

# Jazz as soundtrack of American culture

Perceptions of Jazz and American Culture in National  
Socialist periodicals in the Netherlands during the  
Second World War

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# 1. Introduction

The 1940s were turbulent times for Dutch citizens. Not only did they have to cope with the German occupation, but also with clashes between generations, ideologies, and ideas. While the older generations and some particular youth groups longed for the religious values and standards of the years before the war, such as morality, conservatism, and sobriety, others hinged towards more open sexuality, a looser handling of religion, and a new style of living, which they found across the Atlantic Ocean. For many young people, American culture became the example for a new way of living. This 'Americanness' was visible in Dutch fashion, but was also clearly seen in the music industry before, during, and after the Second World War. Jazz emerged as one of the most popular musical styles in the Netherlands, competing with European classical music. This thesis focuses on this changing musical landscape in the Netherlands in the 1940s, in particular on how jazz music caused friction between generations, politicians, and musicians and music connoisseurs during the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, this thesis connects jazz in the Netherlands during the Second World War with the process of Americanization.

Jazz music was already present in the Netherlands and other European countries before the Second World War began. It was a much discussed topic, hotly debated between music experts and musicians. For instance, they questioned what jazz exactly entailed, as it proved difficult to give a clear definition of the music.<sup>2</sup> During the Second World War, the German politicians did their best to regulate and eventually banish jazz music, because it was both the music of the enemy and the music of the 'inferior black culture.' However, the youth kept resisting the occupying power and jazz music prevailed in Germany as well.<sup>3</sup> During and immediately after the war, the music was not only regarded as vulgar, but also as a depiction of America as a country. Therefore, the frictions surrounding the new music were mostly caused by opposing visions of the 'New World.' That is, strongly anti- or strongly pro-America. After the war, the controversial music remained in the center of discussion and kept causing frictions that were practically the same as before the war.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.1 Academic Discussion

Paradoxically, throughout the first half of the 1940s, the topic of jazz in the Netherlands was injected with an overdose of anxiety, as well as curiosity towards the exotic. America and its

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: Kees Wouters, *Ongewenschte Muziek: De bestrijding van jazz en moderne amusementsmuziek in Duitsland en Nederland, 1920-1945* (Den Haag 1999).

<sup>2</sup> See for example: Walter van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes: Vijfentachtig jaar schrijven over jazz in Nederland* (Amsterdam 2008).

<sup>3</sup> See for example: Wouters, *Ongewenschte Muziek*.

<sup>4</sup> See for example: G.W.H. Kleinhout, *Jazz als probleem. Receptie en acceptatie van de jazz in de wederopbouwperiode van Nederland 1945-1952* (Utrecht 2006).

influence were perceived with both rejection and attraction, disapproval and fascination, fear and enchantment. Accordingly, the discussion surrounding jazz music during the Second World War remained intrinsically a discussion about Americanization and American cultural transfer, or, in other words, about the waning of German and Dutch norms and values. Therefore, this thesis is embedded in the larger academic debate surrounding Americanization, as it tries to examine how jazz music during the Second World War shaped certain Dutch perceptions of America, which eventually led to the Americanization of the Netherlands after the war. Jazz helped to open up the Netherlands for American culture and can be called the music of a generation, especially in the 1940s, when it was a hot-debated topic.

### *1.1.1 Americanization*

Many scholars have examined the concept of Americanization. According to German historian Volker R. Berghahn, three waves of journalistic and academic writing about ‘Americanization’ can be distinguished, all influenced by the political context of their time. The first of Berghahn’s waves was set in the years before 1914, when America was trying to find a place on the political world stage and was not yet the world power it would become. The second phase can be traced to the ‘interbellum’ period in which American presence, despite its political isolationism, was felt in Europe, the Far East, and Latin America, especially in the spheres of finance, industry, and popular culture. The third wave came after 1945, when both Western Europe and Second and Third World societies “grappled with the fact that the Americans, by virtue of their technological – military and industrial – commercial prowess, had so clearly emerged from the Second World War as a superpower that now found itself in an escalating conflict with the Soviet bloc.” In this last phase, America emerged as the main rebuilders of Western Europe, and could in this way shape European culture to its own liking.<sup>5</sup>

What is striking about the three waves Berghahn describes is the absence of the Second World War-period, when America intervened in European politics and life on a large scale. This is problematic, because during this war, American culture, at least in the Netherlands, changed from an implicitly present phenomenon to an explicitly present one, because both the presence of American soldiers on European soil made America and its culture physically (more) visible, and the concept of American culture was discussed in a more direct sense, as is shown in this thesis by means of the jazz debate during this period.

The phenomenon of Americanization has been studied intensively after the Second World War. Many of these studies focus on America’s ‘mass culture,’ like the book *If You’ve Seen One,*

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<sup>5</sup> Volker R. Berghahn, ‘The debate on “Americanization” among economic and cultural historians’, *Cold War History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2010) 108.

*You've Seen The Mall* (1996)<sup>6</sup> by Dutch historian Rob Kroes. This book aims to examine the “black box in the simple diagram of cultural transmission and reception.” This black box, as Kroes calls it, is the intangible moment that American culture passes when it flows to Europe and is “decoded and reencrypted, decontextualized and recontextualized, and made to fit the receivers’ frames of reference.”<sup>7</sup> The book analyzes the process of Americanization in terms of its mediation and transformation, how Europe changed American culture to fit within ‘European culture,’ and how it shaped and picked out aspects of the transferred American culture. “The deejay may have modeled his role after American examples, but he remains hilariously Dutch: ‘Veronica is er voor JOU!’ American news flashes are accompanied by Dutch voices.”<sup>8</sup> We are never passive receivers of overseas culture, seems to be the overarching message of Kroes’ book.

Although mass culture is often regarded as a postindustrial phenomenon, American historian Robert W. Rydell and Rob Kroes debunk this notion in their book *Buffalo Bill in Bologna* (2005), as it deals with Americanization through American mass culture between 1869 and 1922. Rydell and Kroes show that mass culture can be traced back to the Pacific Railroad, finished in 1869. In their introduction, they distinguish ‘mass culture’ from ‘popular culture,’ because popular culture “has been used to describe more locally produced cultural formations in both pre- and postindustrial societies,” while ‘mass culture’ can be defined as “the mobilization of cultural and ideological resources on a scale unimaginable in a preindustrial society lacking mass transportation and communication facilities, [...] [it] serves a hegemonic function within advanced, industrialized societies.”<sup>9</sup>

However, other scholars entirely reject the concept of mass culture. Media scholar John Fiske, for example, does this in his *Understanding Popular Culture* (1989),<sup>10</sup> in which he attempts to “outline a theory of popular culture in capitalist societies.”<sup>11</sup> He argues that the meaning of a cultural anomaly is primarily made by the consumers, instead of the producers of cultural products.<sup>12</sup> Fiske sees the struggles that are incorporated in the site of popular culture, as it is situated in a model of power. However, his focus is rather upon “the popular tactics by which these forces are coped with, are evaded or are resisted. [...] Instead of concentrating on the omnipresent insidious practices of the dominant ideology, it attempts to understand the everyday

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<sup>6</sup> Rob Kroes, *If You've Seen One, You've Seen The Mall: Europeans and American Mass Culture* (Illinois 1996).

<sup>7</sup> Kroes, *If You've Seen One*, xi.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 176.

<sup>9</sup> Robert W. Rydell and Rob Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of The World, 1869-1922* (Chicago 2005) 3-6.

<sup>10</sup> John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (London 1989).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, ix.

<sup>12</sup> Rydell and Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna*, 178.

resistances and evasions that make that ideology work so hard and insistently to maintain itself and its values.”<sup>13</sup>

Although this thesis does in no way reject the concept of mass culture, it is informed by John Fiske’s and Rob Kroes’ argument that the consumer is not forced to consume American culture. In his first chapter ‘The Jeaning of America,’ Fiske deals with the popularity of jeans. Although he admits that the manufacturers of jeans are aware of their influence and try to exploit it for their commercial interests,<sup>14</sup> the clothing also serves a cultural function: “all commodities can be used by the consumer to construct meanings of self, of social identity and social relations.”<sup>15</sup> This is equally true for jazz music in the Netherlands during the Second World War. Although the music industry conveniently anticipated on the latest trends and fashions, in the end the listener gave meaning to what he or she heard.

In his article about the debate on Americanization among economic and cultural historians, Berghahn further analyzes more recent literature on Americanization and states that transatlantic relations between America and Europe in the first half of the twentieth century can best be described as being a “two-lane highway across the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.” Cultural flows went in both directions, albeit the so-called ‘high’ culture – a set of cultural products, mostly European, held in the highest esteem by a culture, and opposing ‘low’ or popular culture – strongly moved from east to west up to the 1930s. Before the Second World War, this ‘two-lane highway’ was highly imbalanced if talking about ‘high’ culture, because Europe dominated this field of culture. However, in regards to popular ‘low’ culture, “the flow was more unidirectional from West to east as early as the 1920s when jazz, Hollywood movies, but also the Tiller Girls and the Charleston came to Europe and other parts of the world.” American popular culture thrived in Europe and the Netherlands, and reached a hegemonic position after 1945. It deeply influenced the cultural tastes, life-styles, and value systems of the younger generations. Slowly, the dividing line between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture disappeared.<sup>16</sup>

Although Berghahn sees the cultural exchange between Europe and America as a “two-lane highway,” other scholars prefer to see it as an example of ‘cultural imperialism,’ questioning whether or not America enforced its culture on Europe after 1945. These critics, such as Palestinian-American literary theoretician Edward Saïd and scholars representing the Frankfurt School, claim that, instead of two lanes, cultural exchange between the two continents could be described as a ‘one-way highway’ going from America to Europe, because America imposed its culture on Europe and other continents by force.

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<sup>13</sup> Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 20-21.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Berghahn, ‘The debate on “Americanization”’, 119-121.



In her article *Shame on US?*, German historian and Professor Jessica Gienow-Hecht, for example, describes the three phases of this so-called “Grand Debate” about cultural imperialism. The first phase spans the twenty years immediately after the Second World War. In the years between 1945 and 1965, American scholars, politicians, and public figures mostly agreed that the spread of American culture would be in the benefit of humanity as a whole. The highly politicized debate among those American scholars and politicians, although vague in its definition of ‘American culture’, called for more effective programs of cultural exchange to counterattack the Soviet propaganda.<sup>17</sup>

The second phase Gienow-Hecht describes, starts in the 1960s, when American intellectuals dramatically altered their view of American cultural transfer abroad. This decade “witnessed the surge of an anti-American feeling within the United States [...] and a rejection of American foreign policy.” The practice of cultural exportation came to be known as ‘cultural imperialism,’ a criticism many American scholars shared with European conservatives, who long feared the menace of American mass culture, and European leftists, who started worrying about American influences in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>18</sup>

However, the debate on cultural imperialism was revised in the 1990s, when criticism of cultural imperialism became a contested discourse, critically analyzed by scholars. This culminated in the third phase of the debate. The threat of global culture and Americanization might be exaggerated, so scholars of this new wave believed. They pointed towards other historical empires and colonial powers, as well as European Union’s activities today that all exported their culture for their own benefit. Besides, “recent studies on U.S. policies in Asia and Europe have also shown that U.S. officials were often ready to sacrifice economic (and ideological) objectives for the pursuit of geopolitical interests.” Furthermore, British scholar John Tomlinson posed that “the critics of cultural imperialism turned out to be the worst cultural imperialists.” After all, by regarding Third World cultures as fragile and helpless, they served Western interests of modernity. Using the tools of post structuralism, the 1990s generation of scholars paid closer attention to global and local aspects of the “Grand Debate.” Tomlinson, for example, claims that cultural imperialism is simply the spread of modernity, which paradoxically lessened the importance of national culture.<sup>19</sup> Tomlinson and the other scholars of the post-1990 phase called for a replacement of the term “cultural imperialism” that avoids dualism.

This thesis’ argument is informed by the views of the scholars in the last phase. American cultural politics in the 1940s did not necessarily entail an imperial component. To use the words

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<sup>17</sup> Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, ‘Shame on US? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War – A Critical Review’, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2000) 468-469.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 470.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 480-482.

of Kroes and Rydell: Europeans are not merely “passive sponges.”<sup>20</sup> People give their own meaning to popular culture and therefore it “could ‘escape’ the political straitjacket that was desired by those in authority,” as historians Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith, and Joes Segal remark.<sup>21</sup> This can be applied to jazz music in the 1940s, as it was not imposed upon the Dutch citizens with force by American politicians. On the contrary, European politicians and oppressing forces ruled against jazz. Still, somehow, the music managed to stay alive in a notoriously anti-jazz era in the country. Thus, it can be argued that a large number of Dutch citizens embraced American culture voluntarily.

### 1.1.2 Jazz studies

Not surprisingly then, jazz is often linked to the process of Americanization in Europe. Most of these studies focus on the Cold War period and look at how jazz was used as a cultural policy tool by the American government. In her *Satchmo Blows Up the World* (2004),<sup>22</sup> historian Penny von Eschen, for example, investigates the American jazz diplomacy of organizing jazz tours in Europe and the Soviet Union during the Cold War to counter Soviet anti-America propaganda. Jazz was used to propagate liberal democracy and American freedom in the world, while paradoxically, American society was deeply segregated, as the Jim Crow-laws were still in effect. As Von Eschen notes, “the prominence of African American jazz artists was critical to the music’s potential as a Cold War weapon.”<sup>23</sup> These African American musicians, such as Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and many others, did not only join these sponsored jazz tours to represent the American state; they also had their own agenda. However, Von Eschen concludes that the tours’ audience “never confused or conflated their love of jazz and American popular culture with an acceptance of American foreign policy.”<sup>24</sup> Von Eschen implies that during the Cold War, jazz only helped to ‘Americanize’ Europe and the Soviet Union in a cultural way. Politically, popular culture proved to be much less effective.

Despite the fact that the European jazz scene is studied thoroughly, and often linked to a form of Americanization, the period of the Second World War seems a neglected era. Although some studies deal with this period, it is often done only briefly and most of the time merely as a side note to the bigger story of jazz in general. One exception to this, however, is Dutch historian Kees Wouters, who in his *Ongewenschte muziek* (1999)<sup>25</sup> examines jazz music in Germany and the

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<sup>20</sup> Rydell and Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna*, 173-174.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal, ‘Introduction’, in: Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal (eds.), *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam 2012) 2.

<sup>22</sup> Penny von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge 2004).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 258.

<sup>25</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte Muziek*.

Netherlands between 1920 and 1945. He describes the existence of a negative attitude towards jazz after the First World War in both countries and gives us a comprehensive overview of the governmental regulations imposed upon the Dutch by the German occupier.<sup>26</sup> Wouters' study is often criticized for not being academic enough and lacking a central statement.<sup>27</sup> However, his impressive and extensive use of all kinds of primary sources and the gap he fills in the historiography of jazz in the Netherlands make it an important publication for this thesis and an often cited book for Dutch jazz studies.

Another important study concerning jazz music in the Netherlands in the 1940s is that by Dutch historian G.W.H. Kleinhout. In his dissertation *Jazz als probleem* (2006),<sup>28</sup> he deals with jazz in the years immediately after the Second World War (1945-1952). He states that the Dutch youth had a hard time dealing with the new American musical styles that emerged in the Netherlands after the German ban on jazz was abolished, even if they were aware of terms like jazz, swing, and bebop. Kleinhout further analyzes that the discussion about what jazz exactly signified made it hard to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable music. This discussion divided the jazz scene into two opposing groups: the modernists and conservatives. Furthermore, the strong pillarization in the Netherlands, which segregated the country into different 'pillars' according to different religions and ideologies, made the country's broadcasting scene less effective than it could have been in the spreading of jazz, because radio stations did not work together and some 'pillars' discarded jazz altogether for religious reasons. All these factors, together with strong opposition from official authorities, made the years after the war a difficult time for the jazz-loving youth. Kleinhout shows that these years saw a pro- and contra-America movement, with strong oppositions between older generations – who wanted to protect the 'Dutch culture' from American influence – and the Dutch youth that adored almost everything that American culture had to offer.<sup>29</sup>

However, most studies about the jazz scene in the Netherlands are limited to jazz histories in one particular city. The first to do this was music journalist Eddy Determeyer. In his *Ruige dagen: 70 jaar Jazz in Groningen* (1988),<sup>30</sup> he describes the jazz scene in the northern Dutch city Groningen. Twelve years later, Arie van Breda, chairman of the 'Haagse Jazz Club' wrote his book *100 jaar Jazz in Den Haag* (2000).<sup>31</sup> Journalist Cees Mentink in 2008 wrote about Jazz in

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<sup>26</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte Muziek*, 83-375.

