musical avant-garde.

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[67] Hunt, "Today's Jazz Artist," 89-90.

[68] Cecil Taylor, *Stereo Drive* (United Artists, 1959), LP UAS-5014.

[69] Ornette Coleman, *The Shape of Jazz to Come* (Atlantic, 1959), compact disc 1317-2.

[70] *Down Beat* 33, Nov. 17, 1966, 48, cited in Rob Backus, *Fire Music: A Political History of Jazz* (Chicago: Vanguard Books, 1976), 87.

The twentieth-century European experimental classical composers added further possibilities for musical expression by Free Jazz artists. In the liner notes to the 1959 album *Stereo Drive*, Taylor suggested the benefits of blending of European classical music aesthetics and those of American jazz:

> The object of any jazz musician who has had this background [European classical training] is to bring it to jazz—combine it with jazz and see what happens. My particular field is jazz and therefore it will eventually become a complete jazz expression. I think it is the right of any would be artist to try and get material from as many places as possible.[71]

The Chicago scene of Free Jazz, embodied by the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music (AACM), absorbed many of the ideas of Cage into their style of music, including AACM saxophonist Joseph Jarmon's collaboration with John Cage in 1966.[72] AACM member Anthony Braxton is identified most with the European-derived experimental classicalists.[73] Historian Ronald M. Radano suggests that this merging of sensibilities allowed a "level of structural syncretism" to exist between Free Jazz and modernist composers.[74] Along with the dissolution of boundaries and the assertion of

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[71] John Coltrane, *Coltranetime* (Blue Note, 1962), compact disc CDP 7 84461 2. Originally issued as Cecil Taylor, *Stereo Drive* (Blue Note, 1959), LP.

[72] Ekkehard Jost, *Free Jazz* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), 167, Ronald M. Radano, *New Musical Figurations: Anthony Braxton's Cultural Critique* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 87.

[73] Jost, *Free Jazz*, 173. Braxton charged that "Both aleatory and indeterminism are words which have been coined…to bypass the word improvisation and as such the influence of non-white sensibility." Anthony Braxton, *Tri-Axium writings, volume 1* (Dartmouth: Synthesis/Frog Peak, 1985), 366, quoted in Lewis, "Improvised Music after 1950," 99.

[74] Radano, *New Musical Figurations*, 111-2.

continuity of the African American musical tradition, Free Jazz also appropriated the "arcane language of modernist concert music, to which it bore similarities in its emphasis on rhythm and texture as well as in its traditional opposition to middle-class values and culture."[75] Jazz critic Joachim Berendt also notes how Free Jazz appropriated older features of the musical avant-garde such as "the free space of atonality" and "noise."[76] Moreover, jazz critic John F. Szwed suggests the element of a "suspension of time" in the works of Arnold Schoenberg and Ornette Coleman, which disoriented the listener through an unfixed positioning of rhythm or regularity.[77] These ideas, which broke with traditional adherence to the same rules constraining jazz, expanded the aural boundaries of Free Jazz, adding an immediacy and spontaneity which combined with a renewed emphasis on the poetic oral expression accompanying the New Thing.

The interdisciplinary nexus of the Lower East Side art community in the late-1950s and early 1960s, created an alternative community, which provided fertile ground for the exchange of ideas and collaborations.[78] This development influenced Free Jazz musicians to incorporate spoken word poetry into their works and compose music for

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[75] Ibid., 21.

[76] Berendt, *The Jazz Book*, 26.

[77] John F. Szwed, *Space Is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 233. He notes the similarity between "Coleman's *Free Jazz*, John Coltrane's *Ascension*, and Karlheinz Stockhausen's completely notated *Zeitmasse*." Also see Radano's discussion on use of spatiality and atmosphere regarding the Chicago group of Free Jazz musicians in Radano, *New Musical Configurations*, 106-7, specifically Muhal Richard Abrams, *Levels and Degrees of Light* (Delmark, 1967, 1991), compact disc DD-413.

[78] Banes, *Greenwich Village*, 39.

avant-garde films and theatre productions. The use of spoken-word poetry became a complementary aspect to Free Jazz musical expression largely through the influence of other black artists entering the Lower East Side and the beat poets already residing there.[79] Labeled by Szwed as the "second Harlem Renaissance," the inflow of black artists—including black Free Jazz musicians—formed art collectives such as the La the Negro Ensemble Company, MaMa Experimental Theatre, and the Umbra poets group, among others.[80] An interdisciplinary mix of avant-garde artists made up *Umbra*, the African American underground literary magazine espousing "a positive assertion of cultural blackness," including contributions from poet/painter/trumpet player Ted Joans, playwright/poet/author LeRoi Jones, and Free Jazz trumpeter Bill Dixon, as well as some white writers.[81] African American poets adapted the poetry of the black tradition, such as Langston Hughes, with that of the beats. Race consciousness from the Civil Rights movement added an overt political commentary to the readings, thus allowing all avant-garde poets to emerge from their apolitical lockdown stemming from 1950s McCarthyism.[82] Moreover, the poets applied the activist model expounded by surrealist André Breton. The spoken poem served as a call to action, especially poignant during the

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[79] Aldon Lynn Nielsen, *Black Chant: Languages of African-American Postmodernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 179-80.

