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A COLLECTION OF INVENTIONS: RADIO, REEDUCATION, AND THE
POSTWAR GERMAN PUBLIC SPHERE

By

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ABSTRACT

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August 1, 2016

Following the Germans' unconditional surrender in May 1945, the Allied Powers introduced a formal occupation and reeducation process, directing Germany toward democratic self-governance. This study will consider the role of radio broadcasting in the occupation project. While many works have been completed on the political revival of postwar Germany, little scholarship has been conducted with emphasis on the impact of German broadcasting's role on reshaping German culture. Examining radio programming from Hamburg's *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* from 1945 to 1956, this thesis explores the creation of a democratically-informed German public sphere in the decade following the Second World War. The primary research for this project was conducted in the Hamburg State Archives.

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INTRODUCTION

Prelude:

January 29, 1947. Hugo Cremer – reluctantly – separated himself from his bed. He and his wife had to get moving if there was going to be anything left at all. Upon leaving the security of his blankets, it hit him. The empty, darkened stove in the corner of the apartment acted as both influence and painful reminder- “*Keine Kohle, kein Holz.*”¹ Cremer stepped out. The thermometer read twelve degrees below freezing as he made his way to the nearby railway station. As usual, the same women and children had already arrived. Carrying their buckets they moved between the tracks, crouching and picking up the portions of coal that fell from the railway carts in the time elapsed since their previous scavenge. Although there were still enough pieces to fuel a small fire, it was already too late. Railway officials, returning the coals to their ‘rightful’ place between the rails, were now removing what the soot-handed foragers had not been able to remove from plain sight. With the seizure complete, Cremer turned back for home. Empty-handed, he checked the gas and electric meter. Düsseldorf’s particularly chilling January amplified the Cremers’ usage beyond financial means, making a small breakfast out of the question. Besides, his daughter, having come down with a case of the mumps, had to get to the doctor. After a two-hour trip to the bakery, his wife also returned unsuccessful- same story as yesterday. The bakery had too little flour and coal to meet the demands of their

¹ ‘No coal, no wood.’

customers. The post brought nothing but medical bills, and the paper, with its customary contradictions and revolving array of stories, reassured Cremer that its only accuracy was the date. Because the prospect of working was slim, Cremer's day passed more quickly in thought. Ranging from the family-oriented deliberations of an apprehensive father – “How will I get fuel? What will we eat tomorrow?” – to the more general inquiries about his *Existenz* and the state of his occupied nation – “What do we get out of this existence... Where is the Germans' leaderless ship blowing?” – the considerations, hardships, and concerns expressed by Cremer on this day was soon to become part of a public dialogue on Germany's narrative of occupation.²

Hugo Cremer's account was shared with his fellow Germans as a part of *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk's* radio documentary “29. Januar”- a special episode of the Hamburg-based station's *Kulturelles Wort* [Cultural Word]. A detailed examination of a particularly frigid day in the conquered Reich, “29. Januar” received submissions from all throughout British-occupied north Germany. The program divided the twenty-ninth of January – from midnight to midnight – into brief vignettes, offering a spliced, intertwined account of the day. From a student's annotations on his Kant lecture, to the blackened perspectives of German miners, the documentary surveyed a diverse listenership.³ Despite ranging perceptions, several themes were revisited often. The lack of food, fuel, and warmth was a predominant concern, but there was a greater unease among Germans submitting their thoughts on this gray, chilly day. As most citizens of a defeated nation

² Hugo Cremer, “Was ich am 29. Januar 1947 erlebte?” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1186.

³ Willi Diestelmeier, “Der 29. 1. 1947.” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1186.

would, these German listeners were questioning their leadership, their values as a population, and the reorganization of a defeated and divided state.

Programs like *Kulturelles Wort* were informing listeners about what was going on in the rapidly changing Germany of the occupation years. The show featured addresses on the general state of the nation, international affairs, and notably, the minute details regarding how Germans were enduring the confusing and hardship-filled times. It was this last point that allowed postwar German broadcasting to excel, sparking a necessary dialogue among and with its listenership. Specials resembling “*29. Januar*” were preserving postwar German history, while simultaneously crafting a transcript to the nation’s events as they unfolded. Through radio, Germans were connected in their shared experiences- with a new and innovative style of broadcasting generating an exceptional documentary of this perplexing period of the twentieth century. Provided with a first person perspective on life in the nation as it was transformed from conquered dictatorship to prosperous democracy, listeners were able to relate with others in a completely new and groundbreaking fashion. Connecting with their fellow Germans was a necessary process in the restructuring of the country, but the particularly innovative aspect was the fact that this type of material was being produced at all. Recorded less than two years after unconditional surrender, “*29. Januar*” was characteristic of a new, experimental form of broadcasting that documented the subjective, personal experiences of listeners. This style of broadcasting was representative of what was being experienced by Germans throughout the nation. Like the classic ‘rubble films’ of the forties, the key material that was brought to these cultural conversations focused on the dismay and disorder caused by

the Germans' actions over the previous decade.⁴ Establishing a collective impasse and delivering it to the public in a relatable manner compelled the citizens of the occupied state to initiate the necessary steps toward the restoration of German life- a formidable task undertaken over the course of the decade following their defeat and occupation.

By the early 1960s, the German landscape was significantly altered. The 1949 partition of East and West Germany divided the nation in two, with the east remaining under the direction of the Soviet Union. For West Germans, the rubble of the 1940s had been cleared, occupation forces departed, and the country was economically sound-united in trade with the rest of continental Europe. For many, life returned to normal, though many questions regarding their past remained open. This was especially true for Germans born shortly before, during, or shortly after the war. Although their parents initiated the necessary discussion of the 'German question,' and began establishing the guidelines for the creation of a 'new' German culture, it was this generation that would ultimately reshape German identity in the second half of the twentieth century- the culmination of a unique, postwar German experience in an increasingly transnational Europe. In order to make it to this point, however, it is required to analyze how these collective conversations about German culture, history, and society were received and interpreted by the postwar German public. Due to advances in communications technologies and methodologies – in addition to fastidious record keeping and community involvement – postwar German radio broadcasting provides a well-detailed account of transformation and restoration in the defeated state. Proper analysis of how

⁴ *Trümmerfilm* was a genre of film in the immediate postwar years, popularized in the reconstruction of the German film industry. Films were set in the bombed metropolises of Germany, and chronicled national hardship and confusion in the postwar years.

Germans developed a democratically informed public sphere during this instrumental decade effectively provides insight into the future success of the nation. Additionally, we are provided with essential visions into the *Bildung* [educational maturation] of the generation of Germans that would go on to further evaluate and reconfigure German identity during the counterculture years. Studying the experiential accounts of postwar Germans, it is necessary to traverse to this generation's *Ursprung* [origin-point]- to a time of debris-clearing, an environment where wrestling with the past and reinvention was the only option remaining to a nation in shambles.

Introduction:

By the time of the Allied occupation of Germany, the use of radio broadcasting as a political and cultural tool was already well known. Radio had shaped a generation of entertainment in the United States, acted as ethereal agent of information within the British Empire, and demonstrated its use as propaganda purveyor by National Socialism.⁵ Broadcasting could disseminate information – whether productive or destructive – to audiences with such immediacy that listeners often had little time to digest and decipher the information in a logical reasoning before the next bit of material was presented. Unlike the printed page, broadcasting gave no opportunity to reread a questionable sentence, or to return to content at a later time following further thought. Substance was immediately transplanted into the listener's imagination and followed with additional material, which could result in a complacent logic; an acceptance of all that was

⁵ All three nations' broadcasters provided all three of these aspects. Within the historiography of mass media and broadcasting, however, these are the attributes that each country was most recognized for by 1945.

transmitted within the specific period of intake. Expectedly, this would explain the medium's success as a propaganda agent and architect of popular culture in the twentieth century.

There is, perhaps, no better example of its function as propaganda agent – before the onset of the communications-driven Cold War – than Nazi Germany's consolidation of the airwaves and the resulting move toward becoming the state distributor of information for the emerging Third Reich. While one could avoid the more blatant propagandizing aspects of the cinemas, or the perversion of German music in concert halls, some outlets, like newspapers and news broadcasts, were unavoidable. Goebbels' propaganda ministry noted the potential of mass media, and exploited it through all available means. The *Volksempfänger* [people's receiver] was produced as cheaply as possible, and widely distributed to the susceptible German public.⁶ These pre-programmed receivers – limiting exposure to foreign broadcasts, although they were relatively easy to reprogram – were a part of an effort to attain pan-German exposure to the ideological positions of the regime. Listening to foreign broadcasts was treasonous- a crime punishable by death.⁷ Rigorous control and free reign of the airwaves provided the Hitler regime the opportunity to transmit its warped ideologies to the German public from their consolidation of power in 1933 until their 1945 collapse. Trailing the fall of National Socialism, however, it was this very same medium that made an enormous impact on the reshaping of modern Germany.⁸

⁶ Michael Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸ Alexander Badenoch's *Voices in Ruins: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide* (2008) – one of the only comprehensive English-language studies of German

In the late 1960s, West German youth ushered in a decade of unprecedented artistic yield that further blurred the increasingly ambiguous line between popular culture and the avant-garde. It was a decade dominated by a unique and progressive *Gegenkultur* [counterculture].⁹ How was it that the Germans – plagued by physical, economic, and moral despair in 1945 – cultivated one of the most idiosyncratic, yet cosmopolitan youth cultures of the twentieth century? Hitting rock bottom in the spring of 1945, it was evident that the German people had to reevaluate their position in a world where they slid an entire continent and then some into a gruesome total war in the name of racial and cultural superiority.¹⁰ The broadcasting structures, built up by the Nazis, remained intact following Germany's defeat. Radio, as the best preserved outlet of communication in the ruins of 1945 Germany, was selected, by Germans and Allies alike, to act as the medium for public interaction and reconstruction that would lead Germany into a progressive, democratic, and experimental future.

This study is an examination of the first decade of the postwar German experience. Understood as markers on a logical trail, selected particularities of the German experience during the 1940s and 1950s led to a distinctive, German interpretation of democracy and an informed exchange of ideas by a – finally – genuine German public. This transformation will be assessed with particular attention paid to radio broadcasting and its accompanying listening culture. Specifically, the study will examine Hamburg and the local *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* over the course of its first

broadcasting – thoroughly covers the medium's role in documenting the fall of Nazi Germany, and the rise of the German Federal Republic.

⁹ Sabine von Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination!: The West German Counterculture from the Student Movement to the Greens*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

¹⁰ Friedrich Meinecke, *The German Catastrophe*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).

ten years following the war. The station and its listenership will be examined as a microcosm, representative of what was occurring all over West Germany during the decade. Over the following pages the strained relationship between Germans and their interpretations of culture, art, and innovation in the years following the Second World War will be dissected within the framework of an emerging public discourse. In the decade following the war, postwar Germans, out of austere necessity, established an environment necessary for reinventing their shattered *Weltanschauung* [worldview].

It is also pivotal to understand the medium that is being analyzed within this study. Perhaps most important is radio's prospect of creating community. Within nearly every historiographical trend, there has always been some emphasis on national identities and national communities. The notion that the nation is tied together through some unique characteristic – whether race, religion, a shared culture, or particular ideology – has been a major organizational and analytical tool in the historical discipline. Many works have been completed to critique these ideas. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983) is among the best known of this trend.¹¹ Because national communities are not based on daily, interpersonal communications, those who have self-identified themselves as a member of the nation, are in some way or another imagining this relationship with their fellow members. The idea of the imagined community is expanded with the advent of mass media in the twentieth century. Distributing similar – if not, identical – information to a mass targeted audience moves the idea of the national community a bit further. Mass communication structures are constructing a community of listeners- individuals linked in the shared experience of exposure to a common idea or

¹¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1991).

subject over the airwaves. German broadcasting under the Nazis operated in this fashion. As Nazi Germany's use of the medium has shown us, radio maintained the possibility to distribute persuasive ideological positions to an enormous audience. The whole of Germany was tuning in to the state-issued propaganda that attempted to meld the distinctive, regionalized communities of the nation into one homogenized authoritarian state. This new community of listeners, that the Nazis considered linked by blood or *volksgeist* [national spirit], was actually linked over the airwaves. By tapping the potential of mass media – something still only a few decades old – the Nazi party was able to unify a country that had long clung to regionalisms and decentralization for centuries.

Additionally, it must be taken into account that this was a sound medium. Most of the materials analyzed in this project were played over the airwaves, read by an actual human voice. In a discipline so used to written communication, it is important to note that the historical value of broadcasting was in its ability to expose audiences to the human voice, creating a level of connection and intimacy that the printed page could not imitate. Small things like the way a journalist emphasized a particular word or idea could be picked up on, sparking a stronger interest in the material being transmitted. This was also noted in Nazi broadcasting, where men with loud, commanding voices dominated the airwaves. The barking of Hitler's nationalistic sentiments resonated in the public's ears. The regional accents of Weimar broadcasting were gone and there was only the voice of the authoritative leader and his followers. Interestingly, as it will be noted later, regional accents and varieties of voices are among the first things that the Germans admire about early occupation radio. This notion of radio broadcasts as a sound medium only increases

their value as a historical artifact, making the study of these broadcasts that much more interesting. To analyze a piece that was potentially heard by millions of people within a shared environment stresses the importance to look into these sources related to mass culture with even more immediacy and detail, a developing trend within histories of the twentieth century.

Historically, Germany has long been known as a bastion of prominent intellectual and cultural thought; and while an extraordinary canon of work exists on the accomplishments, struggles, and ideological conflicts in the German speaking lands, there is much work needed on Germany following defeat in the Second World War. After discussing the quick spiral into fascism, and the Third Reich's eventual downfall in 1945, conversations on German intellectualism and cultural output dwindle into a whisper. Of course, we cannot ignore the incredible work completed by German historians interested in the political and economic revival of the nation. A number of studies have been conducted on the process of reunification, the journey to becoming the economic powerhouse of Europe, and the reestablishment of the *Bundesrepublik* [German Federal Republic] as a major world power. Major works that serve as well known references include the surveys conducted by historians like Mary Fulbrook and Richard Bessel.¹² As accomplished as these works are, finding a reference to Germans reexamining their culture through a democratic popular discourse – in the English language – is slim; references specifically concerning *Rundfunk* [radio] are even more elusive. One work that stands out in this field is Alexander Badenoch's *Voices in Ruins: West German Radio*

¹² Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace*, (New York: Harper Perennial, 2010)., Mary Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918-2008: The Divided Nation*, (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008).

Across the 1945 Divide (2008). Badenoch examines German radio structures and tradition during the first year of the transition from defeat to occupation, emphasizing the ways in which radio assisted with rebuilding ‘everyday’ routine.¹³ The last few years, however, have seen the publication of fantastic books that also relate closely to the subject of this thesis. These include works by Uta Poiger and David Monod. Monod’s book, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans 1945-1953* (2005), provides a detailed glimpse into a struggle pertaining to the performance of German music during occupation.¹⁴ Poiger’s well-known postwar study deals with German youth cultures in the 1950s, and specifically focuses on American cultural imports during this pivotal decade.¹⁵

Broadcasting provides a new lens through which we can examine German cultural movement in the decade following the Second World War- and beyond. Because this thesis is focused on the creation of a German public sphere that promoted public discourse and progress – supporting the later rise of groundbreaking countercultures – there is a lingering eye toward the end result of this transformative process. Recent trends in scholarship focusing on the lesser-known youth cultures in West Germany are the underpinning of this study. The growing interest in how Germany and other parts of the world experienced the counterculture phenomenon propels my research. One such work is Sabine von Dirke’s *All Power to the Imagination: The West German Counterculture*

¹³ Alexander Badenoch, *Voices in Ruin: West German Radio across the 1945 Divide*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

¹⁴ David Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans 1945-1953*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

¹⁵ Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

from the Student Movement to the Greens (1997).¹⁶ Von Dirke's text is a critical sociocultural examination of the rise of Germany's Green Party from its origins in youth subcultures of the late-1950s. In conjunction with von Dirke's study is Anna von der Goltz's surveys of right-wing students in West Germany's student movements of 1968. Often overlooked in the general study of postwar politics, van der Goltz's work represents the actions of students leaning toward the right side of the political spectrum.¹⁷ In order to arrive at the analyses that these authors are conducting, it is necessary to examine how German youth made it to this point. What was it about occupation and media control that established the required pro-democratic public sphere for the spread of such unique and radical ideas? How and why did Germans consider Anglo-American cultural imports intellectually valuable? And how were Germans able to break their pattern of self-proclaimed social and cultural superiority that permitted the establishment of a popular public sphere that was necessary for the shaping of a uniquely German counterculture? Searching for the answers to these questions pointed my research toward the creation of an informed public sphere tied directly to the reconfiguration of public media in occupied Germany.

The main goal of this thesis is to examine the conditions necessary for the founding of a democratically informed German public sphere, during a time of physical and conceptual reconstruction.¹⁸ Sociocultural advances made in the postwar years

¹⁶ Sabine von Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination*, 1997.

¹⁷ Anna von der Goltz, "Generations of 68ers: Age Related Constructions of Identity and Germany's 1968," *Cultural and Social History*, 8.4 (2011): 473-491., "Attraction and Aversion in Germany's '1968': Encountering the Western Revolt in East Berlin." *Journal of Contemporary History* 50.3 (2015): 536-59.

¹⁸ There is a similar trend in the literature of occupied Japan. Though beyond the scope of this project, there is a growing interest in comparative studies of these two occupied Axis

created the environment needed to construct a new German identity in the wake of the Second World War. One particular aspect of the postwar German experience that set-up the necessary foundation for such a task has been selected for analysis- the ‘democratic’ reconstruction of radio and public broadcasting in the first decade following the 1945 surrender. For this cultural revolution to occur in a productive manner, it was crucial for Germans to work through the hierarchical issues that plagued their country for centuries. Democratic practices prior to the war were limited in Germany – particularly when it came to the adherence or rejection of particular ideas and patterns that opposed traditional moral and cultural leanings – making an egalitarian spread of thought limited to the upper class and intellectual elites. Additionally, the longstanding tradition of self-adulation relative to ‘German’ culture – a relic of German history, pushed to the extreme by the Nazi Party – must be dealt with.¹⁹ Emphasis is placed on the prioritization of an acceptance and reverence of foreign artistic endeavors, before an overall tolerance of ‘German’ culture could be restored. This process is observed in the content of German radio programming in the 1940s and 1950s. A gradual shift toward a newfound and reworked acceptance of German culture is also observed- though attached to a tone of notable conservatism.

The trajectory of the selected events in postwar Germany follows an expected progression, leading from cultural confusion and awkwardness to redemption and innovation. This study must be completed to explain how Germans went about the early

powers and their cultural-political evolution in the second half of the twentieth century. For more on radio in occupied Japan see, Susan Smulyan, “Now It Can Be Told: The Influence of the United States Occupation on Japanese Radio,” *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 301-318.

¹⁹ Monod, *Settling Scores*, 3-5.

steps in creating a new sociocultural identity- while simultaneously acknowledging a nascent transnational state of mind. It will show how they navigated postwar and post-occupation institutions and managed to catch up with the rest of the western world in terms of cultural and intellectual expression. The research conducted for this thesis documents a story of how Germany regained its place as a cultural stronghold, while attempting to rectify the reputation placed on it by the previous generation. Figuring out how to deal with a somewhat self-imposed silence over their own culture and history, postwar Germans managed to bring into the country a discursive, informed public, where productive ideas could move freely and without consequence.²⁰ This same generation spawned Germany's buildup as a contemporary economic power, and, perhaps, the most stable democracy in Europe. Furthermore, with Germany's present-day image as Europe's humanitarian regarding the refugee crisis, the study of regaining such cosmopolitanism and foreign acceptance is necessary for understanding what is currently happening in the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. This study will illuminate an area of the German postwar experience that is, only very recently, beginning to receive appropriate academic treatment. The examination of postwar broadcasting and its foundations reveal how cultural change in postwar Germany is definitively linked to social and political change- both contemporary to reconstruction efforts in the 1940s and 1950s, and more recent activity. Jaimey Fisher's *Disciplining Germany: Youth, Reeducation and Reconstruction after the Second World War* (2007) is an excellent example of the critical

²⁰ Here, 'progressive' is used to denote mentalities that aligned with democratic and cosmopolitan objectives. Restrictions regarding communism, fascism, or Nazism remained in place during the post-occupation years.

treatment of German culture and its influential relationship with sociopolitical changes.²¹ Fisher's expansive text covers a number of cultural mediums – film, radio, and literature – and their reconstruction in the postwar landscape through a lens of 'youth' within the emerging West Germany.

Tracing the reconstruction of modern Germany following the Second World War through a public lens, this project also addresses the early upbringing of Germany's postwar generation- the generation that would go on to reconstruct German sociocultural identity in the 1970s. With the focus of the study being the late 1940s and the 1950s, the research intentionally reflects events from their early childhood and school years- critical stages in the development of the individual. Understanding the environment(s) in which this generation was reared provides the clearest insights into how German youth were able to surmount the harsh sociocultural situation that they were thrown into. German youth during this period were exposed to their parents struggle with the concepts of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* [coming to terms with or wrestling with the past] and *Stunde null* [zero hour/null point]- internalizing early efforts of reworking German existence in a redeeming light. Wrestling with their past, pinning it down, and working within a radically new historical *milieu*, postwar Germans were constructing an identity that not only accepted the originality of the age, but also carefully embraced productive nuances of past German identities - a feat spanning two generations. The generation that matured during the rise and fall of the Nazi regime initiated this process, but lacked the capacity to finish it due to their involvement in the political travesties of the previous decade. The successive generation, however, having no developed, direct participation with

²¹ Jaimey Fisher, *Disciplining Germany: Youth, Reeducation and Reconstruction after the Second World War*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007).

Germany's Nazi past, was thrown into a situation that they truly could alter. With the foundations for the cosmopolitan rebuilding of German culture and intellectualism positioned, postwar German youth could finish the project started by the previous generation, confronting their own potentiality with the 'thrownness' [*Geworfenheit*] of their national condition.²²

Postwar Germans, challenging the accepted mentalities of their new environment, were challenging their own recent history, learning from the mistakes following the First World War and attempting to figure out how a non-imperial-minded Germany might exist, freed from the monarchies, dictatorships, and hierarchical troubles that plagued German society for years. Confronting the normative postwar attitudes associated with their own culture, German intellectuals working with the occupation governments struggled to intentionally change the conventional, collective consciousness of their sociocultural environment by establishing a system of public awareness and forum for public debate. It was only when an informed democratic public sphere was created, that a modern German identity – appropriate for the twentieth century, not some relic defined by the likes of nationalist scholars, such as Leopold von Ranke – could be considered. To reach this point, Germans would need to directly surmount many of the normative historical traits associated with their now antiquated and tainted culture. To explain this phenomenon, the build-up to a point at which this could be done must be analyzed. Revolutionary ideas do not manifest overnight. It takes decades to reach a point where a society can, not only promote a societal change of thought, but also accept the ideas that are developing within the gradual modification. As a study of the conditions necessary

²² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 255.

for such an event, the decade following the war must be thoroughly dissected, with particular attention given to those events considered practical and representative for a gradual change of historically effected cultural normatives.

These subjective normative ideas – philosophy, critical theory, and various historically effected sociocultural trends – will function as counterpoint to the primary-source based material in this study. This thesis is an effort to provide the experiential accounts of the actors in the postwar story. An intellectual history that is purposely straying from how ‘elites’ understood and interpreted ideas around them, this study will focus on the average informed individual. While the theories and philosophies of ‘high-brow’ scholars will be applied, the focus is not necessarily on how they came up with the ideas or their significance within a philosophical chronology, but their relevance and manifestation in the lives of the average postwar German. Many of the primary materials are drawn from those who that are not typically the subject of historical survey: students, musicians, authors, and general listeners taking part in restructuring German broadcasting; those who are often overlooked when considering how ideas are incorporated into a society. These are the intellectuals who study the philosophies of the intellectual elite, who act them out in the real world, and live in relation to them. Within this study, we specifically see these individuals in positions of influence within the German broadcasting structures. They are station directors, program writers, or contributors to the reconstruction efforts of German broadcasting; the individuals distributing information – over the airwaves – to German audiences in a democratic fashion. They are the subjective, human component to the far more general study of

ideas. These individuals should be comprehended as an ‘astute-in-common’ - a term borrowed from the director of this thesis, Dr. Mark Blum.

Contributing to the focus on the average subject within the historical narrative, a sub-theme of this thesis is the study of how ideas move, develop, and change through real-world practitioners. Phenomenological thought will be applied to the analysis of structural and cultural changes over time in modern Germany. It is largely understood within intellectual history that progress is documented through the movement and acceptance of ideas. However, in the study of how these ideas manifest and the intellectual implications of their execution, the examination of how ideas, theories, and ‘deeds’ are accepted or rejected at a base level is often neglected. By analyzing the temporal intentions of the historical artefact – be it an idea, an action, or a chance occurrence – in relation to the individuals exposed to it at the time of its conception, we can gain an insight into the historical consciousness of the society in which it was produced.

The temporal aspect of the artefact is critical to the proper comprehension of an individual or group’s in-the-moment ideation, and why the respective deed was rejected or accepted by the broader society. The individual’s act of performing a deed can establish paradigms, cultural configurations, and alter the events occurring within the flow of time, insofar as others recognize the ‘deed’ as significant within the culture. By applying Edmund Husserl’s phenomenologies of inner time consciousness to the broader historical narrative of postwar Germany, this study will take into consideration the

societal perceptions of the movement of ideas within a period of time.²³ The same structures that permit our own recognition of time, and thus, the conscious activities within those structures, can be applied to larger networks of consciousness, as long as these networks are connected by some communal interest or cohesive factor that constitutes the nation or community: the national historical logic. In this case, the historical logic that ties Germans together during this time is the desire – or recognition of the need – to reform Germany and to acknowledge the actions committed by the nation. Therefore, the larger whole – as a synthetic sum of its constituent parts – is able to function as the driving mechanism of change and ideological progression through the communal reactions to specific deeds of individuals within the society. Looking at the postwar era through this lens shows a new and informed German public that was working toward a common goal. Having a clear comprehension of their past, its consequential effects on the present, and the impacts of their at-the-time decisions, the actions of postwar Germans were determining their experience in the second half of the twentieth century.

