ably erroneous" (p. 44). Accordingly "the idea that radio is at this moment a tool for mass *education*, for considerably increasing *serious* responses in the community is groundless" (p. 48. Italics mine). The mass of evidence assembled (especially in Chapter 4) in support of this conclusion as well as the competence of the methods of inquiry leaves little escape from this and many other important findings.

It would be easy to fill many pages with interesting results of this exceptionally readable and informative monograph. Comparisons of the radio listening and newspaper reading habits of people by age, sex, education, economic condition, rural and urban residence, and illuminating cross-classifications and inter-relations of these and other factors provide a gold mine of information as to the type of public reached by different kinds of programs and materials. To present material of this kind in a style which will hold the interest of the general reader is itself somewhat of an achievement. Any appraisal of the implications of radio as a social influence will have to draw heavily upon this volume. It is to be hoped that the author and his able assistants will at some future time give us an equally illuminating analysis of the biases and discriminations which characterize the selection of programs and material of the "serious" broadcasts.

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Hobson, Wilder, *American Jazz Music*. W. W. Norton & Company. New York 1939. (230 pp.; $2.50)

Sargeant, Winthrop, *Jazz Hot and Hybrid*. Arrow Editions. New York 1938. (IX and 234 pp.; $5.00)

Wilder Hobson's volume presents a survey of the history of jazz—or, more precisely, the "story" of it—intended for popular consumption. His point of departure is the thesis that jazz is a "language," not a mere agglomerate of tricks. The basis of this idea is not indicated in detail. The language of jazz is praised as being natural, original and spontaneous, without any attempt being made at an historical or pragmatic analysis of its elements. The notion of spontaneity is applied to the folk music features of jazz, particularly those taken from the musical store of the American Negro.

Hobson's folkloristic persuasion permits him to draw a sharp dichotomy between genuine jazz and the standardized mass article—current entertainment music is not covered in the plan of the book. However, the actual existence of a clear-cut distinction between spontaneous folk music and commercialized mass production is as problematic as it is alluring. Any attempt to abstract jazz from the features of commodity production inherent in it is prone to fall prey to that type of romanticism which is fostered by the music industry in order to increase its sales figures.

Hobson has not altogether escaped this danger. For him, the existence and success of jazz suffice to justify it, although with many reservations. The lack of critical perspective is responsible for the fact that in its latter part the book resolves itself more and more into a series of monographical sketches of the established band musicians, from Armstrong, Beiderbecke and Henderson to the heroes of swing. Incidentally, it is just these sketches which are somewhat vague. They do not contain any precise technical characterization

and are sometimes all too similar to the trade-marks under which today's bands are marketed.

Winthrop Sargeant's book has much more serious scientific intentions and is much more adequate to the subject matter. It offers very careful, minute descriptions of the technical peculiarities of jazz, especially its rhythm and melody. The penetrating analyses of the supposed jazz idiom yield the insight that jazz is far from a language. As a matter of fact, its superficial freedom and its improvisatory lack of restraint can be reduced to a few standardized formulas or "patterns": "Jazz, at its most complex, is still a very simple matter of incessantly repeated formulas" (Sargeant, p. 90). As early as 1905 and 1910 these formulas, particularly the rhythmical ones, were completely assembled in the ragtime-style—that ragtime style from which current opinion, shared by Hobson, is so eager to sever jazz. It may be concluded from Sargeant's book that there is as little fundamental difference between ragtime and jazz as between jazz and swing. What is called the development of syncopated popular music actually consists of presenting that which is always identical as something ever new. The styles commercially promoted at any given time are scarcely more than crude attempts to add a new glitter to shopworn material by changing its label and make-up.

Sargeant regards it as his main task to show the origins of jazz patterns in the forms of Negro folk music. This tendency seduces even him at times to overrate the improvisatory freedom of jazz production, although as soon as he carries through his technical analyses he becomes fully aware that it is not true freedom.

He regards it as the decisive difference between jazz and European art music that jazz is not molded according to the categories of "composing" and particularly of musical notation, but rather according to those of performance and immediate sound. This thesis is open to discussion. First, jazz improvisation is largely an interchangeable substitute for regular, fixed and written musical structures, and Sargeant as a musician knows this very well. The authority of the written music at any moment is still apparent behind the liberty of the performed music. Further, there are limits to the possibility of notating art music as well as folk music. A performance of a Beethoven quartet that conveyed exclusively what was prescribed in the music would not make sense. Finally, the art of rhythmical notation has been so far developed in advanced European art music, that these improvisations, which Sargeant regards as beyond the possibility of being written, fall strictly within the scope of notation. The idea that a solo chorus by Armstrong could not be written down, whereas a quartet by Webern could, is a somewhat shaky one to maintain—not to mention the difficulty of determining where and when improvisation still exists in actual jazz practice.