[80] Szwed, *Space Is the Place*, 194. Hettie Jones (wife of LeRoi Jones) also notes the influx of a "black avant-garde—writers, musicians, painters, [and] dancers." Jones, *How I Became Hettie Jones*, 172.

[81] Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 125.

[82] Kane, *All Poets Welcome*, 81, 90.

rise of Black Nationalism. Aldon Nielson states, "They viewed the poem as a place where politics could happen, and this may have prepared the way for the dominant view during the Black Arts movement that the chief role of a poem *is* to make something happen."[83]

Fused with jazz, spoken word poetry provided a verbal component that supplemented the musical expression, tying the two artistic fields together.[84] Originally, ruth weiss [sic] and musicians Jack Minger, Wil Carlson, and Sonny Nelson put the combination of poetry and jazz into practice in 1956 at the Cellar in San Francisco.[85] Stressing the anti-establishment nature of presenting poetry with jazz, as well as hinting at the connection between art and the praxis of life, poet Kenneth Rexroth explained in the liner notes to *Poetry Readings in the Cellar* (1957):

> It is very important to get poetry out of the hands of the professors and out of the hands of the squares….If we can get poetry out into the life of the country it can be creative….Homer, or the guy who recited *Beowulf*, was show business. We simply want to make

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[83] Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 100.

[84] Preston Whaley, Jr., *Blows Like A Horn: Beat Writing, Jazz, Style, and Markets in the Transformation of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 131; Terry Martin, liner notes to Lennie Tristano & Wayne Marsh, *Intuition* (Capitol Jazz, 1996), compact disc CDP 7243 8 52771 2 2. An early connection between Free Jazz and the poetry community was Jack Kerouac, who observed what is usually considered the first performance of Free Jazz by Lennie Tristano—a blind white jazz pianist trained at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago and leader of a coterie of white musicians involved in Cool Jazz. Whaley states that Kerouac frequently attended the few concerts Tristano put on, and, according to guitarist Billy Bauer, the set would end with "one free piece each evening." Though speculative and without direct connections, this setting of interrelationships between artists of different genres characterized what evolved into the Lower East Side poetry jazz scene.

[85] Ibid., 12.

> poetry a part of show business [by adding its oral rendition to jazz accompaniment].[86]

This tradition carried over to the Lower East Side scene, and by the early 1960s, poets began working with Free Jazz accompaniment, encouraging a multi-disciplined artistic expression. An early recorded example of mixing poetry and Free Jazz was by the New York Art Quartet with LeRoi Jones reading his composition "Black Dada Nihilismus."[87]

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[86] Liner notes to Kenneth Rexroth/Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *Poetry Readings in the Cellar* (Fantasy, 1957; reissue, Fantasy, 2004), compact disc FCD-7717-2.

[87] *New York Art Quartet* (ESP-DISK, 1964), compact disc 1004. The poem "Black Dada Nihilismus" is from LeRoi Jones, *The Dead Lecturer* (New York: Grove Press, 1964). Also see Amiri Baraka, *The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1991), 71-3. Also see discussion of "Black Dada Nihilismus" in Barry Wallenstein, "Poetry and Jazz: A Twentieth-Century Wedding," *Black American Literature Forum* 25, no. 3 (autumn 1991): 612; Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 190-5. Other artists engaging in multi-genre expression included Sun Ra. Born in 1914, Sun Ra was a band leader from Chicago who brought his ensemble to the Lower East Side in 1962. He played poetry readings and also had his own poetry published in *Umbra Anthology 1967-1968*. Moreover, in some concerts Sun Ra had abstract expressionist artists paint during the performance, juxtaposing the abstract Free Jazz live sounds with the live act of painters engaging in their art with the same aesthetics as the jazz musicians. In 1966, Sun Ra's ensemble supplied the stage music for LeRoi Jones' (now Amiri Baraka) play *A Black Mass* at Procter's Theatre in Newark. Other poet-musicians included: saxophonist Pharaoh Sanders (with Leon Thomas), vocalist Linda Sharrock, saxophonist Sonny Simmons, and Cecil Taylor, who wrote a set of surrealistic liner notes to his album *Unit Structures*. Soundtracks provided an opportunity for work as well, with Free Jazz artists playing music for the films *New York Eye and Ear Control* (New York, 1964), performed by a sextet made of up Albert Ayler, Don Cherry, John Tchicai, Roswell Rudd, Gary Peacock, and Sonny Murray; *Who's Crazy?* (Paris, 1966), performed by Ornette Coleman's trio; and *Les Stances a Sophie* (Paris, 1970), performed by the Art Ensemble of Chicago, of which Fontella Bass also appeared (see Chapter 1). Ornette Coleman also appears in the psychedelic underground film, *Chappaqua* (1966), alongside beat contemporaries William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, and the East Village counter-culture rock band The Fugs. Szwed, *Space Is the Place*, 208, 241, 211. Also see Amiri Baraka – Sun Ra Myth Science Arkestra, *The Black Mass: A Play by Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones)* (Son Boy Records, 1999), compact disc. Pharoah Sanders, *Karma* (Impulse! 1969), compact disc IMPD-153; Sonny Sharrock, *Monkey – Pookie – Boo*