The study that follows is an interpretation of how to comprehend the postwar German experience, and the society's changing historical consciousness in a period that desperately required alteration. Mapping the historical trajectory of these experiences in a fashion that highlights cultural and intellectual episodes of the postwar period, this study provides an insight into how Germans were starting to redesign and reinterpret German identity within this new environment. It will be argued that postwar Germans were

²³ Edmund Husserl, "A Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time," *Essential Husserl: Basic Writings in Transcendental Phenomenology*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 186-221.

crafting a democratically informed public sphere to be used in an effort to reconstruct German identity, brought about partially through the reconfiguration of broadcast structures. Synthesizing historical German cultural traits with new cultural attitudes and mediums adopted from the occupying powers, postwar Germans were reinstating critical thought and cosmopolitanism into their society through broadcasting's function as a distributor of information. Although this was happening throughout Germany in the time after the nation's defeat, there was a degree of locality embedded in the broadcast material of the postwar period, with particular broadcasting hubs molding this transformation.

Hamburg's *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* – more so than most other major broadcasters – made an effort to effectively represent its local constituency through the material they produced. At a time when Germans were especially confused and concerned about ways to address the problems with German culture, and the question of German guilt, *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* – later *Norddeutscher Rundfunk*, after a 1955 split with the North Rhine-Westphalia region – was offering a new possibility. Broadcasters were able to present a public dialogue through the programming's analysis of the German experience. It was the initiation of these critically reflective programs that were useful to the Germans' reconstruction efforts. NWDR was particularly good at this. The station interacted with listeners, establishing a real sense of community among those within listening range. And while a community of active and participating listeners was established during the first decade of occupation, it was the radical individuality and subjective aspects of this community that NDR was trying to document. This was an effort to show that German society, while diverse and individualistic, was capable of

rebuilding itself through a common cooperation- both with fellow Germans and the Allied occupiers. The bulk of the research for this project consists of primary documents from the extensive *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* collections examined in the *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* [Hamburg State Archives]. Cultural artifacts – recorded music, novels, theoretical and philosophical works, magazines, etc. – in my own possession, and documents accessed through various online archives that are becoming more available every day are also included within the scope of sources assessed.

In each chapter of this work, a different aspect of the postwar experience will be thoroughly examined as a key component of a transformative process, climaxing in a radical shift in sociocultural thought. Evidenced by an emerging German youth that would go on revive German artistic thought in the *Gegenkultur* years, Germany's postwar days were spent experimenting with appropriate ways to conduct public discourse, adjusting to the democratic principles of an informed public, and dissecting the historical logics associated with past forms of national self-identification. This transitional act, riddled with experimentations, hopes, doubts, frustrations, and reflections, is the defining feature of Germany during the first decade following the Second World War, and is the nation's introduction into an ever-more-global community- a test that demonstrated the redemptive aspirations of a public debilitated by a generation of ill intentions.

The first chapter concentrates on the establishment of a new model of public broadcasting immediately following the war; specifically the role that Allied occupation and administration of German public institutions played in the initiation of this process. This chapter will contain the greatest amount of sources and materials from outside of Germany's borders, with the focus leaning toward the American and British conditions of

occupation. These two occupying powers realized that fashioning a new model of public communication was essential to the rise and realization of a democratic Germany in the postwar era. Primarily, this chapter focuses on the first two years of occupation, until 1947, when a less stringent model of occupation and reconstruction on the Allies' part was adopted.

Focused on German media reform during the period of immediate occupation, this chapter also permits an observation of the Germans' cooperative relationship with occupying forces. National Socialism's propagandizing tainted German culture, destroying cosmopolitanism, individuality, and other constructive qualities, shrouding German broadcasting in a critical veil. After the war, the Allies began a reeducation process centered on the concept of national guilt, rightly demonizing the Germans' straying from fruitful principles- a propaganda of their own design. German broadcasters during this period were trained to be democratic, and attempted to provide 'unbiased' programming that fit within Allied objectives.²⁴ This discussion will require some background information, such as the discussions concerning what to do with Germany and the Germans following their defeat. The American side of this conversation is recorded in the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) documents 1067 and 1779. Both of these are illuminated, with evidence of their effects on public media delivered from primary documents collected in Hamburg, and digital archives. We are also provided with some of the general goals of occupation from the JCS documents and analysis of post-war

²⁴ Throughout this thesis the word 'unbiased' is favored because this was the language used by the occupying forces, and later, German officials. This supposedly unbiased aspect of broadcasting in the period is another tool of occupation, used to extract the political leanings of tradition German media.

broadcasting shows that the Germans efficiently cooperate as they work toward autonomous self-governance.

The chapter will also discuss the concept of national culture in Germany and how the perversion of mass culture can be detrimental in the process of creating a healthy model of self-identification. In short, chapter one will largely examine the creation of a public broadcasting system capable of adequately spreading productive and democratic ideas, overcoming the ramifications of National Socialism, and German broadcasters' contribution to the process of reshaping post-war culture through a subjective study of the individual listener. The survey of occupation-era policies regarding public communication and the spread of information highlights the initial steps in the revitalization of the German public, in addition to an openness regarding the influence of foreign ideas.

The second chapter refines the focus of the study. Instead of a general survey, focused on Allied policies in occupied Germany, the emphasis on locality is enhanced. This section will be significantly more specific, focusing on Hamburg's *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*. NWDR – and Hamburg as the source of origin – is a case study, an inquiry into the minute inner-workings of a systematic structuring of a public that was occurring throughout Germany at this time. The introduction of JCS 1779 in 1947 lifted many of the Allies' restrictions on broadcasting, including the direct oversight of media structures. With the application of more liberal policies, German broadcasters could begin adjusting the structures they largely inherited from the United States and Britain, initiating a period of experimentation and exploration over the airwaves.

Germans were continuing to work within the model established by the occupying powers, but made conscious efforts to expand it, and create a uniquely German audience.

During these introductory years of semi-supervised programming we see German broadcasters branching out from the template established by the Allied powers. Institutions, like NWDR's *Rundfunkschule*, were being established to better train broadcasters and journalists. The public was being encouraged to participate in the growing community of listenership, with stations incentivizing participation through contests, listener submissions, and publications of radio magazines- like the tremendously popular *Hör zu!*. Germans were not only keeping with Allied efforts to democratize the airwaves, but were going beyond expectations and creating listening communities that encouraged an informed public to participate. This was shown through programs like *29. Januar* [29th of January], which chronicled life across the nation on one specific day. The transcripts of the program, along with various submission letters collected in the Hamburg archives show exactly how German listeners were experiencing life during this time. This chapter details the inner workings of the NWDR, the various programming offered to the public, and the effect that the institution had on its growing constituency during the decade following the war.

In the final chapter of this thesis, the attention is directed toward the end results of this process. The third chapter of the work will show how citizens of Hamburg were beginning to discuss their own culture, how they felt about their recent past, and how they planned to move into the future. We see monumental odes to Beethoven and his work as Germany's democratic composer in the radio documentary *Ludwig van Beethoven: Der Mensch und das Werk*. The transcripts from this multi-medium project

shows Germans rehabilitating a figure tainted by Nazi rhetoric, transforming him into a respectable and admirable figure. Although the focus of this section is Hamburg and the NDR, the scope will move out to the general once again, with Hamburg embodying West Germany as a whole. The specific events and cultural conversations happening over the NDR and thus, throughout the station's north German listenership are representative of the democratization of Germany and the emergence of a truly informed German public sphere. We see this in the scripts of political talk shows, which were gaining popularity in this period of self-governance. This section of the paper will also present evidence that not all that was pre-war was despised or hated by postwar Germans. It will highlight a fervent awareness and respect for traditions. Despite this, it was in no way a regression. Germans were thinking critically about their past and sparking conversations on how to incorporate tradition and monumental aspects of their national history into a modern interpretation of Germanness- and whether or not there was a way to remove some of the implications of the Second World War from that history while not dismissing the atrocities altogether.

The study concludes as a new period of German history begins. In the mid-1950s the importation of Western cultural mediums picked up. No longer was it simply abstract ideas regarding a democratic public culture, or political and economic ideologies. A decade after their nation's defeat, German youth begin a complicated relationship with blue jeans, Rock and Roll, and other integral components of Anglo-American popular culture. This critical adoption is the next step in the progression toward the *Gegenkultur* movements of the late 1960s and 1970s that completed the restructuring of German culture described in this project.

The Postwar Dialectic:

As previously stated, Germany's reemergence as an autonomous informed democracy will be navigated through a cultural synthesis. The conducted dialectic concerns German identity following the Second World War: whether to look back at German history and revive traditional features as the nation moved into the second half of the century, or to negate tradition and treat the present moment as a null point at which to start over. Prominent German thinkers and everyday Germans alike were in a state of confusion during this era regarding where to go in terms of national identity and how they ended up in their present cultural state. The events analyzed in this thesis are representative of Germans working through this dialectic. Restructuring German broadcast media; the adoption of Anglo-American (among others) cultural mediums and models; and the consolidation of a new and informed democratic public sphere are major components of a sociocultural synthesis that is taking place in the decade following the war. This dialectical is Germany's way of working through the 'German problem;' of finding a way to move forward into the future; of dealing with the issues of their recent past and how to reinvent their culture in spite of the first half of the century. These historical episodes in Germany's story are determining the necessary conditions for the possibility of the reformation of German identity in the postwar years- successfully reinventing German culture in a cosmopolitan manner.

Throughout the body of this work, I will regularly refer back to the dialectic that I am setting up over the following pages. This intellectual scaffolding is needed for the cultural analyses that will follow. The subsequent chapters examine the ways in which

Germans are confronting and restructuring their own culture, through a careful balance of tradition and originality. The key questions during this time revolved around what must be done in terms of culture and moving forward in a rapidly changing world. At this juncture Germans asked, ‘Do I move on following the traditional standard of what it means to be a German?’ or ‘Do I find something new, develop an entire new set of beliefs, abandon the past millennium? Do I create a new German model?’ I assert that the answer is a carefully navigated synthesis of these ideas. Careful awareness of the German past – learning from the egregious mistakes of prior decades, and the vigilant adherence to beneficial cultural traits from throughout German history – and acceptance of substantive, groundbreaking newness – even if it stems from non-German innovation – propelled Germany into an informed discourse that effectively highlighted the progress and struggles of the postwar years.

Regarding identity in postwar Germany, two particular minds are especially enlightening. Working during the years of focus in this study, examining the terms and conditions of individualism in the twentieth century, and the shading that cultural tradition may place on it, the works of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jürgen Habermas are essential to the study of postwar Germany. These two intellectual heavyweights provide readers with an alternative outlook on the sense of ‘being’ that functions beyond its typical use as the verb of choice within the continental tradition’s lexicon. Central to this observation are the inherent differences and similarities throughout their works, making the German cultural identity issue that much more comprehensible, simultaneously stressing diverse outlooks on the ‘German question’ following the Second World War.

The approaches used by the authors to make their arguments include historicism, sociology, and linguistics. Similar to post-structuralists, Gadamer and Habermas analyze the relationship between language and the reality of the world around them, while realizing that language itself is an irremovable structure that impedes its own complete understanding. Both agree that language constructs one's being-in-the-world, but it is the role that language plays as a necessary part of tradition and innovation that brings up the major differences in their works. To Habermas, language – and the discourse related to how we utilize language regarding particular subjects – while inherited, is something able to be manipulated in the present to bring about a nullifying effect regarding the past, presenting the opportunity to establish the foundations for groundbreaking newness. Conversely, Gadamer treats language as experience. The experience of having a language, of maintaining a particular mode of communication built upon metaphorical and metonymical devices, is in itself the ultimate form of tradition. Experience of language and the biases inherited through cultural particularities cannot possibly be ignored, nullified, and shrugged off in favor of the present moment. This level of clarity and acquiescence is unthinkable.

Another key point worth noting is the function of historicism within the arguments of these philosophers. Although it will be discussed in greater depth later, it should be noted that while similar in their theoretical understanding of language and social convictions, Habermas argues for a deconstructive view of history and Gadamer places emphasis on the idea that history and tradition directly mold the individuals within a particular society; it cannot possibly be disregarded. With the arguments of the

mentioned philosophers understood, the cultural situation of postwar Germany may be assessed in a descriptive intellectual light.

The first view to be examined is that of Jürgen Habermas. As previously stated, Habermas argues for a deconstructive view of culture. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), this idea is developed through an assessment of the emergence of bourgeois culture. While the intellectuals of Europe's aristocracy, as Habermas addresses, "built a bridge between the remains of a collapsing form of publicity (the courtly one) and the precursor of a new one: the bourgeois public sphere," the creation of the society itself was the work of those within the newly emerging realm.²⁵ Habermas' view of this phenomenon maintains that tradition is not necessary; despite conventional noble-monarch relations, a bourgeois society, free from the monarchy was established. This was due to divisions within a society of individuals who wanted to disassociate themselves from the traditional means of forming an intellectual sphere; thus the ties to the public sphere were present but only in the sense that they provided a basis for the legitimacy of a new public realm. Habermas would argue that the substantial merit of the private realm is allocated by its originality as a new public sphere; he states, "Included in the private realm was the authentic "public sphere," for it was a public sphere constituted by private people."²⁶ It is through this idea that we can grasp Habermas' view on tradition when exploring cultural identity. Although some prior ideas may remain, the cultural null point is grasped through the disregard of the constitutive substance of prior structures and going forth- constructing new means to identify one's

²⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 30.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

self. Following this, a ‘new,’ unique culture used to identify members within the society is created.

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, one specific sector of an emerging, German private sphere is focused on in great detail- the artistic community. Habermas directed his attention to the theater and the performance arts. As Habermas points out, “The shift which produced not merely a change in the composition of the public but amounted to the very generation of the “public” as such, can be categorically grasped with even more rigor in the case of the concert-going public.”²⁷ This idea is fleshed out through an examination of music’s general purpose prior to the formation of a bourgeois society- music for the sake of religious or noble ceremonies. Habermas refers to this as “occasional music,” music, specific for a particular event “judged according to its social function.”²⁸ At this point, there would be no form of folk music, no *musique folklorique*, no *volksmusik* accessible to ‘public’ ears. This type of music was reserved for the pub and *Bierpalast*, not for public displays, as this would demean individuals maintaining cultural standards of the time- intellectual and social elites. Public music for the common man in an urbanizing Europe was heard only in church or some sort of courtly festival, not yet available on a mass scale in the average city as one would find in later years. The process of creating public theater houses and concert halls was a drastic step in creating a general audience of music connoisseurs, transforming the art into a new entity – something that may be enjoyed by a much wider audience – and including those that were once on the fringes of the artistic realm. While this process does, in a way, commodify the art, Habermas explains, “there arose something like music not tied to a

²⁷ *Ibid.*,39.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

purpose. For the first time an audience gathered to listen to music as such-a public of music lovers....”²⁹ These ideas follow Habermas’ underlying thesis, implying that change can occur in a new fashion, despite the traditions that are in place at the time. By overlooking the past, and focusing on the present and future, the corporate experience can change.

It was not the adjustment of historical, tradition-laden values, but rather a modification of contemporary ideas that fueled the emergence of a public bourgeois society. An indifferent outlook on the past, and regarding tradition as a model for what must be improved when the null point has been achieved reinforced this sequence. According to Habermas, Germans in the postwar era could accept there was a German culture because it was developed over the past 1,000 years. The substance that constituted German culture, however, is not to be used as an identifying factor once a null point has been reached. A common language identifies the existence of the culture, but its substance is now something entirely new. Despite sharing a name, once the gap has been bridged, these are two wholly different entities. For example, Germans embracing electric, amplified Rock and Roll as an artistic medium in the 1950s were accepting something completely foreign to the acoustic instruments and formal compositions of the orchestras so well loved throughout German history. Although Germany had a rich tradition of folk music, the idea of accepting something that was entirely American in its origins – even something as simple as Rock and Roll’s heavy reliance on the pentatonic blues scale – was an acceptance of something entirely foreign to traditional German culture. Because of this acceptance, everything moving forward from this point – in

²⁹ Habermas, *Public Sphere*, 39.

theory – would be radically new. Despite the normative association of Rock and Roll with an Anglo-American culture, the fact that Germans have accepted this does not mean they are necessarily working within an Anglo-American cultural sphere. The overall message of this idea is, perhaps, “released from its functions in the service of social representation, art became an object of free choice and changing preference.”³⁰ Creating something communal and impressionable to societal trends and public opinion, the general opinion and designation of art throughout the whole of Europe shifted with the institution of a public, bourgeois culture. This alteration can be indirectly tied to an emerging democratic thought regarding the notion of the ‘public’ in postwar Germany well over a century later.

While Habermas’ model of cultural ideation, emphasizing a turn from tradition, in favor of new in-the-moment innovation embodied some ideals of Germany’s transformation, it does not correspond with everything that the process did for postwar Germany. Had this been the case, there would not have been the slightest hint of ‘Germanness’ in postwar society. Traditional German ideas and traits would have been ignored, looked over in order to examine what the English and Americans were doing at the time. Instead, those individuals dedicated to reshaping their broken nation glanced over their shoulders, noticed something interesting, and realized that they could incorporate these historical devices into something that was new to German society. In order to understand the historical component to this synthesis, the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer must be assessed. Providing a stark contrast to Habermas, Gadamer’s work is far more dedicated to the historically effected aspects of identity. Gadamer provides a

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

basis for framing the cultural drive of postwar Germany as a historical progression from occupation to burgeoning democracy and even to the later *Gegenkultur*- though consciously affected by centuries of German tradition.

It has already been explained that the work of Jürgen Habermas should not be entirely credited in the sociocultural interpretation of the postwar movement toward democracy and German cultural ‘redemption,’ though it does provide appropriate insight into the notion that something ‘new’ must be done to revamp the postwar German cultural stasis. While something new is definitely needed, it is important to note how an individual may approach the topic of “newness.” One could take the Habermasian route and attempt to destroy all previous institutions and forge a new path; crediting no one but the individuals involved in and of the moment- or they could approach the new substance with a constant eye toward the past. From this position, the individual accepts present innovation as groundbreaking, but realizes that the foundation is shaded by history (*Horizontverschmelzung*). This sense of historical consciousness creates an awareness of societal unity, forming a collective culture, and permitting the group to remain identifiable. The idea of a historical consciousness is a fundamental within the work of Gadamer. As Gadamer’s view of historical substance within contemporary structures becomes more apparent, it further illuminates the postwar experiences with cultural experimentation as a practical synthesis of his work with that of Habermas.

It was explained that Habermas analyzed cultural advancement through a bourgeois emergence in the wake of the enlightenment. Gadamer’s assessment of culture and society stemmed from a study of the linguistic aspects of collective culture and ideology with a constant acknowledgment of the past. Gadamer works with the

institutionalization of language, and the latent cultural effect that it has on the group as a whole. This effect is described as latent due to the nature of history itself. The events of the past retain a constant residual influence on the present and future; therefore the events occurring contemporarily may not bear consequence for some decades or even centuries to come. It is only through thorough investigation of historical periods that historians are able to grasp what impacts certain actions bear in an analytical light. One method for addressing the results of particular analyses is an assessment focused on communities of the particular period, which, as Gadamer points out, can be characterized through language. Unlike Habermas, who opts for a null point that overrides the categorization of a group based on preceding factors, Gadamer feels that a historically conscious appraisal of community – based on language – is the most viable source for identification. The roots of this argument lie in a historical notion that language can make up a group, that conversation reflects understanding, and that the current sociocultural state of the collective stems from the residual consequences of past events and ideologies. It is important to note, that although Gadamer is using language as a unifying factor in his argument, the emphasis is to be placed on the historical context of the language dynamic. It is Gadamer's historical argument paired with Habermas' near opposite views of deconstruction that creates a blended, cohesive snapshot of the cultural ideology that was constructed in the postwar world, balancing traditional German traits linked to accomplishment and intellectualism with new groundbreaking substance.

Gadamer's argument in *Truth and Method* (1960) is quite expansive and touches on a number of philosophical cornerstones through a hermeneutic lens. Since the focus of this work is on unity through historical circumstance however, the ideas addressed here

are far more limited. Key concepts include, Gadamer's explication of Hegel's dialectic and the role experience plays in dialectical thought, understanding as language, and finally, the notion of historical consciousness. The combined analysis of these three ideas will further attempt to articulate the cultural innovations taking place in postwar Germany.

Pedagogically, the argument could be made that all knowledge obtained in life is through experience, whether positive or negative. Living experientially establishes any form of knowledge on any subject that may intersect with our being-in-the-world. In the analysis of the historically effected consciousness in *Truth and Method*, Gadamer states:

If a new experience of an object occurs to us, this means that hitherto we have not seen the thing correctly and now know it better. Thus the negativity of experience has a curiously productive meaning. It is not simply that we see through a deception and hence make a correction, but we acquire comprehensive knowledge.³¹

With every new experience, the individual gains further insight into the subject that initiated the experience in the first place. With this formula, not only is additional knowledge about the subject obtained, but also, an inclusive learning takes place, as one has now improved on prior notions of perceived knowledge. This experience is entirely historical in nature. The past dictates one's present interpretations of the world around them. Experience constructs reality. The events that occur in the present are subject to experience and soon become a part of the not-so-distant past. Once in the past these experiences become a part of the unified consciousness, and are able to dictate future events (protections), therefore solidifying the argument that the past events of a group or

³¹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (Continuum Press, 1989), 353.

individual directly impacts the present and future decisions to be made throughout time.³² This also exemplifies the movement of ideas through generations, further demonstrating Gadamer's explanation of how past ideas are incorporated into present consciousness. Gadamer points out, in reference to the negation of the un-had, or previously undeveloped experience, "this is a determinate negation. We call this kind of experience *dialectical*."³³ It is here that Gadamer brings the works of Hegel into his case. Hegel's analysis of experience is another that is deeply rooted in the historicity that it brings to the argument. Gadamer realizes that, "experience has the structure of a reversal of consciousness and hence it is a dialectical movement...in general we experience the falsehood of this first concept through another object."³⁴ By reversing consciousness the mind makes sense of the present through retained past experience, therefore, "the philosophical mind realizes what the experiencing mind is really doing when it proceeds from one to the other: it is reversing itself."³⁵

As a whole, Gadamer is arguing that experience is knowledge, and knowledge is being-in-the-world. In this way, experience works as a cultural unifier: a signifier firmly grounded in the historicity of a subject, and an awareness of the past within our own judgments and the conscious relation we share with others' common experiences.

Because postwar Germans share a similar experience, of either participating in the Second World War, or being thrown into the consequences associated with those heinous

³² Here we see Gadamer's phenomenological influence, as this model is similar to Edmund Husserl's phenomenologies of inner-time consciousness. This would have been passed on to Gadamer from his mentor, the previously mentioned Martin Heidegger- who in turn was a student of Husserl.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 354.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

actions and eventual defeat – the case of postwar Germans – they had the potential for a common conversation concerning their identity.

At this point, Gadamer has demonstrated that experience is drawn from the past and continually shades present knowledge. Gadamer also asserts that related experience is equivalent to understanding. Gadamer views understanding as language- drawn from the experience of the individual or group. The explanation behind this:

The understanding of the subject matter must take the form of language. It is not that the understanding is subsequently put into words; rather, the way understanding occurs – whether in the case of a text or a dialogue with another person who raises an issue with us – is the coming-into-language of the thing itself... To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were.³⁶

Every genuine conversation produces understanding, which also creates a unifying effect in the process, as, “Every conversation presupposes a common language, or better, creates a common language.”³⁷ It is through linguistic interpretation of conversation that the individual arrives at the essence behind what was said. This is consequential on a large scale, granting the community a chance to constantly change around one another, thus unifying them as a group of increasingly unique individuals. Communal realization and interpretation go hand in hand- the community that produced the conversation is typically a reflection of the traditions in place, which influenced the output of the time period. The common conversation – for example, the postwar discourse on the question of German culture – creates a common language for discussing some aspect of the shared experience. Without this presupposed language, derived from common conversation, this

³⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 378-379.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 378.

dialectic could never be completed, or even initiated for that matter. The initial factor that unified postwar Germany was this question on how to interpret and approach German culture after the war. This idea is crucial to understanding the cultural output of modern Germany, due to the fact that a unifier must be present to influence such a significant cultural debate. As influential as Germany's postwar transformation was, many conversations had to be taking place, both literally and figuratively. It was up to this generation to establish a common language – firmly grounded in advances of the postwar years – from which to base their new cultural ideology.

It is through this experience, rooted in history, that a new cohesive and cosmopolitan 'Germanness' could be found in postwar Germany. The unification of a historical identity through language and tradition allowed this movement to thrive, and traditional traits such as radical individuality predicted the intensely unique nature of the output. If not for these historical experiences, the individual fails to see where their influences may have come from, restraining further intellectual or cultural expansion.

Gadamer words it best:

A person who believes he is free of prejudices, relying on the objectivity of his procedures and denying that he is himself conditioned by historical circumstances, experiences the power of the prejudices that unconsciously dominate him as a *vis a tergo*. A person who does not admit that he is dominated by his prejudices will fail to see what manifests itself by their light.³⁸

Without these prejudices – dictated by past experience – the individual is severely limiting their full potential. In embracing the subjective, historically effected consciousness, the individual has the entirety of German history at their back. All that is required is a careful selection of the practical and productive aspects of this historically

³⁸ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 360.

effected logic.

With the views of both Gadamer and Habermas laid out, the postwar years can be explicated with more clarity in the body of the thesis. Germans were experimenting with their own culture, and accepting influences from others. At the heart of the undertaking was the inherent, historically realized German traits of being radically individual while maintaining a relationship with the larger organic community, a distinct cosmopolitanism linked to a diverse *Weltanschauung*, and adherence to one's own principles that define their intellectual and artistic outlook. With these characteristics in mind, we see Gadamer's contribution to this project, focusing directly on historically effected consciousness. However, Habermas' idea of reconstruction from a cultural null point is also apparent in the actual substance of the period. It was the German postwar experience that permitted such a unique take on this national phenomenon. It was through a realization of the historical German experience and adopted traits from abroad that allowed such idiosyncratic production. The process behind it all was dialectical in nature.