<sup>27</sup> Huub Wijfjes, "Alles beter dan Duitse hoempaorkesten". Recensie van: K.C.A.T.M. Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek. De bestrijding van Jazz en moderne amusementsmuziek in Duitsland en Nederland 1920-1945'*, in: *Historisch Nieuwsblad* (March 2000) 55.

<sup>28</sup> Kleinhout, *Jazz als probleem*.

<sup>29</sup> Kleinhout, 'Summary', in: *Jazz als probleem* [no page numbers].

<sup>30</sup> Eddy Determeyer, *Ruige dagen: 70 jaar Jazz in Groningen* (Groningen 1988).

<sup>31</sup> Arie van Breda and L. Dalen Gilhuys, *100 jaar Jazz in Den Haag* (Den Haag 2000).

Leiden<sup>32</sup> and music journalist Rinus van der Heijden wrote about the jazz scene in Tilburg (2010),<sup>33</sup> while Hans Zirkzee published a book about Jazz in Rotterdam (2015),<sup>34</sup> in which he stated that although the Nazi's tried to eliminate the critics of their regime, and most deviating opinions, ideas, races, and sexuality were oppressed, "met jazzmuziek lukte dat niet."<sup>35</sup> Many of these local studies were not written by academics and are not meant for an academic audience. As such, popular jazz histories prevail in the Dutch historiography.

This thesis adds something to the current debate on jazz and Americanization in the Netherlands and approaches the concept from a new direction. It argues that the first signs that led to the process of Americanization in the Netherlands can be found in the discussions surrounding jazz during the Second World War. Moreover, this research will show that jazz did not only play an important role for America during the Cold War, but also during the Second World War, as it kept the positive thoughts about America among the Dutch youth alive and helped to counter the anti-America propaganda that the Germans spread. In the end, this anti-propaganda might even have contributed to the usefulness of jazz music for the Americanization process. In this way, jazz music between 1940 and 1945 not only caused friction between generations, but also constituted an ideological struggle between American and Nazi-politics.

## 1.2 Thesis Question

Jazz music had already emerged in the Netherlands in the 1920s and 1930s, and was often criticized by musicians, music connoisseurs, and pedagogues. This criticism on jazz also prevailed during the Second World War, which raises some interesting questions. What did the German occupation mean to the Dutch perceptions on jazz music? Did it change them in a negative way? Did it alter Dutch perceptions of American culture as a whole? After all, during the war, jazz was seen as the bearer of American culture, which met great resistance among the German occupier and older Dutch generations. What did America's involvement in the war do to these perceptions? This thesis tries to answer these questions by examining how jazz, despite the National Socialist constraints, thrived among the Dutch youth and could not be stopped as a cultural force by Nazi-Germany and its followers during the war.

Therefore, the main question that will be answered in this thesis is: *How did National Socialist perceptions of jazz music shape Dutch perceptions of American culture during the Second World War (1940-1945)?* It will be argued that these perceptions formed the stepping stones for the Americanization-process that emerged after the war. The concept of 'Americanization' will be

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<sup>32</sup> Cees Mentink, *De Leidse jazzgeschiedenis, 1899-2009* (Leiden 2008).

<sup>33</sup> Rinus van der Heijden, *Jazz in Tilburg: Honderd jaar avontuurlijke muziek* (Tilburg 2010).

<sup>34</sup> Hans Zirkzee, *Jazz in Rotterdam: de geschiedenis van een grote stadscultuur* (Rotterdam 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Zirkzee, *Jazz in Rotterdam*, 167.

dealt with as neutral as possible, not connecting negative or positive connotations to it, something which the cultural imperialists did do. This neutral point of view is chosen to be distracted as little as possible from the main question. The question whether Americanization is something positive or negative is not important for the conclusion of this thesis. The process of Americanization will be understood as the transfer of American cultural standards to European soil through cultural outlets such as jazz music. This transatlantic cultural transfer already took place before and during the Second World War, because jazz, regarded as 'low' or 'popular' culture, became more popular among the younger generations than the European 'high' musical culture, which constituted mostly classical music.

By answering this question, this thesis aims to fill the void in previous Dutch jazz studies. It deals with the period between 1940 and 1945, years in which jazz obtained a different meaning, as it was affiliated with resistance against the German occupier, and acquired a stronger foothold in Dutch musical culture. The thesis connects the music with what can be considered as the 'pre-history' of or the first steps towards the Americanization-process as it emerged in the Netherlands after the war. The Second World War-period in the Netherlands is characterized by a strong dichotomy between pro- and anti-American feelings, divided over the older and younger generations. The 'rebellious' jazz-listening youth formed the fundament for later generations of jazz-lovers and helped to pave the way for a more receptive Dutch society in which American culture could thrive. In this way, this study will add to both Wouters and Kleinhout the discussion of Americanization and is therefore embedded in both the subjects of jazz history and Americanization. In this research, special attention is paid to the war years in the Netherlands, as for these years the pro- and anti-America feelings were widely felt and most visible.

In order to answer the main question, a number of sub questions need to be addressed. This thesis will start by examining how the jazz debate in the Netherlands took shape before 1940. The next chapter will deal with the period of the Second World War, which saw harsh restraints on jazz music and fierce resistance against these restraints. This chapter raises the question whether the National Socialists, with their post-1941 criticism on the music's American roots, contributed to the emergence of jazz as a vehicle for Americanization in the Netherlands?

In this introduction and throughout the chapters of this thesis, the United States is often referred to as 'America,' and its culture 'American.' Although the use of the term 'America' is difficult, as it can contain the whole of the continents of South- and North-America in some cases, in this thesis, when speaking of America it will mean the United States. 'America' and 'American' are used as conventional shorthand references to this singular country, although it is important to note that this thesis does not attribute characteristics to the U.S. that are universal for all of the Americas.

### 1.3 Methodology

The studies by Wouters and Kleinhout discuss the historical background of this thesis and will be placed within the wider framework of Americanization of the Netherlands. They provide important information for the main chapters and will be of high importance for the conclusion of this study. However, this thesis will not only rely on secondary literature, as primary sources constitute an important factor for this research as well. These primary sources were derived from the online newspaper archive Delpher and material available at the Dutch Jazz Archive (*Nederlands Jazz Archief*) situated in Amsterdam.

For the period before 1940, I examined all national and local Dutch newspapers available through Delpher, because there emerged only a small amount of critical articles about jazz music in these decades. However, during the Second World War the amount of publications about jazz in Dutch periodicals was much higher. Therefore, I had to choose which newspapers and magazines I wanted to examine. My main focus in this thesis is on newspapers and magazines that affiliated with National Socialism and the German occupier in the Netherlands, such as *De Gil*, *De Misthoorn*, *Storm*, *Het Nationale Dagblad*, *Nieuw Nederland*, *Volk en Vaderland*, *De Waag*, *De Schouw*, and *Hamer*. This gives a thorough insight in what the Dutch National Socialists thought about jazz, and at the same time shows how the interference of America in the Second World War changed the approach of National Socialism towards jazz. After the United States got involved in the war, these periodicals started to connect the music more directly with American culture in general. Most articles in these periodicals concerning jazz music did not only show a strong aversion to jazz music, but, moreover, a strong anti-feeling against everything that could be linked to American culture and politics.

Next to these National Socialist periodicals, I examined two popular Dutch newspapers that were controlled and therefore legalized by the German occupier: *Het Volk* and *Algemeen Handelsblad*. These two national papers were censored and controlled by the German occupier and had to adjust their articles to National Socialist ideas. In the first year of the war, the liberal newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* tried to resist this Nazi policy as much as possible. Nevertheless, on July 14, 1941, chief editor D.J. von Balluseck was fired and succeeded by NSB-member Sjoerd Hoogterp.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, the socialist newspaper *Het Volk* was less rebellious against the German occupier. On July 20, 1940, Dutch NSB-politician Rost van Tonningen named a NSB-member as chief editor of the paper.<sup>37</sup> However, the overall tone of these popular papers was not as fierce and not as excessively anti-American as their National Socialist counterparts.

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<sup>36</sup> Jan van de Plasse, *Kroniek van de Nederlandse dagblad- en opiniepers* (Amsterdam 2005) 65.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 66.

By examining *Het Volk* and *Algemeen Handelsblad*, this thesis only looks at a small part of the whole collection of Dutch legalized newspapers during the Second World War. However, both these papers were among the most popular and widely read newspapers in the Netherlands during the war. Moreover, examining all German controlled newspapers available would be a task better suited for the publication of a book, rather than a master thesis. In the publication of such a book, the periodicals affiliated with the resistance movement in the Netherlands should also be examined. However, such journals as *Het Parool*, *De Waarheid*, *Trouw*, and *Vrij Nederland* did not produce many (critical) articles about jazz music. Most critical articles about jazz can be found in NSB- and *Wehrmacht*-periodicals such as *Storm* and *Volk en Vaderland*.

## 2. Jazz music in the Netherlands from 1920 to 1940

To understand why and how American jazz and its popularity in Europe were shaped, a historical background is needed. Therefore, this chapter will first elaborate on how the American music took root in Europe and the Netherlands. It is important to note that jazz first emerged in France and Italy, and that it came to the Netherlands mostly via Great Britain. Furthermore, this part will also deal with the debate and criticism on jazz in the Netherlands before the Second World War. In this way, this chapter answers the question: How did the jazz debate in the Netherlands take shape in the years prior to the Second World War? Jazz was never clearly defined and intensive debates about the meaning of jazz, what it was, and if it were permissible took place in both newspapers and magazines. These debates must not only be traced to Dutch musical critics such as Constantine Poustochkine, but also appeared among jazz musicians themselves. Classical musicians also mostly opposed jazz in their own way, although cultural transfer between classical and jazz music did take place. By answering this question, this chapter shows how jazz music was connected to American culture prior to the Second World War.

### 2.1 How it all started: jazz music in Europe and the Netherlands

The origins of jazz music are mostly traced back to the city of New Orleans, where black musicians had already developed an up-tempo music style as early as 1906, although some scholars argue against this. The cultural *mélange*, apparent in this American city because of the relatively less strict segregation policy and its colonial historical background, gave this early jazz its distinctive characteristics. As American historian and journalist Marc Myers remarks, this music could best be described as an “instrumental offshoot of ragtime.” Both black and white ensembles from New Orleans started playing the music in the years hereafter. On February 26, 1917, the first commercial recording took place. The white musicians of the *Original Dixieland Jass Band* recorded two songs in a studio in New York – the “Dixieland Jass Band One-Step” and “Livery Stable Blues” – that immediately became a resounding success. “Backed by a firm one-two beat, the musicians played with wild abandon, their notes coming and going in organized chaos – much like the herds of automobiles swerving madly around one another on the city’s streets.” The New Orleans-style jazz was soon joined by other jazz-styles. Most of these found their way into Europe through radio, phonograph record, or live concerts.<sup>38</sup>

“Jazz hit Europe and other parts of the world like two tsunami-waves,” according to Austrian historian Reinhold Wagnleitner.<sup>39</sup> The first of these waves occurred in 1917, when the

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<sup>38</sup> Marc Myers, *Why Jazz Happened* (Berkeley 2013), 1-9.

<sup>39</sup> Reinhold Wagnleitner, ‘Jazz – The Classical Music of Globalization’, in: Wilfried Raussert and John Miller Jones (eds.), *Traveling Sounds: Music, Migration, and Identity in the U.S. and Beyond* (Berlin 2008) 33.



United States entered the First World War and brought with them military bands such as *Lt. Will Vodery's brass band* or *Lt. Tim Brymn's seventy Black Devils*. James Reese Europe, American ragtime and early jazz bandleader, arranger, and composer, became highly popular in France.<sup>40</sup> Both in France and Italy jazz found a more open reception than elsewhere in Europe, something which Wagnleitner ascribes to the Italian and French cultural flavor of New Orleans.<sup>41</sup> In the 1920s, European composers of classical music travelled through America and were intrigued by the 'primitive' music. They viewed it as an exotic cultural expression, not similar to any music they knew so far. European classical music sometimes intermingled with jazz-like musical forms. "The metaphor of jazz as freedom and the conquest of new music over old became a major trope in European art," cultural anthropologist Frank A. Salamone writes. In what he describes as a "cult of the primitive" in Europe, the exotic American jazz was reinterpreted in a European manner. However, at the same time 'authentic' jazz musicians, usually black, began to travel to Europe, introducing its citizens with the 'original jazz.' These musicians were often more highly regarded in Europe than in their own country, as jazz was taken more seriously than in America, and its musicians were more and more appreciated as artists.<sup>42</sup> As this thesis will show in the forthcoming chapters, this contradiction between 'real jazz' and 'European jazz' caused friction between different groups of interest in multiple European countries, among them the Netherlands.

"The marriage between jazz and the avant-garde in Paris remained unparalleled anywhere else," Wagnleitner states. "However, for many Europeans it was Britain, and especially London, which bridged the transatlantic gap."<sup>43</sup> This is also true for the Netherlands. Although dance schools already introduced the new American dance "Jes," "Jas," or "Yasz" in 1919 in the Netherlands,<sup>44</sup> the 'real' starting point for jazz music in the country is often attributed to James Meyer, who was enthused for jazz by what he had seen in London, Great Britain. In 1921 he founded the *James Meyer Jazzband*, the first syncopated dance orchestra of the Netherlands, led by pianist Leo de la Fuente. "Daarmee was de jazz voorgoed in Nederland geland," according to Dutch Professor of Jazz and Improvised Music Walter van de Leur.<sup>45</sup> Soon, jazz gained popularity. New bands emerged and grew in numbers and instruments. There were plenty of opportunities to work in the jazz scene, such as playing in bars or working for a radio station. In 1926 the infamous

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<sup>40</sup> Kees Wouters, 'The Introduction of Jazz in the Netherlands', in: Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, Giles Scot-Smith (eds.), *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations: 1609-2009* (Albany 2009) 497.

<sup>41</sup> Wagnleitner, 'Jazz – The Classical Music of Globalization', 36.

<sup>42</sup> Frank A. Salamone, 'Jazz and Its Impact on European Classical Music', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (2005) 735-742.

<sup>43</sup> Wagnleitner, 'Jazz – The Classical Music of Globalization', 37-38.

<sup>44</sup> Wouters, 'The Introduction of Jazz in the Netherlands', 497.

<sup>45</sup> Van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes*, 6.

Dutch jazz band *The Original Ramblers*, with Jack and Louis de Vries, Theo Uden Masman, and Kees Kranenburg, first appeared on stage in Amsterdam.<sup>46</sup> English and American visitors of the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam praised their performance, and in the next year they made the first Dutch jazz recordings. *The Ramblers* not only played in the Netherlands, but also performed in Germany and Denmark, sometimes accompanied by famous American jazz musicians such as saxophonist Adrian Rollini.<sup>47</sup>

Especially in the more wealthy circles of Dutch liberals, Van de Leur examines, “leefde een hang naar de vrijheid die de Anglo-Amerikaanse cultuur bood.”<sup>48</sup> This was partly caused by the fact that these liberals had the money to buy expensive vinyl records, which had to be imported all the way from the United States. Most jazz fans could be described as intellectuals and avant-gardes, primarily comprising male students of middle-class origin. However, not everyone could appreciate the new music style. The jazz music was hotly debated between musicians, journalists, and music connoisseurs. Moreover, the official authorities also pointed towards the troubling nature of the American cultural phenomenon. Representatives of all kinds of groups, such as churches, local and national government, labor movements, and youth groups, were worried about the influx of American culture. They saw the American amusement culture as breeding place for “geestelijk verval en zedenverwildering, oproepend tot primitieve oerinstincten en dierlijke erotiek.”<sup>49</sup> Jazz musicians and fans were forced to defend themselves and define what jazz was and meant.

## 2.2 What is jazz? Debate and criticism in the Netherlands before 1940

During the first years of jazz music in the Netherlands, ignorance and sensationalism precluded most explicit negative judgments.<sup>50</sup> According to Salamone, even European composers of classical music were attracted to jazz, because of its ‘primitivism,’ with which they meant “its rhythmic vitality, its promise of sexual and other freedoms, its subversive nature.”<sup>51</sup> Jazz was seen as an exotic music, different from the accepted European musical standards of that time. “Whether [this primitive] Other was demonized or romanticized as a noble savage, the major point is that the Other was different from the normal in some significant way.”<sup>52</sup> This enthusiasm for primitivism was also visible in one of the first articles about jazz music in a Dutch periodical that occurred in 1919, the year dance schools introduced jazz-dancing in the country. The *Delftsche*

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<sup>46</sup> Wouters, ‘The Introduction of Jazz in the Netherlands’, 498.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Biografie The Ramblers’, *Muziek Encyclopedie: Beeld en Geluid*, <http://www.muziekencyclopedie.nl/action/entry/The+Ramblers> [consulted on April 29, 2016].

