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Music

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ElectroCentral

The Influence of Weimar Culture on Pop Music in the 1970s and ‘80s

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation into the influence of Weimar Berlin’s culture on British popular music of the 1970 and 1980s. The two eras are studied historically and artistically though the constant and ever-changing backdrop of the city of Berlin. The retrospective significance in postmodern terms is examined through music of David Bowie, Lou Reed and Kraftwerk and of the subcultures of punk and post-punk; their respective incorporation of elements, usually associated with ‘others’, reveals an alternative approach to artistic production in response to the ‘authentic’ American model. The breakdown of the divisions between diametrically opposed principles and ideologies is featured as artists consistently sought to erode boundaries. Chapter 1 ‘Beyond Divine Symmetry’ looks at radical ideas in philosophy, politics and arts in the late-nineteenth century and World War I and the challenges brought to conservative forces. 2 ‘Willkommen in Berlin’ focuses on post-World War I socio-economic and political ramifications, on Berlin and corresponding art and leisure industries. 3 ‘Out and About’ continues reviewing the arts and culture of Weimar Berlin and the impact of new forms of art and technologies had on the city 4 ‘Officially Degenerate’ looks at art, music and other elements deemed ‘degenerate’ under the Third Reich, 5 ‘Traveling in Time’ compares the opposing ideologies of the East and West and the role of Berlin during the Cold War, 6 ‘David Bowie: The Changing Face of Influence’ refers to Bowie’s glam period and his most obvious use of references to Weimar, 7 ‘Berlin Personified: Lou Reed’ analyses Reed’s seminal albums of Transformer and Berlin 8 ‘German Irony: Kraftwerk’ scrutinizes the band’s inference that they were a continuance of Bauhaus, 9 ‘David Bowie: About Face’ looks at the artist’s years living and working in Berlin in the mid-1970s, 10 ‘England’s Projecting: Punk’ attempts to reveal why the subculture saw Weimar Berlin as comparable to mid-1970s London and 11 ‘Eye to I: Post-punk’ demonstrates how the evolved subculture created their musical-art by incorporating ideas from Berlin’s inter-war years to express Cold War induced anxiety.
General Introduction

This work investigates the influence of Weimar Berlin’s culture on the pop and rock acts of the 1970s and 1980s. John Savage and Charles Shaar Murray had commented on contemporary artists in the 1970s and 1980s assured that their readers understood its influence and inspiration. In what form that influence and inspiration manifested and where or who it had specifically originated from was alluded to but never fully explained.

The connections between Weimar Berlin and popular music of half a century later have often been commented on glibly in disparate writings. Allusions to the luminaries of Weimar Berlin are mentioned in biographies, articles and reviews of artists and music diverse and far apart: by Roy Carr and Charles Shaar Murray book that reviewed Bowie’s work of the 1970s, in John Savage’s renowned book on mid 1970s punk entitled England’s Dreaming featuring the Sex Pistols.¹ The mentioning of these links between 1970s and 1980s music and the culture of Weimar Berlin were intended for the consumption of fans as well as casual browsers. By 1981, Carr and Murray not only assumed that they would be understood writing about Bowie’s “‘European’ pieces” by core fans, but even non-aficionados.² Bowie and the Sex Pistols were not part of the ‘underground’ or cult players, but top-selling pop music stars. It appeared taken for granted that a young and non-specific audience would know the connections between British pop music and 1920/30s Berlin.

The musicians who came to prominence in the 1970s and 1980s and feature in this study were born after the end of World War II and therefore not directly affected by the war itself. However, the impact of the war and its political ramifications meant they would have grown up in an atmosphere filled with reminders. In post-war Britain, everything German was considered taboo even if it or they were the enemies or antithesis of Nazi ideology. This appeared only to make all things German more glamorous and powerful to many of this post-war generation. Did this mean that 1970s Britain, with high unemployment, strong social divides and clashing youth cultures, be compared directly with Weimar as Savage
implied? I explore whether Savage was correct in his assessment that Weimar Berlin’s culture was indeed an “accepted metaphor for Britain’s decline”.3

Though this work is concerned with the relationship of one era to another, it is not the purpose of this study to necessarily uncover new revelations about the art and music of Weimar Berlin. Investigation of that era centres on areas of most interest to the later period’s musical artists, their critics and respective audiences. In most instances, these were internationally renowned works that had survived in original form, in re-workings or in transpositions through new formats. These are exemplified by Fritz Lang’s film Metropolis, Joseph von Sternberg’s Der Blau Engel, Brecht and Weill’s Dreigroschenoper and Isherwood’s The Berlin Novels respectively. These major ‘inheritances’, along with the potency of Weimar’s inter-war historical placement, conjured up a unique mythology; these factors combined to influence and inspire later musicians who transformed earlier twentieth-century ideals and ideas to furnish their own legacy.