Both books avoid societal conclusions. Hobson consciously remains on the level of reportage, and Sargeant is understandably irritated by rubber-stamp phrases such as "jazz as the music of the machine age," or as "the stimulant of metropolitan vice" (cf. Sargeant, p. 9). He tries to escape beyond the boundary of such notions and to settle within the more secure borders of technological and ethnological scrutiny. Yet it is precisely the facts gathered here which almost force a societal interpretation.

With regard to the theoretical views represented by this periodical, especially in the matter of jazz and listening habits in the field of popular music, it may be appropriate to go into some of the details of both books.

First of all, it must be admitted that there is an undeniable connection between jazz and the folklore of the American Negro, although the commercialization of the concept of primitivity casts doubt on primitivity itself. Indeed, the interconnection is itself far from completely clear. Hobson says, "that there is a close connection between the Negro folk music and jazz is obvious; but it is not open to what might be called exact scholarship." (Hobson, p. 29.) One generally regards the Negro spirituals as a pre-form. However, there is at least a possibility that their melodies are of white origin and were merely transformed by the Negroes of the South (Sargeant, p. 25). There can be at best only negative proof of the Negro origin of jazz; the folk music of white Americans shows none of the characteristic elements of jazz (Sargeant, p. 103). On the other hand, even in the light of Sargeant's presentation, the results yielded by a comparison of American and African Negro music are so modest that an ethnological tracing of jazz is hardly feasible (Sargeant, p. 189f). Thus one is necessarily led to consider societal conditions. It may well be imagined that even the Negro spirituals which divert the impassioned outpourings of slaves and their grandchildren to Christian authority and subject them to this authority, reveal something societal. The pattern of pagan fetishism, Christian submissiveness and commodity-mindedness is clearly discernible in such scenes as the "evolution of a spiritual" described by Natalie Curtis-Burlin in her Hampton Collection of Negro Folk Songs (Sargeant, p. 19 f). The most decisive feature of today's current jazz, the fitting in of the break into the norm, can be spotted in the hymn singing of the South: "each singer would start off on a little vocal journey of his or her own, wandering up, down or around in strange pentatonic figures, but coming back at the appointed instant to common ground" (Hobson, p. 33—quotation from Abbe Niles' preface to W. C. Handy's Blues).

The Negro spirituals are vocal music; the apparent spontaneity of jazz is due largely to the transference of vocal particularities to instrumental media (Hobson, p. 31). Effects such as the laughing trumpet and the baby cry are vocalizations. They imitate inflections of the human voice in singing and speaking (Hobson, p. 43 f; Sargeant, p. 6). The instrumental music behaves as if it were vocal, the mechanism as if it had a voice of its own. Even in present-day swing, the pseudo-morphosis of speaking, singing and playing is highly significant. It has not escaped Hobson's attention (Hobson, p. 46). If there is a specific difference between jazz and ragtime, it lies within this pseudo-morphosis. Ragtime was exclusively instrumental, in fact, limited to the piano. Sargeant rightly defines the piano as the instrument of the ragtime epoch. The pseudo-vocalization of jazz corresponds to the elimination of the piano, the "private" middle-class instrument, in the era of the phonograph and radio.

The vocalization of instrumental sound means the introduction of certain irregularities into the realm of the instrumental. The characteristic "dirty tones" (Hobson, p. 45) and "worried notes" (Sargeant, p. 132) are effects of the deceptive "humanization" of the mechanism.

At this point the inadequacy of a merely descriptive method becomes obvious. Such a method cannot discover anything about the gratification associated with "dirty" and "worried" tones, which replace the normal tones and still allow them to be felt. This gratification is sadistic. It is the lust that the oppressed individual experiences when he mutilates the language in slang

and when he distorts the musical norm in jazz. This is his revenge for being subject to the objective media of communication without ever being allowed to command them himself. The false notes in jazz correspond socio-psychologically to the black teeth drawn by naughty pencils to deface the grinning beauties in subway advertisements. A two-fold protest is here, directed against the individual himself no less than against the trickery and the false promise of the object. The naughtiness is ready to submit to any punishment. The plaintiveness of its sound expresses the longing for such submission. The vocalization of the instrumental serves not only to produce the appearance of the human, it serves also to assimilate the voice into the realm of the instrumental: to make it, as it were, an appendage to the machine.