<sup>48</sup> Van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

<sup>50</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 13.

<sup>51</sup> Salamone, ‘Jazz and Its Impact on European Classical Music’, 735.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, 739.

*Courant* and *Haagsche Courant* published an article written by a correspondent in England. He energetically wrote about a jazz-concert he visited:

De dirigent staat met gebalde vuisten de maat te slaan als er nog van maat gesproken kan worden. U begint 't ook aan te grijpen. Gij gaat u op uw stoel bewegen, hebt moeite om stil te blijven, om het niet ook uit te schreeuwen van de pret. En dan komt het groote nummer, wat het program noemt; 'de quintessentie van den jazz'. [Alle] instrumenten worden vooraan op 't tooneel geplaatst, de elektrische lichtbundel valt op [de zanger], en dan begint een allerdolste vertooning, waarbij [het orkest] al zijn kunsten herhaalt, nog verder gaat, terwijl [de zanger] eindelijk opstaat en naar den kalen celloïst stapt, wiens afwezig haar hij zoogenaamd met twee trommelstokken, die een schaar moeten verbeelden, begint af te knippen. En de trommelstokken knippen en tikken als castagnetten, begeleid door de zingende en spelende zwarten. En wanneer men zoo voor 'n uur of wat deze voorstelling heeft zitten gadeslaan, begrijpt men hoe uit de jazz-muziek als vanzelf de jazzdans is ontstaan, hoe de menschen, die dit hoorden wel opstaan moesten, en dansen gaan. Maar dan krijgt men tevens zoo'n heerlijken kijk op het gemoed van die negers, groote kinderen, met uitbundige, van gezondheid opbruisende naturen, die beweging en lawaai een genot vinden, en die vroeger als zij slaaf waren, zichzelf in hun vrijen tijd troostten met hun rumoerige vermaken.<sup>53</sup>

However, jazz criticism also emerged in these early years. Some studies, such as German jazz-scholar Joachim-Ernst Berendt's *Das Jazzbuch* (1989), even argue that this criticism first emerged in Europe, as European intellectuals tended to see jazz music not merely as amusement, as did American intellectuals, but as an art form.<sup>54</sup> Whether jazz criticism first emerged in Europe or America, in the Netherlands it was already occasionally visible in newspaper articles in 1919. Paradoxically, what attracted most listeners to jazz was also its biggest downside, as almost all of these early concerns over jazz were linked to the 'primitive' appearance of the music. The already mentioned Dutch correspondent, for example, wrote that "ik behoef u niet te zeggen, dat jazz nauwelijks muziek genoemd kan worden,"<sup>55</sup> and an article in the *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad* saw jazz as successor of the so-called French 'miauw-concert,' that used cat-noises to make 'music.'<sup>56</sup> Moreover, in an article in *De Telegraaf*, jazz music was specified as "kannibalenmuziek. Een symphonie op dijbeenderen en halswervels van afgekloven Duitsche zendelingen."<sup>57</sup>

In the 1920s, this criticism on the primitive characteristics of the music was joined by more serious concerns, as well as jokes about jazz. Classical musicians saw jazz as a 'barbaric invasion' and a threat for the true arts. Dutch composer Matthijs Vermeulen described jazz in the

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<sup>53</sup> 'Engelsche Brieven', *Delftsche Courant*, 24 December 1919.

<sup>54</sup> Kleinhout, 'Receptie van de jazz: VS versus Europa', in: *Jazz als probleem* [no page numbers].

<sup>55</sup> 'Engelsche Brieven', *Delftsche Courant*, 24 December 1919.

<sup>56</sup> 'De Jazz Band', *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, 14 July 1919.

<sup>57</sup> 'Dagboek van een Amsterdammer', *De Telegraaf*, 3 September 1919.

magazine *De Muziek* as “de universeele ontredde der stijlen.[...] Jazz is afval en caricatuur van het modern orkest, afval gearrangeerd door halfwassen muzikanten ten behoeve, en ten gerieve der algemeene jool.”<sup>58</sup> Italian composer Pietro Mascagni called European jazz the cocaine of music; addicting but deadly.<sup>59</sup> “Achter dergelijke kritieken op de jazz schuilde vaak onzekerheid en pessimisme over de naoorlogse maatschappelijke veranderingen,” as Wouters argues in his *Ongewenschte muziek*.<sup>60</sup> This western cultural pessimism was triggered by new cultural phenomena that occurred at a time when the supremacy of western, especially European civilizations was up for debate. European classical musicians felt threatened by the growing popularity of jazz.<sup>61</sup> Paradoxically, or perhaps precisely because of this anxiety, classical composers incorporated elements of jazz into their music.<sup>62</sup>

Classical composers were joined in their concerns over jazz by pedagogues, clerics, and youth leaders. They feared the moral decay the music would cause, because they believed that immorality would thrive in ballrooms where jazz music was played. Many Dutch Christian movements despised the jazz dance, and worried parents and youth leaders spoke about the ruination of their children. A correspondent working in Paris for the newspaper *Het Vaderland*, for example, talks with disapproval about a children’s orchestra:

De tegenwoordige jeugd blaast in den saxo, krast op de banjo, beklopt de zaag, kietelt de ‘ukelele’ en wat het ergste is: bedient den veelkoppigen jazz. [...] Ik begrijp, dat men tegen allerlei moorddadige schietwerktuigen als speelgoed is te velde getrokken, maar wil men nu perse onze gehoorzenuwen vermoorden?<sup>63</sup>

These serious concerns, expressed in newspaper articles, were alternated with images and jokes that made fun of jazz. According to these jokes, jazz musicians did not tune their instruments<sup>64</sup> and played out of tune all the time.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the music was often compared to shattering tableware.<sup>66</sup> Besides, cautiously newspapers began to publish pictures and short articles about the African origins of the music. A picture of an African tribe with drums, for example, was accompanied by a caption that stated that this was the origin of the modern jazz-

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<sup>58</sup> Matthijs Vermeulen, no title, *De Muziek* (October 1926), in: Knipselmap Herman Openneer, *Jazz Muziek Niet Gewenscht, 1926-1940* (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>59</sup> ‘Baby-Jazz’, *Het Vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad*, 12 December 1928.

<sup>60</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 14.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>62</sup> Salamone, ‘Jazz and Its Impact on European Classical Music’, 742.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Baby-Jazz’, *Het Vaderland: staat- en letterkundig nieuwsblad*, 12 December 1928.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Jazz’, *De Telegraaf*, 6 March 1927.

<sup>65</sup> Wahre Jakob, ‘Dorpsmuziek’, *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 28 August 1929.

<sup>66</sup> *Tilburgsche Courant*, July 28, 1925.; Wahre Jacob, ‘Onprettige muziek’, *Haagsche Courant*, 15 June 1929.

band,<sup>67</sup> and a short article in the *Haagsche Courant* traced the origins of jazz to the music black slaves made.<sup>68</sup> Continual, jazz music and the modern dance were associated with primitivism.

In 1930 the Dutch government felt it had to do something about the moral risks that jazz music brought to their younger generations. The 'regeerings-commissie inzake het dansvraagstuk' was founded and published a report that stated that "het zedenbederf is op allerlei wijze uit de in de oorlog betrokken landen bij ons binnengedrongen. In zijn uitingsvorm is het echter in hoofdzaak Amerikaansch."<sup>69</sup> They warned for the superficiality of the American culture, in which family, education, and the church had lost their influence. In the same year, the government established the 'Radio-omroep Controlecommissie' (ROCC), which tried to control the Dutch radio stations. However, apart from these commissions, Dutch politicians scarcely intervened.

Meanwhile, jazz music was gaining more and more popularity in the Netherlands, as the radio became a much used medium in the 1920s and 1930s and the gramophone records dropped in prices.<sup>70</sup> According to Van de Leur, a new social group called 'the teenagers' helped to develop the syncopated music both in America and Europe during these decades. They had enough leisure time and relatively few obligations.<sup>71</sup> The first Dutch jazz fan clubs were founded, such as the 'Nederlandsche Hotclub' (NHC) in Overveen, which soon spread to other cities in the Netherlands. Dutch liberal middle class teenagers developed an alternative youth culture, based on jazz music. However, despite the growing popularity of the music, the avant-gardist NHC – that changed its name to 'Nederlandsche Jazz Liga (NJL) in June 1935 – still had to cope with criticism on the primitive nature of jazz. They did everything in their power to prove that jazz was respectable music.<sup>72</sup>

Therefore, a distinction had to be made between what the NHC considered as 'true' jazz, played by musicians such as Duke Ellington, and pale imitations of jazz. The jazz clubs argued that only black American bands were capable of playing the preferred hot-jazz, and that other genres,



Jazz compared to shattering tableware.  
Source: *Tilburgsche Courant*, 28 July 1925.

<sup>67</sup> 'De oorsprong van de moderne jazz-band', *Nieuwsblad van Friesland: Hepkema's Courant*, 16 April 1926.

<sup>68</sup> 'De oorsprong van de jazz', *Haagsche Courant*, 27 April 1929.

<sup>69</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 19.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

<sup>71</sup> Van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes*, 5.

<sup>72</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 28-30.

such as the popular swing, were merely commercial varieties that had no right to be called jazz.<sup>73</sup> Swing, mostly played by white big bands, had drifted to far away from the New Orleans-jazz of the early years, so these avant-gardists believed.<sup>74</sup> Academic publications added to this discussion. In his *Le Jazz Hot* (1934), French music critic Hugues Panassié, for example, distinguished between different kinds of jazz and tried to separate the 'authentic' from the false,' while American music critic Winthrop Sargeant's *Jazz: Hot and Hybrid* (1938) defined swing as jazz, but disapproved the commercialization of jazz by the gramophone record and radio, and argues that technical evolution is not possible in jazz music.<sup>75</sup> The first Dutch jazz publication was written by Dutch jazz specialists Constantin Poustochkine and Will G. Gilbert (a pseudonym for W.H.A. van Steensel van der Aa): *Jazzmuziek* (1939). They tried to cope with the many misunderstandings surrounding jazz in the Netherlands, and condemned white musicians.<sup>76</sup>

This discussion about black and white musicians and 'real' and 'imitation' jazz also occurred in newspapers in the 1930s. The *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, for example, published a report of the jazz-evening organized by the NJL, where Poustochkine talked about the authentic jazz music "(niet te verwarren met het vele, dat geheel ten onrechte onder de naam 'Jazz' pleegt te worden opgediend)." Furthermore, vitality and improvisation were derived as two main characteristics of the music.<sup>77</sup> This newspaper also wrote in their report of the performance by pianist Freddy Johnson in 1935 that "de 'zwarte' trombonist vooral getuigde van bijzondere 'hot-feelings' zoals men die slechts bij negers vinden kan."<sup>78</sup> Two years earlier *Het Volk* had already published an article about the imitation-jazz that white musicians made:

[Mexicaanse Indianen] spelen jazz en u kunt het hen al of niet vergeven, maar zij kunnen niet anders. Al het andere is namaak! Dat van Jack Payne en Bird Ambrose, van Jack Hylton en Paul Whiteman, het is allemaal imitatie! En al is die namaak duizend malen volmakter en – voor de bewonderaars – schooner dan het origineel (wat zeer vaak absoluut onwaar is!) dan nòg is het alleen maar afgekeken. Gestolen en geëxploiteerd, aangepast aan de eischen en verlangens van die menschen, waarvoor het bestemd was, netjes gezegd: gejat en nog wel zonder ook maar een schijn van dankbaarheid jegens hen die het luidruchtige kind door de eerste eeuwen van zijn schreeuwerig bestaan hebben heengeholpen.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 31-32.

<sup>74</sup> Kleinhout, 'Oorsprong en ontwikkeling van jazz', in: *Jazz als probleem* [no page numbers].

<sup>75</sup> Scott DeVaux, 'Constructing the Jazz Tradition: Jazz Historiography', *Black American Literature Forum*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (1991) 532-534.

<sup>76</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 57.

<sup>77</sup> 'Het karakter der jazz muziek. Propaganda-avond Ned. Jazz-Liga. Afd. Tilburg', *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 February 1937.

<sup>78</sup> Haveha, 'Freddy Johnson', *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 11 February 1935.

<sup>79</sup> D. V. Jr., 'Eeuwen voor de jazz in de mode kwam. De echte marimba in het land van de tam-tam', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 3 December 1932.

Although this article pleads for more recognition of the founders of jazz, it is supported by racist views on the 'primitive' Other. Mexican Indians and blacks played rhythm because that's the only thing they could play, according to this article. "Bij onze bands daarentegen kan het...altijd anders."<sup>80</sup> This remark shows that even defenders of the colored history of jazz music had a feeling of white supremacy.

The primitivism of jazz music was often contrasted with the European classical music. The film 'Champagnewals,' for example, depicted the struggle between classical and jazz music (see figure 3),<sup>81</sup> while the catholic journal *De Maasbode* published pictures of monkeys listening to jazz music or even 'playing' it (see figures 1 and 2). Sometimes, pictures of black African tribes were published with captions such as "merkwaardige neger-jazz-band" (see figure 4).<sup>82</sup> Moreover, the author D.A. Linnebank cites in his *Moderne Amusementsproblemen* (1934) an article that defined jazz as

barbaarsche, zenuwachtige rhythmische muziek, met snerpende gillen als van hysterische vrouwen, die geknepen worden. Er tusschen schorre dierengeluiden, gemiauw van katten en gehoest van zeehonden. Wèg is opeens de beschaving, wèg de wellevendheid, het fatsoen en de goede manieren.<sup>83</sup>

All the while, jazz was still mocked with jokes, comparing the music once again to shattering tableware or caterwauling.<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, the NJL propagated that classical music did not exclude jazz music or vice versa, as jazz was a 'new musical language,' that in no way goes at the expense of the "zooveel oudere en rijkere klassieke muziek."<sup>85</sup>

The NJL tried to disseminate knowledge of jazz music through conferences and gigs in order to acquire a broader recognition and understanding of the American music. In this way, NJL-activities, together with the popular magazine *De Jazzwereld*, contributed to the growing popularity of jazz music in the Netherlands in the second half of the 1930s. The dozens of new jazz clubs that arose constituted a visible example of this trend. The NJL and *De Jazzwereld* also

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<sup>80</sup> D. V. Jr., 'Eeuwen voor de jazz in de mode kwam. De echte marimba in het land van de tam-tam', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 3 December 1932..

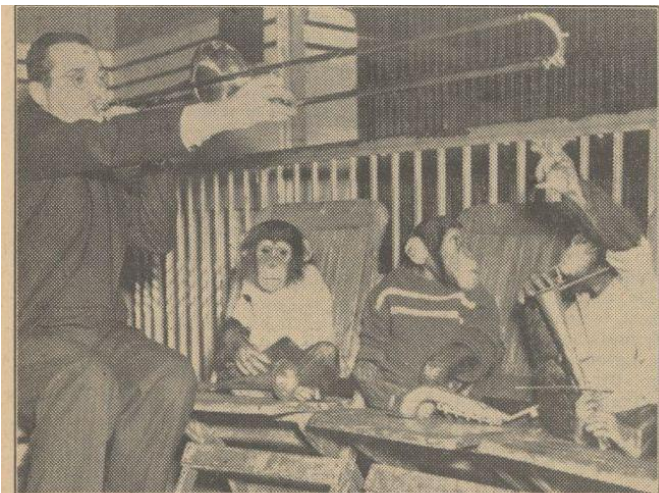
<sup>81</sup> *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 16 February 1937.

<sup>82</sup> *Het Volk: Dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 29 October 1931.

<sup>83</sup> D.A. Linnebank O.P., *Moderne Amusementsproblemen* (1934), in: Knipselmap Herman Openneer, *Jazz Muziek Niet Gewenscht, 1926-1940* (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>84</sup> *De Maasbode*, July 23, 1937.; *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, 7 August 1936.

<sup>85</sup> 'Het karakter der jazz muziek. Propaganda-avond Ned. Jazz-Liga. Afd. Tilburg', *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 25 February 1937.