Saxophonist Archie Shepp exemplified the interdisciplinary nature of Lower East Side artists, expressing himself in music, theatre, and poetry. In 1960 Shepp played with Cecil Taylor to provide the stage music for the theatre production "Connection" by Jack Gelber.[88] One notable performance of spoken word poetry occurred in 1965 at the Newport Jazz festival in Rhode Island. Suffering financially from the popularity of rock and roll and rhythm and blues, by 1965 the most important festival in jazz brought in Frank Sinatra as their headliner to boost ticket sales. One reviewer noted, Sinatra was "one of the great entertainers of our time. However, a jazz singer he is not."[89] Up against the backdrop of a faux-jazz singer (brought in to headline in order to draw a larger crowd), Shepp took the stage with his group.[90] The composition "Scag"—a

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(Actuel/BYG, 1970; reissue, Sunspots, 2002), compact disc SPOT 504; Sonny Simmons, *Music From the Spheres* (ESP-DISK, 1966), compact disc ESP1043; Cecil Taylor, *Unit Structures* (Blue Note, 1966), compact disc CDP 7 84237 2. For remarks on Taylor's liner note/essay, see Andrew W. Bartlett, "Cecil Taylor, Indentity Energy, and the Avant-Garde African American Body," *Perspectives of New Music* 33, no. 1/2 (Winter – Summer 1995): 274-93. *New York Eye and Ear Control* (ESP-DISK, 1964), compact disc ESP1016; Ornette Coleman, (Affinity, 1966), LP AFFD 102; Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Les Stances a Sophie* (Universal Sound, 2004), compact disc B00004Y1YH. *Chappaqua*, writ. and dir. Conrad Rooks, perf. Jean Louis Barrault, William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Swami Satchidananda, Ornette Coleman, Fox Lorber, 1966.

[88] Jost, *Free Jazz*, 105.

[89] Charles Weisenberg, *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 1965, C9.

[90] *John Coltrane / Archie Shepp New Thing at Newport* (Impulse! 1965), compact disc 314 543 414-2. Shepp's group included Bobby Hutcherson (vibraphone), Barre Phillips (bass), and Joe Chambers (drums).

"colloquialism for heroin"—is Shepp's oral recounting of the inner city black experience and the hopelessness attached to heroin.[91]

> Where tracks is, money ain't. It's all in them tracks. Them tracks that takes you limitless; and further on to the styx: S T Y X; Where steam lies… There is the stench of rotted blood and dry Philadelphia Clay. Where its dirtiest; we celebrated the 4th on the 14th, we always did; Where we were hungriest, we fought; some of us died. Yeah, outright on buses to Harlem and sometimes trolleys that led only to 12th and Master or German Town. But we never forgot. We remembered this: my sisters raped, my fathers bled to death, and as our various blood commingled on the ceiling there, I said, "scat ain't dope, it's death."[92]

Within this tirade toward the Newport Jazz Festival audience contained images of the urban decay affecting cities across the nation, especially in black enclaves, as well as the historical struggle of African Americans to survive against racial hatred, including the remembrance of slavery. Nielsen points out that Shepp "traces an historical lineage in which the sale of heroin is shown to be of a piece with slavery, lynching, rape, and murder, shown to be the extension of a past the nation has refused to face."[93] The poem ends with the image of a ceiling painted red from a junkie's syringe containing leftover blood and sprayed upon the ceiling after shooting heroin. Shepp presented the poverty, suffering, and the social ills of urban black America to the Newport audience, providing insight into what the difference between the 4th (of July) and the 14th (amendment) meant to African Americans. In the liner notes to the subsequent album, Shepp states, "The divisions of class and of economics are, after all, so much a part of addiction,

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 206.

Heroin is not in itself the fundamental problem; it is a horrifying symptom of what's really wrong with the society, of the forces that can kill a man, literally or figuratively, at nineteen."[94] As Shepp's group finished their performance, a hesitant, though enthusiastic, applause followed—perhaps expressing the unease of an audience expecting Sinatra-like entertainment instead of a social commentary spoken-word piece by a young, candid African American. For artists like Shepp, the introduction of interdisciplinary methods helped express a functional message, in effect, embracing the historical avant-gardes' bringing together of art and the praxis of life.

A shared cultural and political sensibility between artists regarding the conformism of Cold War America emerged out of the Lower East Side in a 1966 collectively produced, sound collage recording entitled *The East Village Other*. Organized by the underground newspaper of the same name, this twenty-two minute sound collage is complemented with liner notes which ironically bind together the images of the day with and the avant-gardes' stance toward society, mocking the spectacle of war, mass-media, and technocracy:[95]

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[94] Shepp, liner notes to *John Coltrane / Archie Shepp New Thing at Newport*.