Hobson calls the "dirty tones," "sonorities suggestive of hoarse or harsh vocal effects." There is no historical doubt as to whose voice the hoarse one is: "the lost origins of these songs . . . were among 'barroom pianists, nomadic laborers, watchers of incoming trains and steamboats, streetcorner guitar players, strumpets, and outcasts'" (Hobson, p. 34). In this sphere of origins the more radical, unpolished jazz has its abode even now. Hobson says, ". . . its chief market was in big, lower-class dance halls, mostly Negro, where the dancers really meant business, and perhaps its only sizable 'respectable' market was at the more intoxicated college house parties of the Prohibition period" (Hobson, p. 131). Today's mass music stems from the *lumpenproletariat*, and it appears that it fufills its promises only there, while it cheats the masses as soon as it holds them in its grip. Hence the reproach of pornography has been present from the very beginning and one might think sometimes that jazz invites it itself, masochistically aiming at its own liquidation. Simultaneously, the element of ill-repute assists commercial exploitation. It reflects, among other things, the prevailing social attitude toward the Negro and "in this connection it may be noted that despite the large number of brilliant Negro instrumentalists, there are none regularly engaged as radio 'house men' or in the motion picture studio orchestras. The inequality of opportunity for the negro is nowhere more clearly marked than in this field where he is often so specially talented" (Hobson, p. 172).

The tendency of jazz to satisfy the suppressed desires of the listeners by mutilating its own musical patterns reveals the aspect of jazz that once appeared to be modernistic. Jazz is prone to draw the supposedly noble—of which one knows oneself to be cheated—into the dirt; it tends to surrender altogether the magic language of music to the world of things, to permeate it with practical objects of all sorts which one scorns by denying them their actual function. This explains the intercommunication between jazz, certain cubistic manifestations and Dadaism. These intercommunications lie at hand in the *lumpenproletariat* atmosphere. "In the early years of the century Negro dance musicians played in the New Orleans bordellos, and the New Orleans City Guide states that the theatres and saloons of the city were ballyhooed by a white band, with a leader called Stale Bread (one of the players was known as Family Haircut), which improvised so-called 'spasm music' on such instruments as cigar-box violins, horns, pebble-filled gourds, and rude bass viols made out of half-casks" (Hobson, p. 38). But even from the West End of London comes an account of a jazz band of 1919 "consisting of piano, violin, two banjos, concertina, cornet, and . . . a 'utility man' playing traps, gongs, rattles, railway whistle, and motor hooter" (Hobson, p. 106). When jazz finally becomes tame these tendencies are softened into penchants for

articraft; e. g., the use of picturesque percussion instruments which no longer have functional value within the music itself (see Sargeant, p. 198) and the preference for extra-musical objects falls into line with the general trend of debunking the dance. Hobson's explanation of this trend is well worth consideration: the will to make dancing easier for middle-aged people. "And if the ragtime two-steps or one-steps had been somewhat rapid for many of the middle-aged, that objection had been overcome in 1914 by the dance team of Jeanette Warner and Billy Kent, who had introduced the fox trot, the music for which, as Vernon Castle explained, was 'an ordinary rag half as fast as . . . the one-step'" (Hobson, p. 97). The triumph of the fox trot is the triumph of an apparently loose, irregular walking. This tendency is amalgamated with that towards vocalization. The "spoken" melody represents, as against the musical-symmetrical, the contingency of daily life. Sargeant says of the solo exhibitions of trumpet: "From the abstract musical point of view they are often chaotic, resembling recitative or even prose inflection. And the recitative and prose usually bear a close resemblance to Negro speech in their intonations" (Sargeant, p. 64). Music based upon the use of whiskey jugs as instruments tends toward prose (Hobson, p. 96).