Why does the focus fall so fixedly on Berlin? Why not German culture in general? To address this question the unique properties of Berlin are examined. The capital was a stunning example of a purpose-built city, constructed to show the world that Germany could excel in the technological and cultural industries. Post-World War I Berlin became the epitome of modernity, containing a wealth of positive and negative features associated with it. Within the inter-war years, Berlin’s artistic community managed to interpret and reflected the extreme polarities with great energy and conviction. Even before coming to power, Hitler set about stamping out almost everything that made Berlin’s reputation. In the wake of World War II, West Berlin became a walled city within the Eastern Bloc. Though West Berlin was heavily subsidised by West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany) it proved a difficult place to live and many could only last a few years. In spite of this, it became a magnet for young people, nationally and internationally, who dared to live literally on the edge of the West.

This subject makes an important contribution to the body of knowledge on critical theory or new musicology on four counts. Firstly, it attempts to articulate apparently understood but not explicitly explained, common themes and references (musical, visual and textual) within pop music over a twenty-year period. Secondly, in identifying these commonalities a
number of seemingly disparate pop music styles become evolutionary not revolutionary. Thereby, thirdly, this study defines this evolutionary musical path as a means of reflecting the influence of social, political, sexual and gender movements during the 1970s and 1980s. Finally, this work challenges conventional historical accounts of pop music's one-way route from the United States to Europe.  

Apart from regional popular music played locally, often categorised as ‘world music’ when exported, the history of pop and rock music has been conventionally thought of as (North) American invention; a fusing of Black and White music that then conquered the rest of the world. Traditionally, it has been taught within popular music history, across genres and styles, that commercial music has developed in a unidirectional manner from the Afro-American and/or Celtic-American musical traditions. South American, Caribbean, European and Asian popular music traditions are largely ignored. Domestic markets aside, non-US contributions that predominate or add ‘flavour’ to the wealth of mainstream pop music have been largely neglected by musicologists. This study does not intend to negate or play down the vast contribution of Afro-American and/or Celtic-American music. However, it demonstrates that popular music is not entirely and exclusively attributable to these sources. The United States plays a central role in the production and consumption of commercial music; therefore it is not surprising (North) Americans play a leading function in academic and popular writing on rock and pop music which directly relate to the (North) American musical experience. This study aims to investigate an experience that is mainly from a British perspective, although not exclusively so.

There are three main methods utilised for this thesis. Firstly, case studies of musical artists associated with referencing Weimar Berlin in their work, concentrating predominantly on music that supposedly represents these references. Secondly, a wide range of literature and artifacts are used to cross-reference corresponding similarities between the two eras’ cultures. Thirdly, in order to further understand concepts that develop from this study of comparisons there are investigates into issues concerning identity, including nationalism, ethnicity, sexuality and gender.

Notions of identity and perspectives between subjectivity and objectivity are frequently mentioned within the vacillating parameters of postmodernism, yet these topics headlined
debate in what is now considered the ‘pure’ modern period. Hence, the question arises as which set of theoretical markers this work should employ as a means of investigation into the practice of comparing one era’s references to those from fifty years before. Conventional wisdom positions Weimar’s ‘golden age’ within the modern era whilst post-World War II is generally marked out as the beginning of the postmodern. Early on in my research it was clear that the luminaries of postmodern writing about music and style seemed restrictive with their conventional demarcations that separate eras.

Postmodern artists deliberately borrowed from the modern and many without the superficiality that is supposedly post-modernity’s distinction. Equally evident, exponents of modern art and music borrowed from various influences in a similar manner, cross-culturally and historically. Therefore, in accordance with Andreas Huyssen’s theory laid out in After the Great Divide negating modernism’s chief proclamation of absolute ‘newness’ and questioning the division between modernism and postmodernism. Huyssen makes distinctions of the modern into nineteenth century modernism, the historical avant-garde and the high modernism of the inter-war years. He uses music to illustrate, as he found strains of modern music in Wagner if traced back from Horkheimer and Adorno’s theory in Dialectic of Enlightenment.