[95] *The East Village Other* (Get Back, 1998, ESP-Disk, 1966), compact disc ESP# GET1012cd. The website for ESP-DISK notes: "In August, 1966, a horde of East Villagers traveled uptown to RLA studio on West 65th Street, (later torn down to build Lincoln Center) to record an album which was intended to raise funds for the EAST VILLAGE OTHER, the underground newspaper." Accessed August 10, 2005, http://www.espdisk.com/esp1034.html. The *East Village Other* was first published in October 1965 in the Lower East Side. The underground magazine provided a forum to attack the "establishment" institutions such as the police, church, military, government figures, and Cold War premises. This publication also provided a bridge between the

> Newsprint flashes to our ears and the world, sounding through our veins, is unleashed through the eye of a needle. The MOMENTOUS OCCASION! To those of us who are blind, the truth is now written on the wind. EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! LUCI GETS HERS – FINALLY; HIROSHIMA DAY, AUGUST 6; U.S.A. VS UNDERGROUND. Somewhere planes fly low strafing viet purple people with napalm nectar; the jolly jowled poison of a president's smile splashes across the mass media conscience of America; and the underground files through the echo chamber of total technocracy to pay homage to history. All the news unfit to print is precipitated in the ear. Brain valves open, zone vectors are bombarded by reportage.[96]

This community-involved album, which also provides a bridge between the early 1960s avant-garde artists and the late-1960s counter-culture, was recorded for ESP-DISK, a small independent record company residing in New York City.[97] The album cover of *The East Village Other* prominently featured cut out images of Free Jazz alto-saxophonist Marion Brown, Allen Ginsberg, a fist, and a foot, all juxtaposed with haphazardly placed Cold War catch phrases ("Draft" and "Proliferation"), an allusion to psychedelic drug use

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early 1960s insular avant-garde art movement and its successor in the late-1960s the counter-culture. Kane, *All Poets Welcome*, 124.

[96] *The East Village Other*.

[97] Richie Unterberger, *Unknown Legends of Rock 'n' Roll: Psychedelic Unknowns, Mad Geniuses, Punk Pioneers, Lo-Fi Mavericks & More* (San Francisco: Miller Freeman Books, 1998), 230. According to Richie Unterberger, ESP-DISK was "arguably the first label dedicated to 'underground' music," and was founded in 1963 by lawyer Bernard Stollman. Musicians were allowed to produce themselves and provide their own artwork, thus fitting with the do-it-yourself work ethic prevalent in the Lower East Side. With their motto "THE ARTISTS ALONE DECIDE WHAT YOU WILL HEAR ON THEIR ESP-DISK," ESP-DISK provided a market community for experimental artists in genres such as Free Jazz and other "underground" music such as psychedelic folk, musical plays, and sound documents such as field recordings from the Freedom Movement in the south during 1963-64. Free Jazz artists on the ESP roster included: Ornette Coleman, Albert Ayler, Pharoah Sanders, Byron Allen, Paul Bley, Patty Waters, The Guiseppi Logan Quartet, The Bob James Trio, Milford Graves, Sun Ra, Charles Tyler, Sonny Simmons, Sunny Murray, among others.

("Hallucination"), and the anti-hero of the decade (assassin).[98] Across the top of the album in the title appeared a drooped, half-shut eye inside the "O" of "Other"—possibly a reference to getting high on marijuana or LSD, the psychedelic drugs of choice for white middle-class bohemia in 1966.[99] The content of the album was a sound collage composed of a radio program (featuring an interview with President Lyndon Johnson's daughter Luci and her new husband Patrick John Nugent) with intermingled performances spliced over the top by several artists from the Lower East Side. Alongside the music of Free Jazz musicians Marion Brown, Scott Holt, and Ron Jackson, the album involved a diverse group of Lower East Side luminaries such as poets Allen Ginsberg, Peter Orlovsky, Ishmael Reed, Tuli Kupferberg, folk musicians Steve Weber, Viki Pollon, and Peter Rawson, avant-garde rock band the Velvet Underground, and pop artists Andy Warhol and his associates Gerard Malanga and Indrid Superstar.

The East Village Other offered a radical critique of American society through a mock radio program infused with avant-garde and a growing counter-cultural sensibility—the headlines on the cover state: USA VS UNDERGROUND—of mind-

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[98] *The East Village Other*. The cut and paste (pastiche) method of this album artwork is also influenced Dada and Surrealism. This method of expression was prevalent in 1960s underground literature. Some examples include H.Rap Brown's *Die Nigger Die!* (New York: n.p. 1969; reprint, Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2002) and Douglas Blazek, *Life in a Common Gun* (Madison: Quixote, 1968). Marion Brown was an exceptional musician in Free Jazz during the 1960s (and later), recording with Archie Shepp (on *Fire Music*) and with John Coltrane (on *Ascension*) as well as many albums under his own name. Erlewine, Bogdanov, Woodstra, and Yanow, eds., *All Music Guide to Jazz*, 104. Also *Four For Shepp* (1966).