That all these ambitions, however, stay within narrow limits, that they remain within the conventional and are themselves becoming conventionalized, is corroborated by Hobson as well as by Sargeant. The unremitting basic convention is the identical groundbeat: ". . . for those who enjoy jazz the beat has become a convention; the attention is naturally given to what the convention makes possible" (Hobson, p. 48). The excesses of jazz can be understood only in relation to the groundbeat. ". . . the polyrhythmic designs of a jazz band depend on the rocksteady maintenance of basic rhythmic suggestions on and around the 4-4 beat" (See Hobson, p. 52). Hobson raises the question of why the convention of the groundbeat is always observed. His answer is the common-sense one that it is difficult enough for most ears to understand improvisation within an established framework; without such a framework the listener would be altogether disorientated. In other words, the sacrifice of jazz liberty to convention springs from the postulate of easy understandability and therewith from the desiderata of the market. It is precisely at this point that the commodity character of jazz reveals itself as the very core of the whole *genre*. Moreover, the more the cross-rhythms are developed and the more the accents of the groundbeat are suspended, the more the cross-rhythms tend to become symmetrical in themselves as "pseudo-bars." They form a sort of second convention, a derivative, as it were, of the first one. The ground rhythm is projected obliquely upon the system of syncopation (see Hobson, p. 53). This regularization of improvisation is one of the main characteristics of swing and is evidently bound up with the total commercialization of improvising (Hobson, p. 87). Similar considerations lead Sargeant to formulations such as that about the pseudo-primitive orgies of juvenile jitterbugs (Sargeant, p. 5). Sargeant is prepared to be very skeptical about the spontaneity of improvisation in today's jazz: "Most of what is popularly known (even among swing fans) as 'hot jazz' belongs to this category of remembered and repeated, partially rehearsed, music" (Sargeant, p. 31).

The standardization of freedom has its technological as well as its societal aspects. Technologically it occurs as soon as the attempt is made to develop the cross-rhythms beyond their rudimentary single appearances. The ex-

pansion of the bands has an analagous effect. ". . . the more intricate the individual rhythms become, the fewer the players must be if the articulation of the whole is not to be lost, especially in jazz 'counterpoint,' where the players must be able to hear each other as they play" (Hobson, p. 71, cf. Sargeant, p. 200). However, the necessity to draw out the cross-rhythms as well as to expand the bands, is again prescribed by the market. "The natural music, as these men play it for their own pleasure, has a limited public market. Hence most of them make a living in the big business of popular dance music, all of which has been generally known as 'jazz,' and most of which, similarly, is rapidly coming to be known as 'swing' " (Hobson, p. 74). This desideratum of the market involves the predominance of the hit tune over the specific jazz treatment. "It is the popular tune which is important and this is stressed. As the pianist Arthur Schutt has said with some eloquence, in Metronome: 'By all means make the melody of any given song or tune predominant. . . . There is no misunderstanding when commercialism reigns supreme' " (Hobson, p. 85). In spite of his disregard of social influences, Hobson notes the following observation: "There is thus a constant pressure on the players to please the audience at the expense of relaxed invention—which they can practice at home, anyway. And under this pressure, also, the ensemble ease and sympathy are likely to disappear" (Hobson, p. 155). These are the very tendencies which are opposed by the swing "culture" of small, highly trained ensembles such as Benny Goodman's trio and quartet. The latter serve a small audience of expert, sportsmanlike enthusiasts who function as the vanguard and as propagandists among the majority of listeners. The rest of the music labeled as jazz belongs to that *juste milieu* visualized by Hobson as a product of commercial decay, by Sargeant as an inescapable and necessary "hybrid."

As far as the technique of composition is concerned, both books have certain contributions to make. Hobson calls the simultaneous improvisation of several instruments jazz counterpoint. However, he has insight into the deceptive character of this counterpoint: jazz knows genuine polyphony as little as it knows genuine melodic freedom and genuine polyrhythm. The so-called counterpoints merely circumscribe the basic harmony: "But many of the appalled have probably not understood that the basic harmonic progression, as it always is in jazz, is known to all the group improvisers. On this basis, each invents a melody guided by his own feeling and the sound of his fellows" (Hobson, p. 59). Sargeant draws the full implication of this discussion of the contrapuntal nature of jazz improvisation: "Jazz . . . is not essentially a contrapuntal type of music—not, at least, in the sense that that term applies to European music. The blues, and subsequent jazz, employed the conventional four-voiced polyphonic structure of European music only sporadically. This Negroid idiom involved a sustained melody moving over a throbbing rhythmic background. Melodic basses and sustained inner voices were not an essential part of blues, or of jazz, structure" (Sargeant, p. 196 f).