CHAPTER 1: OCCUPATION COOPERATION

The creation – or to some historians, the revival – of an ‘objective’ and democratic model of communications following the Second World War was of the utmost importance to both postwar Germans and the occupying powers.³⁹ The perversion of mass media by the Third Reich demolished the prospect of an accurately informed public for over a decade. From 1933 until 1945, news outlets were tools of National Socialism, used for the corruption of the German people; it further instilled a sense of racial, political, and cultural superiority that turned the once cosmopolitan state into a self-sycophantic recluse. To reverse this setback a strict, Allied-endorsed policy of reeducation and reformation of the German media model was introduced during the initial years of occupation. Simple content changes, however, would not be enough. Crafting a democratically informed media model, that followed the guidelines laid out by the Allies for Germany would require the cooperation of Germans with their occupiers. It took ideological renovations at the structural level of communications to initiate the construction of a new German public sphere. The new postwar *Rundfunk* – product of a cooperative union between occupied Germany, Great Britain, and the United States – was part investigator, part cultural agent, and overwhelmingly a medium through which new ideas could travel the postwar landscape.

³⁹ Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1067, US Embassy- Deutschland, <http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga3-450426.pdf>.

The goal of this chapter is to survey the setting from which German broadcasting took place from, through the lens of occupation and reeducation. Through an analysis of the policies and procedures introduced by the Allies from 1945 to 1947, the primary stages of Germany's sociocultural reconstruction can be observed. This is accomplished by examining primary sources related to broadcast media during the postwar period. These include policies drafted by the Allied powers, broadcast transcriptions, and scholarship from Germans working with Allied officials during the reeducation efforts. Broadcasting has been selected for analysis because by the 1940s, the majority of Germans would have been exposed to radio almost on a daily basis. Whether it was for news or entertainment, the radio was often at the foreground of public affairs- or at least serving as background noise.⁴⁰ As Alexander Badenoch points out, "the regular scheduling of broadcasting itself and the way it is targeted to follow day-to-day routines provide a regular rhythm which help make daily life predictable and tellable."⁴¹ For example, NWDR's morning 'gymnastics' – a program popular during the Weimar years and later during National Socialism that discussed national and regional events and news for the day – had no real role in the occupation effort. German listeners, however, demanded that the programming be returned to NWDR following the war because provided listeners with an impression of daily routine in an environment that was unpredictable and unstable.⁴² After the mid-1950s, television began to become more prominent, but the two preceding decades were dominated by radio. Examining how Germans reported on and interpreted the events around them – while staying within the confines of Allied protocol – gives us the

⁴⁰ Alexander Badenoch, *Voices in Ruin: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 56-58.

opportunity to understand how Germans went about the initial development of their shattered media structures. It is argued that the United States and Great Britain prepared a template for the Germans to follow in crafting a democratic model of broadcast communication. This necessary cooperation permitted Germans to create an environment that promoted western, democratic values, which functioned as a platform for the distribution of progressive ideas in the postwar period.

Broadcasting in occupied Germany was shaped by Allied administrations, and the need to wipe all National Socialist sentiment from the airwaves. In crafting a uniform model that provided commentary of carefully selected, productive content, the occupation forces actively endorsed a public broadcasting system that benefited their own objectives and Germany up to the present. This regulated structure, however, contributed a great deal to the experience of Germans after the war, especially after occupation. Provided with a viable model to communicate ideas, Germany was able to begin focusing on ways to modify the system, as well as their own identity and culture. Of course, media regulation and reform was not the sole contributor to the changing social sphere in Germany. But, when combined with Allied reforms of education, bureaucracy, and industry, it provides an excellent starting point for a nation that has just stepped out of a flawed position, to begin working toward a more productive, and innovative future.

Radio in Germany:

During the period of the Weimar Republic, radio and the development of mass broadcasting followed a pattern similar to that of the United States. The early 1920s saw the rise of radio as a practical, democratic tool in the culturally liberal republic, and the

first network was established in 1924.⁴³ Weimar radio was democratic, informative, and exceptionally experimental. Although the design of Weimar radio was intended to be apolitical, it should be noted that broadcasting in Germany during this time did provide the necessary mechanisms for public discourse. Whether it was commentary on music or the literary programs that were aired regularly, Weimar radio was a reflection of the “unprecedented flourishing of artistic activity” and cultural intellectualism that was characteristic of Weimar society.⁴⁴ The ‘flourishing’ of the early Weimar, as Berghahn puts it, was largely the result of the newfound liberty of many Germans. Following the First World War, the German public initially directed their national frustrations at the now-abdicated Kaiser and his war-mongering, imperial fantasies. Many Germans found pride in their new republic, looking toward a new future where the first article of their constitution laid everything out: “The German Reich is a republic. The state’s power is from the people.”⁴⁵ This idea of the people, or the *Volk*, maintaining the authority of the government made up the backbone of the entire Weimar constitution. In articles 73-75, the constitution explains that legislation can only be overridden by a plebiscite. The body of enfranchised voters also maintained the authority to demand legislation be drafted, changed, or completely done away with.⁴⁶ For the first time in German history, the Weimar Republic granted the German people a voice.

⁴³ Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 97.

⁴⁴ V.R. Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 83.

⁴⁵ *Verfassung des Deutschen Reiches, Artikel 1*, PSM-Data Geschichte <http://www.zum.de>. “Das Deutsche Reich ist eine Republik. Die Staatsgewalt geht vom Volke aus.”

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Artikel 73-75.

Benefitting from Germany's new liberal democracy – initially – was the intellectual Left. Running on a new brand of socialism that would foster the development of the German people, the arts, and Germany's place as an intellectual stronghold in a now 'peaceful' Europe, the early Social Democrats of the Weimar years promoted a innovative social agenda. It was the government's duty to provide education to German youth, to fund the arts and sciences, and develop a system of welfare that would benefit the growing, urbanizing nation. This particular emphasis on the welfare of the German people and the advancement of a collective German intellectual and artistic culture led to the fruitful flourishing of the Weimar Republic. Germany became a cosmopolitan, international country, hosting massive galleries of Avant-garde artwork, international conferences on performance arts and music, and reviving the salon culture of the prewar years.

Radio, still a new and experimental medium, was by no means an exception to the innovations taking place in the early twenties. Interesting materials surviving from period included the radio scripts of Walter Benjamin. Ranging from discussions on the act of listening to his youth radio hour, *Aufklärung für Kinder* ("Enlightenment for Children"), Benjamin recorded nearly ninety different broadcasts for Radio Berlin and Radio Frankfurt.⁴⁷ Benjamin's broadcasts are just a single aspect of radio during the Weimar period, but thoroughly represent the discursive nature of broadcasting under the experimental democracy. By 1932, over twenty-five percent of Germany was tuning in, creating the second largest radio audience in Europe.⁴⁸ However, this year also marked a

⁴⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Radio Benjamin*, (New York: Verso Books, 2014), 2.

⁴⁸ Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic*, 98.

restructuring of the broadcasting system and the medium was placed under strict state control, allowing the National Socialists to make full use of it the following spring.

With the idea of democracy being so profoundly new to Germany in the early twenties, it was only natural for the German public, particularly the working class, to see its downfalls when trouble began in the late 1920s. With the onset of a global economic depression looming, the Germans began feeling the financial pressures of their expensive social programs, and the thriving of foreign art in the nation's economic centers began to lose their appeal when hunger pains set in. A bourgeois artistic culture that was still fairly exclusive to the upper-middle classes was not in the best interest of the majority of the now-impoverished population. Many Germans began to lose faith in the notion of democracy, since their elected Social Democrat officials were failing to provide ample outlets for putting food on the table, and a roof over the heads of their constituency. The struggling state economy could not keep up with the historic inflation rates of the German mark, and the majority of Germans were now looking toward a powerful figure – *ein Führer* – to look up to. Someone who could save their country from an economic collapse so shortly after the military and political collapse a decade prior. In a series of elections, where democracy seemed to have run wild, the German public eventually elected the figure that was supposed to lead them to prosperity- Adolf Hitler. A decade of democracy gone awry was over. The German public, though not truly inclusive and productive, but still, a public capable of discourse, was to be silenced for nearly fifteen years, before losing everything provided them with a final chance.

With the Nazi party's seizure of power in 1933, and the consolidation of German networks the previous year, the party was able to begin propagandizing the airwaves

shortly after their rise to prominence. After the brief period of artistic, experimental, and fairly democratic broadcasting under the Weimar Republic, the National Socialists began to transform German radio into its most discussed configuration- the one utilized by Joseph Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda. The Nazis presented a system of broadcasting that was inherently undemocratic and wiped out all possibility of public opinion and debate. Any democratic opposition to such a model was hindered by late Weimar consolidation of the medium.⁴⁹ The programming that was featured on the German airwaves during the Nazi regime was propagandist in nature, with shows that pointed out and emphasized the German-ness, or *volksgeist*, of its listeners. The propaganda established by the Nazi party set out to create an awareness that there was something about the German 'race,' 'blood,' or '*volk*' that was superior to the rest of the world.⁵⁰ This was done primarily to build up a sense of pride and grandiosity that the German public would associate with their 'patriotic leaders,' and thus submit to the later atrocities that would come to haunt the nation. In a 1933 pamphlet Wulf Bley, the chief radio commander for the party, wrote: "The German radio under National Socialists auspices must become the clearest and most direct instrument for educating and restructuring the German nation."⁵¹

Broadcasters in Nazi Germany ensured that the public was exposed to the regime's nationalist ideologies. One of the primary methods of accomplishing this was through the *Volksempfänger* [people's receiver]. These pre-tuned radio sets, distributed to

⁴⁹ Kate Lacey, "Radio in the Great Depression," *Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 33.

⁵⁰ Horst J.P. Bergmeier and Rainer E. Lotz, *Hitler's Airwaves: The Inside Story of Nazi Broadcasting and Propaganda Swing*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 7.

⁵¹ Wulf Bley, "*Deutsche Nationalerziehung und Rundfunkneubau*," cited in Bergmeier and Lotz, *Hitler's Airwaves*, 6.

the public at the lowest price possible, facilitated the spread of the Third Reich's political and cultural message. Unable to receive foreign broadcasts – although these receivers were easily modified to do so – the *Volksempfänger* prevented Germans from exposure to political opposition and even international critique of the German state during this time. Hacking one of these radios was considered treasonous, and listening to foreign broadcasts was punishable by death. In their efforts to manipulate the entire German public, the Nazi's created a massive listening community with an infrastructure that nearly reached the entire German population. Despite the fact that this was done to assist the rise of totalitarianism, it was actually one of the more beneficial tasks in terms of assisting the later occupation and reeducation effort. The same infrastructure of near-unanimous listening crafted by the Nazis became one of the most important tools of the Allies' occupation project.

Through political and cultural control – particularly broadcasting – the Nazis gained a firm grip on the German population, one that refused to subside until the structures of the Third Reich came crashing down in 1945. That spring must have seemed like a nightmare to the German public. As the Allies encroached further day by day, the Reich government that had manipulated millions – now headed by *Großadmiral* Dönitz – announced over the airwaves on the first of May, “Our leader has fallen...My first duty is to save the Germans from extermination by the Bolsheviks.”⁵² Dönitz's address to the German public continued, foreshadowing the coming hardships, and the astute German listener would have realized that the six-year conflict was coming to an unfavorable end

⁵² Karl Dönitz, Speech 5-1-1945, “News of the Death of Adolf Hitler” <http://www.dra.de/online/hinweisdienste/wort/2005/dezember24.html>. “*Unser Führer ist gefallen...Meine erste Aufgabe ist es, deutsch Menschen vor der Vernichtung durch die bolschewistischen Feind zu retten.*”

for the Reich. Less than a week after this address, and only a few days into Dönitz's tenure as *Reichspräsident*, the final Nazi broadcast was aired:

German men and women...On the night between the sixth and seventh of May, I have given the supreme commander of the armed forces the order to discuss unconditional surrender for all troops fighting in all theatres of the war.⁵³

After twelve long years, half of which were spent waging a gruesome total war, the Führer's regime had at last been silenced. The same consolidated broadcasting structure that had recognized and assisted the rise of National Socialism had now documented its downfall. Following several weeks of demoralizing silence throughout the defeated country, with no official programming over the airwaves – just momentary updates – the voice of the next four years was heard. With Major Bob Light acting as the in-the-moment intermediary for the larger occupation mission, using the same frequencies and infrastructure as the defeated totalitarians, a number of Germans were greeted by the now famous sign-on: "Good morning! This is Armed Forces Network Munich, the voice of the Seventh Army."⁵⁴

Reeducation:

Following the Germans' unconditional surrender in May of 1945, the Allied Powers introduced a formal occupation and reeducation process, directing Germany toward

⁵³ Dönitz Speech 5-8-1945, "Radio Address of the capitulation of the German Empire," <http://www.dra.de/online/hinweisdienste/wort/2005/dezember24.html>. "*Deutsche Männer und Frauen!... habe ich in der Nacht vom 6. zum 7. Mai dem Oberkommando der Wehrmacht den Auftrag gegeben, die bedingungslose Kapitulation für alle kämpfenden Truppen auf allen Kriegsschauplätzen zu erklären.*"

⁵⁴ Major Bob Light, quoted in, Patrick Morley, "*This is the American Forces Network*": *The Anglo-American Battle of the Airwaves in World War II*, (London: Greenwood, 2001), 127.

democratic self-governance.⁵⁵ During this time period, the Allied nations – the United States, France, and Britain – would oversee German bureaucratic and administrative duties. Also falling under the umbrella of Allied authority was German media and its restructuring. To obtain a better grasp on German media during occupation, and the shape taken on, one must understand the general objectives of the occupation effort.

Many of the processes associated with the occupation and reeducation effort were decided before the actual surrender; when a German defeat was seen as unavoidable.⁵⁶ It is generally understood that officials in the French and British sectors followed the American model of occupation. United States Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau in 1944, drafted the proposed plan of occupation. Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt reached an agreement on the demilitarization and disarmament of Germany following its impending defeat at the Second Quebec Conference in September of 1944. It was agreed that the United States would continue to assist the British economically following the end of the European war, but that Britain, and absent France, had to act in accordance with the United States' plans regarding the occupation effort in Germany.⁵⁷ Given that the United States was economically sound following the war, and was spared the expense of a domestic theater, it was clear that they could devote more attention, planning, and resources on the occupation effort in a defeated Germany. This is

⁵⁵ For more on the specifics of the German surrender and occupation procedures, see, Mary Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918-2008: The Divided Nation*, (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), and Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace*, (New York: Harper Perennial, 2010).

⁵⁶ Martin Folly, *Historical Dictionary of US Diplomacy during the Cold War*, (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), 496.

⁵⁷ John L. Chase, "The Development of the Morgenthau Plan Through the Quebec Conference," *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 16, May 1954, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 324-359.

further evidenced by the fact that the Allies – other than the United States – had no set plan of what to do with a defeated Germany.⁵⁸ Russia was also included in these early discussions, and assisted with the initial planning for the general demilitarization and denazification of the country at the Potsdam conference with the United States and Great Britain. Following this conference however, the line drawn between Germany became more and more apparent as both of these superpowers endorsed their very oppositional “One World” views.⁵⁹ As these divergent ideologies collided in postwar Germany, it was apparent that the Soviet occupation project was going to look drastically different from the one being established by the Americans. Ultimately, the Soviet occupation unofficially annexed East Germany into the USSR’s sphere of influence.⁶⁰

These early discussions resulted in the 1945 Joint Chiefs of Staff directive 1067 (JCS 1067). This document became the template for the early occupation effort and greatly influenced the French and British decisions on occupation policy and procedure. This directive was to be the guideline for reshaping Germany in a democratic mold, using military government regulation and aspects of national guilt to accomplish a series of goals that would ensure that Germany was capable of self-reliance upon Allied departure. Some of the direct goals included:

[a.] It should be brought home to the Germans that Germany's ruthless warfare and the fanatical Nazi resistance have destroyed the German economy and made chaos and suffering inevitable and that the Germans cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves.... [b.] Your aim is not oppression but to occupy Germany for the purpose of realizing certain important Allied objectives.... [c.] The principal Allied objective is to prevent Germany from ever again

⁵⁸ Fred Smith, “The Rise and Fall of the Morgenthau Plan,” *United Nations World*, (March 1947), Bernstein Papers, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library.

⁵⁹ Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, 182.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

becoming a threat to the peace of the world. Essential steps in the accomplishment of this objective are the elimination of Nazism and militarism...and the preparation for an eventual reconstruction of German political life on a democratic basis.⁶¹

It is interesting to note that the “Basic Objectives” as pointed out here, do not explicitly state anything regarding media, non-Nazi culture, or the genuine welfare of the German people. Section C stresses what seems to be the most important objective, that being it is the most relevant to the United States’ purposes in Germany: to ensure that Germany behaves in the future, and to transform it into a true democracy. Naturally, media reform and broadcast restructuring consistently slanted toward this particular target. It was essential to neutralize Germany as a threat to the world, and ensure that they did not return to the same problems that followed the First World War- blaming the rest of Europe for the nation’s problems. The Allies, emphasizing that democracy was the only way for a sovereign Germany to reemerge were placing emphasis on the fact that Germans must not only account for their own actions, but work within the Allied-endorsed model of government in order to solve these problems.

Taking on this project was more difficult than it may seem upon first glance. The Allies were imposing a governing ideology based on popular sovereignty, emphasizing the democratic voice of the people. This was complicated by the fact that they had to coerce this upon a defeated country without tainting their own democratic credentials. Could a truly democratic government be constructed from a decision that was not made by the citizens of the nation? Surely the occupation governments were aware of this and made the decision that immediate occupation was about convincing Germans that their situation was their own doing and preparing for a political Germany created ‘on a

⁶¹ JCS 1067, 2-3

democratic basis.’ Allied Command was persuading Germans that they needed democracy in order to survive in modern Europe. The Allies were attempting to make Germans believe, that had there been a stable democracy in place, the nation would not have spiraled into totalitarianism. German moral attitudes regarding governance had to change before the country could operate as a democracy. To stimulate the moral transformation that the postwar German public needed in order to realize that they ‘needed’ democracy to successfully rebuild their nation, the Allies implemented a policy of occupation-induced national guilt. Because of the radio infrastructure left by the Nazis, the Allies were granted the opportunity to rapidly implement this strategy upon the German listening public.

In the scholarly remnants of defeated Germany, a particular question revolved around the collective consciousness of the nation’s intellectuals: was the German public guilty? Karl Jaspers was among the philosophers who questioned this. A stringent anti-Nazi, Jaspers spent much of previous twelve years on the run and in partial hiding. His lectures on guilt were among his first upon reentering the academic sphere. To be blunt, Jaspers believed that all German nationals were guilty in the rise of the Third Reich and that the resulting consequences were deserved.⁶² This was not to say that all Germans were criminals – the Nuremberg trials were to account for the actual criminals of the regime – but that all Germans were compliant in the actions of the Nazis, since the regime did not face any opposition until 1943. For this reason, Jaspers supported the Allied occupation of Germany and the reeducation projects. Because all Germans were partially responsible for the disasters of National Socialism, it was up to the victors to

⁶² Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 55.

decide the fate of the German nation. Accepting this meant accepting the democratic government that the Allies were helping Germany establish during this period. This guilt, both Allied- and German-induced, was essential to the reconstruction- a democratization by national guilt. It would allow the Germans to be accepting of outside influence and suggestions. Though it will be discussed later, it should be noted that Jaspers, realizing the potential of radio as well, went on to record broadcasts materials for the Allies that would help with the depoliticizing and democratizing of the postwar German public.

The exploitation of guilt is perceived in the first section of the document as well, and is perhaps the most significant factor that contributed to the later German-imposed silence regarding the evils of the Holocaust and further, their heritage. The Allied powers made use of this collective guilt as a major tool in getting the Germans to cooperate with their policies. Reeducation-induced national guilt initiated a German desire to separate themselves from the atrocities caused by their former fascist state. Thus, the German public more actively accommodated their occupiers, so that it was not simply Americans administering all of these reforms, but also cooperative Germans.⁶³ Throughout the reeducation effort was the underlying theme of Germany's attempt to redeem their character to the world, and perhaps more importantly, themselves. Having public support of the Allied reforms alleviated some of the hardships that go along with restructuring a nation. However, the major take-away from the information presented in the beginning of the JCS directive is that, in their occupation zones, the Allied powers ultimately controlled nearly all aspects of German life. From denazification and education, to private-public property disputes and media outlets, there was a notion of Anglo-American

⁶³ Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, 187.

control surrounding all horizons.

The three previously mentioned objectives were primarily for the sake of accomplishing the initial goal of denazification. This goal was given immediacy over all other aspects of occupation, and impacted all facets of German public life, including broadcasting. JCS 1067 explained:

The laws purporting to establish the political structure of National Socialism and the basis of the Hitler regime and all laws, decrees and regulations which establish discriminations on grounds of race, nationality, creed or political opinions should be abrogated by the Control Council.⁶⁴

Given that the Allies' primary goal was creating a democratic Germany, ridding the government of laws and regulations that furthered Nazi practices was of maximum importance. This process initiated a change in the public sphere as well. Intellectuals, politicians, and public figures that had gone into exile during the Third Reich were now making themselves present and relevant to their nation again. Included in this phenomenon were Theodor Adorno, Karl Jaspers, Friedrich Meinecke, and Thomas Mann, to name a few. Without having to fear severe government retaliation, intellectualism began to thrive within the borders of Germany once again. These individuals' return to prominence marked the beginning of a returning rationale, moving closer to a rebirth of cosmopolitan culture.

Once all of the laws and political structures that nurtured National Socialism were adjusted or eradicated to initiate reeducation and reculturation, the next logical step was to find former Nazi party members or sympathizers and wipe away their public influence through dismissal. This is not solely limited to public figures, but also private individuals

⁶⁴ JCS 1067, 3.

who may display prominent influence, as the directive states:

All members of the Nazi party who have been more than nominal participants in its activities, all active supporters of Nazism or militarism and all other persons hostile to Allied purposes will be removed and excluded from public office and from positions of importance in quasi-public and private enterprises such as civic, economic and labor organizations. . . . the press, publishing houses and other agencies disseminating news and propaganda.⁶⁵

This required the removal of numerous media personnel and public figures from their positions at radio stations, newspapers, and public office. This also affected the overall content and style of German media. Quick, decisive action on the Allies' part facilitated their larger goal of creating a German democracy. Removing former propagandists and sympathizers of despotic regimes halted negative influence toward this objective. Given radio's power as a mass medium, this was a beneficial decision to make as early as they did. This also prepared the state for the battle over European airwaves in the Cold War era.⁶⁶ More importantly, it allowed semi-democratic and viable models of public media – free from the afflictions of National Socialism – to appear. It must be noted however, that there is a degree of criticism regarding this last objective among most historians of modern Germany. Logistically speaking, it would have been impossible to remove all those associated with National Socialism; even if the focus was on those who were 'more than nominal participants.' If this goal were accomplished there would be a near total lack of professionals and educated tradesmen- severely limiting the reconstruction effort, especially when considering bureaucratic and public services.⁶⁷ Shortly into the occupation mission, the Allies realized this was unrealistic, focusing their denazification

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ For more on Cold War Broadcasting conflicts see, Michael Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

⁶⁷ Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, 186.

efforts on only those measured a substantial threat to their project.⁶⁸

In the postwar period, especially during reeducation and occupation, radio embodied a struggle between occupier and occupied. In order to provide stability and meet the objectives of the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS), radio was placed in the category of public broadcasting, just as it was during the Third Reich. The success of the British Broadcasting Company over the course of the last quarter century contributed to this. It was feared that the commercial American model would present the opportunity for capital-backed interest groups to dominate the frequencies. Despite this similarity, it was done to ensure that propagation of Nazi ideologies could not resurface, while allowing the United States to maintain tighter control on the overall message of broadcasting. While it would have been heavily regulated and used as a public service, broadcasting during occupation was often used to meet the needs of the Allies. Therefore, how much of a public service was radio if it did not grant a sense of agency to the public it was supposed to represent? How did the OMGUS decide what is best to broadcast for its German occupants? To what extent did these regulated broadcasts prove beneficial to the listening public?

Keeping the public service model in mind, it must be acknowledged that there was only an extent to which the model could have genuinely benefited the German public's interests. The United States' occupation force was trying to set up a model that was so contextually distant from recent German memory that it could not necessarily represent all of Germany's concerns. Broadcasting, during the reeducation process, was a tool of occupation, thus making it impossible to grant every interest a voice over the air.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 185.

This would have held especially true for any type of programming centered on German grandiosity, romantic national sentiment, or overbearing patriotism. Although presented as a public service, occupation broadcasting was always intended to be a path toward the creation of a German public that was no longer capable of supporting undemocratic ambitions and policies. This model overwhelmingly presented material and programming that would act in accordance with what the Allies felt Germany's best interest was. This furthers the notion of an Allied-endorsed democratic propaganda, although it is one that most scholars would say was beneficial in the emergence of a stable postwar Germany and an informed German public.

Addressing its followers, the JCS 1067 directive stressed to “prohibit the propagation in any form of...Pan-German doctrines,” going as far as to state, “No German parades, military or political, civilian or sports, shall be permitted by you.”⁶⁹ Maintaining this level of scrutiny in a country that, at least for the last century, was notorious for self-adulation would require content overhauls, regularly conducted inspections, and a degree of censorship. In an effort to move away from structures of National Socialism, the content that was presented through media outlets drastically changed. However, the format of mass media – a government controlled source of information – remained comparable. As previously mentioned, occupation and the high level of Allied regulation ensured that radio would have to follow a noncommercial public service model during the postwar years. This points out yet another similarity between occupied broadcasting and the prior, Nazi model- heavy censorship. Control Council members adhering to the JCS directive were advised: “you will endeavor to obtain agreement for uniform or

⁶⁹ JCS 1067, 5.

coordinated policies with respect to (a) control of public information media in Germany, (b) accrediting of foreign correspondents, (c) press censorship.”⁷⁰ Both the Nazi party and the Allies encouraged censoring of particular issues and topics, but again, the National Socialists did so to distribute nationalist sentiments to their public. Without proper resistance and critical debate, this censorship and propaganda homogenized their position as the dominant political force in the nation. Censorship managed by the occupation forces was used to weed out any lingering Nazi propaganda, remove the spread of communist sentiment, and prevent any future budding of totalitarianism through the various channels of mass media. The continued reasoning behind this was preparing Germans to run an autonomous, modified, and democratic West Germany following occupation.