Whilst at times it is pertinent to use the conventional markers between modernism and postmodernism there is need to be aware of the fragility of those lines. Lyotard and Baudrillard’s “collapse or melt-down” theory of postmodernism as modernity “in retreat” should not be dismissed. Lyotard highlighted “shifting perspectives and possibilities” and emphasised the significant portent of the ‘imitation’ and ‘artificial’. Huyssen proposed a distinction between modernists and the avantgarde using political intention, shedding light on motivational forces of artists though contemporaries. In addition this furthers the debate on the divide between authentic and non-authentic. Alistair Williams concurred with Huyssen’s on the erosion of division between modernism and postmodernism, asserting in Constructing Musicology that modernism began with the enlightenment and nineteenth century modernism was the beginning of meltdown.

This study begins highlighting the tension between the forms in the nineteenth century; as a separation grew between ‘meltdown’ and a ‘solidification’ of modernity occurred. The
solidification became identified with utopian political ideals, a process that was discarded in the West at the end of World War II. The meltdown continued in Western culture, seemingly unchallenged by a corresponding opposite. Hence, the lines were redrawn not historically but geographically across the East West divide. Here, as in any text about bicentricity, gender and feminist theory help to clarify qualities and dynamics of solidification versus meltdown.

For my case studies I have chosen three acts which illustrate the strong influence of Berlin’s ‘golden age’ on popular music half a century later. David Bowie, Kraftwerk and Lou Reed fulfil the criteria excellently as they were among the first generation to show corresponding references to Weimar Berlin. These musical artists work are synonymous with 1970s and ‘80s popular culture; their notoriety and commercial success popularised a certain style and form beyond chart success and fandom. In addition, they consistently maintained a high level of respect from consecutive generations of audiences and critics. Undoubtedly, these luminaries had contemporaries such as Roxy Music, Iggy Pop, John Foxx and others who may have equally added to this work, the fewer references to these musicians within this work does not imply any less importance as they still occupy positions of immense influence with music fans and musicians even today.

While this work does not follow a strict chronological order, musicians who came to prominence during the 1970s (Bowie, Reed and Kraftwerk) have entire chapters devoted to them and their work (in Bowie’s case two) whereas the others are afforded less space. Many of these ‘second generation’ of artists had been fans of Bowie, Reed and/or Kraftwerk, and discovered the history and culture of Weimar by taking a keen interest in their idols’ musical roots. Those referred to were chosen for their additional contribution to the understanding of Weimar Berlin’s legacy. As this second generation of ‘borrowers’ including figures from punk, new wave, new romantics, hip hop, Goths and industrial found something ‘new’ from Berlin’s 1920s and made it relevant for their respective ‘scene’.

The chosen case studies have been informed by a multiplicity of research material. Most importantly, music listened to in audio form has, whenever possible, been on original sound carriers. If contemporary compact discs have been used, especially those that are remastered, which may contain additional material and/or use different artwork than the
originals (or most popular format) it is stated and taken into account. Musical scores, contemporary and retrospective reviews, biographical material, and interviews are all deployed to give a rounded appraisal of the artist and the material in question. Other information is gleaned using material from a variety of literature and artifacts, that, although not connected directly with music, reflect the two eras’ significant impact upon the artist and/or their music.

There are four chapters that form the backdrop of this study before moving on to the case studies. The history of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe and in greater detail of Berlin is given as background, likewise the history of all manner of music, art, literature and theatre that came to prominence in the city. The emergence technological innovations that led to the emergence of new forms of popular culture such as radio and cinema are also studied. More specifically, composers and other artistic luminaries who lived and worked in Berlin and contributed significantly to the reputation of the German capital either contemporaneously or in later years are investigated. As in the case of Kurt Weill I have researched by means of biographical material, (published) letters, scores and original and later recordings. In seminal works like Brecht and Weil’s Dreigroschenoper I used a copy of the German score, an English translated version, an account of an early staged production directed by Brecht and a video of Pabst’s later film.

*The Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Horkheimer and Adorno, written with the benefit of hindsight, adds to the discourse on both eras. Adorno is particularly helpful because of his work on music and his and Eisler’s chapter ‘the Politics of Hearing’ clarifies Adorno’s later position of the properties of music versus visual art and the alternative treatment needed to avoid corruption of the listener.