He is no less critical of the so-called harmonic innovations. He knows that jazz harmony is borrowed from the European, particularly from the harmony of the impressionists. It is necessary to note here that American folk music, particularly the so-called hillbilly and cowboy songs of the whites, has crystallized certain harmonic formulas similar to those of the impressionists. They are characterized by the actual rejection of any har-

monic "progression" according to the steps of the key, and rather glide from dominant to dominant—a sort of folklorist *faux bourdon* effect. This is called "barber shop harmony" (See Sargeant, p. 168ff). It would be important for any theory of jazz to analyze the origin and significance of this harmony. It may be characterized by a general "lack of resistance," and has the tendency to let itself glide without positing definite harmonic relationships. In the barber shop chords the general submissiveness of jazz permeates its harmony as well.

Sargeant takes particular note of the melodic structure of jazz and its system of coordinates. He constructs a scale with blue notes at two points, neutral third and neutral seventh, respectively, with the possibility of alternating the big third with the small third and the big seventh with the small seventh (Cf. Sargeant, p. 134). This scale defines the norm of the dirty tones as opposed to the norm of occidental music. And it is in this scale that Sargeant sees the main Negro heritage of jazz. Of course, it applies more to jazz treatment than to the tunes subject to this treatment, the indifference and meanness of which are unequivocally stated by Sargeant.

As far as the *form* of jazz in its more specific sense is concerned, both authors concede the variation character of jazz. The variation form of jazz, however, leads nowhere to intrinsic motifical work, but to mere paraphrasing of the harmonic-melodic skeleton: "There has been almost no extended thematic writing, or contrapuntal writing, for jazz bands" (Hobson, p. 70). Sargeant speaks about a very simple type of variation form; ". . . considered as we consider 'musical form' in Western music, jazz has a rather elementary structure. The hot ensemble simply presents a theme, which may be improvised or taken from some popular melody, and proceeds to make a series of rhythmic and melodic variations on it. The harmonic structure of the theme is not altered in the variations. The formula is that usually expressed in theory books as A-A″-A‴ etc.; in other words the simple theme-and-variation type of structure" (Sargeant, p. 211 f). It is obvious that such a mechanical attitude toward form from the very beginning contradicts the idea of improvisatory freedom. This should suffice to exclude any romanticization of jazz. Oddly enough, however, the most essential element of jazz form appears to have escaped the attention of both authors—namely, that its conventional form-attitude tends to suspend consciousness of form (in this respect again a parody of impressionism), tends, as it were, to spatialize music.

Jazz is governed by simultaneity. That is to say, the temporal sequence of events is not involved in the sense of the musical phenomena. In principle all the details of jazz are interchangeable in time and Sargeant observes quite rightly that any jazz piece could end at any given moment. This technique, hailed above all else as being rhythmical, is in reality neutral in regard to musical time. That is probably why virtuosi jazz musicians, such as Ellington and Basie, as far as possible avoid caesuras which might hint at any temporal articulation of form. In jazz one substitutes the immobility of an ever-identical movement for time.

Hobson defines *jazz* itself as "a more or less vocalized, personal instrumental expression whose melodic and harmonic, as well as percussive, elements move in stress-and-accent syncopation in subtle momentums which are the products of an instinct for suspended rhythm" (Hobson, p. 72). One cannot say that this definition leads very far. Certain hints as to the

origins of the *word* jazz are more fruitful. Probably it stems from the French still spoken in New Orleans and is derived from *jaser,* meaning to chat, babble. This would suggest the relation to the "melody of speech" as well as to the contingencies of everyday life. Or it can be related to an old term familiar in American minstrel shows, *jasbo,* "meaning antics guaranteed to bring applause" (Hobson, p. 94). This etymology calls to mind the element of trickery in jazz and the commercial interest present in its very origin. At any rate, in the beginning the word had a sexual meaning and appears to have come into common use among anti-jazz competitors who promoted it as an abusive term for the new fad in New Orleans. As early as 1914, however, the word functioned as an advertising slogan. "In 1914, when the jazz bands had their first, faddish success, the word jazz was immediately taken over for its novelty value by dance musicians whose playing had little or no relation to the natural music" (Hobson, p. 75).

Some light is thrown upon the earliest pre-history of jazz in Sargeant's chapter, "The Evolution of Jazz Rhythm in Popular Music." His examples date back as far as 1834. At that time there were popular ditties such as "Turkey in the Straw" and "Old Zip Coon" in characteristic cakewalk rhythm, which contain in a rudimentary form the jazz idea of the pseudo-bar (Two-fourths becoming 3/16 plus 3/16 plus 2/16). The relation of jazz to military band music is mentioned only occasionally. During the first World War numerous American military bands which went to France had their jazz ensembles with them (Sargeant, p. 105). Sargeant recalls the role of the saxophone in the military band and the use of military marches as two-steps. "Military marches often did duty as two-steps during the later decades of the nineteenth century" (Sargeant, p. 195).