It must be noted that in 1947, JCS 1067 was revised and replaced with JCS 1779.⁷¹ This revision to the directive primarily placed more emphasis on the economic rebuilding of Germany- later sparking the *Wirtschaftswunder* [economic miracle].⁷² While economic and commercial endeavors were largely more national following this, the decree’s materials relating to the control of media and social aspects were primarily left unchanged.⁷³ However, with more economic independence and effort applied to restructuring the broken nation, Germany was pushed in the direction of autonomy from Allied regulation. This greatly affected the eventual resurfacing of social and cultural structures in postwar Germany. Liberation from the control of the military government of the United States would allow Germans to begin thinking more critically about questions

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Folly, *Dictionary of US Diplomacy*, 497.

⁷² “Economic Miracle”.

⁷³ JCS 1779.

of national identity and sociocultural directions in which to move.

Broadcasting Under the Allies:

In the previous section it was pointed out that the military government regulated German broadcasting during its occupation. This implies that radio was a political tool, a means by which the American forces psychologically and ideologically prepared Germany for their own autonomous agency in the future. In fact, during the initial years of occupation, radio's separation from the political party and politics in general was a significant objective in the creation of a democratic German state. The effort to depoliticize the airwaves was an attempt to return German broadcasting to the way it had been during the brief period of the Weimar years- informative, intellectual, and, most importantly, democratic. In compliance with the Allied objective of breaking up the structures that fostered National Socialism, the aural propaganda tool had to be done away with as soon as possible. By distancing radio from the influence of the state, the Allied powers were promoting a broadcasting style that favored objectivity and – with exceptions like Nazism and communism – a wide range of opinions.⁷⁴ The German public was granted a voice, though it was one that required compliance with an ever-present system of regulations.

Allied administration of broadcasting was centralized around three parameters: uniformity, democracy, and content regulation. By creating similar, democracy-pushing programming and compatible formats in the three western occupation zones the Allies were constructing a system beneficial to Germans following their exit. Even though the

⁷⁴ Matthias von Hellfeld. "Public broadcasting in Germany marks 60 years of independent reporting." 5.6.2010. accessed 11.10.14. <http://www.dw.de/public-broadcasting-in-germany-marks-60-years-of-independent-reporting/a-5635520>

occupation of West Germany was divided into American, British, and French zones, there was a high degree of uniformity in broadcasting formats. This went along with the fact that the British and French tended to follow the American model of occupation, as mentioned earlier. Additionally, France and Great Britain were burdened by domestic issues related to austere reconstruction following the war, not permitting them to focus as intently on Germany as the United States could. While the United States was the first to formally introduce a broadcasting structure, the model was one borrowed from the British. Since the United States' capitalist-influenced, commercialized model could have granted an opportunity for the emergence of political, economic, and social bias, the BBC public service model was unanimously favored. With this format, the German public would have been able to discuss public issues, while keeping a safe distance from partisanship and bias that could contribute to sabotaging any progress made toward rebuilding the broken country. Creating uniform media models in all three zones of occupation also contributed to a smooth transition from occupation to autonomy. Fewer adjustments would have been required upon Allied exit, allowing Germans to allocate more time to building their new government. Broadcasting was often broken up by region as well. Though still maintaining a set of regulations put in place by the Allied powers, regional broadcasting hubs were responsible for the programming and content distributed. This tradition continued after occupation, with the respective state administering media and broadcasting, instead of the federal government.

This uniformity carries over into the content that was aired during this time frame. For example, the archived transcriptions of the currency reform coverage in the summer of 1948 all focus on the facts behind the reform, not empathetic reactions or subjective

interpretations of them.⁷⁵ Since the coverage was featured in all regions of West Germany, it is interesting to see that all reporting of it is fairly objective, without any critiques or avid endorsements of the reform. One senator from Bremen did remark, “Thus begins a new era. The German Mark is the basis for our future economy’s structure.”⁷⁶ However, this is the most enthusiastic inclusion in the coverage. Also, the coverage of the reforms came from all regions of Germany, and the similarities in the style and presentation of the coverage demonstrates the uniformity of the broadcasting structures assembled by the three occupying powers. Interestingly, two of the nine documented broadcasts on the subject make a point to cite Hitler’s regime as the cause of all of the economic problems; a positive sign for the reeducation effort. One distinction must be made however. It is not being argued that German postwar radio was free from opinion, as the above comments on Hitler were opinions. But, that it advocated an absence of fervent political attitudes that could debilitate the democratization of media outlets on a uniform national level- the democratic propaganda discussed before. It was essential that the Allies convince Germany to accept democratic political ideologies, both to reform their own society in a successful manner, and to not fall victim to the spread of communism. With the Cold War inevitable at this point, it was necessary for the Western Allied powers to have a success story in West Germany. Due to the conditions surrounding the occupation effort – the ‘evil’ Germans being taught how to be ‘good,’ ‘just,’ and democratic – we typically do not consider the reformation of Germany into a democracy as propagandistic. By definition, however, the suggestive and, at times,

⁷⁵ *Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv*. “Deutschland: Währungsreform in den drei Westzonen” 6.14.1948-6.23.1948. <http://www.dra.de/online/hinweisdienste/wort/1998/juni20.html>.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* Senator Erhard Heldmann’s comment, “Damit beginnt auch eine neue Zeit. Die Deutsche Mark ist die Grundlage für den zukünftigen Aufbau unserer Wirtschaft.”

subliminal movement of a particular ideology – whether considered ‘good’ or ‘bad’ by normative cultural standards – affirms its status. The entire process was, however, two separate conflicts- one for the restructuring of Germany and the other establishing the terms of the Cold War.

News reports from this era were unarguably political, but through independent broadcasting German reporters and public figures were able to reintroduce public debate within the media in a democratic fashion. This is important to note since radio broadcasting in Germany had not existed in this way for nearly twenty-five years. A public sphere based on discourse is a necessity for the development of democracy, especially in a nation that had been manipulated by a single political party for so many years. Parting with the excessively propagated reporting of the National Socialism years is a significant step forward in the rebuilding of Germany. Although apolitical coverage of a nation’s political endeavors is a difficult task to accomplish, the emphasis that these figures seem to place on impartiality speaks to a level of cooperation with the Allied forces. By excluding political commentary on the political and governmental changes that were occurring, the German media outlets were allowing their audiences to develop their own opinions on the matters. This cooperation accelerated occupation objectives by proving that Germany could function as a discursive public, free from runaway propaganda and overwhelming single-party politics. Situations such as this show that there was a German willingness to change in more progressive sectors of the population and a growing ambition to meet the end goal of self-governing democracy.

Cases concerning the democratic propagation aspects of postwar German broadcasting are seen most prominently in the reemergence of the German intellectual

sphere. In addition to the high volume of scholarship regarding national guilt and the German situation after the war, there were also frequent radio broadcasts that specifically focused on the democratization of the German public sphere. It was believed that national guilt, and the ‘purification’ of the German could only be accomplished through the process of reeducation and the emergence of a democratic Germany.⁷⁷ The paradigm established in German universities following the war made its way to the air through “expert opinion in the form of intellectual tracts, lectures, and radio addresses on Germany’s past, present, and future condition.”⁷⁸ A common intellectual viewpoint was being established, and although the approaches taken toward the question of reeducation were diverse, a common trait was that it accepted and endorsed the democratization effort.⁷⁹

A particularly enlightening instance of this intellectual trend on the air is Karl Jasper’s November 10, 1946 radio lecture, “*Volk und Universität*,” on the role of the university during occupation.⁸⁰ The lecture was broadcast on Heidelberg University’s “The University Hour,” a program dedicated to publicly expressing the scholarly community’s outlook on the postwar nation. The show’s democratic self-expressive discussions functioned as a vehicle for public discourse, sparking debate among the scholarly community as well as endorsing a pro-democratic, pro-reeducation agenda. This particular broadcast featured Jaspers’ now famous pro-reeducation views, greatly

⁷⁷ Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 114-15.

⁷⁸ Jaimey Fisher, *Disciplining Germany: Youth, Reeducation, and Reconstruction after the Second World War*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007), 89.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁸⁰ Jaspers, “Nation and University,” in *Erneuerung der Universität: Reden und Schriften, 1945/46* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1986).

emphasizing the depoliticizing of the university:

If it is, under the current mission... especially important to study political realities and to train political knowledge and thinking, we should also warn of a certain confusion. The meaning of higher education excludes active politics from higher education itself.⁸¹

Speeches and opinions such as this effectively fell in line with the goals of Allied occupation, and work particularly well with the claim that there was an effort for Germans to embrace apolitical, yet democratic methods of discourse, while still having the option to express opinion. In this case, Jaspers is extending a point about the hyper-politicized nature of Germany's past, and that in order to have a properly informed public, the public must be exposed to an environment where they are able to learn about the new political structures being introduced in Germany. The broadcast continues:

Each student can, when he would like to, belong to a party and be active in it. He can, as a youth, link himself politically to all the other youths of the nation. But as a student with other students, he is not to form party groups within the university. Here he researches the party in a politically windless space.⁸²

To Jaspers, the university was representative of this apolitical environment, where the students of a new Germany would become informed and cultivate the ability to think critically about their political involvements. To the Allies, this sentiment was expressed on a much larger scale. It was believed that the use of mass media, i.e., broadcasting, in Germany – during occupation – should remain fairly apolitical, unless it was to actively endorse a democratic government and public.⁸³ It would also seem as if this was an attempt to break from the group mentality of the Nazi period, with Jaspers' statements endorsing a radical individuality within the new politics and society of postwar Germany.

⁸¹ Jaspers, "Nation and University," 280.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ JCS 1067, 9 a.

As cooperative as he was with Allied broadcasting objectives regarding the democratic and apolitical position of his lecture, Jaspers caused a brief controversy prior to its airing. Bearing such a resonant title, “Nation and University,” the military government was concerned that it may contain traces of romantic nationalism. Despite Jaspers’ untarnished reputation as an anti-Nazi, the fact that he was linking an institution – the university – with the nation echoed sentiments expressed within the former Nazi *volksgeist* that the Allies were trying to eradicate. Obviously the broadcast was aired, but not until American officials inspected the text after seizing it from the Heidelberg station.⁸⁴ While the military government did not censor it, the slight controversy over the title of a lecture stresses the use of censorship as a means of controlling public information.

This period of critical scholarship induced by the reworking of German culture and society contributed to the emergence of a new generation of scholars who were starting to research and publish in the decade following German defeat. Jaspers was among an older generation of scholars; largely silent during the Hitler years for fear of persecution, the philosopher began publishing again following the Allied victory. His immediate output following the German defeat was a catalyst in the transformation of German intellectualism. The structural changes regarding German culture and society were a key component in the *Bildung* of an emerging network of young German scholars, intertwined in their efforts to revolutionize German cultural thought and intellectualism. The most substantial scholar within this emerging tradition of postwar thought, perhaps, was Jürgen Habermas. Coming of age during the fall of Nazi Germany, Habermas

⁸⁴ Fisher, *Disciplining Germany*, 151.

received his formal education during the years of occupation and national reconstruction. During the decade following the war Habermas initiated the research associated with his philosophies of the public sphere, climaxing in the critical study that launched his career.

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), Jürgen Habermas establishes the necessary conditions for the emergence of the public sphere (*Öffentlichkeit*). Born from the bridging of court and bourgeois society toward the end of early-modernity, the public sphere presented the opportunity for the private citizen of the conceptually new 'nation' to interact with their political leaders.⁸⁵ This relationship fostered early democratic thought and provided former subjects with a voice through critical debate. And while physical debate was a possibility in the fairly abstract rendering of the public sphere, rhetorical devices could easily represent this dynamic as well. The writings, paintings, compositions, and various deeds of the private, non-courtly individual provided the public a voice within a dialogue between citizen and state. In order for this phenomenon to operate in a productive and democratic fashion, it must be proven that there is a two-sided conversation going on between the individual/public and the state. A one-sided governance of the citizen or a list of hopeful propositions to those in power is not an acceptable discourse for this exchange.

Completing his work in the decade following the Second World War, Habermas was a product of the experimental democratization of Germany. Growing up in an environment where the ideas of 'democracy' and 'public' were on the forefront of social and cultural issues, it was natural that Habermas' first major scholarly work would focus on a similar subject matter. In an example to his German audience, Habermas cites the

⁸⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, (MIT Press, 1991), 30.

creation of the *Deutsches Nationaltheater* as a monumental landmark in the creation of a public sphere consisted of private individuals during the eighteenth century. The theater, when in the hands of the court and church, provided the necessary mechanisms for the exclusion of the true public. Habermas explains, “In the same way as literature, the theater obtained a public in the strict sense of the word only when the theaters attached to court and palace, so typical of Germany, became “public”.”⁸⁶ As a result of growing societal interest in the arts, the fledgling public sphere – consisting of private citizens – brought about the opening of the *Deutsches Nationaltheater* in 1766 through an active involvement with the Weimar government. This idea shows that the public’s interest in cultural identification can prove effective in establishing the necessary exchange between the government and the governed. If the private citizen is not participating in the larger discussions related to self and communal identification within the confines of, and in accordance with, the political state, then a viable public sphere – as a vehicle for the transmission of societal ideas, influence, and progression – cannot be established.

Tying Habermas’ example of eighteenth century Germany’s creation of the *Deutsches Nationaltheater* into the emergence of a postwar democratic German public sphere is difficult, but it does provide us with a draft of how an interactive public is established out of changing normative constructions. In the same way that the German National Theater acted as the medium for an artistic community to break away from the church and monarchy and to gain access to an artistic public, radio was acting as a medium for postwar Germans to get their experiences and opinions into the public sphere. Both of these processes created publics – albeit different types of publics – that

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

were necessary in reshaping the nation during a shift in the moral and cultural attitudes of the time. Habermas' philosophy infers that there is a sociocultural null point that can be attained through the proper channels. This null point is interpreted as the preliminary condition in a nihilistic view of culture; the world that exists after the established structures and sociocultural mediums are done away with. When this is achieved, the ideal cultural state has been reached. At this point, the output of society will be completely original- a pure stream of creative yield. With the sociocultural structures of Germany hitting rock bottom in 1945, this null point – often interpreted as a *Punkt null* or *Stunde null* – was reached. According to Habermas, the conditions conducive to the creation of a public sphere were attained- with the archaic monarchical institutions and pillars of National Socialism eliminated, private citizens were granted the opportunity to communicate with a new German nation-state in a practical and public manner. The way that the informed and influential public spheres of nineteenth century Europe were established, according to Habermas, was not by adjusting the contemporary norms set in place by tradition as most historicists will claim, but by a radical change of thought in the present, projecting an apathetic light on the past, and regarding tradition as a model for what must be improved upon and deviated from when *Stunde null* has been reached.

While Habermas' philosophies of the creation of historical public spheres in eighteenth century England and Germany are applicable and relevant to the period of transformation in which Habermas was writing, there are a few key differences that should be acknowledged. The public spheres that were the focus of Habermas' study, while based in the artistic and intellectual communities of enlightenment Europe, were not democratic in the way that twentieth century Germany was being reworked.

Habermas' thought on the emergence of new and innovative public spheres was not a step-by-step plan for the creation of a new German public, but rather a theoretical tool to be used in the conversation regarding how to go about creating a truly democratic Germany. Intellectually maturing in such a pivotal time drew the young Habermas toward the subject, setting in motion a career that would evolve with the fledgling democracy. The principles of his eighteenth century public were based in bourgeois cultural logic. These guidelines were overwhelmingly grounded in the upper-middle classes of European society- a connection that Habermas stresses should be severed. In the case of postwar Germany, the democratic public sphere being established had to diversify its constituency. It was essential that a public sphere based on Western democratic thought be far more reaching and inclusive than the limited, elite public of bourgeois Europe. This type of thought was demonstrated in the brief Weimar period, as mentioned above, but became a top priority in the restructuring of a defeated postwar Germany. Radio presented the opportunity to accomplish this. Because of the inclusive nature of the broadcasting community – unrestricted by class, ethnicity, or social status – anyone within the a particular broadcaster's constituency had the opportunity to be involved within this new public.

The public sphere of postwar Germany is similar to a logic seen in Thomas Mann's immense fictional biography of musician Adrian Leverkühn: a literary stand-in for Friedrich Nietzsche, Arnold Schoenberg, and others- including Mann himself. Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947) provided a critique of German society and hinted at the direction

that Germany must travel in their striving-toward-redemption.⁸⁷ Within his assessment Mann addressed the antiquated bourgeois public of prewar Germany. The narrative sees Leverkühn – the tragic hero – navigating the intellectual and cultural realms of German society as a groundbreaking, young composer, through the eyes of lifelong friend Serenus Zeitblom, a tradition-laden intellectual representative of Mann’s historically conservative aspects. Mann was writing the book from 1943 to 1947, while living in California after leaving Germany in 1933. From afar, Mann was evaluating the cultural attitudes of his homeland, placing much of the blame for the Third Reich and the Second World War on Germany’s lofty cultural and political ambitions of the previous century. Like Jaspers, Mann was a stringent critic of National Socialism. And also like Jaspers, the collapse of the Third Reich reconnected Mann with his German audience. With the censorship and propaganda ministries of Nazi Germany eliminated, Mann and his works could now travel within the boundaries of an occupied Germany, incorporating his message into the sociocultural mentalities of the reconstruction era.

In an argument that would later find supporting rhetoric in the *Sonderweg* position of the *Historikerstreit*, the exiled author drafted a narrative that condemned much of the German historical logic. Despite this, Mann endorsed a number the creative and intellectual deeds of German artists throughout the country’s history. He explains that while these works were monumental and necessary for the progress of the arts, science, and humanity as a whole, the attitudes through which Germans acted in relation to these great deeds were setting up the nation for a remarkable downfall as a result of their hubristic overreaching. Throughout *Doktor Faustus* we see Mann – acting through

⁸⁷ Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus: The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn, as Told by a Friend*, trans. John Woods, (New York: Vintage International, 1999).

Adrian Leverkühn and Serenus Zeitblom – negotiating the terms of the new direction Germany must follow. Removing the arrogance and prejudices so familiar to an exclusive bourgeois German culture, a public, *volk Kultur* had to be attained in order to ground the lofty ambitions of the historically inaccessible German intellectual.

In chapter 31 of the work, Leverkühn delivers his changing view on art following the First World War while discussing his latest work the *Gesta*- a musical setting of folk tales with the accompaniment of marionettes. Mann’s fictional composer explains that art was isolated in the modern age, “left alone with a cultured elite, known as the ‘audience,’ which will soon no longer exist, which already no longer exists.”⁸⁸ Leverkühn, believing that the art and intellectualism of Enlightenment Europe was dated, felt compelled to make a case for modernity’s role in crafting a new community: a refurbishment of the selectively exclusive and antiquated humanistic tradition, broadening what constitutes an ‘audience’ in the twentieth century. Mann continues, “art will soon be all alone, alone to fade away and die, unless, that is, it should find a way to the *volk*... to human beings,” persuading his readers to accept that “art will hold the future within it, will again see itself as the servant of a community that is embraced by far more than ‘education’.”⁸⁹ This conversation was a part of Zeitblom’s exposition, guiding the reader toward the premiere of Leverkühn’s most primitive, though technically experimental work, the *Apocalypse cum figuris*. It is with this particular composition that Mann establishes Leverkühn as an architect of a future *volk* culture- an artistic community consisted of

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

radical individuality, which establishes “an art that is on a first-name basis with humanity.”⁹⁰

Leverkühn’s reworking of Gregorian chant and early polyphony, the *Apocalypse cum figuris*, was a return to the primal, base vocal traditions from which Western music sprung. The modern revision of medieval chant music and the early works of polyphony with the twelve-tone or row method of Schoenberg – who’s groundbreaking innovations Mann is channeling through Leverkühn’s musical accomplishment – is similar to the transformation taking place within the German public of the postwar period. Leverkühn was bringing the techniques and *musicalisches Gedanken* associated with modernity and intellectualism to the communal tradition of vocal music. Mann explains throughout the work that this was an attempt to reinterpret the cultural logic of Germany. By evoking the communal sentiment of Gregorian chant, Leverkühn was accessing a traditional aspect of art, something tied in with the inclusive religious communities of pre-modern Europe. Mann’s composer felt that the traditions of European concert music had pivoted too far toward the elite, the middle-class, and the bourgeois over the past three centuries, and it was Leverkühn’s duty as an artist to return that tradition to its origins in an attempt to expand on the notion of audience. The processes enacted by Mann’s protagonist were democratic in nature, a return of the art to the people, or better, the newly emerging purveyors of a popular public culture. Although the theory and thought behind Leverkühn’s art was radical and innovative, it remained within the *volk* tradition that it was attempting to revive. Postwar Germans, striving toward a democratic society, were analyzing their traditions, finding the errors and wrong turns, and attempting to correct

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

them through a shift in national thought, brought on by their failures in politics, warfare, and humanity. To bring about a revival of their own culture in a new democratic light, postwar Germans would have to remove the romanticism, the loftiness, and the bourgeois elitism of their traditional views on their own culture- a return to basics, back to the unaccompanied human voice. It is interesting that in Mann's work, the fictional Leverkühn finds his solution to German elitism and romanticism in the base human voice, while at the same time, in reality; the postwar German public was leaning toward the human voice for many of their answers as well.

Mann's Adrian Leverkühn was working within a dialectic. A mastery over the origins of western musical tradition once associated with the ancestral 'audience' community, and the innovative progressions developed by the intellectual individuals, like Beethoven, Schoenberg, or Berlioz, produced a radically new art form tied as closely to community as it was to Enlightenment-era individualism. By extracting the notions of elitism, virtuosity, and romantic sentiment about the nation of origin – or in this case, the 'Germanness' of the art – Mann's Leverkühn was bringing about the revival of an archaic art form that was more inclusive regarding audience. Simultaneously, Leverkühn was pushing the boundaries of western music, through the Avant-garde interpretation and transfiguration of musical theory within his compositions. Finding the future of musical theory within its most base traditions, Leverkühn was promoting the group dynamics of Gregorian chant, but within a perspective that focused on the radical individuality of the compositional form. Among the many unique voices and components of the composition, the composer was finding unity. We see a similar pattern in the radio public sphere of postwar Germany. The airwaves provided the nation with a platform for the unity of

many divergent and individualistic opinions. Instead of a group based on the homogenous ideology of a totalitarian regime, we find a public consisting of varied backgrounds and experiences unified in the effort to reform their nation in a progressive fashion. In both situations, the group – each composed from the merging of unique, individualistic elements – functions as a practical possibility for the future.

Similar to the dialectic described in the introduction to this work, a constant eye toward the past paired with a modern cosmopolitanism established the conditions for a radically new and constructive cultural consciousness. As we move into the second chapter of this work, Germans were granted a greater autonomy regarding their cultural endeavors. With the guidelines and processes established in the first years of occupation in place, we see how Germans are initiating the postwar dialectic, as they navigate, expand, and reinterpret the conditions of their occupation and existence. Much of it documented over the airwaves for present and future generations to bear witness to the monumental processes of change.

CHAPTER 2: VARIOUS INVENTIONS

“Radio is not an invention. It is the practical application of various inventions that provide interested parties the opportunity to participate in works of fine and visual arts, in world affairs, and in current events.”⁹¹ This statement opened Alfred Ratzlaff’s essay on the role of radio for a broadcasting conference organized by the *Rundfunkschule NWDR* [Broadcasting School of Northwest German Broadcasting] in British-occupied Hamburg in March 1949.⁹² The head of the broadcasting school, Alexander Maaß, sent out invitations to officials in the broadcasting sectors of the American and French zones of occupation to round out the occasion. The conference was being held to promote NWDR’s successful *Rundfunkschule* [broadcasting school], while simultaneously providing the opportunity to discuss “the most important educational and cultural issues for competent Germans and Allied personnel.”⁹³ The *Rundfunkschule* was established by NWDR in 1947 to train young German broadcasters to be democratic, ‘objective’ and

⁹¹ Alfred Ratzlaff, “Die Aufgaben des Rundfunks,” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 1338. “*Der Rundfunk ist keine Erfindung. Er ist die praktische Nutzenanwendung von Erfindungen, die einer Vielzahl von interessierten die Möglichkeit gibt, teilzuhaben an Werken der schönen und bildenden Künste, am Weltgeschehen und an Tagesereignissen.*”

⁹² Rundfunkschule, Correspondence between Alexander Maass and Eberhard Beckmann, January 25, 1949. Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 1334.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, “*Wir würden uns sehr freuen, wenn auch Sie an dieser Tagung teilnehmen würden, auf der die wichtigsten Erziehungs- und kulturellen Fragen von deutschen wie von alliierten kompetenten Personen behandelt können.*”

thorough in their reporting, and to adhere to the standards set in place, not only by British occupation forces, but throughout the whole of West Germany. The *Rundfunkschule* maintained regular correspondence with the American and French sectors, and operated with the ‘big picture’ project in mind. That big picture was crafting a model of public broadcasting for a sovereign West Germany, capable of spreading cosmopolitan and productive ideas in a democratic fashion.

In 1947, the planned model of occupation for Germany’s western zones shifted. The previous two years intently focused on the strict supervision of German political, economic, and cultural affairs- complying with the American model of occupation described in Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive (JCS) 1067. Under a newly implemented JCS 1779, the tightly wound model of control began to unravel, allowing Germans a bit more jurisdiction over their divided and broken nation. As it was stated in the previous chapter, a great deal of the Allies’ focus after 1947 was on Germany’s political and economic structures, particularly preparing Germany for its economic survival following the exit of the occupying forces. JCS 1779 decidedly put industry back into the hands of Germans, though it was the Allies’ responsibility to ensure no major monopolies, trusts, or mergers came to dominate the new German free market. Also receiving greater freedoms during the second half of the occupation years was the German cultural realm. Compared to the previous directive, which had several pages of regulations related to German culture, the new outline consisted of only a few paragraphs. This was concisely summarized as an order for Allied Command to foster the development of German culture by distancing

themselves from it, unless it perpetuated aspects of National Socialism or German militarism.⁹⁴

With the newfound freedoms of a more liberal policy of occupation, Germans were granted greater sovereignty over their public institutions, sparking a period of practical and public experimentation as they moved toward a renewed, democratic, and autonomous Germany. We see this experimental frame of mind manifested in the conversations over German culture and the new German public. Regarding ‘Cultural Objectives,’ the military government, “believes there should be no forcible break in the cultural unity of Germany, but recognizes the spiritual value of the regional traditions of Germany and wishes to foster them.”⁹⁵ Because of a conscious decision by the Allied powers to promote and ‘foster’ German culture, Germans were fairly free to do as they wished in terms of national culture. This period of cultural liberty – though still under the now-lessened supervision of the Allies – promoted a fervent wave of sociocultural thought revolving around the notion of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* [mastering the past]. Of particular interest are the questions that Germans were raising regarding their sociocultural position within their own country.