[99] Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, The Sixties, and Beyond* (New York: Grove Press, 1985, 1992), 195.

expanding psychedelic drug use. The collage took pre-existing images, statements, and newspaper clips and assembled them in a manner where, though recognized in their immediate meaning, for example "draft" and "proliferation," were then re-contextualized.[100] The original meaning became subverted as its positioned within the artwork. The phrase "electric newspaper" offered at once a nod toward the traditional medium of news dissemination (the newspaper) as well as an update of the medium by electrifying the process. The ironic celebration of "Hiroshima Day" juxtaposed traditional holidays, such as Flag Day or Memorial Day, with the nuclear bombing of Japan. Together, these words celebrated the paradox of technocracy: useful as a tool in spreading knowledge, and deadly as a maker of destruction. However, in the latter case, the destruction is replaced with the idea that the remembrance of Hiroshima should be a time of rejoicing in America.

The collage was also used in the sound presentation of the album, adhering to the use of a radio program consisting of traditional, patriarchal notions. This includes such statements such as "the President formally surrendered his daughter to her new husband"—as if the daughter was a piece of property in which the President lost to another man—and "Luci was so nervous, she was visibly shaking," and she held up her little firm chin, "looking up at the magnificent mosaic of Christ." This image presented Luci as a weak, thoroughly domesticated woman trading the clutches of one strong man to take care of her for another (Christ or her new husband). This "reaffirmation of family

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[100] Gregory L. Ulmer, "The Object of Post-Criticism," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Hal Foster, ed. (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 84.

values and female subordination" characterized the liberal consensus' representation of the woman's place in society, and became a target of ridicule within the context of *The East Village Other*.[101] This soundtrack reflects a pastiche of different styles of music, from folk to Free Jazz to spoken-word poetry. The resulting schizophrenic montage of popular radio show interspersed with avant-garde art from Lower East Side erased boundaries between politics, radio entertainment centered around elite public figures, and different genres of music and poetry. Accordingly, this "interplay between artistic expression and the experience of the everyday world…[brought] art and life closer to being a simultaneous experience" dissolving the authority of Cold War catch phrases through ironic juxtaposition.[102]

The different avant-garde performances intermixed with excerpts of a radio show presented multiple expressions from different genres, with the varyingly implicit and explicit themes of the artists' work serving as counter-narrative to the patriarchical family values of the interview. Releasing albums which utilized this sort of diverse ranges of sounds and overarching concepts increasingly became popular after the mid-1960s, especially rock and roll, but increasingly also in jazz as artists expanded the boundaries of the art. Offering a eclectic array of different sounds, instruments, and spoken and vocal presentations helped eliminate boundaries between different musical and art genres and produced one of the distinctive factors making up postmodern art: pastiche.

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[101] Elaine Tyler May, "Rosie the Riveter Gets Married," in *The War in American Culture: Society and Consciousness During World War II*, Lewis A. Erenberg and Susan E. Hirsch, eds. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 141.

[102] Ulmer, "The Object of Post-Criticism," in *The Anti-Aesthetic*, 84.

Alongside the break with the past jazz traditions, its dismissal of western musical tenets, and the incorporation of the praxis of life in artwork, postmodern jazz also dissolved the boundaries of the jazz. Many Free Jazz musicians re-embraced aspects of traditional New Orleans-style jazz (1920s), swing (1930s), and bebop (1940s) within a freer conception of the music, which helped to dissolve the periodization and notion of progress in the jazz narrative.[103] What Charles Jencks labels "double coding," Free Jazz musicians' simultaneous embrace of the modern jazz tradition and the aesthetic transcendence outside that tradition exemplify the postmodern condition.[104] Furthermore, as the decade progressed musicians also assimilated Asian and African musical aesthetics and instruments into their repertoire, and, ironically, revisited the European tradition whose system was originally seen as stifling to creative.[105] Finally, as the dawn of the 1970s appeared, many Free Jazz artists—along with other contemporary jazz artists like Miles Davis who inaugurated "fusion"—looked to pop music to provide a stronger

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[103] See Ornette Coleman, *Free Jazz: A Collective Improvisation by theOrnette Coleman Double Quartet* (Atlantic, 1961; reissue, Rhino, 1998), compact disc R2 75208; Sun Ra, *The Heliocentric Worlds of Sun Ra* (ESP-Disk, 1965), compact disc ESP1014; Archie Shepp, *Fire Music* (Impulse, 1965, 1995), compact disc IMPD-158; Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Les Stances a Sophie* (Universal Sound, 2004), compact disc B00004Y1YH.

[104] Jencks, *What is Post-Modernism?*15.

[105] Don Cherry, *"Mu" First Part/"Mu Second Part* (BYG Recordings, 1969; reissue, Fuel 2000, 2001), compact disc 302 061 147 2; Pharoah Sanders, *Thembi* (Impulse! 1971, 1998), compact disc IMPD-253; Alice Coltrane, *Universal Consciousness* (Impulse! 1971, 2002), compact disc AS-9210.