For the inevitable concept of *swing,* Hobson cites the following definition: "a band swings when its collective improvisation is rhythmically integrated" (Hobson, p. 16). This definition is problematic in every respect, because of the over-emphasis laid upon the improvisatory elements as well as upon the simultaneity of different improvisations. Later Hobson conceives of swing as a counter-tendency against commercialization, more or less in the same sense in which the small highly syncopated ensembles withdrew themselves from the broad stream of musical mass consumption. But even this does not suffice as a definition, because, as events have shown, the commodity character of popular music at once gets a hold on the specialized articraft for which swing stands. "The word 'swing' has become completely ambiguous. In some quarters 'swing' even seems to be regarded as if it were some sort of standardized commodity, such as the new-model Buicks, which could be judged from any given sample" (Hobson, p. 84). Finally, Hobson appears to incline toward the opinion that swing must be regarded as a mixture of jazz tricks and current hit music. "The 'swing' fad, which still continues as this is written, has largely been built on the commercially salable mixture of a certain amount of jazz playing and a great many of those compromise, popular melody-and-jazz orchestrations referred to in the chapter on commercial and concert jazz" (Hobson, p. 152).

Sargeant's results fundamentally agree with those of Hobson: swing is a counter-movement against the standardization of jazz, which quickly falls victim itself to this standardization. "The swing fad has, of course, been a reaction against the studied product of the large ensembles, and toward the primitive art of Negroid improvisation. Like most fads it too has

become sophisticated and conventionalized. As this book goes to press the term 'swing' is being universally applied to a ubiquitous variety of noise in which real improvisation has about as much place as it has in a logarithmic table" (Sargeant, p. 201).

There remains only the question of whether standardization is actually an injustice done to swing, or whether the supposed counter-movement against standardization itself inherently implies standardization. Sargeant's analysis of the patterns of improvisation heightens such a suspicion.

The counter-concept of swing, *sweet,* is not much more lucid. Sargeant summarizes as follows: "Small differences aside, then, we have distinguished for our present purposes two general types of jazz both of which represent types of performance rather than types of composition. They are 'hot' jazz and 'sweet' or sophisticated jazz. The former is more purely Negroid, more purely improvisatory, and comparatively independent of composed 'tunes.' The latter is the dance and amusement music of the American people as a whole. The tunes on which it is based issue from Tin Pan Alley, the centre of the popular song-publishing industry. These tunes are, some of them, purely Anglo-Celtic or Central European in character, some of them pseudo-Negroid" (Sargeant, p. 235 f). If this is correct, there ranges under the category of sweet the great mass of entertainment music that uses jazz elements but does not indulge in more complicated rhythmical formulas or appeal to expert listeners. Apparently the historical tendency is toward this type in spite of the manipulated swing fad. The once aggressive has become harmless. " 'Sweet' commercial jazz today is different in many respects from the ragtime of 1910. It is orchestral where ragtime was jerky and boisterous. Its melodies are vocal, based on tunes that are originally created as songs. Its composers and, what is more important, its arrangers, are likely to be eclectic in their choice of musical material. Its harmonic and orchestral effects are often borrowed from the romantic and impressionistic composers of Europe. Its general character is more romantic and sentimental, less primitive, than that of ragtime" (Sargeant, p. 117). It must be noted that sophisticated here means not rhythmically refined, but, rather, "polished" and "civilized" and therefore even more primitive, in its more strict technical sense.