This second phase of occupation, from 1947 to 1949, saw instances of Germans beginning to question their own immediate history as individuals within a society that required restructuring. Early explorations in the discourses revolving around German culture in the twentieth century are noticed during this period, as Germans began evaluating the aspects of tradition that would be acceptable in a new democratic

⁹⁴ Department of State, Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1779, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 17, July 27, 1944, 192-193.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 192.

Germany. This was especially important as a greater number of Germans began to assess how National Socialism and the Holocaust were going to impact the next generation. In this chapter, postwar Germans' experiential accounts of wrestling with their 'German' past will be explicitly dealt with as the nation began to attempt a reclamation – or in some cases, a suspension – of traditional values within an increasingly democratic public.

The research in this chapter focuses on the German experience with broadcasting and the nation's own initiatives geared toward amending media structures. Since Allied supervision lessened, Germans were granted greater liberties concerning domestic affairs, such as public communications. Additionally, at this point the research specifically emphasizes Hamburg and *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*. Some examples, however, are taken from the entirety of future West Germany to denote broader patterns that are taking place within a national context. With the implementation of JCS 1779, which brought about a more liberal set of guidelines for German broadcasters, a greater creative autonomy over the airwaves was observed, allowing the general Allied model of broadcasting to be refined to the needs of German broadcasters' local listenerships. Hamburg's NWDR promoted a model of broadcasting that was pioneering and constructive, with the network producing novel programming that sparked a dialogue regarding German culture and society in the last years of occupation and the first years of self-governance.

Some truly groundbreaking aspects of postwar broadcasting were noticed during this period, as Germans began to implement a more experimental and innovative approach to radio. This helped listeners approach critical discussions about their national culture and identity in a uniquely German manner; a mechanism employed for cultural

and intellectual expression in an environment where Germans were perplexed about their own culture and society. Of greatest importance were the collective developments displayed by Hamburg's radio community. When questioned about experience, or presented with issues related to cultural tradition, NWDR's listening community regularly set up the dialogue as a reflection of their current situation. Examining *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk's* internal documents and broadcast programs, its relationship with Hamburg's cultural institutions, and the opinions and experiences of its listenership, we find an insightful pattern. The period of 1947 to 1949 – as Allied cultural supervision lessened – saw more Germans bringing up tradition, discussing how to make it 'new,' or how they should go about applying it to the next phase of rebuilding the nation. This chapter argues that, in the final years of occupation, Germans were expanding and manipulating the structures introduced in the first two years of occupation and making them a unique part of their own public cultural mentalities. This was a critical stage in the attempt to construct a uniquely German public through a convergence of tradition with outside innovation and influence. Broadcasting and the inclusivity of the "imagined community" it created was essential to this process, as it brought a significant portion of the German population into these discussions. As German broadcasters continued to endorse cultural reconstruction and the democratic principles the Allies were addressing, an internalization of these ideas could be examined in the German public- or at least in what German broadcasters were distributing to the public.

Rundfunkschule:

1947 marked a critical point in both the Allies' occupation role and the restructuring of Germany in the postwar period. Moving into this period of greater liberty concerning domestic affairs – at least those not associated with economic or military affairs – was seen as a critical moment for Germans to begin restructuring their society. Therefore, in order to guarantee that greater restrictions and supervision were not reinstated, Germans in positions that were closely tied to public and cultural institutions made sure to prove to the occupying powers that Germany could function in accordance with the guidelines and behaviors set in place by the Allies. In Hamburg, the leaders of *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* ensured this by committing a great deal of time and resources to the structuring of their station and its accompanying broadcast culture. Radio broadcasters – being a key public institution – were to be democratic and 'objective' in their programming and reporting.⁹⁶ Hamburg's NWDR was particularly attuned to this objective, and maintained an informed model of communication for its listenership. Although the station was in line with the Allies' objectives established during the first few years of occupation, they did not distribute sterilized forms of programming based on what was considered acceptable by the military government. The network conformed to the standard guidelines set in place by the Allies as they simultaneously emphasized the progression of a distinctively German take on broadcasting. The station placed considerable emphasis on the fact that they were distributing information on the postwar German experience- in order to unite listeners as members of a radio community. *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* disseminated

⁹⁶ Although most official documents reference the necessity of objectivity, it was actually objective within the scope of values endorsed by the Allies. For instance, even 'objective' critiques of National Socialism would have been banned if there was a notion of approval.

critical information in a method that sparked inquiry and interaction among their north German constituency while coordinating a cooperative relationship with the British officers overseeing the occupation project.

To ensure that their station was putting out the most innovative but still compliant material in occupied Germany, the directors of *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* founded the *Rundfunkschule NWDR*. NWDR's broadcasting school functioned as a training center for journalists and directors of the station starting in 1947. Until 1948, the main responsibility of the school was the training of young journalists just getting into the profession, in addition to the 're-training' of more seasoned journalists.⁹⁷ During this time those involved in the program would have been notified of the guidelines established by the British authorities, how to go about producing informative reporting, and meeting the requirements of the Allies' desired objectives. Once this goal was accomplished, the program moved on to a new development. In this second phase, "the function of the school was transformed into something similar to a training center, which brought together the relevant groups of the radio community."⁹⁸ This would have included the directors of the station, writers, and journalists who were not included in the first wave of training, and others that fell into the category of 'groups of the radio community.'

The *Rundfunkschule*'s series of lectures, ranging from the democratic nature of radio to the role of broadcasting in the restructuring of German art and culture, were

⁹⁷ Hans-Ulrich Wagner, "London-Remigranten in der westdeutschen Rundfunkgeschichte," *Stimme der Wahrheit: German Language Broadcasting by the BBC*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi Publishing, 2003), 142.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, "In der zweiten Phase wandelte sich die Funktion dieser Schule zu einer Art Bildungszentrum, das die gesellschaftlich relevanten Gruppen mit dem Rundfunk..." 142.

advantageous to the Allies, since they were facilitating Allied objectives in Germany.⁹⁹ Even more so, these courses were beneficial to the Germans attending and organizing them. The German directors of these stations – although working under Allied control officers – were incorporating the ideas of democracy and objectivity into their programming and broadcasting methodologies. Maintaining an ideal model of public media while under a degree of scrutiny, it was likely that Germans would establish a culture of broadcasting that genuinely promoted democratic values and the rearing of an informed German public. Therefore, the process was working toward preventing a relapse into the propagandistic and immoral habits of broadcasting under the Third Reich, or an eventual broadcasting system built on the capital of interests groups with financial persuasion.

Like any training program for a professional field, the *Rundfunkschule* offered courses that related to the job functions of those in the radio community. Students would have picked up some tips related to their particular specialty, or been given a synopsis on new media technologies that may be introduced, but the most important component of the program was the philosophical. Those attending the *Rundfunkschule* in the late 1940s would have a general idea of the Allies' occupation policies regarding public information, and the main goals of German broadcasters during the period. When it came time to put these abstract ideas to use in a practical manner, however, there may have been some confusion about designing an 'objective' and democratic media model. The lectures put on by NWDR's program taught German journalists and broadcasters how to go about remaining within these guidelines for productive broadcasting. This would have

⁹⁹ Alfred Ratzlaff, "Die Aufgaben des Rundfunks," Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 1338.

varied by broadcasting division, with particular interests being broken into specific categories like news, culture, children, and youth radio.

The broadcasting school had certain lectures for specific broadcasting outlets, varying by the interests of those in attendance. For instance, one student wrote, “The first four weeks of the program have provided us a good insight into the various divisions of broadcasting. But despite the temptations toward other areas of interest, I am initially leaning toward youth radio.”¹⁰⁰ The individual then went on to describe the importance of high-quality and informative youth radio programming: that German youth are in a different predicament than the youth of other nations and therefore require a alternative model of radio. It was the youth broadcaster’s role to incorporate ideas regarding a democratically informed and conscientious public into the mentalities of German youth, where the notion of democracy was still in its infancy. This particular student understood the impact of placing a greater emphasis on this new idea, as Germany lacked democratic traditions such as those in Britain or the United States. The student explained, in reference to the informed youth programming that they were hoping to work on, “Such transmissions could show the young people [of Germany] that the youth of democratic countries represent an active and critical sector of the nation; it takes their contribution for a successful democracy.”¹⁰¹ The goal of the *Rundfunkschule* was to implant this type of thinking into all those who attended their programs. Looking into the works of the journalists and broadcasters who attended the program, we are able to see that NWDR was fairly successful in facilitating this goal. The station’s officials, providing an

¹⁰⁰ Essay from unidentified student, Hamburg Staatsarchiv, 621-1/144 NDR 1338.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, “Eine solche Senderreihe könnte den jungen Menschen hier zeigen, dass die Jugend in den demokratischen Ländern ein aktiver und bedeutender Teil des Volkes darstellt und ihren Anteil am Gelingen der Demokratie nimmt.”

authentic reality that highlighted the significance of a properly informed German public, were focusing on Germany's future as a reoriented democracy with a thriving, inclusive culture.

The director of the broadcasting school, starting in 1947, was Alexander Maaß. Maaß, entrusted as *Kontrolloffizier* [Control Officer], oversaw the programs curriculum, organized conferences, evaluated students, and reported to the British military officials who loosely administered broadcasting in the British sector. The organization of Hamburg's *Rundfunkschule* further demonstrated the relationship between British officials and the Germans who were to replace them upon their exit. Greater discernment on the school's structure and organization is observed in a letter from Maaß to the American Officer Alan Taylor from August 9, 1947. Taylor was a broadcasting director at Radio Stuttgart. While Officer Taylor – although in a different occupation zone – would have been considered Maaß's superior, Maaß was in a unique position that allowed him to demonstrate greater authority than usual as a broadcasting specialist at Hamburg's *Rundfunkschule*. This letter was an evaluation of two potential Radio Stuttgart news department employees- Rose-Inge Sandler and Dieter Schmoll.¹⁰² *Rundfunkschule NWDR* did not solely operate in benefit for Hamburg's aspiring journalists and public figures, but extended its reputation for shaping the theoretical and practical acumen of its students to the French and American zones of occupation, and Maaß's opinion was necessary in the evaluation of determining whether these two Germans from the American sector were fit for broadcasting. Officials in the other sectors of future West Germany observed the successes of the broadcasting school and

¹⁰² Correspondence between Alexander Maaß and Alan Taylor, Hamburg Staatsarchiv, 621-1/144 NDR, 191.

sent their potential and experienced employees to participate in the courses, hoping to improve the quality of their staff and the well-being of their stations.

Maaß explained that Fräulein Sendler “met our full approval during the whole time of the course.... She has been very active and very successful. She has made the best impression on all teachers and me.”¹⁰³ It is interesting to see that there was such interest in the accomplishments of Sendler as a female news journalist, something of a rarity still in the United States and Britain. Instances such as this may also document the changing environment of the newsroom, which traditionally had been a male dominated environment. In postwar Germany a female news reporter was certainly not uncommon, demonstrating that the idea of restructuring and reformation did not adhere to traditional gender roles. It was an inclusive process that required a progressive output from all sectors of German society. *Rundfunkschule NWDR* acknowledged this in their comprehensive and innovative program of study in Hamburg by training and employing a significant number of women.

The *Rundfunkschule*'s program of study – or “course,” as Maaß calls it when writing in English – was over a duration of four months, during which time students stayed in Hamburg, interacting closely with their peers and instructors.¹⁰⁴ Students would benefit from this close interaction, which reinforced the idea of the ‘radio community’ that was stressed as a major commitment of the program. While it was primarily NWDR's German staff instructing those in attendance, it should be noted that there was outside assistance as well. Maaß informed Officer Taylor that Mr. Duncan Mennie, “Professor at the University of Newcastle, who at the beginning of the war, organized the

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

News Service at the German Section of the BBC and who is considered one of the best news experts in England,” was a member of his ‘News Department’ staff.¹⁰⁵ When it came to the evaluation of German students, it was probably beneficial to have a member of the Allied forces on the recommendation, providing a more balanced assessment of the employees. If one of the Allies’ experts felt the same way as one of the Germans’ experts, then the young journalist in question must have met all standards of the occupation project, and was fit for the airwaves. Maaß used Mennie’s expertise and reputation to his own advantage when reporting to Taylor on his two German employees at Radio Stuttgart. In his assessment of Herr Schmoll he explained, “in the opinion of Mr. Mennie Herr Schmoll is a very capable news man.”¹⁰⁶ Again, we see the cooperative nature of the German relationship with Allied personnel in the efforts to reshape their country’s public media outlets. By working closely with the individuals that the Allied officers held in high esteem, the German supervisors of radio stations were able to take on greater roles of responsibility. If someone from the British or American side was able to corroborate the achievements of a German student, or a German program like the *Rundfunkschule*, then there would be a greater trust in the officials reshaping the nation, thus granting a greater independence from regulative scrutiny.

Germans may have been in charge of the NWDR and its broadcasting school, but they still had to act in accordance with the ‘Senior Broadcasting Liaison Officer.’¹⁰⁷ This individual – Alan Huet-Owen for the time of *Rundfunkschule*’s existence under British occupation – was the administrator of the British’s Broadcasting Branch of the

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Alan Huet-Owen. “Letter to Alexander Maaß: Educational Course at NWDR Training School,” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 1334.

occupation government. The daily functions, and even the big-picture projects were handled by individuals like Maaß, but when something came up that was new or not clearly defined in occupation policy, then the broadcasting liaison would step in. For example, in the opening of this chapter there was a brief discussion of a conference that Maaß was planning, with invitations sent out to broadcasting officials – both Germans and Allies – for a weeklong lecture series. In an almost humorous exchange following the receipt of the invitations, Huet-Owen sent Maaß a letter scolding him for going outside the outlined protocol for the scheduling of events. He sent to Maaß:

I must point out that to you that you are not entitled – whether on behalf of the BLB [Broadcasting Liaison Branch] or NWDR – to arrange courses for, or send invitations to, members of the British Control Commission or Allied Officers without first consulting me.... I must therefore express my strong disapproval of your action in making complete preparations and issuing invitations for this course without making the slightest attempt to inform me.... As the educational course which you have in mind is a fairly ambitious and extra-routine project, I have to seek the principal agreement of ISD headquarters for the proposal to invite two BBC representatives.... Although I disapprove of the manner in which you have set about organizing this course, I strongly approve of your aim. I shall do anything I can to help you make it a success.¹⁰⁸

Interestingly, Huet-Owen entirely agreed with the scope and objective of the conference – so much that he wanted to invite officials from the BBC in London to attend. But, because it fell outside the bounds of what was deemed acceptable behavior by an official working under British Control, he was forced to scold Maaß for his lofty ambitions.

The interaction above indicates that, while the supervision of Allied officials had lessened – granting German officials the right to administer much of their own affairs – there was still a notion of Allied control over Germany during this unique chapter of the postwar story. Instances such as this effectively highlighted the relationship between

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

occupier and occupied that, though strained at times, was representative of two parties working together to facilitate a common goal. Postwar German officials, working with Allied officers, were negotiating the terms of their future autonomy and relationship with the rest of the world. This was not something unique to the British sector, as this cooperative relationship was confirmed by an inter-zonal cooperation with the Americans and the French.

In the exchanges initiated by Maaß's conference planning, a clear interaction between the three western zones of occupied Germany is noticed. After receiving an updated invitation with Huet-Owen's signature present, Pierre Ponnelle – *Le Sous Directeur de l'Information charge de la Radio* [Chief Director of Radio Information] of the French sector – replied explaining that the proposed conference was “of very great interest for us.”¹⁰⁹ Ponnelle provided that a Mr. Hirn and Mr. Johann would be attending the conferences; and that both were eager for the collaboration between NWDR and *Südwestfunk* [Southwest Broadcasting].¹¹⁰ Interestingly, Huet-Owen sent out his ‘official’ invitations with the wrong dates. Ponnelle corrected him and presented the dates that Maaß originally sent- adding a bit more humor to the overall exchange.¹¹¹ The Americans also enthusiastically responded to the invitations. Charles Lewis, chief of the Radio Branch in Berlin, acknowledged that he would be sending three radio officers from the American zone – Americans and Germans – to the proceedings in Hamburg. These

¹⁰⁹ Letter between Pierre Ponnelle and Alan Huet-Owen. Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1334. “*Très grand intérêt pour nous.*”

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, “*M. Hirn se fera un plaisir de se rendre à votre amiable invitation, de même que M. Johann, collaborateur du “Südwestfunk” invité par ailleurs par la Direction du NWDR.*”

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, “*Je pense qu'il s'agit d'une erreur en ce qui concerne les dates (14 au 19.4.) indiquées dans votre lettre et qu'il faut lire 14 au 19 mars, ainsi qu'il est précisé dans votre télégramme et dans le programme des conférences.*”

officers were from three major stations in the American zone- Radio Bremen, Radio Stuttgart, and Radio Frankfurt. Such wide-ranging interest demonstrated the appeal of the *Rundfunkschule*'s reputation, and the successes it had accumulated in its two-year existence.¹¹² Allied officers and Germans alike wanted to send their broadcasters and journalists from all over occupied Germany to attend the events put on by Maaß and the broadcasting school. Interestingly, invitations were also sent to broadcasters in the Soviet sector of Berlin. Because there was no record of follow-up correspondence, or of their presence at the conference in the form of lectures, or letters, we must assume that they did not attend. This marked a shift in the occupation dynamics, hinting at the upcoming conflicts of the Cold War.

Rundfunkschule NWDR's intentional and cooperative relationship with the rest of what would become West Germany was paving the way toward the eventual reunification. NWDR maintained a position of leadership within a community of German broadcasters that were all functioning as a part of a whole, striving toward the creation of a democratically informed German public. By cooperating with other regional broadcasting hubs – even when the state was fragmented by occupation – German broadcasters were preparing for a time when the Allies' geographic boundaries would not be considered when assessing the nation as a whole. An early interaction among broadcasters was a training exercise for a time of autonomous administration of public media. Maaß's decision in planning and organizing this conference himself, also speaks to the fact that Germans were beginning to act in their own interests during the period of lessened supervision from 1947 to 1949. This specific deed on Maaß's part,

¹¹² Letter between Charles Lewis and Alan Huet-Owen, Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1334.

representative of a larger shift throughout all of occupied Germany, implies that there was a German desire to rebuild and manage German affairs in a uniquely German way. Maaß was still navigating a horizon shaded by the dominion of the Allied occupiers, but all in pursuit of the next horizon- that of an independent Germany seeking redemption and re-identification in the second half of the twentieth century.

Der musikalische Gedanke¹¹³:

In 1970, Anna and Richard Merritt compiled public opinion surveys conducted in occupied Germany. *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys 1945-1949* (1970) assembled an expanse of information on the Germans' living conditions under Allied occupation.¹¹⁴ The surveys conducted by OMGUS ranged from the German opinions on the cinema, to the number of Germans who had admittedly read *Mein Kampf*, to assessments on the rationing of food and the typical German consumption rates. The individuals who conducted these surveys – a multinational team of American, British, French, and German specialists – were interested in the content of the “Germans’ minds.” The objective was to use the information gathered from 1946 to 1947 to better equip and prepare Germany for independence. The top priority of these surveys for military officials was the acceptance and implementation of societal and cultural change in Germany, and gauging the willingness of Germans to actively participate in the process. Officials wanted to be sure that Germany could accept the responsibility of becoming a

¹¹³ The Musical Idea.

¹¹⁴ Anna Merritt, and Richard Merritt, *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany: The OMGUS Surveys 1945-1949*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

free and mature society, ready to engage with the rest of the world as a “great nation.”¹¹⁵ Another goal of these surveys was to align the fledgling local governments with the military government. Field representatives of the public opinion project would meet with local German officials – mayors, police units, and bureaucrats – to discuss where overlapping goals met, and where the public interest may have diverged with that of local or military government ambition. Since the success of the entire occupation project depended on the cooperation of Allied and German governments, acquisition of accurate popular opinion was an essential step in the restructuring of the nation. With these surveys in hand, officials – German and military – gained traction in the move toward a democratic Germany.

One specific survey in the collection found that in the American sector, fifty-six percent of the population regularly listened to the radio.¹¹⁶ Although this figure is from the American sector, it can be inferred that northern Germany, with its historical and geographic proximity to Great Britain and the BBC, the presence of the British occupying force, and higher concentration of urban populations, would have had a very similar or even higher percentage of regular listeners. Additionally, the American occupation zones reported that sixty-five percent of German listeners preferred music programs.¹¹⁷ Because of a public disposition toward the musical offerings of the radio, it is beneficial to examine just how listeners and broadcasters dealt with this popular cultural medium.

Discussions regarding German music during the early postwar years were critical in the movement toward a Germany that recognized the problems with its past.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xx.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

Additionally, it was in this period that classical concert music progressed outside of the realm of the middle and upper classes. In the previous chapter, there was discussion of Jürgen Habermas' claim that music and art moved outside of the sacred or courtly sphere with the creation of the bourgeois public in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, technological innovations like radio brought concert music to the working class sects of society for the first time. Concert and modern popular music was available to all Germans through the airwaves. Allied officers – aware of this fact – worked with German officials to expose the new public to reeducation policies as Germans gained their first exposure to a popular public culture. This populist tactic dually informed Germans of the practical application of democracy within their society and warned of the hazards of self-serving nationalist culture. Because of the noted importance of broadcasting as a popular cultural medium, the restructuring of the airwaves and the resulting policies would serve as key arenas in debates over German music.

The question of music in occupied Germany was incredibly difficult to navigate. Because of the propagandistic nature of music – especially music by German composers – during the Third Reich, occupiers were faced with a number of questions; all lacking clear-cut answers. The most immediate concern, as it was noted in the previous chapter, was the elimination of influences of the Third Reich from concert halls and major orchestras. To facilitate this goal Nazi sympathizers were removed from positions of authority, or, if they were a composer working with closely with the Reich government, their music was removed from performance. The Third Reich manipulated German music to demonstrate continuity between their dictatorship and the rich cultural tradition of Germany's past. David Monod elaborates:

the prominence of German performers and composers in Western culture was promoted as evidence of Aryan superiority, and Nazi veneration of a canon of eminent musicians was used as proof of fascism's connection with the nation's glories.¹¹⁸

Although Monod was referring to music in general, the broadcasters of postwar Germany were also following this example. In order to properly address issues with German culture, broadcasters could not convey the antiquated notions of German superiority. To endorse the postwar concept of *Stunde null* [zero hour, null point], the historical and national value of concert music – something previously used to assume racial and cultural superiority – had to be removed from the public mentality of postwar Germans.

Going about this process presented a number of difficulties. Changing the German public's opinion of their 'heroic' national artists required undoing a belief system that tied national identity to the prominent character traits of selected individuals. In some situations the Allies implemented a policy of censoring the music of composers directed associated with the Nazis – like Richard Strauss – or those credited with fueling the racial and cultural superiority complexes of the Third Reich- as Richard Wagner's writings on anti-Semitism and German superiority had done. While it seems that this strategy would fulfill the Allied goal of de-Nazifying the German music culture, a series of issues remained. Censorship of music by all German composers would discredit the democratic credentials of the occupying powers, but allowing frequent performances of Strauss or Wagner may reinforce the assertions made by the Nazis concerning their national musical tradition- the negative values that the Allies were attempting to remove from German cultural mentalities.

¹¹⁸ David Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953*, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 31.

As stated, the Allies initially dictated what music Germans could and could not perform. Works by German composers tied closely to Nazi ideology, like Wagner or Strauss received the most scrutiny, with many of their pieces being strictly forbidden. Beethoven's third and seventh symphonies and Siegfried's funeral march in *Twilight of the Gods* were among pieces explicitly forbidden in the American sector for their role in former Nazi functions.¹¹⁹ It should be noted, however, that not all German composers were advised against, since works by Bach, Brahms, and Schubert were often encouraged and performed regularly, as these composers were not directly and explicitly perverted by or associated with the Hitler regime. Johann Sebastian Bach, for instance, was often championed, for the occupying powers regarded him 'a great Protestant humanist.'¹²⁰ In 1947, when Germans gained greater creative control over their concert venues and radio stations, we see a practical continuation of many of these policies. By limiting or prohibiting National Socialism-affiliated music, German broadcasters prevented any nostalgic resurgences of Nazi sympathy. Occupying music officers also revived compositions by French and English composers, which were banned during the National Socialist years, and reintroduced works by Jewish composers.¹²¹

These actions spawned Germany's immersion into American music. Early jazz was fairly popular during the Weimar years, but it was during the period of occupation that Germans really had a firsthand experience with American popular culture. Radio orchestras were regularly heard performing works by American composers like Leonard

¹¹⁹ Erwin Warkentin, "History of the Information Control Division: OMGUS, 1944 to June 30, 1946," 122.

¹²⁰ Monod, *Settling Scores*, 98-99.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

Bernstein and George Gershwin, though this also revealed some disagreements.¹²² From January to April of 1946, the public opinion researchers collected nearly 3500 pieces of mail. These letters were related to “*Stimme Amerikas*” [the Voice of America]. The Voice of America provided American service members, and the citizens of the nations where they were stationed, accurate – by American intentions – news coverage and updates regarding American interests around the globe. This particular survey compiled what Germans were writing to “*Stimme Amerikas*” and while much of it concerned personal problems, the researchers were able to piece together some general opinions on the outlook of American life and culture. Many Germans liked hearing about the American lifestyle and the German-speaking American commentators delivering news and speeches to the public.¹²³ It was also made clear that Germans did not care much for the American music that they were being exposed to by the Voice of America. In this early 1946 survey the criticism of the programming was minimal but revolved around “the commentators, the time at which the broadcasts took place, and a dislike for the jazz broadcast.”¹²⁴ Monod reinforces this finding. The German audiences at performances of works by American composers Robert McBride or Walter Piston were puzzled by these sloppy and over-the-top pieces. McBride’s *Strawberry Jam Overture* was labeled ‘*Eine amerikanische Schweinerei*’ [an American scandal or dirty trick].¹²⁵

In the American and British sectors of Germany, an increase in the performance of foreign, non-German music was thought to undermine the cultural superiority of the German public. A 1949 report on the reeducation processes by the U.S. State Department

¹²² Letters from Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, Hamburg Staatsarchiv, 621-1/144, 651.