**APEN HOUDEN NIET VAN JAZZ-MUZIEK.** — In den dierentuin van Philadelphia werd onlangs onderzocht hoe apen op muziek reageeren. Hierbij bleek, dat jazz-muziek de dieren onrustig maakte, terwijl ze bij walsen zeer goed gemutst bleken.

Figure 1, top left: Monkeys 'listen' to jazz music.  
Source: 'Apen houden niet van jazz-muziek,' *De Maasbode*, 16 February 1939.



**DAT KUNNEN WIJ OOK „dachten”** Peter en Jackie, een tweetal populaire apen uit het kinderspeelhoekje in den Londenschen dierentuin en gewapend met de daartoe noodige muziekinstrumenten geven zij eenige jazz-nummers ten beste.

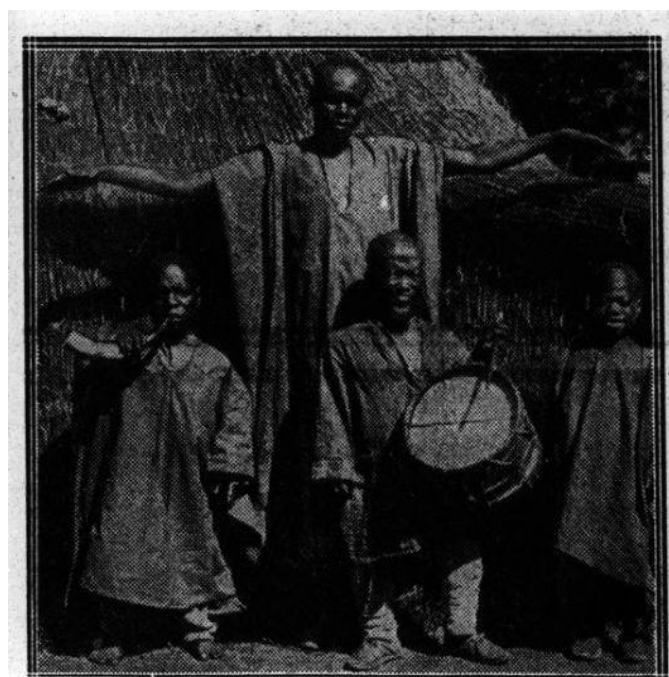
Figure 2, top right: Monkeys 'playing' jazz music.  
Source: *De Maasbode*, 25 July 1937.

Figure 3, bottom left: Film 'Champagnewals'  
Source: *Nieuwe Tilburgsche Courant*, 16 February 1937.

Figure 4, bottom right: African 'jazz band'  
Source: *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 29 October 1931.



Fred MacMurray en Gladys Swarthout vervullen de hoofdrollen in Paramount's jubileumfilm „Champagnewals”, een musicaal amusement over den strijd tusschen de Wiener walsen en de Amerikaansche jazz.



**MERKWAARDIGE NEGER-JAZZ-BAND** in de binnenlanden van Afrika.



pleaded for more airtime for 'real' jazz on the radio.<sup>86</sup> Radio stations were very restrained about programming jazz and especially hot-jazz was avoided by pillarized (religious) stations such as the AVRO, VARA, and VPRO. However, the more jazz grew in popularity, the harder it got for radio stations to ignore the music. In March 1935, the VARA organized a jazz week because they ascertained that "jazz in het centrum van het volksmuziekleven staat." The infamous Dutch jazz band *The Ramblers* started working for the VARA, playing a lot of American jazz songs.<sup>87</sup>

Meanwhile, many American jazz musicians found their way to Europe and the Netherlands. The growing foreign competition, together with the economic crisis, caused employment-problems for Dutch jazz musicians. Wages for live performances dropped and many Dutch musicians had to stop their musical activities. However, this problem was automatically solved. In 1937 employment-rates in the German amusement industry grew and many German artists in the Netherlands returned home. In their search for employment, many Dutch musicians also went to Germany. Moreover, in October 1939 all English and France musicians staying in the Netherlands were called back home for military service, as the Second World War was about to begin.<sup>88</sup>

### **2.3 Conclusion and a definition of jazz**

In the years prior to the Second World War, the discussions surrounding jazz music in the Netherlands were mainly dominated by concerns over the 'primitive character' of the music. It was often opposed to European classical music and not seen as a serious art form, which is shown by the many jokes about jazz in newspapers. On the contrary, Dutch teenagers enjoyed jazz in all its forms all the more. Especially liberal middle class boys approached the music very seriously, propagating the 'real' jazz, with which they meant hot-jazz, over 'imitation' jazz, such as swing. These boys, the founders of the NJL, were very much aware of the American roots of the music and noticed the differences between American and European jazz. However, as Wouters points out, the vast majority of the Dutch youth was not interested in the NJL-led discussion.<sup>89</sup>

Most of the time, interpretations of jazz in the newspapers did not emphasize the American character of the music. These articles reacted mostly on the primitive nature and immorality of the music, rather than the American culture behind it. Of course, some exceptions occurred. The 'regeerings-commissie inzake het dansvraagstuk,' for example, stated that the immorality was a manifestation that was mainly American. However, it was jazz that constituted the main problem, not American culture as a whole. Moreover, within the Dutch jazz fan base

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<sup>86</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 31-36.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 41-57.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, 57.

itself, there was also a divide between those who propagated the hot-jazz as the only 'real' jazz, and the rest, who ranked swing and other dance-music under the common denominator 'jazz.' A clear general definition of what 'jazz' exactly was, remained absent.<sup>90</sup>

Therefore, it is important to define what is meant by jazz. In this thesis, jazz music is that what people at the time thought it was. From the 1920s till 1945, jazz was more an idea than a clearly delimited concept. In this way, 'jazz' overarched all different forms from hot-jazz to swing that existed between 1900 and 1946. To quote scholar Peter Townsend, "that what is called jazz is in any case a certain segment or area selected out of a continuous terrain of American musical styles. It has no precise boundaries, and at its fringes it shades off into a range of other musics."<sup>91</sup>

This general notion of jazz is justifiable, because during the Second World War, the period that constitutes the primary interest in this thesis, jazz was also often referred to in the most general sense of the word. The German occupants in the Netherlands strived to abolish all varieties of jazz, and therefore mostly spoke about jazz in general terms. Furthermore, the majority of the Dutch youth was not concerned with the differences between swing and hot-jazz. As Wagnleitner argues, "the majority of the audiences never interpreted the music as a new form of art but as dance music which provided a welcome (or unwelcome) antidote and perfectly fitting (or unfitting) rebellion against the moral double standards of genteel and militarist traditions." Moreover, jazz also thrived as a "symbol of political freedom and a form of cultural rebellion,"<sup>92</sup> something which the National Socialists wanted to prevent.

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<sup>90</sup> Van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes*, 9.

<sup>91</sup> Peter Townsend, *Jazz in American Culture* (Edinburgh 2000) viii.

<sup>92</sup> Wagnleitner, 'Jazz – The Classical Music of Globalization', 33.

### **3. Jazz during German occupation: National Socialism versus American culture**

This chapter revolves around the question how jazz music was perceived in the Netherlands during the Second World War, and how this helped to pave the way for Americanization after the war. The war period can best be described as a power struggle between American culture and National Socialism. Whereas National Socialist powers did everything to prevent jazz from spreading and popularizing, the Dutch youth rebelled against this and made it impossible for Nazi-Germany to control the American influence in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, this chapter also raises another interesting question: Did the National Socialists, with their post-1941 criticism on the music's American roots, contribute to the emergence of jazz as a vehicle for Americanization in the Netherlands? As will be shown, the Dutch National Socialist periodicals started to connect jazz music more directly with American culture after the entry of America into the war. Ironically, with this they might have sparked even more enthusiasm for this overseas culture, and unintentionally contributed to the first inclinations of Americanization in the Netherlands.

Therefore, this chapter is divided into three separate sections. The first section (3.2) deals with the pre-Pearl Harbor period 1939-1941. The shift that occurred in National Socialist periodicals after the interference of America in the Second World War is discussed in the second section (3.3), while the last section (3.4) shows that the whole discussion about jazz music mostly revolves around a generational struggle and fear for the waning of old Dutch norms and values. But first, a short historical background of the German invasion in the Netherlands will give the reader useful background information.

#### **3.1 German invasion**

On May 10, 1940, the first German parachutes dangled in the air above the Netherlands. Despite all warnings, the invasion was a shock for most Dutch citizens. The paratroopers landed on strategic places near Den Haag and Rotterdam and bombed the city center of the latter on May 14, 1940. The municipalities and provinces were not prepared for such a hostile invasion. Within days the Nazi's had overthrown the fled Dutch government and took control of most public authorities. The majority of directors and officials conformed to the occupier and there was barely any public resistance. This can, among others, be explained by the cautious approach the German *Wehrmacht* adopted in the first weeks after the invasion. This prudence disappeared with the founding of a German *Zivilverwaltung* in the Netherlands and the appointment of Austrian

attorney Arthur Seyss-Inquart as *Reichskommissar* in May 1940. National Socialists were installed on key positions in government agencies, including the police forces.<sup>93</sup>

At first, Germany tried to collaborate with the Netherlands and effectuate gradual 'Nazification.' As it became clear that this did not work, the occupier further intensified its control. Pillarized Dutch organizations and political parties were abolished or modified to the National Socialist ideas, newspapers and radio had to deal with German censorship and control, and from August 12, 1941 onwards, the national government was reformed according to the so-called *Führerprinzip* (leader principle), that abolished local and provincial councils. Especially the Dutch Jewish population had to endure tough German measures, which were aimed at racial cleansing of the Dutch society by expelling all Jewish citizens. After July 1942, they were deported to concentration camps in the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, and other middle-European countries.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, Nazi-Germany and its followers did everything in their power to protect the 'Germanic high culture' and prevent British and American culture from taking root in the Netherlands. As this chapter will demonstrate, this is also visible in how Nazi Germany dealt with jazz music during the Second World War.

### **3.2 Jazz criticism before Pearl Harbor**

After Adolf Hitler seized power in 1933, jazz was subjected to criticism in Germany. "The racial or religious characteristics of many practitioners coupled with its distance from classical music made it vulnerable to denunciation by the Nazis," according to popular culture expert Ralph Willett.<sup>95</sup> Although jazz appealed to officials of the Third Reich, "racial remarks and insults emanated freely from the Nazi press."<sup>96</sup> German Nazi-propaganda depicted the music as a vulgar threat to the 'pure German soul' and as a danger for German culture in general. They despised the black culture, something which was shown in the exhibition *Entartete Musik* in Düsseldorf (1938), which identified blues, boogie-woogie, and swing as a poison for the Aryan art.<sup>97</sup> However, the Nazis also recognized the popularity of the music and used it to make parody lyrics directed against the Allied forces. Moreover, to keep up the morale of German soldiers, German bands were allowed to play an adapted form of swing music that was stripped from its American characteristics.<sup>98</sup>

Stopping the growing popularity of jazz was near to impossible, even in Germany itself. The pro-Western orientated German *Swing Jugend* distanced itself from the Hitler Youth

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<sup>93</sup> Thimo de Nijs and Eelco Beukers (eds.), *Geschiedenis van Holland, deel IIIA: 1795 tot 2000* (Hilversum 2003) 58-61.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, 61-64.

<sup>95</sup> Ralph Willett, *The Americanization of Germany, 1945-1949* (London 1992) 86.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, 86.

<sup>97</sup> Frank Mehring, *Soundtrack van de bevrijding: swingen, zingen en dansen op weg naar vrijheid* (Nijmegen 2015) 76.

<sup>98</sup> Willett, *The Americanization of Germany*, 86-88.

movement and formed an urban subculture, which entailed listening to jazz music and participating in “spontaneous, rhythmic jitterbugging at private parties, in air raid shelters, and at city bars or cafés where swing bands were tolerated.”<sup>99</sup> Nazi authorities reacted very hostile to this youth movement, but because the *Swing Jugend* never openly or actively opposed Nazism or hindered its cause, they escaped persecution and managed to create “their own closed society, their oasis of peace in a war-ravaged environment.”<sup>100</sup> Despite these pro-Western feelings within Germany, National Socialist anti-jazz propaganda prevailed in German occupied countries such as the Netherlands.

### 3.2.1 Dutch National Socialism and jazz before the German invasion

Even before the Germans invaded the Netherlands, some Dutch periodicals affiliated with German National Socialism and echoed its ideology’s opinion on jazz. The Dutch magazine *De Waag*, for example, became increasingly pro-German from its founding in 1937 onwards. In February 1939, this magazine published a couple of critical articles about jazz that emphasized once again the primitivism of the ‘music,’ and called for a propagation of European ‘white’ music. However, author R.N. Degens was no proponent of prohibition of the music, something which the German occupier would increasingly become during the war:

Het stampend en hijgend geweld der Jazz roept alle primitieve instincten, die de mensch met de moderne beschaving zooveel mogelijk tracht te onderdrukken, weer op.[...] Directe bestrijding der jazz lijkt niet de aangewezen weg om haar invloed te breidelen. Met verbodsbepalingen bereikt men veelal het tegenovergestelde van wat oorspronkelijk bedoeld was (drankverbod!). Propaganda voor eigen muziek door goede en goedkoope concerten en beperking van de muziek-overdaad welke ons via de radio bereikt, zoodat men meer gedwongen wordt de muziek ‘in natura’ te gaan beluisteren, zal meer uitwerking hebben.<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, positive remarks about jazz also occurred in these periodicals. In a reaction on Degens’ article, an anonymous musician stated that black culture formed no threat to ‘our own’ culture, and that jazz was not barbaric or unmusical.<sup>102</sup> Another commentary pledged for the distinction between “jazz in den volksmond en de jazz die niet populair vermocht te worden.” The latter, with which the author meant jazz from the 1920s, he called a “goeden vorm van kunst.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Willett, *The Americanization of Germany*, 88.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 89.

<sup>101</sup> R. N. Degens, ‘Prélude’, *De Waag*, 23 February 1939.

<sup>102</sup> ‘Melodie en Rhythme’, *De Waag*, 2 March 1939.

<sup>103</sup> P.K., ‘Melodie en Rhythme’, *De Waag*, 2 March 1939.

Similar conflicting articles including negative and positive attitudes towards jazz were also visible in the popular Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad*, which opposed National Socialism in the first year of the war. In a comprehensive weekly rubric called ‘Uit de wereld van de jazz,’ always furnished with drawn pictures of jazz musicians, *Algemeen Handelsblad* spoke very positive about American jazz, regarded as hot-jazz, and contrasted it with the inferior European ‘white’ jazz.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, the rubric spoke with passion about the brilliance of hot-jazz musician Duke Ellington, who exceeded all other swing musicians.<sup>105</sup> This stood in stark contrast with articles in the newspaper that were negative about the music. One article described serious concerns about the morality, sexuality, and alcoholism that came with jazz and especially the ‘Jitterbug’ dance. The author did not consider jazz music and dancing as serious forms of art.<sup>106</sup> Another sarcastic article did not see jazz as music at all:

Toen de overige [jazz] muzikanten met veel kabaal een eind aan het gekreun en aan het geheele hotstuk hadden gemaakt, en mijn familielid zich weer verstaanbaar kon maken, vroeg deze: ‘gaan we nú ergens een biertje drinken, waar muziek is?’<sup>107</sup>

In 1939 and the first half of 1940, the National Socialist movement was growing. Germany had already started the war by invading Poland, and its ideology already found some common ground in the Netherlands, even though the Nazis had not yet occupied the country. These ‘in-between’ years thus show a bilateral attitude towards jazz. Both positive and negative articles were published, and the periodical *De Waag*, that was outspoken pro-German, printed correspondence letters with fairly nuanced pro- and contra-arguments. The jazz criticism was mainly focused on the primitive character of the music, an argument that was already much heard in the 1920s and early 1930s. Moreover, the anti-German newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* also published both positive and negative articles about jazz. This more or less nuanced discussion about jazz in the periodicals was replaced with a flagrant anti-jazz argumentation after the Nazis took over control of the Netherlands.

### 3.2.2 German cultural institutions in the Netherlands, 1940-1941

In the months after the German invasion of the Netherlands, the Nazis quickly installed official cultural institutions that had to control the cultural ‘excesses’ that opposed the ‘Aryan culture.’ On November 25, 1940, they founded the Department of Public Education and Arts (Departement

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<sup>104</sup> ‘Interessante opnamen, die ongetwijfeld ook wel haar weg zullen vinden!’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 17 February 1940.