The connection between jazz and the eccentric clown is conspicuously neglected, although discussions about tap dancing lead to the very threshold of this relationship. Yet there is no lack of material, particularly from the earlier period of jazz: "Within a few months after the Dixieland arrived in New York, the word jazz merely meant any rackety, acrobatic dance music" (Hobson, p. 76). A patriarch of jazz, Ted Lewis, is described as an eccentric. "Lewis at his best was a sort of loony apotheosis of the ragtime spirit, strutting, twirling a baton, offering burlesque histrionics with a dancer's sense of pace and posture" (Hobson, p. 81). What is actually of the utmost interest is that Hobson associates the element of the eccentric with that of the castrated. He quotes a passage from Virgil Thompson, who describes Armstrong, the eccentric trumpet player par excellence, as a master of musical art comparable only ". . . to the great castrati of the eighteenth century" (Hobson, p. 121). A description of the band of Mike Riley identifies eccentricities as acts of mutilation committed against the instruments: "The band squirted water and tore clothes, and Riley offered perhaps the greatest of trombone comedy acts, an insane rendition of Dinah during

which he repeatedly dismembered the horn and reassembled it erratically until the tubing hung down like brass furnishings in a junk shop, with a vaguely harmonic honk still sounding from one or more of the loose ends" (Hobson, p. 161). Against the background of such acts the theory of the "jazz subject" developed by the reviewer might appear less lofty.

If the eccentric features of jazz are somewhat neglected, the representative of the eccentric in the technique of compositoin—the *syncope* in its relation to the basic rhythm—is focussed the more sharply. Hobson takes only the first step in the direction of a theory of syncope. "For those who like psychoanalytic suggestions, it might be said that the ragtime public enjoyed being moved out of the rut of the established beat" (Hobson, p. 26). For it is decisive against this supposition that the established beat is reestablished constantly and even that it remains effective during the syncopation as the inherent measure of the latter. Hobson feels a legitimate suspicion against this measure, which, however, he attributes somewhat maliciously to the "modernists" instead of making it his own case: "The ultra-modernists in composition go so far as to pronounce taboo upon rhythm, and even omit the perpendicular lines on their bars of written music, so that the risk of a monotonous pulsation is done away with" (Hobson, p. 107 f). Here the insight into the merely pseudo-modern character of jazz, its false freedom, the uniformity of its supposedly multifold rhythm lie at hand.

Sargeant's analyses lead more profoundly to a theory of syncope. To be sure, the two basic types he enumerates, namely simple syncopation and the formation of pseudo-bars, are not ultimately distinct from each other, because, according to Sargeant's own explanation, even the simplest syncopation contains within itself elementary pseudo-bars. However, his interpretation of the syncope as a mere substitution of the down beat, is all the more important. It localizes the fictitious character of jazz in the very center of the technical procedure. "A syncopation often gives the impression of anticipating a normal beat, as the ear tends to expect a normal one, and accepts the appearance of the abnormal one as its hurried or advanced representative" (Sargeant, p. 38). The syncopation is a living "as if." The substitution theory gives significance to Sargeant's interpretation of the "umpateedle" rhythm (Sargeant, p. 54). The punctuation reinforces the effect of the down beat and thus indirectly the effect of the syncope contrasting the groundbeat. The law of syncopation, as formulated by Sargeant, actually conceives of the syncope as a function of the strength of the very groundbeat with which it does *not* coincide. The power of the break is, as it were, drawn from the power of the convention itself. "A syncopation, or syncopative accent, is striking in direct proportion to the weakness of the metric beat on which it enters. Hence the effect, through 'umpateedle,' has been intensified" (Sargeant, p. 55).

Further, it is a new discovery that the relation between groundbeat and syncope has to be understood as involving an historical process. The groundbeats have defended themselves against the submissive scorn of the syncope as well as they could. But the driving force of the malicious trick proved to be stronger: "Even in the rags of the early nineteen hundreds a certain reluctance to override these beats with syncopation and polyrhythmic cycles persisted. The prim, four-square structure of the old reels and horn-

pipes, put up a valiant defense against the new influence. But the development of polyrhythmic freedom was not to be denied indefinitely, even though the Anglo-Celtic tradition and the structural peculiarities of the European notational system were pitted against it. By the turn of the century the besieged strong beats began to yield here and there" (Sargeant, p. 108).

Sargeant's final theory of the syncope largely coincides with that of the reviewer. "The interruption of rhythmic regularity produces a feeling of unrest. The listener's rhythmic faculties are thrown off balance, and he gropes instinctively for a re-orientation. His groping is attended by a certain sense of stimulation or excitement. A resumption of regularity is greeted with a feeling of relief" (Sargeant, p. 203). He aptly describes the syncope as "rhythmic discord longing for its solution." The ritual of revelation by which the "jazz subject" becomes aware of its identity with the social power of the groundbeat to which it believed itself opposed, is thus identified by Sargeant: "The listener is thrown for the moment on unmapped and confusing ground. The basic rhythm ceases to offer its familiar thumping landmarks. The solo dangles dizzyingly without support, and then, just as the listener has about abandoned hope of re-orienting himself, the fundamental rhythm resumes its orderly sway, and a feeling of relief ensues" (Sargeant, p. 205).