¹²³ Merritt; Merritt, *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany*, 90.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Monod, *Settling Scores*, 121.

explained: “if Germans are convinced that America does have a culture of its own, and moreover one that has progressed beyond theirs in certain fields in which they have prided themselves, they will begin to listen with more interest to talk of political democracy.”¹²⁶ In the American sector, officials set out to reform the Germans through American music. And while British Command adopted many policies set by the Americans, this practice was not followed with the same severity as the United States. In British occupied Germany, the range of compositions was far more varied. Another key difference in the American and British attitude toward the performance of music was that in the British sector, Germans were frequently allowed to conduct and manage their orchestras, whereas Americans were largely at the helm in their sectors. Initially, the Americans felt that a German orchestra – managed by a German conductor and administration – would fail to venture into the sonic territory of foreign music. It was believed that the Germans would indulge in their own musical history, rather than reinterpreting their impressions of their beloved composers through a greater exposure to alternative content.

As previously stated, the policies regarding German orchestras in the British sector were not as stringent or oppressive as those in the American sector. Therefore, when examining *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*'s interactions with Hamburg's various musical organizations we see German broadcasting officials interacting with German orchestra leaders. The prohibition of German cultural self-indulgence, however, was not only limited to the American zones. The revival of romanticizing German culture was a concern in all regions of occupied Germany. The uniformity of Allied objectives was a

¹²⁶ “Report to Department of State of the USIE Survey Mission on the OMGUS Reorientation Program in Germany,” 21 July 1949, box 205, Department of State.

key concern of the occupation effort, and ensuring that the goals of occupation overlapped was a priority. Breaking decades of tradition over a few years, though, proved difficult. In December of 1948, a letter was sent to the NWDR board of directors (*Verwaltungsrat*) regarding a salary raise for musicians in Hamburg's *Philharmonische Orchester*.¹²⁷ The letter from the German musicians union explained:

Germany has infinitely lost a foreign war. Beforehand, in most areas it is not possible to make up for our losses. But in the cultural realm, we have the opportunity for at least one of our cultural traditions to take a position over the ether of radio.¹²⁸

Employing the rich tradition of German classical music, the musicians' union was attempting to persuade the board of directors to maneuver additional funding to the musicians in Hamburg's orchestras. The *Philharmonische Orchester* and the *Kulturorchester* were frequently highlighted on NWDR programming. Interestingly, the union's argument is that additional funding would provide the chance for Germans to have a true cultural position over the airwaves, all while utilizing a medium that Germans have historically held in the highest esteem- *das Orchester*. The letter continues, "The German Music Association of course believes that a city's orchestras have, and continue to assume a supreme cultural tradition. It would all be done to pave the way for this."¹²⁹ Speaking of the German musical tradition in such a grand way was clearly against the

¹²⁷ "An den Verwaltungsrat des Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunks- Musikergagen der Rundfunkorchester," Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 651.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, "Deutschland hat durch diesen Krieg gerade dem Ausland gegenüber unendlich viel eingebüsst. Auf den meisten Gebieten ist es uns vor der Hand nicht möglich, die Verluste wieder wett zu machen. Aber auf kulturellen Gebiet haben wir gerade über den Rundfunk die Möglichkeit, eine unserer kulturellen Tradition entsprechende Stellung wenigstens im Aether wieder einzunehmen."

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, "Der Deutsche Musikverband ist selbstverständlich der Auffassung, dass die Kulturorchester der Städte eine höchste kulturelle Tradition übernehmen und fortzusetzen haben. Es müsste alles getan werden, um hierfür den Weg zu ebnet."

Allies' demands, but in terms of cultural endeavors, it was clearly important to a large number of Germans that the public orchestras be properly funded and adequately provide for their members.

In the reply from General Bennecke of the board, the request for additional funding – 10,000 marks – “would not be possible,” due to the unmentioned, but easily inferred “circumstances” of the time.¹³⁰ Despite refusing Herr Hartmann’s proposition, Bennecke replies using much of the same language and sentiment that the *Musikerverband* made use of in their letter. Bennecke explained that Germany, “while once the number one country in the world of music,” has become too impoverished in both funding and international interest to even send their best chamber music groups throughout Europe.¹³¹ An impeccable example of this was presented when Wilhelm Fürtwangler was offered the opportunity to conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1949. At the time, the German conductor was – to many – the most prominent conductor in the world. Fürtwangler opposed the Hitler regime, but managed to maintain a degree of success under National Socialism. It was this fact that made him guilty in the court of public opinion. Thus, Fürtwangler was deemed unfit to successfully tour the world. Outraged, musical organizations throughout the United States protested the possibility of his leadership over an American orchestra. Prominent soloists also rejected the idea, threatening to never work with a Fürtwangler orchestra.¹³² Germans recognized that these attitudes were going to follow them throughout the world, and only those who fled the

¹³⁰ “Deutscher Bühnenverein Hauptgeschäftsführung,” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 651.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, “Deutschland, von dem man früher sagte, daß es das erste Musikland der Welt sei, ist jetzt so arm an Kraft und Interesse geworden, daß die ersten Kammermusikgruppen Europas vielerorts nicht mehr aufgenommen werden können.”

¹³² Monod, *Settling Scores*, 165-66.

Nazi regime, like Vienna's Bruno Walter could possibly maintain a degree of respect and success abroad during the first decade following the war. Because of this, German musicians were not bringing in funding from international tours or from tourists coming to see their own previously world-famous orchestras perform. The external opinion of German music and musicians was effectively influencing the internal workings and reorganizations of the Germans' processes and attitudes of their musical realm.

It was clear that the German musical tradition could not – or at least would not be allowed to – continue the way that it had for the previous few centuries. Reputations were destroyed, funds were limited, and the cultural world-at-large would be watching the actions of German artists with increased scrutiny. Through the lens of music, an endeavor so dear to Germany, we are able to see the Germans being coerced in a new direction. This new artistic direction, like much of the *Stunde null* mentalities of the postwar years, pressed the nation's artists toward 'newness.' New solutions regarding their past had to be discovered. During the initial years of denazification this mentality was strongly honed in by the occupying powers and by 1947, when Germans were granted greater say in the affairs of their country, much of it was – perhaps – internalized. There was great ambition to be 'new' and progressive in postwar Germany. This type of sentiment was familiar throughout German history. In this striving to be innovative, Germans were confronted with the familiar notion of *der Zeitgeist* [spirit of the age]. Within dialectical conflicts, an ingrained idea was constantly in need of a unique new idea to reinforce or reshape the original. If this new idea elaborated on the normative mentalities of the time, or pushed them further toward a desired direction, this originality was embraced. Throughout German history there was openness toward newness, and postwar Germans

were attempting to revive this mentality. Bennecke informed Herr Hartmann that the talent was present in the NWDR orchestras, but that it had to be fine-tuned to meet the expectations of a new Germany; one with a changing mentality toward both musical and German history. The German “cultural realm” may have had the chance “to take a position over the ether of radio,” but it was not yet the time to do so.¹³³ Through broadcasting and the policies and guidelines that went along with it, German musicians were experimenting with how to reevaluate their cultural tradition.

While the requested salary increases were not possible, what was gained from the musicians’ union correspondence with General Bennecke was the knowledge that Germans were having discussions about their cultural position in the postwar world. Both Bennecke and Hartmann agreed with the fact that Germany had a rich musical tradition, crucial to the public cultural sphere of Germany during this critical time. These two individuals – to a degree – resisted the Allied notion that they had to move away from traditional German culture in order to be reformed. To Bennecke, Hartmann, and numerous artists and musicians, German art could be endorsed in the new democratic and cosmopolitan vision of Germany. Required, however, was the verification that Germans could reinterpret how they evaluate their own culture on a global scale. Removing the nationalist sentiment that previously accompanied such endeavors would be essential. Moving forward in cooperation with the Allies’ restructuring of broadcast media, German thinkers were simultaneously experimenting with the content of their broadcasts in relation to a reconfiguration of German identity- though one that may have not necessarily complied with all aspects of the reeducation process.

¹³³ “An den Verwaltungsrat des Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunks- Musikergagen der Rundfunkorchester,” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621- 1/144 NDR, 651.

Although Germans accommodated their occupiers in the realm of policy and procedure for the most part, there had to be instances that questioned the demands being placed on them. This provided an opposition to Allied positions on the limits of cultural and traditional prominence. Were it not for conflicts with Allied objectives, then Germany would have been molded into an alternate version of the United States or Britain. In order to craft a unique postwar identity the Germans had to interpret the changes and transformations affiliated with occupation through a German lens.

Defending the inherently German institution of concert music was something that Germans needed during the occupation era; this type of cultural conflict was key to the early processes of interpreting and wrestling with their recent past. This was expected to happen in order to initiate critical thought regarding German history and its role in the present. The period of increased liberties over the airwaves and other cultural mediums from 1947 to 1949 provided an excellent battleground for these struggles. German officials could survey public interest, discover what was important to citizens, and implement new policies and programs that served these interests. At the same time, German officials had the military government to act as a system of checks and balances during their efforts- warning them, offering suggestions, or reprimanding if the Germans appeared to be moving toward anything harmful to the overall reconstruction project.

Naturally, there were disagreements between the two parties. The struggle between being a 'good' German in the eyes of Allied Command and a 'good' German in relation to the centuries of German history was an existential struggle that lingered throughout the years of occupation and beyond. Maintaining a careful balance of both was a key strategy to a productive reemergence of an informed and democratic German

public sphere. Correspondence between Germans, Americans, and the British revealed that active conversations about German culture were taking place, and Germans were experimenting with how to handle the question of their shared inherited culture. And while some discussions – like the place of the orchestra within the society – were fairly harmless, others, those that may have promoted mass, overtly romantic displays of cultural superiority or ideologies tied too closely with the *Volk* would have been dangerous toward postwar reeducation and development. It was clear that the rhetoric tied to German culture had to sway in the direction of the previously mentioned features of ‘newness,’ progress, and democratization. Coincidentally, a prominent pattern noticed in the documents of this period was the balancing act that consisted of questioning German cultural tradition and gradual acceptance of the incorporation of innovation.

Horizon Merging:

In occupied Germany, the efforts of German officials and Allied Command were instrumental in the movement of the defeated state toward democratic self-governance. German officials worked with Allied officers in an effort to expedite the process, adhering to their rules and regulations in order to accomplish the goal of a Germany that would not act out in aggression and drag the world into another major military conflict. As it has been noted, this was not a blind obedience, but rather a transformative process in which German leaders acted upon the advice and guidelines laid out by the military government. Questions were asked, strategies were doubted, and officials on both sides of the democratization project sparked conflict. The primary concern, however, was that the Germans were making progress toward an informed and democratic public that would

ultimately voice decisions in their affairs as they moved into the second half of the twentieth century. In the study of a major cultural and political change such as this, however, the views of the average individual are often overlooked. While individuals who were a part of key groups – musician’s unions, broadcasting officials, and students – have been identified, it is necessary to look at the German public that these groups were representing during the process. How were German parents, students, and laborers reacting to the changes and conditions of life during this time? What outlook did they have on the end result of this democratization project? Did they feel that officials were representing them in the new government that was being constructed for – and, in theory – by them? This chapter’s final section is a focus on the average listener’s interpretation of occupation through mediums provided by broadcasting. Examining the average listener’s interpretation of the project in the final years of occupation presents an opportunity to see how the German public handled the rapid transformation of German politics, culture, and society.

In the introduction of this thesis, the NWDR special program “27. Januar” was mentioned, accompanied by a letter from a dedicated listener of the station. This special report, aired on NWDR’s *Kulturelles Wort*, was documented average life in Germany on January 27, 1947. The outcome was exceptional, and the program remains an often-cited example in studies of twentieth century broadcasting. Among the standout stories submitted for the program was one by Hugo Cremer. Cremer was a husband and father living in the *Stadtbezirk I* [central city district] just outside of Düsseldorf’s *Altstadt* neighborhood. The letter Cremer provided for the program focused on the hardships of life during this period- the lack of work, the below freezing temperatures, and the

struggle for the working class to procure basic services and goods like bread, fuel, or medical care.¹³⁴ Through the efforts of an emerging democratic and public model of broadcasting, Cremer's experience – one often overshadowed by the logistics and politics of the occupation project – became a part of Germany's occupation narrative. The highlight of Cremer's letter, however, may be the existential struggle that he was facing with German tradition regarding the nation's uncertain future.

Cremer's letter climaxed with a string of questions, one of which was focused on the German experience in the days of occupation. He exclaimed, "What do we get out of this existence... Where is the Germans' leaderless ship blowing?"¹³⁵ Cremer's letter was filled with musings of prewar Germany. The general comfort of the working class, established social programs, expressive cultural values, and strong German leadership. During the period of occupation there was no such leadership. There were Germans working closely with the military government, but there was no central figure or body that the German public could really point to at this time. Cremer, as a part of an older generation that could recall powerful leadership of the German Empire, or the failed democracy of the Weimar years, was leaning on German tradition to make sense of the present. Concerns were on the rise among older Germans because their generation was conditioned to rely on the direction of a commanding and powerful leader. While an opposition to democracy was not apparent, there was the notion that, in order to adhere to German tradition, a commanding figure was necessary to lead the Germans to success. This idea was central to German political education, where figures such as Charlemagne,

¹³⁴ Hugo Cremer, "Was ich am 29. Januar 1947 erlebte?" Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1186.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

Frederick II, and Otto von Bismarck were frequently cited as central to the development of German state building and power.

NWDR's *Kulturelles Wort* provided an outlet for such opinions to be presented to the public. The station went about selecting and presenting material to listeners that made it appear that many Germans had a similar outlook on the period of occupation as Cremer, although surely many actually did. Due to the progressive broadcasting agenda in postwar Germany, this dialogue was able to be heard. Additionally it should be noted that Cremer's discontent with the hardships of occupation does not imply a favorable opinion of National Socialism, or a rejection of German democratization. When a program such as "29. Januar" was calling for open submissions about listeners' experiences on a particular day, some narratives veering toward the negative aspects of occupation were bound to be documented. Cremer, like the German nation, was struggling with the act of putting some aspects of national identity and culture behind him. The period of occupation was a new experience for Germans, and reinventing a nation while under the scrutiny of foreign powers was difficult. In times of struggle it is natural for people to look back at how things were in the past, but part of the occupation project was realizing that there were fatal mistakes in Germany's past. NWDR's special radio-documentary on the 29th of January was able to present this conflict to listeners. Hamburg's radio community was witness to the changes occurring during this experimental time. By publicly broadcasting remarks like those of Hugo Cremer, the larger German public became a part of this conversation as they made their way toward a public discourse that would revolve around the more specific discussion of Germany's past and the status of its future.

It appears that the submission process for the program was an open call to draft letters explaining what a particular individual did on January 29, 1947. Obviously, there was a degree of scrutiny in the selection process of the program. Not all German views would have been made available to the public. The programs selected for airing seemed to revolve around the opinions and experiences that highlighted the goals of the occupation project. Some frustrations would have been highlighted – like Cremer’s submission – but this only united the German public. Knowing that others were frustrated would create a sense of solidarity as the nation moved toward democracy. It has been noted that broadcasting officials were cooperating with Occupation officers, and this was one way. Selecting seemingly unbiased retrospectives of a particular day would have further persuaded the Germans that this pluralistic model of communication was uniting them through the acknowledgment that Germany must accept change in order for their condition to improve.

Another submission for “*29. Januar*” provides listeners with a different perspective on the occupation years. Immediately, a generational difference is noticed when Willi Diestelmeier discusses his conversation with his mother before heading to school. His description of his daily routine contained many similarities with Cremer’s. Diestelmeier explained, “For breakfast there were only a few stale biscuits.” His mother explained to him that it seemed there was, “no bread in the entire city.” In addition to sharing many of the same sentiments as Cremer regarding living conditions, it becomes clear that German schools were providing students with lunches. This was something that Diestelmeier preferred over the stale biscuits his mother had provided. In what turned out to be a recurring theme of the program, there were frequent references to the cold, wind,

and a desire to be in the summer sun.¹³⁶

Diestelmeier's submission to the program provided listeners with an example of a German school day in the occupation era. The school was a makeshift building, unable to keep out the chilled winter air. He explained that there was a lot of waiting. Some students sat and waited in their assigned spots, while others socialized about what the wait was for. When their teacher did arrive, they had a lesson on the death of Laocöon, and his failed attempt to warn the Trojans of gifts from the Greeks. He also commented on how the teacher had to pull his jacket tighter around him throughout to keep out the cold. This lecture did not impress Diestelmeier, as he exclaimed that "you could not even buy a piece of bread with it."¹³⁷ For their German lesson, they had a discussion of Immanuel Kant's ethics. Almost appropriately, the discussion revolved around Kant's reasoning that greater experience is gained through losing than winning.¹³⁸ Diestelmeier remarked that his classmates were largely former soldiers who had suffered on the battlefields of Europe. He realized from reading their reactions to this statement – some mocking, and others more serious in thought – that the words of one of Germany's most respected minds had struck a cord:

The ideals of their youth had collapsed and they had landed on the solid ground of reality. These men wanted to teach what life 'really' was, but realized that they were no longer students, but people who represented a boundary between the limit of theory and life.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Willi Diestelmeier, "Der 29.1.1947." Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1186.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, "...mit dem man sich noch nicht einmal ein Stück Brot kaufen kann...".

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, "Es kann sein, daß der Mensch ärmer wird, indem er gewinnt und reicher, indem er verliert."

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, "Die Ideale ihrer Jugend waren zusammengebrochen, und da hatten sie sich auf den festen Boden der Realität gerettet. Diese Menschen wollte man auch in dieser Stunde lehren, was 'wirkliches' Leben wäre und hatte doch dabei vergessen, daß es tatsächlich keine Schüler mehr waren, sondern Menschen die zwischen Theorie und Leben scharf selbst eine Grenze zogen."

The former soldiers in Diestelmeier's lecture on Kant had witnessed, firsthand, the collapse of the German Empire. Their youth had been lost in the idealistic dream of a Europe governed by German military might. With the defeat and ensuing occupation acting as a alarm, these particular students were awakened to a stark reality in a far more direct way than much of the German population.

To Diestelmeier, these individuals were representative of the strange situation that Germany was now facing. At this point in the occupation project the Germans were truly at a boundary of "theory and life." There was the reality of German life at this time, and the fact that the nation must learn from their defeat, and there were the theories that went into the restructuring of the nation. These students seemed to realize that they could learn from their defeat. Again, we are seeing the intentional selection of documents that facilitate the ambitions of the occupation project. This was not a negative thing, however, as it assisted the adoption of democracy and expedited the occupation process. Seeing the horrors that Germany released upon Europe was enough to convince them that Germany must move in an alternative direction. They were now furthering their education – like Diestelmeier – in order to comprehend the situation that Germany was facing, a necessary prerequisite to the deeper discussion of enacting the various theories that could transform the nation. A discussion that would bring about the reality of a democratic and peaceful Germany. Diestelmeier realized that – because of military loss – the German nation had seen the errors of its recent past, and was now presented with the opportunity to change and reform society. He came to the conclusion that it was because of this defeat that the former soldiers sitting around him had now learned that they lost such vital years of their life pursuing a dream that was never intended for them. NWDR, in selecting

Diestelmeier's submission, was attempting to convince audiences that, through their loss, these youthful soldiers – along with the rest of Germany's youth – were learning the ways that they could reshape and reconfigure a new Germany. This was yet another example of a careful selection of the material that was being transmitted to listeners as German broadcasters were attempting to reshape the nation.

That humanity could be richer through defeat, penned by Kant two centuries prior, was a reality that Germans were facing during this critical time. Diestelmeier brought this idea – something being taught in schools, and beginning to appear in critical circles – to the larger public in his 1947 letter to NWDR. In a precursor to what would become a major talking point in later discussions of Germany's past, Diestelmeier explained to his future radio audience that accepting defeat and facing that Germany's lofty ambitions had ruined, not just German lives like the soldiers in his class, but those all over Europe. In contrast to Cremer's lamentations over the lack of German leadership, the younger generation – those participating in universities and entering the work force – seemed to embrace this period of newness with greater enthusiasm. Individuals like Diestelmeier accepted that tradition was something to embrace, though not wholeheartedly. It was necessary to examine the past and learn from critical mistakes. In 1947, as limitations on German media by allied Command were lessened, we see average individuals like Cremer and Diestelmeier bringing this important conversation of tradition versus newness to the ears of German audiences all throughout Hamburg and the rest of northern Germany.

Interestingly, in both submissions we see the authors asking questions. That they are asking themselves questions about the current state of the nation demonstrates the

confusing qualities of this period. Like the other individuals who we have focused on in this chapter – Hamburg’s musicians, NWDR’s students, and the officials of the station – the average listener was questioning the world around them. Asking thought provoking questions that not only questioned German tradition, but also the boundaries of Allied authority and the rapidly changing environment was essential in building a discursive postwar community. It contributed to the larger society and permitted the individual to see where they stood among their fellow Germans. It was an anxious time, and questioning the status of Germany and its future was essential to the foundation of a democratic public, one that questioned the principles upon which a new Germany would be administered and how they would reach that vital point. Given the nature of the ‘29. Januar’ an additional dimension was added to this questioning. The questions were no longer self-directed, but presented to an audience of listeners within a shared culture. Publicly broadcasting these questions and the corresponding situations that sparked them, NWDR’s listening community was now a part of a shared historical horizon.

In *Truth and Method* (1960) Hans-Georg Gadamer discusses the importance of the historical ‘horizon.’ He applies to his hermeneutics that:

a horizon is not a rigid boundary but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further. Thus the horizon intentionality which constitutes the unity of the flow of experience is paralleled by an equally comprehensive horizon intentionality on the objective side. For everything that is given as existent is given in terms of a world and hence brings the world horizon with it.¹⁴⁰

The physical experience of listening to these broadcasts provided the basis for comprehending that the horizons of the individual listener must merge with the horizon of the larger community- NWDR’s listenership. In the shared experience of being a part

¹⁴⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (New York: Continuum, 1989), 245.

of occupied Germany, it can be argued that German listeners were objectively a part of the same environment- Gadamer's "equally comprehensive horizon intentionality on the objective side." A historical situation, or as Gadamer may put it, 'the word of tradition,' placed them into this shared horizon. From the vantage point of their current situation, Germans were presented with 'the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth.'¹⁴¹ Asking thoughtful and discursive questions, Germans expanded their horizon as they merged their current objective horizon – the experience of occupation and reform – with the horizon of possibilities; a 'finite determinacy' of thought and gradual opportunity for new experience as society questioned their current situation in relation to their past and attempted a comprehension of a new Germany.

Gadamer's idea of the *Horizontverschmelzung* [horizon-merging] within the concept of the historically effected consciousness can also be applied to one of the major themes of this thesis- the merging of tradition with newness. Gadamer rejected objectivism, insisting that each individual comes from unique backgrounds that will alter their understanding of the world from that of another. It is also noted that there is no absolute truth, or universal history. If a particular group, however, has experienced the same event and are conditioned to similar experiences, then the historically effected consciousness can apply to the larger community of affected individuals. Having been exposed to the same event – defeat in a major conflict, occupation by foreign powers, and the subsequent reconfiguration of a shared nation – it can be argued that there is a communal or societal history shared by the German public at this time. Gadamer explains that the "horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past," and that true

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 302.

“understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves.”¹⁴² Not only are Germans incorporating the learning experience of their recent historical mistakes – as described by listeners like Diestelmeier and his classmates – into the present shared horizon, but also the centuries of German tradition. This shaped a unique perspective that was constantly changing as new ideas, often from foreign powers, like Great Britain or the United States, were now incorporated into the ‘horizon of the present.’

The essential quality that advances the individual, or in this case, the society into the ‘new’ present is questioning. Since “questions always bring out the undetermined possibilities of a thing,” it necessary to understand that a current answer or situation may stem from a previous question.¹⁴³ Sometimes, in thinking historically, the individual or group is not searching for an answer in the past, but rather a question. Reconstructing the question to which the present is the answer is understood as comprehension of the past. For thoughts to merge in this way, however, there must be a unity of this thought process in the present, which is brought on by newness. In postwar Germany, the German people were not necessarily questioning their present situation, but rather, as we have seen, finding the correct questions in their recent past. It is only through new knowledge, realized in the present that they could formulate the questions that were going to be critical in discussions of the recent German past. These questions, sparked by the insights provided by an informed and democratic public that promoted such discourse were essential to the shared historical horizon of the postwar years.

In the immediate postwar years, it was essential for Germany to reinterpret its past. The

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 306.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 374.

period of leniency in terms of cultural expression, public opinion, and popular mass media was essential to the democratization of the nation. The progressive broadcasting model established by *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* was a vital vehicle for change in the conquered nation, as it encouraged listeners from all throughout its coverage area to actively be involved in the discussions promoted over the airwaves. Listeners were provided an opportunity to ask questions, voice their opinions, and remain informed as the station disseminated valuable information to its constituency and acted as a model broadcaster for the rest of occupied Germany to imitate. In the period from 1947 to 1949 many Germans had already come to realize the importance of their current situation, and the sources that have been provided by the NDR records from this time demonstrate that Germans are starting to look back to their past to make sense of the present. Whether it was Diestelmeier's commentary on his classmates recollection of the war and their realization that it was now, in a time of defeat and recollection, the time to learn what life really was about, or Hamburg's musicians hoping to explore their musical past again through a new critical lens, the public individuals impacted by NWDR's frequencies were acknowledging that they had to merge their traditional horizons with their current situation in order to expand their opportunities in the future. As the period of occupation came to a close in 1949, we see the emergence of a sociocultural public discourse that would bring about a coming-to-terms with German tradition and the establishment of a reconfigured German public founded on democratic principles.

CHAPTER 3: A LINE THROUGH THE PAST

May of 1949 was upon the Germans. Four years had passed since the nation's unconditional surrender. The rubble of the Second World War was nearly cleared and the divided state was at a major turning point. Although the Allied occupation would not officially be over until 1955, the Allied powers of Great Britain, the United States, and France had declared that their occupation zones would merge into a new, partially unified Germany. A state that managed its own affairs, held free democratic elections, and maintained the opportunity to join the "community of European nations." On May 23, 1949 the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Federal Republic of Germany) was established. The process of German reunification had reached a milestone, though what was commonly known as West Germany had its ideological and geographic counterpoint- the Soviet puppet state of East Germany, or the *Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR)*. The partitioning of Germany into two separate, and ideologically distinct states was an unintended consequence of the occupation process. The initial divisions laid out in 1945 were only for the administrative duties of the Allies. The Soviet rejection of the 1948 currency reforms – mentioned in the first chapter – and the further implementation of Stalinist economic and social policy was an initial indicator that a clean and simple

German reunification was not going to happen anytime soon.¹⁴⁴ The Soviet blockade of Berlin from 1948-49 only furthered these tensions. Complete German reunification was placed on hold, creating one of the most important political and cultural flashpoints of the Cold War. With the formal restructuring and occupation behind the new West Germany, the ideal platform for discussing the German partition, along with an abundance of other issues, was established within the confines of a cosmopolitan and democratic broadcasting structure.