<sup>105</sup> ‘Melodie en Rhythme’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 16 March 1940.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Mrs. Grundy en de ‘Jitterbug’’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 5 May 1940.

<sup>107</sup> Nono, ‘Van onzen redactienar’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21 March 1940.

voor Volksvoorlichting en Kunsten, DVK), that had to propagate pro-German cultural ideals among Dutch citizens. Art critic and philosopher Tobie Goedewaagen was appointed as head of the DVK, with music critic Jan Govert Goverts as one of its most important freelance contributors. The Department's goal was to reorganize Dutch cultural life, with the German model as leading example. Art, so Goedewaagen believed, had to serve the national community, and in order to ascertain this, all 'cultural workers' had to be organized in guilds.<sup>108</sup> Therefore, the Dutch *Kultuurkamer* (NKK) was founded, also supervised by Goedewaagen.<sup>109</sup>

The NKK became the most important instrument for the alignment of Dutch cultural life. However, in the first months it struggled to write a council regulation that defined the organizational structure and described the powers and duties of the NKK. The music guild also had to deal with a slow start, due to many changes in personnel. Only on January 22, 1942, the NKK officially started its activities. The cultural magazine *De Schouw* served as official body of the *Kultuurkamer*. One of the first official actions of the NKK was to decide that all citizens working in the art or dance branch had to register themselves at the NKK before February 19, 1942. Moreover, all musicians, artists, and music retailers had to sign an 'ariërverklaring' (Aryan declaration).<sup>110</sup>

While the music guild got off to a slow start, the guild for theatre and dance worked more expeditiously. In June 1941 it proclaimed a dance prohibition for the whole country, something the music guild had yet to achieve. It was, for example, still possible to buy swing gramophones in November 1941.<sup>111</sup> Administrative difficulties and the lack of effective control of illegal musicians were the main concerns for this music guild in the first years. In November 1942, approximately 14.000 musicians had registered at the NKK as 'provisional members,' half of the total number of members. However, due to incompetence, internal power struggles, and a bad relationship with the DVK, the music guild could not efficiently execute its plans. Moreover, the DVK, that had to supervise the NKK, had to deal with internal struggles as well. Because the 'Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging' (NSB) was not satisfied with DVK's propaganda-activities, Goedewaagen was fired and S.M.S de Ranitz, member of the NSB and *Schutzstaffel* (SS) was appointed as new chairman of DVK. With De Ranitz as president of the DVK and NKK, and Goverts as deputy chief of the music guild, the DVK and NKK could finally work on cultural regulations in the Netherlands.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> 'Verordening Nederlandsche Kultuurkamer' (1 januari 1942), in: Knipselmap Tweede Wereldoorlog (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>109</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 173-176.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 176-182.

<sup>111</sup> 'Hoe is het mogelijk! Decca brengt alweer een serie nieuwe platen', *De Telegraaf*, November 30, 1941, in: Knipselmap Tweede Wereldoorlog (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>112</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 183-195.

### 3.2.3 Dutch National Socialist periodicals about jazz, 1940-1941

While Dutch National Socialist cultural institutions struggled to proceed effectively in the first years of the war, Dutch National Socialist periodicals showed more unity in their coverage of anti-jazz propaganda. Criticism on the music mostly relied on racial pre-war arguments of primitivism, and jazz was often not seen as art or even music. These periodicals celebrated the 'European high culture,' which they felt was superior to any other culture. Jazz music and its popularity did not fit this picture of superiority. Therefore, it had to be curbed. Moreover, while the jazz music played by North-American black slaves was sometimes regarded as 'primitive but honest,' this original jazz music, according to the National Socialist periodicals, was spoiled by white Americans and Europeans, and, most of all, Jews. This trend fits with what Salamone argues. He states that "throughout jazz history, the concept of Africa has served as an index of authenticity."<sup>113</sup>

In general, most publications in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals emphasized the historical background of jazz music, which they traced back to black slaves in North-America, who were regarded as highly primitive. *Het Nationale Dagblad*, a Dutch periodical published by the NSB before and during World War II, for example, mentioned this in a comprehensive article about jazz music. According to Goverts, author of this article, the black African people were troubled by homesickness and nostalgia:

Jazz is muziek van Noord-Amerikaansche negers. Eens leefden zij verbonden met grond, welke hun sinds eeuwen behoorde: het zwarte werelddeel, waar de menschen oorspronkelijk zijn en de felheid der driften overgaat van geslacht op geslacht. Toen werden zij weggevoerd uit het land waarmee zij vergroeid waren. Maar in den vreemde aardden zij niet; zij hielden een donker heimwee naar hun geheimvol land. Dit verlangen en deze innerlijke gespletenheid zongen zij uit. En toen zij geleerd hadden hun stemmen met muziekinstrumenten na te bootsen, konden zij zich geheel overgeven aan den verdoovenden roes die uitging van de eindeloos herhaalde melodie. Maar na het zelfbeklag kwam de oer-aard weer boven: er ontstonden wilde invallen, waarin zij zich naar ziel en lijf geheel gaven, zooals zij waren en waaruit de stem van hun bloed klonk met een beangstigende duidelijkheid.<sup>114</sup>

An article published in the SS-magazine *Storm* also emphasized the African background of the music. Because jazz had its roots in black slavery, "zwartrassichen," the music was "den Noordrasmensch wezensvreemd." This led the author to conclude that although the music might

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<sup>113</sup> Salamone, 'Jazz and its Impact', 741.

<sup>114</sup> Jan Goverts Jr., 'Jazz, Volksche muziek of ontarding?', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 5 August 1940.



be good enough for 'the negro,' it is not for the "Noordrasmenschen."<sup>115</sup> Moreover, the sensuality that accompanied the music was also seen as a sign of primitivism:

"Wij mogen het den Afro-Amerikanen geenszins verwijten, dat zij dit oer-element in hun jazz-muziek opnamen, maar wij hebben te erkennen, dat de kultuur der blanken een ander stadium heeft bereikt."<sup>116</sup>

The 'primitive roots' of jazz was often a reason for Dutch National Socialists to qualify jazz as 'unmusical' or rumpus. It was called "bandelooze en grenzeloos brutale lawaai-kunstmakerij"<sup>117</sup> and jazz-composers were scolded as "klankverminkers"<sup>118</sup>

European and German 'high' culture, by contrast, were regarded as superior and had to be defended against the dangers of jazz, according to these periodicals. European classical music was vulnerable to the ever growing popularity of jazz music, something that was a major concern for National Socialism:

Op eenzame hoogte zal altijd blijven staan een der grootste genieën, welke de menschheid ooit kende: Johann Sebastian Bach. Wie de grootscheid van zijn scheppingen zóó heeft ondergaan dat hij alleen om deze muziek het leven al waard vindt, geleefd te worden, kan een gevoel van afgrijzen niet onderdrukken voor dat soort cultuurlooze knoeiers, dat zich aan zijn muziek heeft durven vergrijpen.[...] Natuurlijk staat Bach te hoog, dan dat hij door deze ploertige prutsers geschaad zou kunnen worden, maar zijnen behooren in de modder en ver van de parels.<sup>119</sup>

The "verjazzing, versincopeering, verblackbottoming en tot muzikaal gehakt verwerking" of classical music had to be stopped.<sup>120</sup> In addition to praising classical music over jazz music, *Het Nationale Dagblad* also depicted jazz as a threat to traditional Christian holidays such as Christmas, as can be read in an article titled "Ontwijding van het Kerstfeest."<sup>121</sup> An article in *Storm* therefore concluded that Hitler's seizure of power meant the salvation for art and music.<sup>122</sup>

These views on jazz as primitive rumpus that threatened the European 'high' culture were also visible in the popular Dutch newspapers *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *Het Volk*, which had to

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<sup>115</sup> 'Jazz', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 14 November 1941.

<sup>116</sup> 'Jazz', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 14 November 1941.

<sup>117</sup> 'Nog een kleine predicatie', *De Waag*, 11 July 1940.

<sup>118</sup> 'Ontaarde muziek', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 5 December 1941.

<sup>119</sup> Jan Goverts Jr., 'Jazz, Volksche muziek of ontaarding?', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 5 August 1940.

<sup>120</sup> 'Vastenavond en cultuurverwording. Het Amerikaansche neger-dansorkest van Willie Lewis', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 25 February 1941.

<sup>121</sup> 'Ontwijding van het Kerstfeest. Rauwe klanken in het concertgebouw', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 30 December 1940.

<sup>122</sup> 'Ontaarde muziek', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 5 December 1941.

deal with the ever-expanding censorship and control of the Nazi regime. For example, according to the 'Bond van Heemkunde' in Wageningen, jazz music had spoiled European music. This local history group saw it as its task to examine the original, real Germanic culture, and differentiate it from imported cultural outlets such as jazz,<sup>123</sup> that in another article was compared to the shrill sound of a car horn.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, *Het Volk* published parts of a column by jazz critic Will C. Gilbert (Steensel van der Aa) for the popular magazine *De Jazzwereld*, in which he stated that

jazzmuziek is geen kunst in dezelfde zin als de Europese schone kunsten. Zij eist geen scheppende activiteit van geestelijk grote gestalten, geen cultuurkennis en studie van het esthetische (schoonheids-) ideaal.<sup>125</sup>

Although jazz was qualified as primitive and sometimes even discarded as music altogether, some articles in Dutch National Socialist periodicals argued that the 'original jazz,' played by African American slaves, was at least honest. However, because the music was 'hijacked' by Jews, Communists, and white Americans and Europeans – that is, they played and modified this music – it became the objectionable music National Socialism believed it to be. Goverts, for example, differentiated three kinds of jazz:

1. De echte Negerjazz.
2. Nabootsings-jazz van hen, die van ander bloed en anderen bodem zijn.
3. Datgene, wat men jazz noemt, alleen omdat men een sterk rhythmische werveling hoort van bestormende klanken, waaruit gestopte trompetten en walgende saxen schichtig en bibberend omhoogschieten.<sup>126</sup>

Only the first form had some musical value, Goverts stated. Moreover, he argued that jazz was not meant for Europeans, and that 'imitation jazz' caused the music to slide towards the abyss. Music and art could only have value when they remained true to themselves and their origin, was the overarching message Goverts told his readers. Therefore, Goverts lamented about what the Jews did with the music.<sup>127</sup>

Other articles also despised the Jewish influence on jazz. Different Dutch National Socialist periodicals argued that Jews 'maimed' jazz, using it to earn money and to become famous.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, Jewish composers used the music as "een nieuw middel om door lawaai en

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<sup>123</sup> 'Over heemkunde. Onderhoud met prof. Dr. J. Jeswiet', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 4 May 1941.

<sup>124</sup> 'Oud en Nieuw', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 20 June 1940.

<sup>125</sup> "'Jazz-Wereld" houdt op te verschijnen', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 18 November 1940.

<sup>126</sup> Jan Goverts Jr., 'Jazz, Volksche muziek of ontarding?', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 5 August 1940.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> 'Jazz', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 14 November 1941.

onevenwichtige instrumentatie hun innerlijke voosheid te bedekken.”<sup>129</sup> Next to Jews, other enemies of Nazi-Germany were also depicted as the ‘hijackers’ of the original jazz. The music was often called “de Engelsche ziekte,”<sup>130</sup> probably referring to the spreading-process of jazz from Great Britain to the Netherlands.<sup>131</sup> Notably, *Algemeen Handelsblad* and *Het Volk* did not publish articles about the ‘hijacking’ of ‘original jazz’ by Jews and white Europeans. This difference could be explained by the fact that these newspapers wanted to attract an audience as broad as possible.

Remarkably, American culture became an increasingly contested phenomenon in Dutch National Socialist periodicals throughout 1941. This might be caused by the fact that U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt and U.S. Congress approved the nation’s first peacetime military draft in September 1940, which probably felt as a threat to Germany. Another explanation could be that the signing of the Lend-Lease Act on March 11, 1941 – which meant that the U.S. started to supply Britain, the Soviet Union, and China – was perceived as a war declaration by the Germans.<sup>132</sup> However, a more simple explanation seems to be, that American cultural influence in the Netherlands was growing, with jazz as one of its major components. An article in the NSB-periodical *Volk en Vaderland* stated that

Amerika met zijn millioenen Joden en werklozen, zijn enorme hoeveelheid goud, zijn opschepperige weelde en zijn schrijnende armoede heeft niet het minste recht, zich als de ware houder der beschaving en de cultuur aan te dienen.<sup>133</sup>

Another author claimed that he was not surprised that ‘in the country of hot-jazz and gangsters,’ classical composer Richard Wagner was seen as pagan,<sup>134</sup> while an article titled ‘Nieuw Europa’ warned for the superficiality of American culture and capitalism.<sup>135</sup> Such direct criticism on American culture was not common in Dutch periodicals before December 1941. However, this changed after the attack on Pearl Harbor, when America entered the war.

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<sup>129</sup> ‘Ontaarde muziek’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 5 December 1941.

<sup>130</sup> *Volk en Vaderland: weekblad der Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland*, 17 January 1941.

<sup>131</sup> Wagnleitner, ‘Jazz – The Classical Music of Globalization’, 37-38.

<sup>132</sup> United States Department of State: Office of the Historian, ‘Japan, China, the United States, and the Road to Pearl Harbor, 1937-41’, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/pearl-harbor> [accessed at 7 June 2016].

<sup>133</sup> ‘Amerika – “hoofdstad der wereld”’. *Bilderdijk over de nieuwe wereld*, *Volk en Vaderland: weekblad der Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland*, 10 October 1941.

<sup>134</sup> ‘Opvattingen over cultuur in de Verenigde Staten’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 7 August 1941.

<sup>135</sup> ‘Nieuw Europa’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 17 June 1941.

### *3.2.4 Conclusion*

In the years before the war, periodicals that affiliated with National Socialism already showed a disdain for the primitivism and immorality of jazz music. However, more positive remarks were still visible, probably because Nazi-Germany had not yet invaded the Netherlands. When they did, reports about the music started to become increasingly negative and jokes about the music were replaced with serious concerns. Although the Dutch National Socialist cultural institutions struggled to effectuate Nazi-policy in these first two years of the war, National Socialist and Dutch newspapers and magazines were mostly unanimous when it concerned their attitude towards jazz. They considered it as a primitive cultural form, hijacked by Jews, which formed a threat to the superior white culture of Europe.

The National Socialist periodicals acknowledged the North-American roots of the music, as the 'original jazz' stemmed from African American slaves. However, the fact that the music originated in the United States seemed no major concern for these periodicals. They found it more problematic that it was 'black music', than that it was 'American music.' Moreover, the fact that it was 'black music' was not even the major problem, while they were more concerned with the fact that Jews and white Europeans 'hijacked' the music. However, the 'Americanness' of jazz became more of a problem for National Socialism near the end of 1941, and concerns about the American roots of jazz skyrocketed even more when America became an official enemy of the Third Reich.

### **3.3 Jazz criticism after Pearl Harbor**

From the start of the Second World War in 1939 onwards, the interference of the United States in Europe became more and more inevitable. The rise of Japanese militarism that threatened China, a longstanding American friend, caused ambivalence among U.S. officials between 1937 and 1940. On the one hand, they opposed Japanese attacks on Chinese citizens and American citizens living there. On the other hand, they wanted to avoid conflict and accepted apologies of indemnity from the Japanese. However, in 1940 and 1941, relations between Japan and the U.S. deteriorated, as the treaty of commerce between the two countries was abolished and the Roosevelt Administration started to restrict the flow of military supplies to Japan, which the U.S. used as leverage to force Japan to halt its aggression in China. Moreover, the U.S. increased its aid to China through the Lend-Lease Act.<sup>136</sup>

Hostilities between the U.S. and Japan increased because of actions taken by the latter. In September 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Nazi-Germany and Fascist Italy, which

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<sup>136</sup> United States Department of State: Office of the Historian, 'Japan, China, the United States, and the Road to Pearl Harbor, 1937-41,' <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/pearl-harbor> [accessed at 8 June 2016].

linked the conflicts in Europe and Asia. Moreover, the Japanese military was preparing to move into Southeast Asia, where the U.S. had greater interests. The U.S. responded with a full embargo on exports to Japan and halted the negotiations. Japan was backed into a corner, and Japanese officials concluded that they had to act expeditiously. On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes bombed the U.S. navy fleet at Pearl Harbor. The next day, the U.S. declared war on Japan and formed a military alliance with China. In turn, Germany, as ally of Japan, declared war on the U.S., which meant the direct involvement of America in the Second World War in Europe.<sup>137</sup>

### 3.3.1 German cultural institutions in the Netherlands, 1941-1945

Meanwhile, National Socialists in the Netherlands further intensified their grip on Dutch cultural life by extending the regulations. The radio was an important cultural outlet for the German occupier, and therefore was subject to harsh restrictions. Many music records were forbidden, because they were too English, too Polish, too Russian, too Jewish, or too different from the feelings of Dutch and German citizens, according to the German occupier. Goedewaagen, president of the DVK, stated that

Het samenstellen van de programma's voor het Nederlandsche muziekleven moet aan de ernst van den tijd en aan het nationale volksgevoel worden aangepast. Toch moet de vroolijke muziek in geen deele worden uitgeschakeld; ze moet echter worden gevrijwaard van gebrek aan waardigheid en overdrijving in de weergave.<sup>138</sup>

An extensive list of banned gramophone records showed how scrupulous the National Socialists proceeded. Next to Jewish and Polish works (with the exception of Frédéric Chopin), all works composed in hostile countries were “niet gewenscht.” A huge part of the list constitutes hot- and swing-music, mostly American. Music by the British white jazz trumpeter Nat Gonella, for example, was banned because “de verwrongen, schreeuwige zangstijl en de overdreven hot-instrumentatie zijn tegenstrijdig met de gevoelens van het Nederlandsche volk.” Furthermore, “echte of imitatie-neger muziek” and “Amerikaansche hot-bewerking of hot-imitatie” were also banned.<sup>139</sup>

Instead, the National Socialists used the radio for their own propaganda. They preferred classical music, but realized that they also had to satisfy the general taste of Dutch citizens.