connection to a wider audience.[106] These included the late1960s sounds of funk and rock and roll (for example James Brown, Sly and the Family Stone, and Jimi Hendrix) that characterized a new assertive African American pop music after the success of early and mid-1960s Motown.[107] The inter-weaving of strands of modern and Free Jazz, European, Asian, and African instruments and aesthetics, the incorporation of pop elements, exemplified the collapse of the cultural boundaries erected by the liberal consensus. LeRoi Jones predicted this disintegration and vision of a pluralist music in 1966, stating: "[The] use of Indian music, old spirituals, even heavily rhythmic blues licks (and soon electronic devices) by [Free Jazz] musicians point toward the final close in the spectrum of sound that will come. A really new, really all inclusive music."[108] The crossing and blending of genres, which broke implicit hierarchies separating western art from non-western art, popular art from elite art, and tradition from avant-garde, helped shape the postmodernity of Free Jazz where "styles no longer fit neatly into well-defined categories" and were scattered "along lines vaguely defined by the fractured vestiges of a prior order."[109]

An example of this blending of styles is the Art Ensemble of Chicago, a group that, along with a number of other Free Jazz musicians such as Archie Shepp, Sonny

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[106] Miles Davis, *Bitches Brew* (Columbia Records, 1970), LP 26. Fusion "fused" together elements of rock and roll and jazz, and has been bitterly debated through today as destroying jazz's purity.

[107] Budds, *Jazz in the Sixties*, 93-4.

[108] Jones, *Black Music*, 189.

[109] Radano, *New Musical Figurations*, 8.

Murray, and Don Cherry, left the United States in late 1968 and early 1969 for France where more opportunities to record and perform existed. In Paris in 1970, the Art Ensemble recorded an album that embraced a multitude of styles: *Les Stances a Sophie*.[110] The opening track, "Thème De Yoyo," utilized a popular song format, with a verse-chorus-verse setup, and contained an upbeat and aggressive funk bass line similar to the style of James Brown. While Fontella Bass sang the verse in an R&B style (see chapter 1), the chorus fell into a collectively played free improvisational section which then returned to the verse. The album also contained a mixture of traditional jazz styles from hardbop and bebop to swing and New Orleans style, executed with the playful and energetic aesthetics of free improvisation. In addition to these "American" styles of jazz and pop music, the track "Thème De L'Amour Universel"—a title aptly contextualizing its sound—uses a non-western sounding drone, percussion, and horns mixing the sounds of North Africa, the Middle East, and India. The use of these non-western aesthetics and increased interaction between African and African American Free Jazz musicians, notably the 1969 summer Pan-African music festival in Algeria, brought an even more postcolonial cultural flavor to the music.

Archie Shepp, who had played with North African musicians at the Algerian arts festival, recorded three distinguished albums while in Paris: *Blasé*, *Yasmina, A Black*

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[110] Art Ensemble of Chicago, *Les Stances a Sophie* (Universal Sound, 2004), compact disc B00004Y1YH.

Woman, and *Poem For Malcolm*.[111] Eventually returning to the United States in the early 1970s, Shepp recorded the 1972 concept album *Attica Blues* that commemorated the prison uprising as well as other notable African American jazz legends such as Charlie Parker and Louis Armstrong (who died in 1971).[112] He selected an album cover with a photo of himself sitting behind a piano in what looks to be a cluttered office, with a saxophone on top of the piano, a book shelf bulging with books, and a wall with two posters. One poster pictured the 1968 Olympians gold medalist Tommie Smith and bronze medalist John Carlos raising their fist during the award ceremony, and the other showed a black and white collage drawing of African faces, masks, and W.E.B. DuBois. The large ensemble of musicians allowed Shepp to present a broad array of African American musical styles, from the funky opening title track to spoken word poetry and narration, as well as more traditionally big band style jazz compositions like "Blues for Brother George Jackson" and "Good-Bye Sweet Pops." Aldon Lynn Nielsen notes the "amateurs" appearing on the album added a non-professional touch, including the famous radical lawyer William Knustler and composer Cal Massey's seven-year-old daughter Waheeda Massey who sang "Quiet Dawn."[113]

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[111] Archie Shepp, *Blasé/Live at the Pan-African Festival* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Fuel 2000, 2001), compact disc 302 061 152 2. Archie Shepp, *Yasmina, A Black Woman*/*Poem For Malcolm* (BYG/Actuel, 1969; reissue, Charly, 2003), compact disc SNAP 162 CD.

[112] Archie Shepp, *Attica Blues* (Impulse! 1972), compact diss AS-9222.

[113] Nielsen, *Black Chant*, 211.

Another important work recorded a few months earlier, Ornette Coleman's *Science Fiction*, also presented a multi-textual mix, including a poetry reading by Umbra poet David Henderson, the voice of Indian classical singer Asha Puthli, and a baby crying.[114] The album shifted compositions performed by a quartet, to ensemble productions incorporating two percussionists, classically trained trumpeters, a vocalist and poet. Moreover, Coleman juxtaposed instrumental styles between jazz and classical music, a technique he used on the string arrangements on Alice Coltrane's *Universal Consciousness* and his own opus, *Skies of America*.[115] Consequently, albums produced by Free Jazz musicians in the early 1970s signaled the arrival of an aesthetic that, while placing the modern aesthetics of jazz at the basic root of the music, incorporated music from around the world and from different genres resulting in a pluralistic conception of jazz—soon to be rejected by the neo-conservative neo-classicists of the 1980s.