The formation of the democratic BRD presented a number of opportunities for West Germans. For the first time since the elections of 1933, the German public had a total say over their own government, leading to the election of Christian Democrat Konrad Adenauer as Prime Minister in August 1949. Even the Communist Party of Germany was permitted in the election amid the burgeoning Cold War conflicts, though they only received five percent of the total vote.¹⁴⁵ Adenauer oversaw the nation's domestic and international affairs for the next fourteen years, exemplifying ambitions of a culturally secure and economically viable Germany in addition to the cultivation of a peaceful and integrated Western Europe. With Germany finally acting as a sovereign state – though still under loose Allied supervision – it was essential that the new nation hone the innovative broadcasting structures that were crafted under the Allies' watch to truly tap into the public mentalities of the new German public. Reintegration meant that the regional zones of occupation were now one state, and greatly expanded the voice of the German public. It also implied that the German media, responsible for transmitting

¹⁴⁴ V.R. Berghan, *Modern Germany*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 208-209.

¹⁴⁵

the interests and opinions of its constituencies to the public front, had to continue operating within the democratic model stressed during the immediate occupation years.

As we examine the programming and policies of Hamburg's *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* from 1950 to 1956, it is essential to note that an enormous cultural and political shift had taken place. West Germany was now a sovereign state. It was being politically and economically integrated into the new Western world of the twentieth century. While it was essential to continue focusing on the domestic issues of Germany's culture and recent history, it was now necessary to incorporate these discussions into the new nation's efforts to become a relevant actor on a global stage. The ideas of wrestling with the past and the rebirth of a cosmopolitan German culture were still pertinent, but with the formal occupation over, a broader spin on the questions that Germans were asking during occupation was needed. As a new intellectual public sphere emerged from the reintegration of West Germany, regional broadcasting hubs, like *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*, began to consider a broader constituency. Still maintaining the democratic and 'objective' principles encouraged by the Allies, it became apparent from the programming that the audience and attitude of German broadcasting was shifting.

Entering the period of the federal republic, we are witness to the outcome of the previous four years of struggle. From the cooperation with Allied Command and the adherence to their objectives, to the conflicts with self-identity, national history, and the foreign officials running the country, the rebirth of an identifiable and self-governed Germany was a landmark triumph for the German public. German broadcasting documented this entire process. *NWDR*, as one of Germany's premiere broadcasters, had captured the initial process of denazification and the restructuring of the nation under

Allied Command, the questioning of German tradition and its recent history, and their listeners' thoughts on the nation's future. This process was critical in reaching that 1949 breakthrough. Germans regained control of their country and had greater freedom over the airwaves. The radio community of Germany was now acting in behalf of full German interests and wholly represented the democratically informed popular public sphere that postwar broadcasting had hoped to establish.

This chapter argues that, with the formation of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, the German public finally had the necessary cultural mechanisms to have a genuine and discursive public sphere. A collective public atmosphere in which to consider the nation's matters in an informed and democratic fashion was established over the airwaves. Since public radio broadcasting functioned as this environment, it can be asserted that this was a public that highlighted the goals of a democratically stable Germany. In previous interpretations of 'public,' we find that the term was incredibly limited, often to a particular ethnicity, religion, race, or class. For instance, Habermas places the origin of the public sphere in bourgeois society, eliminating laborers, laypeople, and those excluded from artistic and intellectual circles. The radio publics, or communities, of the second half of the twentieth century were perhaps the most accurate incarnation of the word, with over seventy percent of Germans having access to radio by 1949.¹⁴⁶ Additionally we see standout stations, such as NWDR, begin to expand its coverage and grow its constituencies. Regional issues became national, there were more in-depth and

¹⁴⁶ Alexander Badenoch, *Voices in Ruins: West German Radio Across the 1945 Divide*, (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

passionate discussions over German culture, and the political environment and coverage of party politics became more serious.¹⁴⁷

To properly assess the emergence of West Germany's public broadcasting sphere an examination of the conversations that were taking place over the airwaves is required. Again, Hamburg's NWDR will provide an example of how this process was taking place. Examples of the station's spoken programming will be highlighted- ranging from political forums to radio dramas celebrating the accomplishments of national German heroes. The broadcasts aired by NWDR – from reunification in 1949 to the station's 1955 split – emphasized the careful balance of celebrating German culture in safe, non-nationalistic manner while keeping the conversation of historical mistakes and tragedies relevant.¹⁴⁸ A strategic feat, as the country was still facing an ambiguous future. The significance of these programs and broadcasts are discussed, demonstrating that the dialogue taking place was essential to the new democratic foundations of the BRD. Studying the public discourse of a new Germany presents the opportunity to watch the birth of an inclusive public with the emergence of notable German intellectuals, politicians, and cultural figures maintaining a key role in informing the station's constituency. Ultimately, a new phenomenon was witnessed over the ether of radio- a comprehensive German public. With the official occupation of the country behind them, we still see Germans promoting the democratic and cosmopolitan traits endorsed by the

¹⁴⁷ Because of the Soviet environment of East Germany, however, the specifics of broadcasting and public on the east side of the Iron Curtain will be minimal to discuss the emergence of the informed popular public of federal republic.

¹⁴⁸ In 1955, NWDR was split into two separate stations- *Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR)* and *Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR)*. North Rhine-Westphalia wanted to regulate its own broadcasting. NDR remained based in Hamburg and continued providing coverage to Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein.

Allies. This was perceived as the most efficient way to continue reshaping German society in a progressive manner. Ultimately, this was the product of the cooperation and conflicts associated with the occupation project, combined with the Germans' self-assessment and struggles with their recent past.

Historical Celebration:

Although one might expect the archives of a major national broadcaster to be stocked with materials regarding the station's transition from occupation to autonomy, the materials in the NDR's collection – which also contain all of the documents related to NWDR – at the *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* are relatively lacking. There are documents concerning the coverage of the new government, the election process, and general political coverage in the early 1950s, but it appears that activity regarding the reprogramming of German culture seemed to be placed on hold while the country got its bearings together. A year of top-notch informative reporting by the NWDR prepared autonomous West Germany for its first free elections in nearly two decades, covered the revival of the economy, and still maintained a position of authority regarding entertainment and popular culture. The goal of this chapter, however, is to examine how German broadcasting was specifically continuing to shape the German public in terms of coming to terms with Germany's recent past. The general coverage nurtured the German public during this period. It earned the trust of a society that had been warned that the politicization and perversion of mass media partially led to their national demise by projecting an image of objectivity and cosmopolitan pluralism. Politics, especially party politics, were a touchy subject in postwar Germany, but NWDR's coverage brought this

to the forefront in a responsible and pluralistic fashion. During this initial wave of political freedom, however, it seems that so-called cultural broadcasting took a bit of a backseat.

In 1952, this shifted. This year had at least two high-profile cultural pieces on “heroic” German figures. The first was a fifteen-part, eleven and a half hour radio biography series on Ludwig van Beethoven- complete with musical interludes performed by NWDR’s music unit. The second was a much shorter, and incompletely archived musical drama focusing on Goethe and Herder’s conversations on the philosophies of Johann Georg Hamann. NWDR did have a *Goethejahre* celebration in 1949 as well, but their programming of this remains undocumented in the archives aside from a few promotional flyers. The specific cultural-historical broadcasts of 1952 continued the experimental broadcasting that was established during the occupation years. NWDR was, again, presenting material that would critically engage its audience with their past. Instead of looking at the recent past, the station was – in these two examples – shifting its focus to the period of German Classicism and romanticism- a period that many postwar scholars labeled as the catalyst of German superiority in the development of National Socialism.¹⁴⁹ NWDR was celebrating Germany’s famous historical figures while simultaneously providing an example of how Germans could take pride in their national artists.

The *Vorläufiger Plan einer biographischen Beethoven-Reihe 1952* [Tentative Plan for a Beethoven Biographical Series] by Helmuth Wirth and Jürgen Petersen clearly demonstrated the thorough undertaking of this project. The plan lists the fifteen, forty-

¹⁴⁹ Friedrich Meinecke, *The German Catastrophe*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1950).

five minute broadcasts documenting the life of the composer. It began with his youth in Bonn and concluded with his death and legacy [*Ewigkeit*].¹⁵⁰ There was evidence of Mozart's role in the development of young Beethoven's musical prowess, and the major events of the composer's life were scheduled for discussion. Highlights included his first symphony, the famous *Eroica*, the fifth symphony, and his major piano works. Some non-musical offerings were covered as well. The 1812 meeting between Beethoven and Goethe – to discuss the composers setting of the poet's *Egmont* – was given an entire forty-five minute segment, along with a dialogue on Beethoven's reclusive decade from 1810 to 1820. With a model of the celebration set, the document concluded with the specifics of the recording process. Wirth and Petersen explain that the first forty-five minute broadcast was set to air on March 26- Beethoven's death day.¹⁵¹

The initial broadcasts from March could not be found, but the scripts for the reruns that aired later in the summer were available in complete order. Unfortunately, the *Staatsarchiv* contained no audio recordings of these programs, so the way in which the writers of the program characterized the voices of the characters from Beethoven's life is unknown. And while it stated that the NWDR radio orchestra performed the accompanying music, the size of the ensemble was not noted, nor whether it was a live or prerecorded performance of the works. The fact that this massive program was aired several times, in its entirety, emphasized the popularity and success of the work. Perhaps this was due to the unconventional composition of the broadcast. Reading over the script, one finds that the narrative of '*Ludwig van Beethoven – Der Mensch und das Werk*'

¹⁵⁰ Dr. Helmuth Wirth, Dr. Jürgen Petersen, '*Vorläufiger Plan einer biographischen Beethoven-Reihe 1952*,' Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 992.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

[Ludwig van Beethoven – The Man and his Work] was a bit unusual. There was a narrator propelling the story as they set context, explained the cast of characters, and revealed how everything was tied together. Once sufficient information was provided, the narrator then began a conversation with the historical figures from Beethoven’s life. It is as if the listener was witnessing an interview with these individuals- sort of a ‘what if there were radio and mass media in the early nineteenth century?’ scenario. For instance, in the broadcasts on “*Die grossen Sonaten*” [the great sonatas], the narrator provides background on the piano, its relative newness as an instrument, and Beethoven’s exposure to it as a youth. He then discusses that Beethoven’s father decided to let him give piano lessons at night. An actor playing Carl Czerny – one of Beethoven’s most prominent early students – responds to the scenario. Czerny explains to the audience that Beethoven applied many of his own experiences to his studies- that “he had practiced tremendously in his youth, often until late after midnight.”¹⁵² The audience is provided primary evidence from those who knew the great composer, connecting them to the program and to the historical research that went into it. This approach was informative, but at the same time, greatly entertaining. It provided the listener with an opportunity to immediately place themselves into this ethereal conversation with the historical figure. After a few more exchanges with Czerny, the narrator discusses Beethoven’s ability as an improviser and the great lengths he went to in order to compose the great sonatas that were the focus of the broadcast. All of a sudden the composer speaks directly to the audience. After the narrator details the composer’s frustration with the gradual loss of his

¹⁵² J. Müller-Marein, K.H. Mann, *Ludwig van Beethoven – Der Mensch und das Werk- 8. Die grossen Sonaten*, Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 992. “*Er sagte mir oft, dass er in seiner Jugend ungeheuer, meistens bis spät über Mitternacht exerziert habe.*”
1.

hearing, Beethoven informs the audience that he decided to “grab fate by the throat,” working these frustrations into his compositions.¹⁵³ Following the subject’s interjection, NWDR’s music department commenced a performance of the Piano sonata no. 8, or the *Pathetique Sonata*.

NWDR’s biography of Beethoven was part radio-history, part radio-drama, and part concert performance. The result was an engaging and informative work that would allow listeners the opportunity to reconnect with one of Germany’s most prominent composers. After distancing themselves from possessive, Nazi-endorsed adulation of German composers, the nation was reaching a point where they could begin to re-embrace cultural traditions- so long as it was approached in a safe, non-nationalistic style. NWDR, taking this into consideration, included various caveats and historical fact-checks into the program. At one point in the discussion of the great sonatas, the narrative turns toward romanticism. The narrator makes sure to provide the listener with a proper definition of the romantic tradition that Beethoven was working within. A conversation between Beethoven and his secretary Anton Schindler is introduced by the narrator. When Schindler demands that Beethoven tell him the secret to understanding the emotional affect of his sonatas, Beethoven explains that he must read Shakespeare’s *Tempest*. Not only does this endorse Beethoven’s cosmopolitan leanings and favorable appreciation of foreign art and literature, but also points the listener toward the composer’s interpretation of romanticism. Schindler then explains that Beethoven went into nature, “as a wanderer in the high mountains. Hour after hour he is subjected to

¹⁵³ Ibid., 2. “*Ich will dem Schicksal in den Rachen greifen!*”

highest points, which cannot afterwards be transcended to impressions.”¹⁵⁴ The program made the point to explain that the source of Beethoven’s romantic sentiment was nature—from the “kingdoms of nature” [*Reiches der Natur*] and not the state. It was through nature, not nation, that Beethoven found his inspiration.¹⁵⁵ This was a critical point to make because as the nineteenth century progressed, the romantic sentiment of composers like Beethoven were altered and perverted by the notions of the romantic feelings toward a mighty German military state, and the supremacy of German culture. We saw this idea climax in the writings of Wagner, and in Richard Strauss’ musical support of the Third Reich. To NWDR, it was imperative that the German public understood this key difference.

Audiences were presented with portions of Beethoven’s worldview throughout the course of the program. For example, the program goes into the history of Beethoven’s *Eroica* dedication. It explained that although the composer found dedications trivial, his third symphony produced thoughts of Napoleon Bonaparte. Beethoven felt that Bonaparte fully embodied the ideals of the French Revolution and the ambitions of the Enlightenment. This was, however, while Napoleon was still the First Consul.¹⁵⁶ The narrator was conducting his fictional interview with Ferdinand Ries, a student turned friend of Beethoven, when the topic of Napoleon’s actions in 1804 came up. Ries expounded: “I was the first who brought him the news, that Bonaparte had declared

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., “*Von Stunde zu Stunde sieht er sich Höhepunkten gegenüber, die dem Anschein nach nicht mehr überragt werden können.*”

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ J. Müller-Marein, K.H. Mann, *Ludwig van Beethoven – Der Mensch und das Werk- 6. Eroica*, 4-5.

himself Emperor, whereupon he flew into a rage and cried out....”¹⁵⁷ Before Ries can continue, the composer dominates the narrative again, “Is he no more than an ordinary man? All human rights will be trampled underfoot, only to indulge in his ambition; he will now, like all of the others, become a tyrant!”¹⁵⁸ The composer, upon hearing the death of Bonaparte, consul of the French people, and the birth of Emperor Napoleon, destroyed his dedication page. This was not a man fit for the ‘Heroic Symphony,’ and the third became *Eroica*. In this veiled critique of the rise of National Socialism – with Napoleon representing Adolf Hitler – we are further presented with NWDR’s presentation of Beethoven as a democrat; this was a continuation of Allied treatments of the composer. Since this democratic Beethoven could not actually rally against the Nazis, the station decided to include the composer’s criticism of another authoritarian regime that came to power through military aggression and a lack of egalitarianism.

Interestingly, Beethoven’s seventh symphony was not covered in the program. The fourth, sixth and eighth also lacked coverage, but this is typical in condensed overviews of the composer within musicology. The seventh is held in esteem alongside the third, fifth, and ninth. Perhaps it was due to the work’s appropriation as the soundtrack to numerous Nazi functions.¹⁵⁹ In comparison, the program did feature the often-overlooked *Fidelio*- Beethoven’s only opera. What might seem a bit odd to the musically-inclined observer, can be explained by looking into the immediate postwar

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 5. Ich war der erste, der ihm die Nachricht brachte, Bonaparte habe sich zum Kaiser erklärt, worauf er in Wut geriet und ausrief:

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, “Ist der auch nichts anderes wie ein gewöhnlicher Mensch? Nun wird er auch alle Menschenrechte mit Füßen treten, nur seinem Ehrgeiz fröhnen; er wird sich nun höher wie alle anderen stellen, ein Tyrann werden!”

¹⁵⁹ Erwin Warkentin, “History of the Information Control Division: OMGUS, 1944 to June 30, 1946,” 122.

history of the composer's presence in occupied Germany. While it was commonly known that the National Socialists built up Beethoven as a musical god – an “Aryan titan,” to use David Monod's expression – it was also true that the Allies quickly turned the composer into an advocate of democracy. Monod explained that Beethoven was the musical counterpart to Goethe, whom the Allies presented as a liberal humanist.¹⁶⁰ *Fidelio* was frequently performed throughout all zones of occupation. The opera revolves around the false imprisonment of Florestan, a nobleman in the countryside of Seville. Florestan is secretly locked away in a political prison for attempting to reveal the crimes and corruptions of a fellow nobleman. After two years, Leonore – Florestan's wife – discovers what has happened to her husband and dresses up as a boy named Fidelio, eventually rescuing him from his impending death. This notion of the voice of justice being locked away through brute force, overcoming unthinkable odds, and prevailing in the end was a narrative that resonated with the Allied powers- especially among American officers. It was also the narrative that both the Allies and German intellectuals were trying to transpose to the story of postwar Germany. Through Beethoven, they found a way to tie this into traditional German culture. The Americans, in particular, urged the German public “to reconceive him [Beethoven] as a democrat: an opponent of arbitrary state power and a champion of individual rights.”¹⁶¹ NWDR was continuing this tradition by including the coverage of *Fidelio* within the broadcasting schedule. The democratic sentiments expressed by Beethoven in this work would have resonated greatly

¹⁶⁰ David Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953*, (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 99.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

with the ideas establishing the new West German public, while simultaneously reinforcing the early cooperation of the station with the Allied powers.

Beethoven's comparison with Goethe was no coincidence. The poet, philosopher, scientist was – and still is – possibly the most discussed and respected German intellectual of all time. Argentine critic and author, Jorge-Luis Borges famously wrote that “Goethe, as we all know, is Germany's official religion.”¹⁶² Even National Socialism could not taint Goethe's reputation as a ‘monumental’ German. The Nazi's burning of his liberal-minded humanist works – among countless others that emphasized equality and cosmopolitanism – only allowed the author to reemerge in the postwar landscape completely unscathed.¹⁶³ It was only natural for NWDR to lean on the scholar when bringing a less-heard-of mind to public attention. The piece on Johann Georg Hamann, while not nearly as monumental as the Beethoven project, was a part of this novel concept of ‘radio-history-play.’ Hamann was a German philosopher working in the eighteenth century, and a major influence on the *Sturm und Drang* [storm and stress] literary movement. Johann Gottfried Herder and Goethe were both heavily influenced by Hamann's philosophies. The *Sturm und Drang* period was notable for breaking with the Enlightenment's strict approach to rational thought, with major themes focusing on the radical independence of the individual and role of emotional conflict in experiential human expression. The June 20 broadcast, *Das geistige Erbe Hamanns: Ein Forschungsbericht* [The Spiritual Heritage of Hamann: A Research Report] was a thirty

¹⁶² Jorge-Luis Borges, “Shakespeare's Memory,” *Collected Ficciones of Jorge Luis Borges*, (Penguin Press), Accessed via PDF, https://postthegemony.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/borges_collected-fictions.pdf

¹⁶³ Boaz Nuemann, “Nazi Antisemitism and the Decline of Language,” *Varieties of Anti-Semitism*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2009), 51.

minute exploration of the massive influence that the philosopher had on the works of Goethe and Herder, and therefore, the mass of intellectuals influenced by their works. Dr. Jürgen Petersen – the organizer of the Beethoven program – was also responsible for this broadcast, assisted by Walter Hilpert. The typed script provides a narrator, who introduces the theme:

My speech promises you a research report and provides a name with which you rarely connect ideas: Johann Georg Hamann, writer, philosopher, and customs officer. Born in Königsberg Prussia in 1730, he died in Münster, Westfalen 164 years ago tomorrow in 1788.¹⁶⁴

The narrator continues, acknowledging that the listener may not recognize the name, and therefore, lose interest. The listener is informed that the work of Hamann was tied particularly close to the thought of Albert Einstein, and that Richard Strauss's artistic impulses stemmed from the writer's considerable talent.¹⁶⁵

After the brief exposition, the cast is introduced. The narrator explains that Hamann, both personally and through Johann Gottfried Herder, influenced Goethe's artistic development. Goethe addresses the audience from an 1806 diary, after beginning work on *Faust* again, "From time to time, Hamann's writings were pulled from the mythic vaults in which they were kept. Through a strange enveloped language, a powerful spirit attracted educational joy again."¹⁶⁶ The rest of the program continues in

¹⁶⁴ Walter Hilpert, *Das geistige Erbe Hamanns: Ein Forschungsbericht*, Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 2. "Das Thema meines Vortrags verspricht Ihnen einen Forschungsbericht und nennt Ihnen einen Namen, mit dem Sie wohl kaum eine Vorstellung verbinden: Johann Georg Hamann Philosoph, Schriftsteller, und Zollbeamter, zu Königsberg in Preussen 1730 geboren und gestorben in Muunster in Westfalen morgen auf den Tag genau vor 164 Jahren, also im Jahre 1788."

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, "Hamanns Schriften wurden von Zeit zu Zeit aus dem mystischen Gewölbe, wo sie ruhten, hervorgezogen. Der durch die sonderbare Sprachhülle hindurch wirkende rein kräftige Geist zog immer die bildungslustigen wieder an."

this way. At one point, the listener is exposed to Goethe and Herder's reaction to Hamann's death. Goethe received the news in Italy and traversed the Alps to Herder's secluded cabin. The narrator introduces this scene and then the listener is subject to their sorrowing conversation. The two discuss the unexpected death of the scholar, and lament over the memory of his work. Goethe then exclaims, "How better to respect the memory of a dear friend than examining his life and keeping his words alive."¹⁶⁷ Both conclude that in order to keep their friend and mentor's memory alive, it is essential that they permit his works and influence to be shown through their own major literary contributions.

NWDR's writing department was continuing this tradition. Instead of a piece that solely focused on yet another celebration of Goethe, the station was introducing listeners to another prominent German mind. The station was promoting the works of an individual who, although fairly esoteric, was an immense influence on classical German thinkers and contemporary minds alike. Much like its administrative duties during the period in which the *Rundfunkschule* was operating, NWDR was making an effort to educate its constituency of listeners through radio. Having the technological capacity to reach the new German public, the station considered it their responsibility to expose its listeners to pertinent information regarding their nation's past. Although centered on one of the major figures of the two-centuries-old *Sturm und Drang* literary movement, the idea was relevant to modern Germany because of the way in which the material was presented, and in the subject matter. Instead of exclusively focusing on those monumental figures of German history, the station was intent on demonstrating how this little-

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 6. "Wie können wir das Andenken eines treuen Freundes höher achten, als dass wir uns sein Leben vergegenwärtigen und seine Worte in unserem Herzen wachhalten."

discussed figure remained relevant to modern minds, like Albert Einstein and Richard Strauss.

NWDR's interpretation of German cultural history was something especially beneficial for the fledgling democracy. Most of the ideology behind the new West Germany was new and – to a degree – foreign to the German public. It operated as a completely new chapter in German history. Taking a figure as monumental as Ludwig van Beethoven and turning him into a beacon of the Enlightenment and democratic thought could alter the perspective on German tradition. This composer, whose masterpieces had been used and abused by the Nazi government, was now becoming a voice against oppressive, tyrannical rule. A proponent of the rights of man, and a cautionary of unchecked ambition, the Beethoven that NWDR delivered to its listeners was a hero that the German public could still admire. Not because he was genius German composer, but because he was a genius composer who defended the rights of the individual who happened to be a German. What would have been somewhat taboo a few years earlier – the celebration of a highly recognizable German whose work was heavily used by the Nazi party – was now being broadcast, and rebroadcast, across the listenership of *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*.

Due to the deservedly cautious outlook on the glorification of German culture during the occupation years, it can be assumed that a broadcast like *Ludwig van Beethoven- der Mensch das Werk* may not have been permitted between 1945 and 1949- no matter how democratic Allied officers may have interpreted the composer. Though the program on Hamann probably would have been accepted, due to the smaller size (and emphasis on Goethe). The Hamann program also reinforced the emphasis on newness in

occupied Germany. Hamann was known for reinterpreting classics in modern terms. He took the original elevated rhetoric of classical literature and brought the work to contemporary terms, using more modern references that current audiences could comprehend. At this point, however, Germans had control over their own stations. It should be noted that NWDR's historical pop-culture broadcasts – a seemingly grandiose celebration of Beethoven and a public radio course conducted by the station's writers and Goethe – was not a reversion to the old self-adulating *volksgeist* of the Third Reich. This type of broadcasting, presenting a historical figure in a new perspective, would actually fall in line with many of the goals and ambitions of the reeducation and occupation project. It was beneficial to the German public because it sparked a larger dialogue about their preconceived notions of this individual. There seemed to be a realization that these national heroes may have had certain traits and characteristics that could be admired by a cosmopolitan and democratic German public- that there could be a celebration and respect concerning national culture, without making it about superiority or ownership of a form of art.¹⁶⁸

Norddeutscher Rundfunk- Ends and Beginnings:

In 1955, North Rhine-Westphalia decided to establish its own broadcasting service.

Effective January 1, 1956 NWDR was split into *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* and

Westdeutscher Rundfunk.¹⁶⁹ Despite examining regional broadcasting from the

¹⁶⁸ One of the most common complaints that music officers had in occupied Germany was that they could not convince Germans that they did not 'own' music; that there was respectable works by non-German composers.