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<sup>137</sup> United States Department of State: Office of the Historian, ‘Japan, China, the United States, and the Road to Pearl Harbor, 1937-41,’ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/pearl-harbor> [accessed at 8 June 2016].

<sup>138</sup> ‘Richtlijnen voor den omroep’, in: Knipselmap Herman Openneer, *Jazz Muziek Niet Gewenscht, 1926-1940* (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>139</sup> ‘Niet gewenschte werken’, in: Knipselmap Herman Openneer, *Jazz Muziek Niet Gewenscht, 1926-1940* (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

Therefore, the famous Dutch jazz band *The Ramblers* was allowed to play for the radio, closely supervised by the Germans. Nevertheless, it proved difficult to ban jazz from the radio altogether, due to the limited amount of alternatives. Moreover, jazz musicians tried everything to circumvent these rules. Many times, English songs were translated to Dutch, mocking the National Socialist policy, and jazz bands sometimes presented themselves as ‘Hawaii-ensembles.’ In 1943, the Germans intensified their censorship and control. Many radios were confiscated, which caused a drop in the amount of listeners. This also meant that the radio was less effective in its use as propaganda tool.<sup>140</sup>

Next to radio music, jazz musicians and live concerts were also strictly monitored by National Socialists. Musicians were ranked as ‘amateur’ or ‘professional’ and had to be registered at the NKK in order to perform on stage. Jewish and Surinamese musicians were fired and excluded from the amusement branch, while the *Arbeitseinsatz* prompted many white jazz musicians to flee or work in Germany. The musicians that could continue their musical career in the Netherlands were subjected to many new, often unrealistic rules. Next to an Aryan declaration and membership at the NKK, bands were also ordered to comply with the anti-jazz rules Gilbert drafted. He defined jazz as

Uitsluitend de door Afro-Amerikaansche negers geschreven, gearrangeerde (geimproviseerde) en uitgevoerde muziek, die melodisch en rhythmisch sterk dynamisch is. Onder dynamisch wordt hier in hoofdzaak verstaan: ‘swing’ en ‘hot’.<sup>141</sup>

In this prohibition, Gilbert speaks of ‘portamento and glissando,’ ‘whip,’ ‘vibrato,’ ‘growl-effecten,’ ‘plungers,’ ‘dinges,’ and other terms that are not defined and hard to understand.<sup>142</sup> Because of these and other obscure and unclear terminologies, monitoring live jazz music was not easy. Therefore, it was mostly a hunt for English words. For a long time, language and nationality remained the only evaluation criteria, and the ‘purification’ of music was limited to replacing English names and titles.<sup>143</sup>

The lack of clearly defined musical criteria only resulted in external modifications of jazz. “De bestrijding van ongewenste muziek was verzand in pietluttigheid en ambtelijk onbenul en de richtlijnen [...] bleken volstrekt ontoereikend om dat te voorkomen,” argues Wouters.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda and close associate of Hitler, allowed a

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<sup>140</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 251-271.

<sup>141</sup> Will G. Gilbert, ‘Verbod van negermuziek’, in: Knipselmap Herman Openneer, *Jazz Muziek Niet Gewenscht, 1926-1940* (Nederlands Jazz Archief, Amsterdam).

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 212, 278-306, 310-323.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, 329.

certain degree of musical freedom, because jazz was also popular among German soldiers and citizens. Nevertheless, listening to jazz music and dancing became harder and harder for the Dutch youth. On March 15, 1943, all 'luxury businesses' not necessary for the war, such as bars, restaurants, and dancing schools, were closed, and in October 1943, guidelines were composed that regulated the behavior of the audience at jazz concerts.<sup>145</sup> Despite all these efforts, the Dutch youth kept listening to jazz music. Furthermore, the jazz bands were also inventive in getting around the German regulations. Therefore, in a letter to Goverts, De Ranitz had to conclude that "de stijlvergunningen in de praktijk tot een fiasco leiden. Geen sterveling houdt er zich aan."<sup>146</sup>

### 3.3.2 Dutch National Socialist periodicals about jazz, 1941-1944

The failure to curb jazz music in the Netherlands frustrated National Socialists. Although they accepted the fact that they could not abolish jazz music altogether, National Socialist officials had hoped to strip the music from its American and African characteristics. Especially after Germany declared war on America in December, 1941, Germans became increasingly hostile to everything that had something to do with American culture. As Wouters examines, jazz and swing came to mirror the superficiality of American culture. "America was depicted as a naïve country where, with primitive means such as 'cries' and 'yells' and raising the Stars and Stripes, an artificial kind of national enthusiasm was being aroused."<sup>147</sup> This argumentation is also visible in Dutch National Socialist periodicals and newspapers censored and controlled by National Socialist officials, that started to repel and criticize jazz more and more because of its American cultural background, instead of the fact that it was 'black music,' 'hijacked' by Jews, Communists, and whites. These periodicals feared that American cultural influence in the Netherlands would lead to the waning of the Dutch national culture and the internationalization of Germanic 'high' culture, led by America.

Furthermore, whereas before the attack on Pearl Harbor National Socialist periodicals published many articles that solely focused on jazz music, after America's entry into the war, these periodicals mostly mentioned jazz in articles that mainly focused on American culture. The subject of jazz became subordinate to the dangers American culture constituted to National Socialists' view on culture and society. However, jazz was still seen as one of the main components of American culture, or as the *Algemeen Handelsblad* called it: "deze kenmerkende uiting der Amerikaansche 'cultuur'."<sup>148</sup> Often, jazz was mentioned in enumerations of everything

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<sup>145</sup> Wouters, *Ongewenschte muziek*, 219-225, 326-329, 349.

<sup>146</sup> W.G. De Ranitz, 'Nota. Voor kd. Goverts', 4 August 1944, in: knipselmap Tweede Wereldoorlog (Nederlands jazzarchieef, Amsterdam).

<sup>147</sup> Wouters, 'The introduction of jazz', 503.

<sup>148</sup> 'Jazz-wittebroodsweken der Amerikaansche oorlogvoering', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 7 March 1942.

that was wrong with American cultural life,<sup>149</sup> and more than once, jazz was the primary example of American infiltration in European culture: “Zoo werden wij verblijd met de jazz en met zooveel andere dingen, die het Amerika ons gaf en die wij slikten, omdat zij ons door de joden in Europa, als trouwe handlangers van het Amerikanisme, als de groote toekomst werden voorgetooverd.”<sup>150</sup> In these articles that mentioned jazz, National Socialist criticism on America prevailed. Jazz was only discussed in the context of American culture. Therefore, the following paragraphs mainly focus on this culture, rather than specifically on jazz music.

Articles in Dutch National Socialist periodicals that mentioned jazz first of all expressed critical interpretations of the demographics of America, traced back as far as the first European migration flows to the New World. The SS-periodical *Storm*, for example, called America a “kultuurwoestijn,” because of

in de kultuurwoestijn der V.S. verzinkende resten van Nederlandsche, Spaansche en Fransche kultuur in het Oosten, Westen en Zuiden van dat noordelijke continent, die een werkelijke koloniale stijl geschapen hadden en welke voor die krachten van New York het onderspit moesten delven, die in 't geheel geen kultuur bezaten, omdat zij a priori weigerden die met zich mee te voeren, toen zij bewust van hun vaderland afscheid namen, om als tegenstanders en niet als koloniserende zonen de zee over te steken en die dus als een miljoenenmassa van menscheijk woestijnzand de kulturen van Nieuw-Amsterdam, Louisiana en Californië overdedten.[...] Zij beleefden de nieuwe wereld niet als een natuurlijke dochter van de oude, als ‘colonia’, maar als het geestelijke Antagonisme daarvan, als de revolutionaire wederhelft, als de bewuste verloochening van het eigen verleden.<sup>151</sup>

In addition, in a couple of articles, 20<sup>th</sup> century migration flows to America were linked to Judaism. One article, for example examined that these flows were dominated by Jews:

Wij zien dat in de laatste jaren de emigratie van joden uit Polen en Rusland en uit vele der Westeuropeesche state [...] in verhouding enorme afmetingen heeft aangenomen.<sup>152</sup>

Moreover, the Jews also dominated the daily life and played an important advisory role in American politics, according to this article. They had penetrated American politics, and in this way determined the course of American culture.<sup>153</sup> Thus, the demographic composition of America

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<sup>149</sup> See for example: ‘Democratische demagogie’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche Volk*, 4 September 1942.

<sup>150</sup> ‘De worgende greep. Amerika in de klauwen van Juda’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>151</sup> ‘Kultuur-Emigranten’, *Storm: Blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 7 July 1942.

<sup>152</sup> ‘De worgende greep. Amerika in de klauwen van Juda’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.



was attacked by National Socialist periodicals because in its roots, created by the first European immigrants in the New World, it had rejected European culture, and political and cultural life was dominated by Jewish influences.

These “bastaarden, gesproten uit de mengeling der immigranten uit alle landen en volken, die in den loop van vier eeuwen naar de Nieuwe Wereld togen en een agglomeraat vormden, dat zich thans ‘het Amerikaansche volk’ noemt,”<sup>154</sup> had one thing in common, according to many articles in Dutch National Socialist periodicals: “baarlijk materialisme, dat geen ruimte laat voor werkelijke beschaving.”<sup>155</sup> The periodicals argued that materialism prevailed in the American capitalist system, where self-interest triumphed at the expense of public interest. Furthermore, collaborating newspapers and magazines argued that capitalism aimed to enrich a small group, while the majority of the people suffered from poverty. The illusion of freedom and infinite opportunities lured people into ‘white slavery’:

Waren zij eenmaal het vrijheidsbeeld gepasseerd, dan verdwenen zij als blanke slaven achter het prikkeldraad en achter de schuttingen, die de fabrieken omgrendelen. [...] Honderdduizenden zijn in ellende gecrepeerd, terwijl er één zich bovendien wist te werken.<sup>156</sup>

This led Prof. Dr. M.D. Dijt, economic editor of *De Waag*, to conclude that capitalism was not fit to uphold a reasonable economic society. According to him, especially American capitalism strived for war and excessive export profits, in order to keep up the national economic activities and dominate the world.<sup>157</sup>

Therefore, National Socialist periodicals such as *Het Nationale Dagblad* feared the fact that America, with jazz as one of its main components, made a claim to leadership of the world and was venerated by younger people:

Het Amerika, dat na den [Eerste] wereldoorlog zoo talrijke vereerders vond in Duitschland en in geheel Europa, uitte zich daarin, dat een dollarbiljet méér waard was dan de handteekening van een koning. Het trad op als crediteur van Europa, in het beste geval nog als het rijke familielid, als de rijke ‘oom uit Amerika’ en niet voor niets heeft ‘Uncle Sam’ voor alle Europeanen een weinig zuren bijmaak, evenals verkreukelde

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<sup>154</sup> ‘Zij staan voor niets’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21 July 1943.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.; Other example: ‘De worgende greep. Amerika in de klauwen van Juda’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>156</sup> ‘De worgende greep. Amerika in de klauwen van Juda’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>157</sup> M.D. Dijt, ‘Het Europeesche boven het nationale belang. Bolsjewisme en Americanisme’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 29 June 1944.

bankbiljetten. Niet voor niets wordt hij als een magere oude heer met een puntigen neus en 'n harden zakelijken trek om den mond voorgesteld.<sup>158</sup>

This article argued that between 1918 and 1933, Germany had suffered from American culture: “Amerikaansche jazz bemoedigde duizenden en honderdduizenden elken avond met zijn krampachtige trekkingen.”<sup>159</sup> However, Hitler freed the country from American influences, and would also liberate other European countries from the yoke of American culture, because recognizing America as leader of a new world order, “beteekent het jodendom opnieuw op den troon heffen.”<sup>160</sup>

National Socialists were anxious that culture would be internationalized, and “‘Internationaal’ mag daarbij veelal beschouwd worden als een euphemism voor ‘Amerikaansch’,”<sup>161</sup> according to M. Wolters. This internationalization was particularly visible in the amusement industry, in which, for example, jazz music thrived. “Bij de jazz is het vooral de radio, die zorgt voor steeds verdere internationaliseering, ondanks oorlog, ondanks tegenactie vaak.”<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, literature and theater also became victims of internationalization, or, in other words, American culture, according to Nazi-affiliated periodicals. Dutch National Socialists did everything in their power to prevent the spreading of American culture, because they feared that internationalization of culture would lead to the waning of Dutch and Germanic culture:

Wij weten zeker, dat een overwinning van het Amerikanisme de verdere zelfvernietiging van de Europeesche cultuur en van de nationale culturen van ieder Europeesch volk beteekent, hoewel velen die door het Amerikanisme met zijn wancultuur, zijn verachting voor den boer en voor den arbeid, zijn verzotheid op reclame en jazz, zijn grenzenlooze hebzucht en goudverblinding, bevangen zijn, er gouden Bergen van verwachten...<sup>163</sup>

The internationalization of cultures, so Dutch and German National Socialists believed, would threaten the European national cultures. According to the National Socialist periodicals, the historic Dutch culture would cease to exist whenever Dutch citizens succumbed to the false temptations of America’s “kultuurwoestijn.” Especially the jazz-loving Dutch youth was exposed to this threat:

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<sup>158</sup> ‘Moderne beschaving tegen Europeesche cultuur’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 24 January 1942.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> ‘De worgende greep. Amerika in de klauwen van Juda’, *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 28 May 1943.

<sup>161</sup> M. Wolters, “‘Kilometerpaal 7,4”, geen mijlpaal’, *De Waag: algemeen cultureel, politiek en economisch weekblad voor Nederland*, 4 September 1942.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> M.D. Dijt, ‘Het Europeesche boven het nationale belang. Bolsjewisme en Americanisme’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 29 June 1944.

Vooral onze jeugd en met name de rijpere jeugd vergaapt zich aan den schijn van het buitenland: Jazz, Amerikaansche, Engelsche, en negersongs, tapdansen, dat was de ballast waarmee zij zich aanvulde. Ze verzamelde en vergaapte zich aan filmsterren, die op het witte doek hun leegheid en holheid in onnatuurlijke houding en opmaak ten toon spreidden. Maar het pittige Hollandsche lied werd niet gehoord en de natuur bleef een gesloten boek voor het grootste deel van ons opkomende geslacht.<sup>164</sup>

### 3.3.3 Conclusion

Whereas pre-Pearl Harbor criticism on jazz music in Dutch National Socialist periodicals was mainly aimed at the primitive, black background of the music, and its ‘hijacking’ by Jews and white Europeans, post-Pearl Harbor interpretations of jazz in these periodicals were more indirect, connecting it with American culture, which was the main focus of most of the articles that mentioned jazz after December 1941. The subject of jazz became subordinate to the dangers American culture constituted, but the music remained one of the main concerns for National Socialist, and indeed one of the most important components of American cultural penetration in the Netherlands.