Huyssen is a source of reference in his seminal work of the 1980s, *After the Great Divide* for reasons that I have already stated and is apt for this work because he cited Adorno among others, and similarly gains sustenance from comparative sources, as do those of the 1970s and 1980s musicians in this thesis. Division and apparent opposition is a repeated feature in this work.

Apart from literature, this thesis has been informed by considering artifacts and information
found at exhibitions and museum displays, from watching films (including primary and secondary documentaries) and studying bought objects from both eras studied herein. Much of this method has enabled what could be considered to be a positivist approach, but in addition, it was beneficial in establishing a sense and feel for the time and place, depending on the exhibition. In addition to the 1970s and 1980s music used for case study, music that originated from or was popular in Weimar Germany has been studied, and where relevant, this music has been included for background or focus. Special attention is afforded to music or artists who were synonymous with Berlin at the time or since, such as Claire Waldorf and Marlene Dietrich respectively.

In line with the aims of this work objects were studied from the Weimar era for background research purposes. However, two artifacts proved very effective in confirming what up to that time could only be conjectured about: a Berlin resident’s Arbeitsbuch (a log of employment) spanning both the regimes of the Nazis and the German Democratic Republic (the first entry is dated 15.4.38 and its last 15.6.53) the significance of which is outlined in chapter 5. The somewhat comical and yet sinister expression on the face of a porcelain head manufactured in Germany during the early 1930s captures what was a typical feature in cabaret of the time though can be traced to a figure much earlier in date. This quality of blending or layering the funny with the macabre is something that many of the musicians in the 1970s and 1980s tried to emulate in their work seeking expressions of ambiguity.

There is an emphasis on identity in the forms of nationality, ethnicity, gender and sexuality for two reasons. Firstly, the more general question and questioning of individual and collective identity is one of modernism’s preoccupations and secondly, the more personal questioning of one’s own identity and its nature. It is this second reason that leads to the cohesive and recognisable artistic form that characterises Weimar Berlin’s culture. The beginnings of modernism coincided with the breakdown of traditional measures of identity in European society, a process that continued to mark the twentieth century. The commonalities, differences and comparisons between Weimar Berlin, Cold War Berlin and London in the 1970s and 1980s are noted and considered within the music and surrounding cultures.

Identity is also a prime question in understanding the nature, or indeed the anti-nature of the
city. As well as the shared features of all large cities, each city’s identity essentially determines the form of the culture that is created there. From its beginnings as Germany’s capital, Berlin was considered a model, modern city and as such Berlin became the focus of praise or scorn for urban living and its culture met similar treatment. Joachim Schlör describes Berlin within his book *Nights in the Big City*, accenting the capital’s duality in his separation of day from night, highlighting Berlin’s exaltation and demonising its supposed intrinsic artificiality. It appears that within studies on cities in general, what is deemed artificial is pitched against natural, and often whatever is affiliated with either ‘side’ is thus deemed bad or good. In 1920’s Berlin this was also true. This demarcation between artificial and natural, good and bad was often interpreted as un-German or German. It is in this way that Berlin became an ‘un-German city’.

Schlöer, in the article ‘How Urban Culture was saved in the Levant’ candidly discusses how and why Jews have become synonymous with urban life and cities. As an outcome of their successful adaptability Jewish people became vulnerable to accusations of promoting artificiality in the guise of modernism. Berlin’s ethnic other’s collective alliance with modernism warrants scrutiny so as to separate myth from reason. Furthermore, retrospectively, Jews have also been connected to Weimar because of the catastrophe that ensued after the Nazi’s accession to power in 1933. During Weimar Jewish names rose to prominence within the arts and entertainment sphere, and a large proportion of musicians working in Berlin were Jewish. If there are recognisable stylistic tendencies in Berlin’s popular music, does it follow that these are identifiable as Jewish, as Nazi propaganda would have Germans believe, and if so is it conceivable that the music from fifty years later had intrinsic Jewish qualities?

The connection between artificiality and the city is strongest when centred on new technology. 1920s technological advances meant a transformation in entertainment, particularly via radio and cinema. The amazing possibilities inspired a wealth of work and many, such as the film *Metropolis*, expressed fear as well as awe of the potential of such technology. This work not only looks at the technologies of the day but also considers the human projections onto that new science. It is these projections that imbued machines with certain qualities that in the process of exploration, provided the stimulus for much of the work of bands such as Kraftwerk.
This text continues along the path of critical theory’s assertion that culture, in this case music, reflects the time and place it was written and/or performed in. Whilst this work maintains this premise, it also proffers the idea that another era may be plundered in order to promote contemporary issues. This leads to the challenge of contrasting and comparing eras in Berlin and then again for an examination of 1920s Berlin and 1970s London. This is not only to ascertain what common factors the two eras shared but also what contrasted.