Referring back to the opening quote from Ornette Coleman's first album in 1958, his notion of reversing relationships exemplified the ideal of the 1950s and 1960s avant-garde: the conformist postwar liberal consensus had hardened into an unnatural living state where profitable efficiency and proper form was the measure of success. The radical critiques offered by Free Jazz musicians and other avant-garde artists slowly seeped into the mainstream as the latter half of the 1960s erupted into various counter-cultural factions espousing different ideals of freedom, leaving behind a shattered liberal

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[114] Ornette Coleman, *The Complete Science Fiction Sessions* (Columbia, 2000), compact disc C2K 63569.

[115] Alice Coltrane, *Universal Consciousness* (Impulse! 1971), LP AS 9210; Ornette Coleman, *Skies of America* (Columbia, 1972), LP 31562.

consensus as well as providing the needed breathing room for a resurgent conservative agenda.

Though a failure in the short-term goal of a total cultural shift, these "alternative modes of cultural production" aided in presenting cultural critiques synonymous to the late-1960s protest movements through an aesthetic of spontaneity and participation, and helped to unfasten the older codes making way for pluralistic expression.[116] Free Jazz and their avant-garde compatriots assisted in the dismantling of established art's strict conventions—an affront to the institutions that decide the legitimate measurement of artistic quality—and the implosion of the idea of strict meanings. Thus, the postmodern era ushered in a period of where the dominant meanings became unstable and a confrontational tug-of-war between keepers of tradition and pursuers of progression.

Perhaps the significance of the avant-garde and later counter-culture lay not in its failure to become the dominant culture—no revolution overthrew society—but its role precisely as a "counter" culture, the opposition to, and engagement with the expanding, investigating, and diversifying of the dominant mainstream culture. Free Jazz critiqued the liberal consensus discourse and its measurement of value through technocracy, becoming an early crack in the consensus and the questioning of the power over designating meaning. Thus, Jacques Attali explains, "The utility of music is not to create order, but to make people believe in its existence and universal value, in its impossibility

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[116] Sally Banes, *Greenwich Village: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 9; see Alfred Willener, *The Action-Image of Society: On Cultural Politicization* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970) for comparison of France's May 1968 uprising to the aesthetics of Free Jazz.

outside exchange."[117] The radical breaks from institutional practice by avant-garde artists provide a useful tool for resistance against imposed hegemonies in an age where power fluctuates between competing discourses and their dissemination of knowledge. As Michel Foucault notes, power enters use through the interaction of knowledge and the discourse in which it is disseminated. When knowledge is examined using institutionalized frameworks of representation—for instance, the critique of a phenomena using a particular theoretical frame of reference as a guide—the "techniques and tactics of domination" within the specified framework, in this case the institution of jazz, can be examined.[118] Knowledge, and its interaction with discourse in obtaining power, is illuminated when the institution of art becomes self-conscious through the practices associated with Bürger's historical avant-garde. These come in the shape of confronting the "apparatuses of knowledge"—the viewing of art through conditioned frameworks—and their "methods of observation, techniques of registration, procedures for investigation and research, [and] apparatuses of control."[119] The study of 1960s avant-garde groups and their relationship to particular institutions in which they have reacted against elucidate the discursive interactions and their relationships to power—for Free Jazz, this consisted of its break with the governing precepts of 1950s mainstream jazz and its association with the liberal consensus.

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[117] Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 57.

[118] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 102.

[119] Ibid.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

> Postmodernist art "disentrenches" its given medium, not only as an autonomous activity but also as a mode of representation with assured referential value and/or ontological status. In general, postmodernist art is concerned not with the formal purity of traditional artistic mediums but with textual "impurity"—the interconnections of power and knowledge in social representations. It is in these terms that the art object—indeed, the art field—has changed, as the old Enlightenment decorum of distinct forms of expression (visual versus literary, temporal versus spatial), grounded in separate areas of competence, is no longer obeyed. And with this destructuring of the object and its field has come a decentering of the subject, both artist and audience.
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> Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, 1985.[1]

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, neo-conservatism had hoped to recover a particular mindset prior to the 1960s, what Foster calls stylistic "modernism" in the arts, or, culturally, a respect for what came to be called traditional values, patriotism, and a return to order after the 1960s upheavals.[2] Within the jazz world, neo-conservatism took the form of the neo-classicist movement that virtually erased from history the changes that occurred in jazz during the 1960s, placing 1950s hardbop as the last true form of the jazz tradition. Consequently, this position also moved jazz from its grassroots and musically interactive home in nightclubs to the museum and into the hands of caretakers

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[1] Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 130-31.

[2] Ibid., 121; Brick, *Age of Contradictions*, 188-9.

who carefully guard and sculpt its tradition. This recasting of jazz generated nostalgia for the 1950s the same way that people viewed President Reagan: a return to a simpler Golden Era.

The neo-conservative stance could be characterized by a phrase from the 1970s emanating from the infamous *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Tri-Lateral Commission*: the call to reverse the 1960s "excess of democracy."[3] The neo-classicists' assertion that Free Jazz and Fusion went too far in their search for a broader expression in jazz illustrates the reigning in of choice within the idealized paradigms of conservatives, reflecting 1960s Free Jazz's subversive quality within the culture war debates.