This American culture was described as the culture of a conglomerate of individuals, stemming from, but not bringing with them European ‘high’ culture. Moreover, Jewish influences in American culture and politics had spoiled its people and made it even more objectionable, according to periodicals such as *Storm* and *Het Nationale Dagblad*. Materialism and capitalism prevailed in this society, which caused unemployment and ‘white slavery.’ Therefore, it would be disastrous, according to National Socialism, when America would take on the role as world leader. With America as the leader of internationalization, national cultures would wane, in favor of the immoral and impious American culture. In this light, especially the younger Dutch generations caused a problem for the German occupier, as they became more and more ‘Americanized.’

### 3.4 Dutch youth and American culture: the waning of Dutch norms and values

According to Wouters, “National Socialists, composers and musicians of classical music, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and reds, all cursed the arrival of the new American entertainment culture. [...] Time and again, jazz music and modern dances were associated with barbarism, primitive, primal instincts, and eroticism.”<sup>165</sup> What mainly concerned them was the threat this culture imposed upon the younger Dutch generations. Especially boys and girls between 16 and

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<sup>164</sup> G.H. Snitger, ‘Leegheid en holheid. Kenmerken der democratische cultuur-verwilderings’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 16 January 1942.

<sup>165</sup> Wouters, ‘The Introduction of Jazz’, 502.

25 years old were highly influenced by American cultural perceptions, and, according to National Socialism, needed reeducation that thought them the Dutch (or Germanic) norms and values.<sup>166</sup>

These pedagogic concerns already emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, but were further intensified by Dutch National Socialists during the Second World War. Both before and after American involvement in this war, pedagogues, Nazi officials, and older generations, as well as the *Hitlerjugend*, shared this critical view on the jazz-listening youth. It remained a constant factor in jazz criticism, although it can also be divided in a pre- and post-Pearl Harbor interpretation. Before Pearl Harbor, the youth was spoiled by 'jazz music,' while after Pearl Harbor, Dutch teenagers were tarnished by 'American culture,' according to Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals. The following two paragraphs will focus on this dichotomy, starting with the pre-Pearl Harbor jazz criticism.

#### 3.4.1 Pre-Pearl Harbor pedagogic concerns

In 1940 and 1941, both evident pro-German periodicals and the Dutch popular newspapers *Het Volk* and *Algemeen Handelsblad* published articles that feared for the ruination of Dutch teenagers by jazz music. "Jeugdverwilderling" and "de angstige vervlakking van groote categorieën jongeren, die hun hoogste cultuurgenot in 'croon-singing' en 'jazz' schijnen te vinden" formed a threat to Dutch cultural norms and values among the younger generation. Moreover, jazz music caused a decline in sport activities among adolescents.<sup>167</sup> In turn, this stimulated criminality and gave rise to a prototype of the Dutch youth, according to the *Algemeen Handelsblad*:

Zoo werden de jazz-neuriënde jongeling, die met zijn handen in zijn zakken over het lijntje van het voetbalveld hangt en de bakvisch met de zijden kousen, die alleen van Amerikaanse suikerwaterfilms houdt, veelal de prototypen van onze jeugd.<sup>168</sup>

Goverts considered the interest Dutch teenagers showed in jazz music as 'unhealthy.' It led to moral decay and the loss of 'race-awareness':

Wat kan den meesten jongemenschen jazz-an-sich schelen? Het gaat hun slechts om de prikkeling, die voeten, hoofden en wat al niet in beweging zet en waarin zij zich kunnen laten afzakken, tot zij in de geestelijke goot terecht gekomen zijn.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Based on newspaper articles, examined through Delpher.

<sup>167</sup> 'Gerichte levens. De jeugd der toekomst', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 22 October 1941.

<sup>168</sup> 'Bedreigde levens. Een volk, dat leeft, zorgt voor zijn jeugd', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 20 October 1941.

<sup>169</sup> Jan Goverts Jr., 'Jazz, Volksche muziek of ontarding?', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 5 August 1940.

Philosopher Ir. B. Wigersma joined Goverts' argument. He argued that jazz music pushed spiritual values to the background and resulted in physical and material desires, which inevitably led to war and the loss of freedom.<sup>170</sup> Other articles in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals, such as *De Waag*, shared these convictions.<sup>171</sup>

Therefore, some articles called for a punishment for the jazz-listening youth in the form of forced labor<sup>172</sup> or detention.<sup>173</sup> However, most National Socialist newspapers and magazines opted for reeducation of the Dutch youth, as the immorality had to be stopped and Germanic culture had to be reintroduced. As stated in *Storm*:

Onze tijd eischt andere jonge mensen dan hen, die, afgestompt voor goede muziek, slechts bevrediging vinden in hot en swing en wier dorst naar klanken uitsluitend uitgaat naar het half negersch, half joodsche schuim der muziek.<sup>174</sup>

The 'Heemkundekring Wageningen' was willing to take on this pedagogic task. They saw it as their duty to distinguish the 'real Germanic' from all foreign and imported folkways and forms of art. They stressed the importance of local history-education in primary and secondary schools, in order to avoid "wat we bijv. op het gebied van de muziek hebben beleefd. Jazz- en negermuziek hebben veler smaak volkomen bedorven."<sup>175</sup>

#### 3.4.2 Post-Pearl Harbor pedagogic concerns

Before Germany declared war on the United States, many articles about jazz music in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals were mainly concerned with the musical decadence of the Dutch youth. Jazz was seen as immoral and in conflict with the classical musical education Dutch boys and girls should have had. Pedagogic criticism mainly focused on jazz music, although it was sometimes embedded within a larger framework of cultural decay. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, pedagogic interpretations of jazz were almost always embedded within the wider spectrum of American culture. Pedagogues, teachers, and the clergy all despised the 'Americanized' teenagers.

These educators complained about the cultural superficiality of the Dutch youth. According to them, only a small part showed interest in Germanic cultural and artistic norms and

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<sup>170</sup> Ir. B. Wigersma, 'De geest van onzen tijd', *De Waag*, 17 October 1940.

<sup>171</sup> See for example: 'Humanistisch jeugdleven. Onvolksche opvoeding bracht ontaarde ontspanning', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 17 October 1941.; and: H.H. Diephuis, 'Onze jeugdbeweging in den smeltkroes,' *De Waag*, 12 December 1940.

<sup>172</sup> 'Humanistisch jeugdleven. Onvolksche opvoeding bracht ontaarde ontspanning', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 17 October 1941.

<sup>173</sup> T. Leonardi, 'Schande', *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 22 February 1941.

<sup>174</sup> 'Jazz', *Storm: blad der Nederlandsche SS*, 14 November 1941.

<sup>175</sup> 'Over heemkunde', *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 4 May 1941.

values. In turn, their enthusiasm for “Amerikaansche wanproducten” was unprecedented.<sup>176</sup> G.H. Snitger examines that Dutch teenagers attached great value to the profitability of culture, as materialism, perceived as typical American phenomenon, prevailed among the younger generations.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, this materialism was joined by the absence of ideals, which led to the waning of Dutch nationalism, an article in the *Algemeen Handelsblad* argues:

[De jeugd] vertoont, in wijde kringen, een bedenkelijke verslapping, een neiging tot voor jonge menschen ontstellend groot materialisme en een veelvuldig gebrek aan idealen.[...] Zelfs het nationale gevoel, dat thans ten toon wordt gespreid in bepaalde kringen, heeft veelal iets gekunstelds en is meer een tijdelijke vervanging voor het internationalisme, waar men vóór den oorlog in opging, meer een uiting van negativisme, dan een uiting van werkelijke bewuste liefde voor eigen volk en eigen land.<sup>178</sup>

This led Snitger to conclude that the cultural education of Dutch youth was characterized by three main components: “leegheid, holheid en onnatuurlijkheid.”<sup>179</sup> A sarcastic article in *De Waag* titled ‘Hartelijke Hatelijkheden’ gives a good example of the general trend in the post-Pearl Harbor criticism:

U dacht misschien, dat onze jeugd trilde van ongeduld om de hand aan den ploeg te slaan, maar u vergist zich. Onze girls en boys smachten naar Amerikaansche films en hot-jazz. Zij zullen pas weer ruim adem kunnen halen, wanneer zij ice cream en brandy soda kunnen slurpen en alle heerlijkheden van God’s own country onbeperkt kunnen genieten.<sup>180</sup>

Thus, American culture constituted a big problem according to Dutch periodicals. Jazz music – together with movies and cinema – was regarded as a main component of this culture, and, therefore, was often embedded within the post-Pearl Harbor criticism on American cultural influence in the Netherlands. Dutch teenagers considered this ‘cacophonous art,’ as one article called jazz,<sup>181</sup> in higher esteem than classical composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> ‘Het Cultureel verval der democratische jeugd. Nieuwe richtingen in het onderwijs noodzakelijk’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 18 February 1942.

<sup>177</sup> G.H. Snitger, ‘Leegheid en holheid. Kenmerken der democratische cultuur-verwildering’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 16 January 1942.

<sup>178</sup> ‘Nederland op de schaats: ijssport, tijdverschijnselen en volksaard’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 21 January 1942.

<sup>179</sup> G.H. Snitger, ‘Leegheid en holheid. Kenmerken der democratische cultuur-verwildering’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 16 January 1942.

<sup>180</sup> ‘Hartelijke Hatelijkheden’, *De Waag: algemeen cultureel, politiek en economisch weekblad voor Nederland*, 31 July 1942.

<sup>181</sup> ‘Hot-jazz’, *Volk en Vaderland: weekblad der Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland*, 4 September 1942.

Moreover, Frans Vink, member of the NSB, saw a growing interest in “kwalitatief lagere soorten instrumenten,” like the accordion, harmonica, and guitar. The lack of a ‘higher musical culture,’

heeft zich gewroken in en door het afglijden der muziekbeoefening naar de mede onder Engelsch-Amerikaanschen invloed geïmporteerde en weer verbasterde neger-muziek, de onreine, chaotische en destructieve jazz is een rechtmatige bestraffing van het verzuim der vroegere overheid van haar plicht tot kultureele voorlichting en verzorging van het volk.<sup>183</sup>

Next to their interest in classical music, jazz also ruined the sportsmanship of the younger generations. Instead of playing football, these youngsters were occupied with playing ‘bridge’ and listening to ‘jazz,’ as journalist G. Kos remarks.<sup>184</sup> The ‘musical overseas import’ had influenced the Western-European youth in a horrible way, according to the periodicals.<sup>185</sup> Therefore, cultural education of the Dutch youth was of high importance to National Socialists:

Tenslotte is het een open deur intrappen, wanneer wij er nog eens op wijzen, dat culturele leiding voor onze jongeren broodnodig is. Wie alleen maar even denkt aan de taferelen die zich afspelen bij jazz-uitvoeringen, heeft geen enkel argument meer nodig.<sup>186</sup>

Almost all examined National Socialist periodicals called for reeducation of the Dutch youth. They were unanimous that the cultural decay, caused by American cultural phenomena such as jazz music, could only be stopped by reintroducing them to National Germanic culture, with National Socialism as the leading ideology. The *Nationale Jeugdstorm* had to play an important role in this, according to multiple articles. That is, because they were ‘protected from American culture,’ and still knew what was ‘truly Germanic.’<sup>187</sup> Therefore, some members of the *Jeugdstorm* were installed as youth instructors to train Dutch teenagers some particular ‘human virtues’: courage, decisiveness, and perseverance.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> ‘Het Cultureel verval der democratische jeugd. Nieuwe richtingen in het onderwijs noodzakelijk’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 18 February 1942.

<sup>183</sup> Frans Vink, ‘Is het Nederlandsche volk muzikaal?’, *De Schouw: orgaan van de Nederlandsche Kultuurkamer, gewijd aan het kultureele leven in Nederland*, 15 December 1944.

<sup>184</sup> G. Kos, ‘Stemmen uit het volk. Als het sportveld wijkt voor de jazzband’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 9 July 1942.

<sup>185</sup> ‘Muzikale nabetrachting’, *De Waag: algemeen cultureel, politiek en economisch weekblad voor Nederland*, 8 December 1944.

<sup>186</sup> ‘Acht jaar Nationale Jeugdstorm’, *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 25 September 1942.

<sup>187</sup> ‘Interessante rondvraag over film onder Duitsche jeugd’, *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 22 July 1944.

<sup>188</sup> ‘Belangrijke taak voor de jeugdstormers. Rede ir. Mussert bij opening kaderschool’, *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 23 April 1942.

Musical reeducation played an important role in this battle against American culture. Because jazz music did not at all align with Dutch norms and values, it had to be banned. Vink stated that it was the duty of all National Socialists to redeem the Dutch youth from the “ziekelijke en infecteerende anti-kultureele sfeer.”<sup>189</sup> In National Socialist periodicals, jazz was often seen as the best example of American cultural penetration in the Netherlands (and Western-Europe). Without proper pedagogic accompaniment it would eventually overthrow national cultures, replacing it with an international American culture.<sup>190</sup> Therefore,

kunnen wij die jongens en meisjes, die na vier jaren oorlog en revolutie niets beters weten te doen, dan te ozo’en, te sorry’en, te kankeren, losbandig te zijn en te zweren bij jazz als hoogste genot, missen als kiespijn. Wat we nóódig hebben, dat is een jeugd, die niet den strijd schuwt en die waarachtige liefde voor ons schoone vaderland gepaard doet gaan met een even waarachtige liefde voor haar volksgenooten. Wij willen jeugd, die niet zweert bij decadente jazz, maar die de echte Nederlandsche liederen, waaraan ons volk zoo rijk is, uit volle borst weet te zingen.<sup>191</sup>

### 3.4.3 Conclusion

The National Socialist jazz criticism during the Second World War can be divided into two periods: before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, that caused America to enter the Second World War. During these two periods, a recurring and repeatedly heard criticism was that the Dutch youth was spoiled by jazz and American culture. Interestingly, and maybe also logically, this criticism followed the same path as the criticism on the music itself. Before Pearl Harbor, pedagogic concerns were mainly aimed at jazz music. It was primitive, it opposed the conventional European music, and it led to immorality and physical decline. After Pearl Harbor, pedagogic criticism was more concerned with American culture overall. Jazz music constituted one of the leading examples of American cultural penetration in Europe, and, in this way, was embedded within the criticism on American culture.

Because National Socialists despised jazz and American culture, reeducation of the younger generation had to take place, in order to save the national culture from ‘Americanizing.’ An ‘Americanized’ youth would lead to the waning of Dutch national norms, values, and morals. In this way, the discussion surrounding jazz music was not only a struggle between jazz and classical music, but also between American, or ‘internationalized,’ and Germanic, or ‘national,’ cultures. Moreover, particularly the younger generations had to be reeducated. Dutch National Socialist

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<sup>189</sup> Frans Vink, ‘Is het Nederlandsche volk muzikaal?’, *De Schouw: orgaan van de Nederlandsche Kultuurkamer, gewijd aan het kultureele leven in Nederland*, 15 December 1944.

<sup>190</sup> ‘Muzikale nabetrachting’, *De Waag: algemeen cultureel, politiek en economisch weekblad voor Nederland*, 8 December 1944.

<sup>191</sup> “Vijanden” des volks’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 24 September 1943.



periodicals never spoke about reeducating all Dutch citizens. Therefore, the discussions surrounding jazz during the Second World War also seemed to be a generational battle between old Dutch ideas versus a 'rebellious' youth. Striking in this sense is an article in *Het Volk* that constituted a fictional letter in which a mother wants to organize a birthday party for her son:

Het fijnst vinden wij het als ze samen musiceren, vooral als Leo er bij is, die op het conservatorium studeert. Dan spelen ze altijd klassieke muziek en dan mogen ze van mij hot-jazz en weet ik veel wat voor andere jazzen houden. Wij zijn er veel te oud voor om die hoempa-muziek te waarderen.<sup>192</sup>

### **3.5 Conclusion: pre- and post-Pearl Harbor jazz, Germanic versus American culture**

In this chapter, a dichotomy is shown, that divides pre-Pearl Harbor Dutch National Socialist jazz criticism from post-Pearl Harbor criticism. Prior to the attack on the American harbor, when the United States were not officially in war with Germany, National Socialist periodicals referred to jazz as primitive, and sometimes even fully denounced it as a music. This primitive cultural form, according to them, was 'hijacked' by Jews and white Europeans and Americans, and formed a threat to the superior white Germanic culture. Although National Socialism acknowledged the music's African-American roots, this was not the 'real' problem for them.