¹⁶⁹ Peter Golding and Christian Potschka, "The Structural Developments of Regional Television in Britain and Germany," *Media History*, (Taylor and Francis, 2012), 444.

perspective of television, Peter Golding and Christian Potschka note that the regionalization of broadcasting in Germany was far more defined than in their counterexample- Great Britain. One explanation was that the occupation, and later partition of the nation, contributed to an emphasis on the regional importance of each *Länder* having its own service. Most German broadcasters, including Hans Bredow – often seen as the most influential founder of German radio – rejected the centralized, uniform model crafted by the Nazis. This was furthered by the Allies’ role in inadequately licensing broadcasters in the postwar years. For example, in British occupied Germany, NWDR was the only officially licensed station. Many Germans wanted to return to the way that pre-1933 broadcasting existed. Golding and Potschka explain, “the strong traditions of political and cultural regionalism were never wiped out.... In 1929, the German Reich had the most decentralized and regionalized broadcasting system within Europe.”¹⁷⁰ Germany’s historical tradition of regional governance and specific regional customs encouraged a broadcasting and information system that represented the regional nuances of each respective *Länder*. In the first decade following the war, NWDR took on this role. With the German government up and running again, however, it seemed that the station’s reach was not fine-tuned to those living in the Rhine-Ruhr region and the nation’s prewar regionalisms took precedent. This cannot be used as sufficient evidence to critique the efforts of *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk*’s Hamburg-based operations. The eventual split was natural, its root cause lying in historical tendencies that predated the postwar German state.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 445.

While the split was primarily attributed to the growing size of constituency in the now independent West Germany, there appeared to be cultural and political motivations as well. Golding and Potschka's article adds, "this separation had political reasons while also reflecting historical differences in culture, economic power, religion and mentality between the Rhine-Ruhr area, with its largest city Cologne, and the Hamburg region."¹⁷¹ Protestant Hamburg may have experienced significant differences with the Catholic Köln, but the differing political attitudes could be a more accurate assessment. Examining results from the first decade of elections, it is apparent that the city-state of Hamburg was far more inclined to elect Social Democrats, and the Rhine-Ruhr region voted for Christian Democrats. Until the 2009 election, Hamburg had exclusively leaned toward the left-oriented SPD [*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*], and aside from a few years in the late 1980s, the North Rhine-Westphalia *Länder* has placed political faith in the CDU. While it does not appear that NWDR favored any political inclinations – their political coverage documented all parties and held many forum-based discussions between opposing views – it is possible that those in North Rhine-Westphalia were simply uncomfortable with their news coming from somewhere with conflicting political opinions. Although this does not provide an entire explanation, the newly autonomous Germany was expected to establish regional political ideologies that would influence decisions concerning media coverage- no matter how unbiased and objective the reporting may have claimed to be. Even if politics are ignored, the split could have been the result of individuals in North Rhine-Westphalia simply wishing they could have a trustworthy broadcaster based in their own *Länder*.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Despite this shifting landscape, the productive output of the newly branded NDR continued to set the example for the new Germany. Perhaps this is due to the rise of television, but the programming on NDR took a sharp turn toward intellectualism and highbrow discussions Germany's cultural and political situation following the 1955/1956 split. One of the main themes of this period was the rise of political talk shows. The rise of a multi-party system in Germany created the need for political discourse. In order to maintain an informed and democratic public, it was essential to voice the opinions of the various political parties within West Germany. Political forums, highlighting the various aspects of the major parties in postwar Germany, ensured that this basic need was met. The broadcast structures developed in the postwar years created an ideal outlet for the transmission of information to Germans hoping to be educated on matters concerning the nation's political and cultural movement. The specific content of these programs were also important, as they provided listeners with a glimpse of the transformations Germans had made, and were continuing to make in their movement into the latter half of the century.

One show particularly stood out among NDR's offerings. *Das Politische Forum* was a weekly program, aired during prime-time evening hours. Every Sunday, from 7:30 to 8:00 P.M., NDR brought together a commentator from the station with a representative from each of Germany's major political parties of the time. These were typically constituted by members of the *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* [CDU], *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* [SPD], *Freie Demokratische Partei*, [FDP] and the *Deutsche Partei* [DP]. For each episode there was a specific question. Instead of relying solely on hot-button issues related to the current election season, or at-the-time

concerns, *Das Politische Forum* program tackled bigger questions that did not necessarily adhere what was occurring on the latest news cycle. Topics included, ‘*Neue Wege zur Wiedervereinigung?*’ [New Paths to Reunification?] ‘*Wo ist der Platz der Wehrmacht im Staate?*’ [Where is the Place of the Military in the State?] and ‘*Strich unter die Vergangenheit?*’ [Line Under the Past?].¹⁷² The questions covered by this weekly broadcast engaged audiences in a critical analysis of Germany’s recent past, but also the future of the country. Listeners could hear politicians and political analysts’ opinions of major current issues – such as, the program dealing with the role of the military – and gain a greater understanding of the issues. The wide range of topics also demonstrated NDR’s continued commitment to provide listeners with material that not only engaged the present, but also forced them to think about Germany’s past, their own actions and beliefs, and the consequential actions of their present decisions on the future.

This program also functioned as this study’s final evidence of the creation of a viable and democratic German public sphere- a departure from the examination of Hamburg’s broadcasting giant. For the previous decade, NWDR officials in Hamburg had been carefully broadcasting material that was intended to persuade listeners that they were part of a democratically informed public sphere. Internalizing these notions, the German public that NWDR displayed over the airwaves did appear to be a part of a unique and progressive project that was reshaping centuries of German culture. Looking at this program – *Das Politische Forum* – we find a German public that is being led by capable, democratic minds involved in independent discussion. Although Germany’s postwar transformation into a cosmopolitan world power was not yet complete, they had

¹⁷² Walter D. Schultz, “Das Politische Forum: Strich unter die Vergangenheit,” Hamburg Staatsarchiv. 621-1/144 NDR, 1203.

established an informed public that was critically engaging the situations presented to them in the postwar years. For this final analysis, the broadcast that most accurately reflects this mentality is ‘*Strich unter die Vergangenheit?*’

On Sunday April 8, 1956, *Norddeutscher Rundfunk’s Das Politische Forum* introduced the topic of discussion- ‘*Strich unter die Vergangenheit*’. The title of the broadcast translates to ‘A line under the past,’ or, marking out the past. Immediately listeners would have been drawn in by this notion of past, a constant in the postwar environment. The entire cultural reconfiguration of Germany – and much of this thesis – was based around the notion of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or ‘coming to terms with the past.’ NDR’s discussion leader, Walter Schultz introduced the theme:

How will we tackle this ‘hot iron’ issue in the Political Forum today. The theme, ‘Line under the Past,’ touches on the political relationship of those serving in the new government with those who served the totalitarian regime. This is not only a political problem, but one impacting all of mankind.¹⁷³

In his introduction Schultz opens up the broader implications of Germany’s political problems. Expanding the theme beyond the political and geographic boundaries of postwar Germany, the listener understands that this is not a problem unique to their state. This is something that is happening across the globe- especially at this point, since the Cold War had officially started by this time. Germans could relate the upcoming broadcast to both their own recent history and to those places recently afflicted by communist overthrows, including former parts of their own country in East Germany. Following his opening statements, Schultz introduced his guests for the discussion.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, *Wie wollen im Politischen Forum heute ein heisses Eisen anpacken. Das Thema "Strich unter Vergangenheit" behandelt das politische Verhältnis zum neuen Staat von seiten jener, die totalitären Regimen gedient haben oder noch dienen. Dies ist nicht nur ein politisches, sondern, oft auch ein menschliches Problem.*

Representing the Christian democrats – Germany’s majority party at the time – was C.W. Dietsch. Dietsch was the first to speak, and addressed the audience with a rhetoric that made them concentrate on their recent past. He also emphasized that this was not solely an issue of the recent past, explaining, “I do not believe that we can only discuss the most recent past, we should tighten the subject a little further, we should be clear about how far a line under the past may be drawn regarding the events and the experiences of the past 50 years.”¹⁷⁴ Dietsch continues to clarify that the question of his German audience’s past goes beyond the twelve years of Nazi rule and a decade of occupation. He reminds the audience of the *Kaiserreich*, of its 44-year period of relative peace, and of Germany’s experimentation with democracy in the Weimar Republic. These positive examples are brought up before noting the negative experiences that the German public had dealt with. Dietsch continues:

Although it is not true – as the Nazis claimed – that we experienced fourteen years of shame and disgrace, we have experienced hardship and struggle to get our people out from under the heavy losses of the First World War, from bringing order to currency, to foreign policy, and to economic freedom.¹⁷⁵

Denying the nationalistic rhetoric of the National Socialists was a clear choice. Stating that Germany’s hardship following the First World War was a struggle, but not a source

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Dietsch, ‘*Ich glaube, wir können nicht nur über die jungste Vergangenheit diskutieren, sondern wir sollten das Thema etwas weiter spannen, sollten uns darüber klar werden, wie weit ein Strich unter die Vergangenheit gemacht werden kann aus den Ereignissen und den Erlebnissen der letzten 50 Jahre.*’

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ‘*Es ist doch nicht wahr gewesen, wie es im Aufruf der Nationalsozialisten hiess, dass wir 14 Jahre Schmach und Schande erlebt hatten, sondern wir haben doch erlebt das Ringen und den Kampf unseres Volkes, um wieder herauszukommen aus den schweren Verlusten des ersten Weltkrieges, um die Ordnung seiner Währung, um seine aussenpolitische und seine wirtschaftliche Freiheit.*’

of national embarrassment, implied that the true embarrassment to Germany was, as Dietsch explains, the period of totalitarianism.

While National Socialism was the most horrific and immediate cause of Germany's current situation, Dietsch informed his audience that they could not overlook the broader historical trajectory of Germany; that the historical events of the previous century were a part of "today's political questions." Dietsch then elaborates on the second part of Schultz's original question- that which addressed the "mankind" aspect:

If I can say something to the mankind side of the problem, it is the following; everyone comes to a point in any situation that they have to acknowledge 'a line under the past,' but they do it only with the firm intention - I think that they also embrace – of the experiences that have carried them to a point where they can draw a line to use, and I believe we should therefore be sure to include the experiences of the last three systems of government, spanning nearly three generations, and how they are related within our discussion.¹⁷⁶

Dietsch was asking his audience and his peers to recognize that questioning the past was not something unique to the experience of National Socialism. This was something that every individual must question at some point. It is also interesting that he plays with the language and wording of Schultz's original question. Dietsch interprets it as "an underlining of the past," as if for emphasis, instead of a line through it. Within the current context of this discussion over the airwaves, however, it was essential to draw this line in the past with a broad vision. The last three generations of Germans – many of which were still alive and a part of the now-democratic state – had endured three very separate forms

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 'Wann ich dazu etwas nach der menschlichen Seite des Problems sagen darf, dann ist es folgendes; jeder Mensch kommt einmal in die Lage, dass er sagen muss ein Strich unter die Vergangenheit, aber er tut es nur mit dem festem Vorhaben - ich glaube, das hält er auch - die erfahrungen, die ihn dazu gebreacht haben, jetzt einen Strich zu machen, zu benutzen, und ich glaube, wir sollten deshalb bei unserer Diskussion jetzt diese Erfahrungen der letzten drei Regierungssysteme und praktisch drei Generationen nicht ausser acht lassen und sie mit in unsere Diskussion hineinbeziehen.

of government before the formation of the *Bundesrepublik* in 1949. To properly assess the present situation, Dietsch was asking listeners to consider their own experiences in these three periods and how they collectively arrived in this present discussion. He then brought the conversation into the present, considering those who had worked to distance themselves from the attitudes of National Socialism:

I believe that if someone has proved, over the last decade, that they are variably prepared to work again, which by itself already marks a line with the time that they were on the other side, then you should give them an adaptable start option and grant them the chance to further this line under the past.¹⁷⁷

Dietsch – in addition to many of his party’s constituents – felt that if someone had worked hard, and made the effort to distance themselves from the Nazi party, then the individual should be granted the opportunity to join the efforts to reconstruct Germany in a democratic and cosmopolitan fashion. Dietsch was invoking the *pathos mathos* sentiment of ‘learning through suffering’ to appeal to an audience who, most likely, was involved in some sort of Nazisms or extreme nationalisms in the previous two decades. This was not an approval of that conduct, since Dietsch included statements that concerned the individual’s struggle to overcome it. Enduring serious contemplation over their role in the former regime was required for acceptance in the new government.

Throughout the program, audiences could pick up on some party-affiliated differences from the guests on the program. For instance, Graf von Gahlen of the *Deutsche Partei* seemed to distance himself from notion of getting through this

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, ‘Ich glaube, wenn jemand im Laufe des letzten Jahrzehnts den Beweis erbracht hat, dass er erlich bereit ist, wieder mitzuarbeiten, also von sich aus schon einen Strich macht unter die Zeit, in der er auf der anderen Seite stand, dann sollte man ihm die erliche Startmöglichkeit geben und sollte ihm auch zuerkennen, dass er diesen Strich unter die Vergangenheit macht.

connection to the past. His answers revolved around the contentious notion that one could simply disregard their Nazi past; that this was necessary since the new government needed experienced personnel to run the country.¹⁷⁸ The German Party was well known for these positions. They represented those who served in the *Wehrmacht* and held esteemed positions in the Third Reich government.¹⁷⁹ Based on election results throughout the years, they were representative of a small portion of the German population, with most of the nation leaning toward the progressive agendas of the CDU and SPD. For the most part, however, most of the responses seemed to act in coordination with the outline that Dietsch laid out- that the past was something inescapable, and it had to be dealt with in an educated and critical manner.

Jürgen F. Warner, of the SPD, seemed to appreciate Dietsch's response to the question of 'emphasis on the past' in contemporary German politics. He supported Dietsch's remarks with his own, "if I have understood correctly, it is impossible, politically speaking, to draw a line through the past [that is, to disconnect from it]. In the political life of nations, actions must continue and there is no possibility for one to deny his past, whether for better or for worse."¹⁸⁰ Within the concept of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* it was essential for one to acknowledge the consequences of historical actions. There could be no disconnect. Even though Germans were making efforts in political, cultural, and social life to redeem themselves from the horrors of the

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Graf von Gahlen, 4.

¹⁷⁹ V.R. Berghahn, *Modern Germany: Society Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 99.

¹⁸⁰ 'Strich unter die Vergangenheit,' Hamburg Staatsarchiv. Jürgen Warner, 2. 'wenn ich das richtig verstanden habe, dass es unmöglich ist, politisch gesehen, einen Strich unter die Vergangenheit zu machen. Im Politischen Leben der Völker setzt sich das Geschehen kontinuierlich fort, und es ist keinem Volk möglich, seine Vergangenheit abzuleugnen, weder im Guten noch im Schlechten.'

Third Reich, it was something that they still had to own up to as a nation that spiraled into such actions. Warner continues his answer:

And even if one inwardly differs from the past of the Third Reich – as we in the German Federal Republic hopefully do – as a German, seen by people from the outside as a whole, making up an entire generation, what you have done in Germany, the good and the bad, is seen from the outside as an unabridged process.¹⁸¹

As a German, working within a German cultural tradition, the actions of the public were subjected to the scrutiny of the world. This was a major motivator for the German public to continue their efforts of working toward a democratic state that could actively discuss their past, and work through the hardships that it placed on German society as a whole. Warner explains, that even though the majority of those working within the *Bundestag* had ‘internally’ changed and distanced themselves from the mentalities of the Third Reich, they were still unable to disconnect themselves from the past. For this reason, it is essential that Germans focus on aspects of their new society that would highlight the ‘good,’ in order to reassure the outside world that Germany had changed for the better. Conversations concerning the past represented this, and NDR, from its beginnings in 1945, was promoting this type of discourse over the airwaves for the German public, hoping they would follow this example.

As the broadcast continues, Warner brings up Dietsch’s reference to the Weimar Republic. He explains the issues with the first German democracy. Warner states, “the transition from empire to republic was a forced political change, but there was no change

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, ‘Und selbst wenn man sich innerlich, wie wir es hoffentlich tun, in der deutschen Bundesrepublik von der Vergangenheit des Dritten Reich scheidet, als Deutscher, als Volk von aussen gesehen, bilden wir ein Ganzes, bilden wir durch die Generationen ein Ganzes, und das Gute und Schlechte, was man in Deutschland Getan hat, wird von draussen als ein Ganzes gesehen.

in the attitude of the moral foundations.’¹⁸² Warner claimed that the leaders of the Weimar Republic failed to morally adapt to the principles of democracy, which established the conditions for the possibility of the Third Reich from the republic’s inception. This was the key difference in the success of Germany after the Second World War. Warner felt that because the nation was able to look back at these historical errors, that they could overcome the moral dilemmas that afflicted the Weimar years. An acknowledgement of the past was key to this. The outside world had to be convinced that Germany would not run rampant with imperial, nationalistic thought. The broadcasts that NDR distributed to its constituencies were representative of the moral transformation of Germany, in addition to its cultural progression.

Through the dialogues taking place on NDR, whether pertaining to the cultural contributions of Ludwig van Beethoven or the political directions in which Germany was moving, the German public was able to better navigate the democratic public sphere that was being constructed. Embodying the struggle over the past, the German public discourse was essential in understanding a present that was always looking toward a progressive future. Only through a mass cultural medium, like broadcasting, could this have been accomplished in an age of growing information. The efforts to create a democratic broadcasting model in postwar Germany – initiated by the Allied powers, and continued by the Germans – generated the necessary mechanisms for crafting an informed public sphere that could maintain confidence in the information that they were receiving. It was because of these legitimately constructed broadcasting structures – as efficient distributors of information – that West Germany could remain optimistic about

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 3. ‘Denn der Übergang vom Kaiserreich zur Republik war eine politische Änderung, es war aber keine Änderung in der grundsätzlichen moralischen Haltung.’

its progression into the future. Warner, closing his discussion of the inability to mark a line through the past, addressed his German audience again, this time emphasizing the future- “The past is a part of the present and reaches into the future- it is a continuous chain.”¹⁸³

¹⁸³ *Ibid.* ‘Die Vergangenheit ist ein Teil der Gegenwart, reicht in die Zukunft weiter- es ist eine kontinuierliche Kette.’

CONCLUSION

In a study initially sparked by the psychedelic, rocking and rolling output of young Germans in the late 1960s, the result ended up focusing on the output of a sole radio station in Hamburg. Attempting to understand what made the musical output of those involved in Germany's countercultural revolution of the 1960s so idiosyncratic and innovative, the narrative of the original project continually bounced back to the period of occupation and the reconstruction of German culture taking place during that period. Questions revolving around the artistic output of these individuals were becoming questions about the collective culture of Germany following the Second World War. Repeatedly intrigued by the nation's ability to culturally transform from self-praising, authoritarian dictatorship in 1945 to a landscape of cosmopolitanism and democracy in the 1960s, the scope of the project was contracted to an analysis of the immediate postwar years.

Early research attempts of this period continually pushed the research toward sources related toward mass media. In postwar Germany, the form of mass media that dictated all others – in overall presence and its adherence to reconstruction efforts – was radio. Questions concerning the artistic output of Germany's cosmic rock musicians became questions of German public culture following the war, which in turn became questions concerning how German radio and mass media in this era shaped and reconfigured the German public. Overall, the goal of this project became the analysis of a democratically informed German public sphere created during the decade following the

nation's 1945 defeat. The study revolved around one question: What was it about Germany's postwar broadcasters that presented the opportunity for Germans to "master their past" and reinterpret German identity in the second half of the twentieth century?

When considering this question, one broadcaster was constantly referenced in the German literature on the subject. Hamburg's *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* was seen by many – like Alexander Badenoch and Hans-Ulrich Wagner – as postwar Germany's premiere radio presence. Following several discussions of the subject with scholars working within this field, it became clear that there was a limited amount of material specifically focusing on postwar German radio in the English language. It was also made clear that Hamburg's state archives contained a voluminous collection of NWDR's undertakings. Traveling to the *Staatsarchiv Hamburg*, the research in this thesis contained notes from the station's board of directors, audience submissions to programs, scripts for radio plays, notes on concert performances, scholarly works for radio conferences, and clear interactions that highlighted the relationship between Allied Command the occupied Germans. Aspects of Germany's postwar social and cultural life were all documented by Hamburg's NWDR. The station served as this thesis's entry point to the examination of how broadcasting – as an exceptionally influential mass medium – facilitated the creation of Germany's first truly informed public sphere.

The examination of radio's role in the formation of an intellectual postwar German public sphere resulted in a number of conclusions. Focusing on the mass medium's potential as a democratic agent following the war, the true promise of radio was that it could operate as an inclusive cultural vehicle for the Allies – and later, Germans – to use in meeting the goals of occupation. Able to reach a significant portion

of the German population at once, radio became a tool of occupation, used to help neutralize Germany as a future threat. Because of the population's almost unanimous exposure to broadcasting, the traditional class-based restrictions on being culturally informed were set aside and the German public became an expansive and inclusive one, though we must keep the end goals of occupation in mind. Postwar broadcasting, in many ways, acted as a unifier of the German public as they worked toward the goal of reconstruction and reformation. NWDR assisted in this process by actively choosing to broadcast in a manner that would glorify the traits of democracy and objectivity that the Allies were endorsing. This process, however, was not an easy one. There were multiple steps taken to achieve the goal of a peaceful, democratic, and cosmopolitan Germany. For this reason, this project focused on three separate periods of the decade following the war, with each emphasizing a particular goal of postwar broadcasters.

The first chapter was a focus on the period of immediate occupation- the first two years of military rule following the surrender. These first two years, from 1945 to 1947 highlighted the foundations of Germany's broadcasting structures. Equally important was the role that Allied Command played in their efforts to transform Germany into a new, democratic society. The allies knew that the most efficient – and possibly most difficult – way to reform Germany was through German culture. The early processes of reeducation and denazification highlighted a difficult groundbreaking. They had to transform a defeated state into a democracy by persuasion, while simultaneously not undermining the democratic principles they were peddling. The policies and procedures established during this period provided Germans with a template for reconceiving their society in a democratic manner. For instance, a policy of national guilt, backed up by German

scholars as necessary to the nation's transformation, was implemented. It emphasized that Germans were entirely responsible for the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust, and that the only possible redemption was peaceful democracy. Radio was the background of this entire process. Over the airwaves, the Allies and cooperative Germans could distribute necessary information to help expedite this process, and hopefully, ingrain their desired principles and cultural traits into the German collective consciousness. Background information on Germany's radio history during the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich was necessary to highlight the efficiency and potential of broadcasting in occupied Germany. The massive propaganda machine established by the Nazis was now to be used to distribute the democratic propaganda of the Allied occupiers. It was also essential to note that this period reigned in an emphasis on the *Stunde null* [zero hour] mentality embraced by many Germans- this complete overhaul of content and culture was a new starting point for the country. Broadcasting during this period was strict and administered by the Allies, but there were signs of an early cooperation between them and the Germans. This paved the way to the period increased autonomy over the airwaves in 1947.

In 1947, the occupation project's immediate supervision of all cultural and political affairs was lessened. This period exposed Germans to broadcasting that served more of their own interests, although the Allies still had the final say in critical decisions. Greater autonomy of the airwaves sparked a period of experimental broadcasting that highlighted the experience of living in Germany during this time. The sources from this period tend to emphasize the cooperation and struggles of rebuilding a country- in addition to reconfiguring its tradition-laden culture. By examining shows like *29. Januar*,

we see a Germany that was struggling to understand its present condition. These reflections often tie back to the conversation Germany was having regarding its recent past and the need to understand the errors within its own national identity. It must be considered however, that these programs were intended to spark these types of debates, and engage this particular brand of thought. NWDR tended to focus on the experiences of “average” Germans for a reason. By making it seem that this was normative narrative of the country during this time, it would encourage other Germans to follow this example. It constructed a postwar solidarity that hoped to motivate Germans to accommodate occupation policy and reeducation. This material was widely distributed and exceptionally popular, immersing a huge portion of the country in these discussions. We also notice conflicts with Allied control, regarding the use and promotion of German culture in the period of occupation. Academic programs like NWDR’s *Rundfunkschule* and its associated conferences and curriculum demonstrated that NWDR was a proponent of the democratic reeducation of West Germany, and that it was compliant in facilitating the goals of the Allied powers. It was during this period that German broadcasters proved that they were able to function in a democratic and cosmopolitan fashion, expediting the transition to self-governance and the German public’s willingness to change.

The first two chapters of this thesis examined occupation and the efforts by both Allied Command and Germans to restructure postwar Germany. Chapter three was the end result. Once the Allies left, it was necessary to see if German broadcasting was still able to function as an independent platform of public discourse. It was argued that the experience of occupation, the work done to reconfigure German public mentalities, and the continued efforts by German broadcasters to adequately prove the existence of a

democratically informed German public demonstrated that West Germany had embraced many of the imposed Allied traits. Broadcasting in sovereign West Germany continued to project an image of democracy and objectivity within its programming as broadcasters explored Germany's past and future. During this time – marked by the rise of television as a competing medium for news and entertainment – Germans were finding new ways to discuss their culture. We see Ludwig van Beethoven enshrined over the airwaves as a bearer of democracy in a monumental series of radio-histories. And we see the past thoroughly explicated in relation to contemporary political issues the discussion of German politics on *Norddeutscher Rundfunk's Das Politische Forum*. Although NWDR split in 1955, its new form, *Norddeutscher Rundfunk* continued to function as a powerful tool in the continued efforts to change German culture through a critical understanding of the German past. Included in this discussion was the entire German listening public, not just the intellectual and political elite. In their exposure to this “democratic” broadcasting over the previous decade, it seems as though the German public actually internalized these traits, as West Germany continues to thrive as Europe's most stable democracy-acting as a leader on the continent. Embracing aspects of the past – such as Beethoven's praise of radical individuality in the radio documentary of his life and work – and elements of the new environment in which they found themselves – the political talk shows, like *Das Politische Forum*, the adoption of democracy – Germans were pairing tradition with progress.

The postwar dialectical, consisting of a German openness to newness [*der Zeitgeist*] and the careful reverence of the cosmopolitan aspects of German tradition had made it through the first step of reconstructing German society. Although partially crafted

through the Allies' democratic propagandizing, a decade of NWDR programming following the Second World War provided audiences with a number of success stories regarding the reconfiguration of the German nation. Through the careful adoption and implementation of new and progressive ideas from the Allied powers, and the adherence to a rich cultural tradition of radical individuality within community, West Germans – through radio – had crafted an informed listening community in their new country. Making it to this point allowed Germany to advance into the second half of the twentieth century, as they utilized the public medium of radio to continue, “mastering their past.”

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