To illustrate the beginnings of modernism as defined earlier in this introduction there is a chapter included on early modernism and its impact on Berlin and the city’s culture. In examining modernism, factors that have defined postmodernism, such as the mixing of styles, irreverence and multi-layered meaning are evident questioning conventional wisdom. Using William’s theory that modernism began with the age of enlightenment, this paradigm informs the nature of the relationship between artists working in a postmodern period whilst referencing a modern one, but this study does not intend to solve the conundrum of the relationship between the movements but only to add to the debate.

Also part of postmodernism’s discourse is the exposure of artificial construct behind an apparently natural façade. Otto Friedrich, writing about the 1970s fascination with Weimar, tries to identify what is myth and what is real in these recollections of an earlier age. This study shows within the case studies and elsewhere that musical artists of the 1970s and 1980s also tried to address the same question. For example, Bowie’s investigations led to a musical turnaround and marked differences in his on/off stage personas.

Bowie and other featured artists’ method of expression also present a musicological challenge in the process of this work. Ideally clues would be found first within music and supported by evidence found elsewhere, though often it has seemed that references to Weimar appear to be everywhere but within notated music. The examining of musical scores does not show how a piece was recorded, performed, and/or produced. For instance, rock ‘n’ roll, until the early 1970s (and for the most part continued to be) was a seen as an authentic expression of a more ‘natural self’ and analytically, many of the songs by Bowie (and others) conform to a typical rock ‘n’ roll formula, which is true of much music of the 1970s and 1980s. Bowie’s performance and image could be considered perversely anti-rock ‘n’
roll, demonstrating an understanding and exposition of authenticity as artificial and vice versa. Instead of continuing in the tradition of rock ’n’ roll as it had been developing during the 1960s, he satirised it. Apart from all the clichéd references to Weimar culture, here there is ‘inherited’ expression of Weimar in this subtle (and at times, not so subtle) parody of rock ‘n’ roll. This is an example of a musical dilemma necessarily tackled, borrowing ideas from postmodern theory, rather than found within the music itself.

In the same vein, although this is primarily a musical study, other artistic disciplines have to be discussed for three reasons. The first is that many of the performers studied incorporated a multitude of artistic forms within their work and also made forays into other media; secondly the influence of one art form on another has been a characteristic of postmodernism and perhaps modernism too. Thirdly, critical theory has reached a stage where it no longer needs to qualify itself along traditional musicological lines note for note, nor pretend a study is an objective science. There will however be musical analyses where necessary because often the demonstration of proof is indeed within the music. Furthermore in accordance with Richard Schechner’s article ‘the Street is a Stage’ in Performance Studies, what happens on the street also becomes a cultural issue and this is especially true as these ‘staged’ events pass to history for ‘direction’ and ‘criticism’.

For context this work spans almost a hundred years of history and enlists ideas from numerous theory. Many topics can only be touched on and similarly several weighty names have had to be dealt with briefly so as to forward central themes. It is beyond the remit of this work to delve into every possibility that each question presents and give detailed background for every figure or event.

Chapter 1, ‘Beyond Divine Symmetry’ exposes the beginning of the divide between meltdown or postmodernism and solidification or modernism. From the founding of the national capital in 1871 to the end of the World War I it investigating Berlin’s history, life, and culture including the careful planning of what Berlin would become in the 1920s and 1930s. Polarities that come into play within the context of this work are also introduced. The reoccurring themes of modernity, outsiders, gender, sexuality and degeneracy are considered as well as leading contemporary philosophies and other cultural trends. Theory and the
manifestations of reformed modernism increased political motivation in art and music, search for identity and the metropolis’ chaos created the city’s reputation.

Chapter 2, ‘Willkommen in Berlin: Street Theatre’ explores the aftermath of World War I, the rise and fall of the Republic and the ascension of the Nazis by way of political demonstrations, financial catastrophe, aspects of Berlin’s street life by day and night, technological advances in sound recording, broadcast and cinema and corresponding culture industries, the pleasure industry and the writing of contemporary novels set in the city. Ideas and motivations behind subjectivity and objectivity are introduced. The extreme nature of the city provoked thinking about issues of power, not only in local and national politics but also in the relationship between genders. The unique quality of Berlin’s nightlife leads to explorations of the city’s inhabitant’s attitude towards gender, sexuality, and morality. This leads to the reflection on the Berlin cabaret and its use of the Berlin manner. 