However, the 'Americanness' of jazz did become a problem for National Socialism after America's entry into the war. Whereas before this attack, articles in periodicals that mentioned jazz were mostly all about the musical threats, after the Japanese airstrike, jazz was most of the time mentioned in articles that were all about American culture. The subject of jazz became subordinate to the dangers of American culture, although the music remained one of the main components of American cultural penetration in the Netherlands. In this way, the jazz criticism was embedded within the larger framework of American culture, which National Socialists saw as despicable and a danger to the Dutch national culture.

An overarching theme in both the pre- and post-Pearl Harbor criticism on jazz was reeducation of the Dutch youth, which, according to National Socialists, was spoiled by jazz and other American cultural phenomena. 'Americanization' of teenagers would lead to the waning of Dutch national norms, values, and morals, which were still proclaimed by both National Socialists and older generations. This shows that the debate about jazz in the Netherlands was both a contradistinction between cultures, that is, 'internationalized American' versus 'national European' culture, and a clash between generations.

By showing the change in perspective of Dutch National Socialist periodicals from anti-jazz to anti-America, this chapter showed how jazz music was perceived in the Netherlands during the

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<sup>192</sup> 'Voor de vrouwen', *Het Volk: dagblad voor de arbeiderspartij*, 29 July 1941.

Second World War. This was examined through Dutch National Socialist views on the music. Research showed that in 1940 and 1941, jazz was not directly linked to American culture. Therefore, negative connotations of jazz did not directly influence the readers' perceptions of American culture. The only criticism that could be derived from these articles was the fact that America had a long history of slavery.

In turn, this automatically meant that positive connotations of jazz, which prevailed among the younger Dutch generations, were also not directly connected with American culture. Although young jazz fans were probably already quite positive about American culture in general, National Socialists' 'denial' of American cultural penetration in Europe, together with the rather isolationist policy of the United States in these first years of the war, did certainly not spark more enthusiasm for this country among Dutch teenagers.

After America got involved in the war, instead of anti-jazz criticism, concerns over jazz in Dutch National Socialist periodicals became more anti-American orientated. This meant that jazz was embedded within anti-American criticism. Thus, negative connotations of jazz automatically led the reader to negative perceptions of American culture, which would logically cause negativism about America. Instead, jazz became even more popular among the Dutch youth. Positive connotations of jazz were not changed, while the music was more and more embedded within American culture by National Socialist periodicals. Therefore, the Dutch youth could connect the music more directly to American culture and could portray the positive connotations they had of jazz on American culture as a whole.

Moreover, Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals portrayed the jazz-listening youth as people who had no affection for or connection with Dutch national culture. These teenagers were influenced by the process of internationalization, led by America, so National Socialists believed. The growing attention for American culture in National Socialist periodicals could have indeed sparked a sense of 'Americanism' among the Dutch youth, as this youth also read that they were not part of Dutch culture because of their 'Americanness.' In this way, Dutch National Socialist periodicals might have alienated the Dutch youth even further from Dutch culture, and caused more enthusiasm for American culture among teenagers.

## 4. Conclusion

This thesis tried to find an answer to the question: *How did National Socialist perceptions of jazz music shape Dutch perceptions of American culture during the Second World War (1940-1945)?* By answering this question, this thesis concludes that the first incentives for the so-called Americanization-process of Europe already emerged during the Second World War between 1940 and 1945. In order to find a compelling answer, this thesis looked at how articles in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals during the Second World War portrayed jazz music, which constituted one of the most important American cultural phenomena in Europe at that time. In this light, some interesting conclusions can be drawn. Based on the examination of the Nazi-affiliated periodicals, a division between pre- and post-Pearl Harbor criticism on jazz can be made.

### 4.1 Pre- and Post-Pearl Harbor jazz criticism

In the 1920s and 1930s, as well as during the first two years of the war, prior to the interference of America, both Nazi-affiliated periodicals and local and regional Dutch newspapers shared the same visions on the newly arrived jazz music. It was conceived as primitive, opposing classical European music. It was not taken seriously, made fun of, and often not seen as a form of art or even music. The American background of jazz did not seem to be of real importance to these articles. National Socialists even argued that the 'primitive' music made by African-Americans was still better than jazz made by white Americans, Europeans, and Jews, who 'hijacked' it. In these pre-Pearl Harbor criticisms, the 'Americanness' of jazz was limited to its association with slavery in America. Therefore, from the 1920s up to 1941, jazz music, at least in Dutch newspapers, was never directly linked to American culture as a whole.

This changed after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, when the United States became officially involved in the war in Europe. Articles in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals between 1942 and 1945 that mentioned jazz, almost all focused on American culture as a whole. It was despicable, and spoiled Dutch norms and values with its materialism, capitalism, and lack of culture. Jazz music constituted one of the main examples of this American culture, and presumably also one of the most visible phenomena of American cultural penetration in the Netherlands. National Socialists feared that this would go at the expense of Dutch national culture. In this way, the 'Americanness' of jazz constituted a major trope in the post-Pearl Harbor criticism. Hence, the National Socialist jazz criticism during the Second World War showed a transition from anti-jazz to anti-American.

Nevertheless, jazz music was highly popular among the Dutch youth, also because official Dutch cultural institutions such as the NKK and DVK failed to prohibit it. Youth groups such as the NJL arranged multiple discourses about musical techniques and lamented on the differences

between 'real' and 'imitation' jazz. Despite the constraints National Socialist cultural institutions in the Netherlands tried to impose on jazz music, and despite the anti-jazz and anti-American propaganda in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals, the youth kept listening to jazz and visiting live performances by jazz musicians. Therefore, the German occupier believed that the best solution would be to reeducate the 'Americanized' Dutch youth, which was spoiled by jazz and other American cultural phenomena. Dutch national norms, values, and morals need to be defended, so the Nazi's and their followers believed, and National Socialism would provide this protection by propagating the 'old European' norms and values. This shows that the jazz debate was intrinsically a debate about American cultural transfer and the waning of Dutch national culture.

#### **4.2 Pro- and anti-American feelings**

This thesis showed that during the Second World War, a clear shift occurred in the criticism on jazz in Dutch National Socialist periodicals. Pre-Pearl Harbor jazz criticism was mostly anti-jazz, while post-Pearl Harbor jazz criticism was mostly anti-American. What does this tell us about Dutch perceptions of American culture in this period? The most obvious answer would be that, due to the harsh restrictions and fierce anti-American propaganda in Dutch Nazi-affiliated periodicals, perceptions of American culture became increasingly negative during German occupation. This is true for followers of the National Socialist ideology, and might even be true for the older Dutch generations, as they were also anxious about the cultural influence America had on their children.

However, Dutch youth kept resisting National Socialism by continuously listening to jazz music and attending live performances. Instead of becoming increasingly negative, these teenagers upheld their positive connotations of jazz. Their 'black box,' as Kroes called the intangible moment when American culture was made fit for the receivers' frames of reference,<sup>193</sup> opposed that of the National Socialists. In turn, it is highly probable that these same opposing 'black boxes' were used to form an opinion and give meaning to American culture as a whole, as jazz music was more and more linked to this culture by Dutch National Socialists. By strongly connecting their interpretations of jazz with criticism on American culture, Nazi Germany caused the 'black box' of jazz music to merge with the 'black box' of American culture.

Therefore, after Pearl Harbor, both negative and positive opinions of jazz music could be projected on American culture. In this way, the Dutch youth became more positive and maybe even more receptive for Americanism due to National Socialist criticism. It can be concluded that National Socialism helped to alienate the 'Americanized' youth from the national Dutch culture by leading them towards the acceptance of American cultural norms and values. America came to be

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<sup>193</sup> Kroes, *If You've Seen One*, xi.

a counterculture during the Second World War. The Dutch youth loved jazz music, and with it, also embraced everything American culture had to offer. Fiske argued that “all commodities can be used by the consumer to construct meanings of self, of social identity and social relations.”<sup>194</sup> Both National Socialism and the Dutch youth themselves used jazz music to construct a social identity for Dutch teenagers, in this way reinforcing the dichotomy between pro- and anti-American in Dutch society during the Second World War.

This growing enthusiasm for American culture paved the way for later processes of Americanization in the Netherlands. Perceptions of America among the Dutch youth during the war formed the stepping stones for cultural Americanization of the Netherlands from 1945 onwards. The receptivity of Dutch teenagers for American culture, which developed over the course of the Second World War, also persisted in the years after the war. American cultural influence in Europe grew, and the popularity of jazz grew with it. The United States were seen as victors of the Second World War and claimed a leading position on the world stage. American culture prevailed in the Western hemisphere, while the Soviet Union seized cultural power in the Eastern hemisphere. Once again the world stood on the brink of war, and jazz once more became an important tool for the spread of American culture.

#### **4.3 Further research**

This thesis based its arguments on primary sources acquired through Delpher and the Dutch Jazz Archive (*Nederlands Jazz Archief*). It examined National Socialist periodicals, directly affiliated with the Nazi regime, such as *Storm*, *De Waag*, and *Het Nationale Dagblad*, as well as two popular Dutch newspapers that were published under German censorship and control: *Het Volk* and *Algemeen Handelsblad*. However, more is better in this case. Further research could look at more of these popular newspapers, such as for example *De Telegraaf*, to give a broader insight in Dutch reception of jazz during the Second World War. Moreover, it would be interesting to involve Dutch resistance periodicals, such as *Het Parool*, *Trouw*, *De Waarheid*, and *Je Maintiendrai*, in such an inquiry. What was their opinion on jazz music and American culture? Did they oppose the jazz criticism that emerged in Nazi-affiliated periodicals? Or did they also view jazz and American culture as undesired intruders? Furthermore, musical magazines could also be included in such a research. *De Jazzwereld*, for example, published many technical explanations of jazz music, and interviewed famous jazz musicians, both black and white. These kinds of magazines could give a thorough insight in how jazz musicians and music connoisseurs looked at jazz music, and new forms of jazz.

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<sup>194</sup> Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 11.

Although jazz music constituted an important example of American cultural penetration in the Netherlands, other American cultural phenomena should also be examined. This thesis only looked at jazz, but other American cultural outlets in the Netherlands during the Second World War might lead to different conclusions. In close relation to jazz music, dancing was also prohibited by the Nazi-regime in the Netherlands. Both American and English dances were criticized by older generations, while younger generations embraced it as part of their daily life. American literature constitutes another cultural phenomenon that might be interesting to examine. Were there any translated American books available during the war? How did these books shape Dutch perceptions of American culture?

Next to more primary sources and different case studies, further research can also examine the post-war period in the Netherlands, from 1944 to 1950, as these first years after the war saw the rise of America as a world power and the growing influence of American culture. Kleinhout already examined this period, but did not connect it directly with the process of Americanization. By examining this period in light of the process of Americanization, the relevance of criticism on jazz during the Second World War for this process would become even more evident. Besides, it would also clarify whether perceptions of American culture among the older Dutch generations did change after the war. Did negativism towards jazz and Americanism still prevail among older Dutch generations? Or was their view on jazz and American culture alternated due to the victorious American forces or the 'Americanized' Dutch youth?

## 5. Epilogue

After almost five years of German occupation, the first Canadian ground troops set foot on Dutch soil at 10.00 a.m. on September 12, 1944, just south of Maastricht. Together with the British military, their objective was to attack the German *Siegfried* line and push forward to Berlin. However, Operation *Market Garden*, as it was called, failed, because the last bridge across the Rhine River, near Arnhem, turned out to be a 'bridge too far.' This meant that the Western and Northern parts of the Netherlands remained occupied by the Germans. Dutch citizens in these regions suffered from a famine that caused many deaths.<sup>195</sup>

Military historian Wim Klinkert argues that the role of American troops during this operation was fairly limited. The South of Limburg emerged as the most 'Americanized' part of the Netherlands, because it became a 'rest and recreation area' for troops engaged in heavy combat in Germany and the Ardennes.<sup>196</sup> Nevertheless, Klinkert states, "it is clear that the Americans still occupy a prominent place in the Dutch collective memory. This may be due in part to the dominant role that the United States came to play in the Netherlands in the areas of the economy, culture, and the military in the years immediately following the war, which helped the Americans to distinguish themselves from the other Allies in the minds of the Dutch."<sup>197</sup>

However, as this thesis showed, culturally, America already established a dominant role in the Netherlands before and during the Second World War. Jazz music thrived among the younger generations and was a hotly debated topic. National Socialists perceived this early 'Americanized' youth as a real problem and after the attack on Pearl Harbor caused the jazz-debate to focus more on American culture in general. The overseas culture was approached with negativism in Dutch periodicals, with jazz music as one of its main components. After the war, this negative attitude towards jazz remained apparent in the Netherlands, but American culture had won the hearts and minds of many (young) Dutch citizens.

This enthusiasm for 'Americanism' had already emerged during the Second World War, as jazz music became highly popular among teenagers. Moreover, National Socialist periodicals talked about the 'Americanized youth' and criticized the waning of Dutch nationalism, which is an incentive for the influence of American culture in the Netherlands. After the war, the *American Dream* "beloofde Nederland precies dat waar we naar snakten," according to writer and music journalist Jan Donkers, "overvloed, comfort en een onbekommerde overgave aan plezier."<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Wim Klinkert, 'Crossing Borders: Americans and the liberation of the Netherlands,' in: Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, Giles Scot-Smith (eds.), *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations: 1609-2009* (Albany 2009) 566-571.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid, 565-566.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid, 574.

<sup>198</sup> Jan Donkers, *De Amerikaanse Droom in Nederland 1944-1969* (Nijmegen 2000) 5.

Especially Dutch teenagers were drawn to this new way of living. America was one of the main liberators of Europe, and its culture promised a renewed freedom and modernism. Therefore, everything American was hailed and welcomed with open arms by the younger Dutch generations.<sup>199</sup>

Nevertheless, jazz remained in the center of attention, as the debate about the music once again showed a dichotomy between pro- and anti-jazz. Arguments in this discussion mirrored the pre-war debate about jazz in many ways. Once again, a distinction between 'real' jazz and 'imitation' jazz emerged, and the primitivism of the music formed a much discussed topic. Moreover, modernists propagated that progress was essential for the music, while traditionalists saw the 1920s New Orleans jazz as the only 'real' form of jazz. The latter saw modern forms such as swing and bebop as too commercial and not authentic. Besides, the perceived fears for the rising popularity of the American music after the Second World War often mimicked those fears that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, and even those, that emerged during German occupation. Classical composers wanted to protect their market share in the musical branch, while official institutions feared for the deterioration of traditional norms, values, and moral.<sup>200</sup>

At first, the Dutch youth also struggled with the new American musical styles, as Kleinhout points out. Because the influx of new American culture had stagnated during the Second World War, Europe somewhat lagged behind the latest inventions in American jazz. Still, the enthusiasm among Dutch teenagers for everything American grew steadfastly. It became difficult for critics to be overtly negative about American culture, because its influence was felt throughout the whole of Europe. Moreover, the Dutch youth could not be persuaded to denounce American culture and replace it with Dutch music and cultural forms.<sup>201</sup>

This thesis showed that the roots of this enthusiasm for American culture among the Dutch youth might be found in the Second World War. National Socialists connected jazz more directly to American culture and distanced themselves from the 'Americanized' youth, in this way creating a gap between Dutch national culture, embraced by National Socialists and the old official institutions, and 'American international' culture, already embraced by the younger generations before the war, but extensively so during German occupation, when it became an act of defiance. Further research on the connection between jazz and Americanization during the post-war years could add valuable arguments to this thesis' conclusion.

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<sup>199</sup> Kleinhout, 'Amerikaanse culture invloed', in: *Jazz als probleem* [no page numbers].

<sup>200</sup> Kleinhout, 'Het jazzdebat', in: *Jazz als probleem* [no page numbers].; and: Van de Leur, *Jazz behind the dikes*, 11-12.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.



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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines Dutch National Socialist periodicals in order to give a compelling answer to the question: *How did National Socialist perceptions of jazz music shape Dutch perceptions of American culture during the Second World War (1940-1945)?* It argues that a distinction can be made between pre- and post-Pearl Harbor interpretations of jazz in these periodicals. This dichotomy is marked by a shift from anti-jazz criticism to anti-American criticism. Furthermore, it also shows how National Socialist jazz criticism has reinforced the contradiction between the older and younger generations and alienated the Dutch 'Americanized' youth from the national Dutch culture by leading them towards the acceptance of American cultural norms and values. This thesis forms a so-called 'pre-history' of the Americanization process as it occurred in the Netherlands after the Second World War, because it argues that the first incentives for this process already emerged during the German occupation. In this way, it approaches Dutch jazz from a different angle and adds to the current Dutch jazz studies the debate on Americanization.