The antithesis to neo-conservatism, poststructuralism, critiques the interplay between discourse and codes of knowledge that make up one's representation of reality. Abandoning the idea that meaning emanates from a structural origin outside the interpreter's social imaginary, poststructuralists see the historical subject "as a product of linguistic or discursive practices, without 'essence' or an irreducible nature."[4] Free Jazz assumed this position largely through its questioning of the structural framework informing the jazz tradition, noting its colonial history as well as its responsibility in

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[3] Michel Corzier, Samuel Huntington, and Joji Watanuke, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Tri-Lateral Commission* (New York: New York University Press, 1975), 113-4, cited from Brick, *Age of Contradictions,* 187.

[4] Joseph Childers and Gary Hentzi, eds., *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 237.

helping to dismantle the narrow representations of jazz endorsed by predominantly white critics before the 1960s.

The main difference between these two positions is that neo-conservatism seeks to reestablish the representation of an object on the faith that meanings do not embody or refer to phenomena providing the context surrounding the object; on the other hand, poststructuralism "rests on a critique of representation" that questions the creation of meanings and their relationships to discursive formations.[5] Thus, neo-classicists insist upon a version of jazz history where musicians operated in a purified vacuum, "as if jazz has survived as a protected gem of black creative wisdom, growing and changing yet miraculously unaffected by the overarching shifts in American life."[6] In a sense, the neo-classicist stance dusts off the discursive formations identified and discarded by Free Jazz musicians and attempts to rebuild the representation of jazz according to a racially constructed ideal which, ironically, embraced the Western musical tenets rejected by the Black Nationalist Free Jazz musicians. Consequently, the neo-conservative position rests upon the cultural authority within an interpretation of society prominent in jazz discourse prior to the 1960s upheavals. Free Jazz's eclipse of hardbop's boundaries brought a self-conscious reflection upon the constraints imposed by the discursive formations of pre-1960s jazz, constraints built by particular modes of western thought accepted without question in previous generations. Neo-conservatives struggle for an unquestioned return to an autonomous subject resistant to critique, for fear that other groups hemmed in by

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[5] Foster, *Recodings*, 129.

[6] Radano, *New Musical Figurations*, 272.

previously accepted norms will replicate this confrontational act of questioning engaged by Free Jazz and other radical groups in the 1960s.

The notion of controlling history also coincides with the aversion towards the critique of representation, since controlling the representation of the past helps to defend against accusations of injustice, both past and present. Defining the dispute between neo-classicists and those who embrace a pluralistic history of jazz, musicologist Scott DeVeaux states: "The struggle is over *possession* of that history and the legitimacy that it confers. More precisely, the struggle is over the act of definition that is presumed to lie at the history's core."[7] Just as historians before the rise of 1960s social history generally eschewed the contributions of women, minorities, and the working people, the neo-conservatives seek a return to a sort of history that emphasizes the strong (masculine) hero—the mythic figure that holds together the linear narrative that produces a simplistic story line of individualist success while playing down instances of questioning toward the general narrative. Returning to Burns' neo-classicist-influenced *Jazz*, Louis Armstrong is presented as the hero, even going so far as placing his tracks on all but one disc of the subsequent box set from the documentary even though his major contribution to jazz remained in his 1920s works. The "great man" portrayal of history implies a return to a Golden Age. In his review in the *New York Review of Books*, David Hajdu describes the methodology behind *Jazz*, stating that "Burns presents his subjects in the terms he would

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[7] DeVeaux, "Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography," 528.

have found in a music textbook three or four decades ago."[8] The exclusion of Free Jazz and its criticism of mainstream jazz's adherence to western musical tenets allows Burns to preserve his pure narrative.

As one thinks about the workings of culture—how the forces of progression resist the drag of tradition, and how the history of this struggle is related in the subsequent generation—historians must reflect upon how these developments reverberate across intersecting lines of social imaginaries and the discourse binding these representations together. Viewing Free Jazz and the debate surrounding it illustrates how cultural constructs when they confront the ideals of established institutions, create a crisis in the institution's authoritative ability to administer meaning to its subject. This questioning, moreover, affects the legitimacy of the institution's hierarchical position, leading to a loss of power over the representations it controls.

Based on the practice of cultural history utilized by postsocial historians such as Miguel A. Cabrera and Joan W. Scott, this thesis has portrayed the culture of Free Jazz through Jacques Attali's theoretical framework. It has revealed the threads connecting culture with the social imaginaries of society. Attali states that music "reflects the manufacture of society; it constitutes the audible waveband of the vibrations and signs that make up society."[9] By exploring the diverging reactions of Free Jazz critics, this thesis addresses notions of how social imaginaries influence people in their environment. Moreover, it argues that the real issue in cultural history lies in the shifting

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[8] David Hajdu, "Not Quite All That Jazz," *New York Review of Books*, 8 February 2001, 31, cited in Pond, "Jamming the Reception," 35.

[9] Attali, *Noise*, 4.

interconnections between all spheres of current reality—political, economic, gender, race—as well as long-term historical currents—including patriarchy and scientific racism—that continue to inform the mindsets of people in the twenty first-century.

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