Chapter 3, ‘Out and About: Kunst und Kitsch’ outlines the period’s history and corresponding to the major movements in art and culture of the day including the subjective use of expressionism and its newer ‘cousin’, that of *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Berlin dada and their art performance, Grosz and the history and influence of the Berlin cabaret on other art disciplines are demonstrated, including a glimpse of some of the city’s most celebrated female performers. The Bauhaus school provides a focus for the incorporation of technology into art and is inspected for its role in forwarding industrially made art and mass culture.

Chapter 4, ‘Officially Degenerate’ looks at what constituted degenerate art and music during the Nazi period as a way of identifying the various elements of Weimar’s reputation were emulated by the post World War II generation of musicians. Although the Nazis based their ideology on many existing conservative and nationalist ideas they went further still; officially they derided and banned anything they deemed ‘un-German’, including categories of people, music and art that they associated with Weimar. After a brief glimpse at the officially organised *Entartet Kunst* (degenerate art) there is a more detailed account of the ‘unofficial’ *Entartet Musik* that was modelled on the art exhibition of a year before. Much of what was deemed ‘bad’ in music was deliberately incorporated by musicians in the 1970s 1980s in commercial popular music and promoted as a selling point and ironically the
inverse of what the Nazis wanted happened; the music and art they derided became internationally synonymous with Germany rather than that they championed.

Chapter 5, ‘Travelling in Time: from one Berlin to another’, explores the unique situation of Berlin immediately post World War II and during the Cold War period of the 1970s and 1980s. The European situation during this period is outlined and the resultant impact of the superpower stalemate on artists of the period. Polarities of identity and non-identity, place and non-place, passivity and activity are also discussed. There are comparisons of youth culture under American-led Western commercialism and Communism as well as the manifestations of respective youth rebellion.

Chapter 6, ‘In The Changing Face of Influence: David Bowie’ explores Weimar culture’s influence on David Bowie from his glam rock years. Bowie has admitted using expressionist style performance devices but I have also identified other corresponding factors between his work and Weimar culture. To this end, Bowie’s manner of promoting himself as a bi-sexual androgen and an outsider and his constant courting of other controversies are all explored. In addition Bowie’s ‘revolutionary’ status is brought to light in his conscious construction of personas on and off stage and more generally exposing the artificiality of pop music against the rock ‘n roll’s more conventional adherence to authenticity.

Chapter 7, ‘German Irony: Kraftwerk’ contains a comparison between the group and their stated influences of the period. The film *Metropolis* is re-examined for evidence of sympathies for Kraftwerk’s desire to create a utopian paradise that is so far fetched the mundane and the chaos of everyday life are conspicuous in absence. Their observance of many practices of Bauhaus is scrutinized, particularly in relation to their incorporation of art and technology, business and work practices. Ideas of kitsch and pastiche are looked at, considering their work practices, readings of published interviews and memoirs. Aspects of gender are also discussed in view to the above especially within the context of the female as a man-made construct.

Chapter 8, ‘Berlin Personified: Lou Reed’ Reed’s albums *Transformer* and *Berlin* are compared as Weimar Berlin transformed from fashionable use of Berlin cabaret to cinematic evocation of the city itself. Reed’s sexuality is discussed in the context of his ambiguous
reputation. Berlin is analysed against epic theory and practice. Reed characterisation as the ‘phantom of rock’ reveals a renewed vision of the sinister side of Berlin cabaret. His detached manner in both performance and timbre and is successful at ‘playing’ and displaying the disengaged voice that Brecht so preferred and correspondingly the objective standpoint are discussed in relation to Weimar artistic practices. Reed statement that the album *Berlin* is an archetypical urban story that could as well have been based in any major city is challenged.

Chapter 9, ‘David Bowie: About Face’ Bowie’s life in Berlin is discussed in comparison with his golden years as the colourful and glamorous star. His guise as a ‘common man’ and his music’s incorporation of ‘everyday’ sounds and observations expressed through sound are looked at. Internationalist drama theory and more specifically Brecht’s influence is studied in view of Bowie’s mid-1970s demeanour, lifestyle, artistic research practice and live shows.