At this point Sargeant becomes aware of the illusory character of the whole process: "In this process the fundamental rhythm is not really destroyed. The perceptive listener holds in his mind a continuation of its regular pulse even though the orchestra has stopped marking it. And when the orchestra resumes its rhythmic function, it continues the series of mentally sustained pulses, its entrance coinciding precisely with one of them. The situation during the silent pulses is one that challenges the listener to hold his bearings. If he has any sort of rhythmic sense he will not be content to lose himself. If he does not feel the challenge, or is perfectly content to lose himself, then he is one of those who will never understand the appeal of jazz" (Sargeant, p. 206; cf. Hobson, p. 49). To comprehend this appeal of jazz means only to be ready to find the gesture of freedom while actually there is no freedom. The achievement of the expert listener is limited to his not being confused by any subjective temptation while obeying the rhythmical law.

Sargeant correctly compares the kind of integration achieved by jazz with the happy ending of the moving picture. Whereas everyone knows the ideological role of the ending of a film, Sargeant for the first time brings the same phenomenon to the fore in the field of musical mass communication. Jazz is "a 'get together' art for 'regular fellows.' In fact it emphasizes their very 'regularity' by submerging individual consciousness in a sort of mass self-hypnotism. . . . In the social dimension of jazz, the individual will submits, and men become not only equal but virtually indistinguishable" (Sargeant, p. 217). This is an astonishing statement from a musician who does not intend to raise any sociological questions. The link between the societal and the aesthetic process, however, is the technique of mechanical reproduction. Jazz and the radio match each other as if they were patterned in the same mold. One might almost say that jazz is the sort of music which in its life performance already appears as if it were trans-

mitted by radio. Sargeant grasps even this relation: "already the flexible idiom of jazz has found a strong foothold in the technologically changed situation" (Sargeant, p. 222).

T. W. ADORNO (New York),
with the assistance of EUNICE COOPER.

Abbott, Wilbur Cortez, ed., Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Mass. 1937, 1939. Vol. I: 1599-1649. (759 pp.; $5.00) Vol. II: 1649-1653 (806 pp.; $5.00)

Petegorsky, David W., *Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War.* A Study of the Social Philosophy of Gerrard Winstanley. Victor Gollancz. London 1940. (254 pp.; 7s. 6d.)

Professor Abbott's edition of *Cromwell's Writings and Speeches* gives us far more than the title indicates. It is, in fact, a comprehensive biography of Cromwell and his times, interspersed with Cromwell's utterances, verbal or written. The task which Professor Abbott has performed is stupendous. The quality of the edition is outstanding and its value for the final elucidation of this period, so decisive for European and American history, can hardly be overrated. The first volume covers the years 1599 to 1649, that is, Cromwell's early life and the civil war until the king's death. The important sections of this volume are primarily those dealing with Cromwell's early parliamentary activities. Professor Abbott's interpretation and the documents which he reproduces make it clear that Cromwell's chief concerns during that period were religious problems. I also consider of high value the chapters dealing with Cromwell's activities as Lieutenant General.

The second volume, comprising the years from 1649 to 1653, reaches from the beginning of the Commonwealth to the dissolution of Parliament. This volume also contains an excellent index to the first two volumes, indispensable in a book of this kind. The wealth of information contained in volume two is so overwhelming that, in a short review like this, it is impossible to select any problem for discussion. The very detailed analysis of the military campaigns is perhaps not so important as the documentation of Cromwell's emergence as a dictator. In order fully to evaluate the relation between democracy and the dictatorship, we shall have to wait for the remaining two volumes. That connection is of paramount importance not only for the study of the puritan revolution but for that of the French revolution and even of National Socialism.

Professor Abbott's historiography keeps well within the great tradition of Gardiner and Firth. The method has definite advantages in that it allows us to learn the political, religious, and military movements. Yet it has its drawbacks in that it neglects to put the religious and political struggles in the framework of the great social movements which tore English society asunder during the civil war. We would be able fully to understand the significance of the profound political transformation during that period only if we possessed an economic history of the civil war of the same precision and wealth of information as that contained in the writings of Gardiner, Firth and Abbott. Some preparatory work has been done by the two German socialists, Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky. Their work, however, though very stimulating, does in no way fulfill the condition of an economic history.