Chapter 10, ‘Punk: England Projects into No-Mans Land’ shows punk as a definitive moment in British popular music, emerging with speed and force and often included lyrics that formed a social commentary on the British economic crisis and the lack of success of the 1960s ‘revolution’, as sexism, racism and class-consciousness was as apparent as ever. Just as Berlin became synonymous with Weimar culture, London became so with the rebelliousness of punk, the capital of clashing youth subcultures and political unrest. The ‘failure’ of modern life, including new technology was also of prime lyrical concern. Reminiscent of the diverse art scene of 1920s Berlin was a highly fragmented cultural scene that developed into, with hindsight, a collective movement.

Chapter 11, ‘Eye to I: New Romantics, Electro-futurists and Goths’ covers pop music’s 1980s foray into the dark underworld assisted by technological advancement in music and recording technology. Many of those involved with the new music were part of the punk scene but whose preferred subject matter was about non-conformist sexuality, a more personal sense of power play. Expressionist tendencies and ideas of dualities that had had proved themselves ten years earlier for Bowie, Kraftwerk and Reed did so again often with renewed confidence. Though most songs did not remark directly on nuclear annihilation, a rekindled fear of technological takeover returned, death and suicide became unlikely
favoured topics. A reading of the mainstream film *Breaking Glass* incorporates a simple reading of the concerns of commercial music that encapsulated newly disregarded clichés and reveals a generation that had transformed themselves beyond bi-centricity.

I have included music and picture illustration for an aid to the reading of this work. The music has been selected for corresponding analysis within the text and also for stylist reference. Illustrations that are within the main body of the work are from sources less readily available whilst pictures that are more familiar are in the appendix.
Chapter 1
Beyond Divine Symmetry

And only on this solidified, granite like foundation of ignorance could knowledge rear itself hitherto, the will to knowledge on a far more powerful will, the will to ignorance, to the uncertain, to the untrue! Not as its opposite, but as its refinement!

Cynicism is the only form in which base souls approach what is called honesty; the higher man must open his ears to all the coarser or finer cynicism, and congratulate himself when the clown becomes shameless right before him, or the scientific satyr speaks out.²

Berlin was a microcosm of the world's social and political reform in the twentieth century; the unrest that underscored those reforms is its most characteristic feature. Every major political reform etched itself physically onto the Berlin landscape as every successive regime radically transformed Berlin into the flagship capital for its cause. Although conflict and rebirth have both become synonymous with twentieth century Berlin, their origins are to be found in the capital of the late-nineteenth century. In 1871, as the capital of a newly unified Germany, plans were drawn up to make the city a purpose-built modern, industrial metropolis.

This chapter examines the key forces that threatened traditional values, particularly with reference Germany, and the challenges these provoked. These ranged from those who had lifestyles that appeared to veer from the norm, questioning authority or defying ‘one’s natural place’. Out of the newly created capital of Berlin came a ‘type’ that resolutely defied definition. Their very purpose was born out of the avoidance of constraint of either birthright or convention. Their anti-nature or self-manufacture seemed purposefully constructed to confound, a group of regenerating self-creationists and transformers. In the late nineteenth century a modern person could dare to believe himself or herself an individual, separated from others not by class, religion or creed but by his or her own virtue. As many changed their position, geographically or financially, they reinvented themselves.
Social, historical and political factors allowed for this change, as did radical new thought. Nietzsche provides a timely glimpse into the beginnings of unsettling thoughts that began to emerge in three places: the shadow of Darwin’s evolutionary theory; in Freud’s early work in psychoanalysis; in Marxism’s growing popularity.

Bauschinger referred to Nietzsche as “the common denominator of German modernism” and a “major influence on Expressionism”. Nietzsche’s idea, that an individual’s transformation from a ‘lower’ being to a ‘higher’ links him to the expressionist’s ‘new man’. His despair over the German character and devotion to art over religion were all part of the move away from established ‘truths’. Part of this departure was his ridicule of ‘divine symmetry’ and insistence this notion was man-made, created to impose a set of false values to keep other men as slaves. Nietzsche proposed thinking and acting beyond the conventions of good and evil. Nietzsche’s ‘will’ moved away from the reasonable and the studied towards a subconscious expression of creativity, a trait that unified seemingly disparate styles of later art under the banners of expressionism, dada and surrealism. Nietzsche was at one with romanticism yet simultaneously struggled free from yet another imposed set of values.

Naturalists, such as Freud, claimed Nietzsche was searching for the essence of a man, that behind each man’s civilised façade there were hidden depths. In contrast, postmodernists, have since refuted the naturalistic view, and instead claimed Nietzsche’s triumph was that he saw Man was nothing beyond construct. Brian Leiter devoted an entire introduction about the duel identities of Nietzsche but did not conclude with any reconciliation of the two opinions. Though there seems to be no redeemable middle ground between these judgments, there is compatibility, as it follows that in Nietzsche’s search to find a ‘true’ self in a ‘new’ self (whilst refuting an essence of self) his intention was in line with naturalism, though his method was not to uncover but transform. Rather, Nietzsche advocated a losing (or deconstructing) a false self created by others.

Using Williams’s mark of the beginning of modernity as “The Enlightenment… apply[ing] rational criteria to all domains of knowledge”, then the end of the nineteenth century was its closing stage. The modern age, traditionally regarded as rational, straight-edged and idealistic came at once to a heightened fulfillment of it values yet also contained within it a
type of negative: emotionalism, nebulosity, fragmentation and cynicism. An expression of a desire to be freed of established values and order.

Although bi-centricity can be traced back to an Ancient past, in The Birth of Tragedy, first published a year after the founding of the German nation, Nietzsche illustrated bi-centricity in art in his interpretation of Dionysian and Apollonian traits inspired by their namesake gods. Nietzsche might indeed have pre-empted expressionism by reporting a lack of Dionysian qualities in art in his time, though this was not a plea to disregard technique and form per se but for balance. His aversion was to the regulatory statutes had reduced art to, not the complimentary practice of refinement and clarity. His theory proffered that both polarised artistic forces should be combined to maximise the effectiveness of the artistic experience. Nietzsche did not take sides but instead extolled the virtue of both criteria.

Using the models of the Apollonian clear lines of distinction and Dionysian ‘blur’ it was apparent that within Nietzsche’s Germany the two forces were pitched as polar opposites. By 1871, in the newly unified Germany there was a tussle between those who supported an established stringent hierarchy and an ever-increasing number wishing to erase boundaries or Grenzverwischer. Conservatism was the active or passive acceptance of the establishment, referring to those obedient and loyal to the societal order headed by church and royalty. This hierarchy depended on an unquestionable allegiance to a set of orders and conditions in society to maintain the status quo. So who were Grenzverwischer, working towards eroding established social and cultural etiquette? What circumstances prevailed that made it seem possible? Why highlight Berlin?

Germany’s new capital in 1871 is central to discussion for it took on the mantle as Europe’s most modern city, the escalating role of technology in the lives of Berlin’s fast-growing population became key; it simultaneously tethered the majority to positions they were born to whilst allowing them to imagine other possibilities. In this explosion of the ‘new’, technology and the city became intertwined. However, not all of the associations were positive, the political and social ills of the city also became synonymous with technology, reform and new ideas.
Whilst the growing role of technology assisted in popularising the notion of vertical social mobility, often providing new ideas for artistic content, the likelihood of dissolution of horizontal boundaries also emerged impacting on artistic form. An artistic manifestation of this erosion was exhibited in the (re)emerging practice of intertwining various artistic disciplines for live performance. This multi-disciplinary approach, evident in Ancient Greek theatre and reworked in the mid-nineteenth century through Wagner’s idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, was pursued again in naturalist theatre. A fan of this work, Nietzsche regarded art as a means for possible human salvation, the theatre not as a replacement of the church, but conversely the church’s origins, an experience for spiritual guidance and sustenance.

1.1 Berlin: a new capital

Berlin, capital of Prussia from 1701, was made the capital of a newly unified Germany under the influence of Bismarck in 1871. Full-scale implementation of the plan commenced to make Berlin rival, or indeed better other capitals of Europe. Industry, business, architecture, education and culture developed at such a rapid rate that over twenty years the city became unrecognisable even to natives of the city. As Large pointed out, it was the infrastructure put in place within these twenty years which became “leitmotifs that would dominate Berlin’s history for the next one hundred and thirty years…” The more liberal rules concerning banks and joint-stock companies, the war reparations from France and the riddance of internal taxes meant that Berlin attracted new and huge investment from national and international businesses. In the first year of Berlin’s role as capital, 780 companies started in Prussia, mostly in Berlin. Notable were those that relocated or those that were setting-up headquarters, particularly banks and newspapers. In addition to the electrical and chemical factories that were already in Berlin, major centres were built, devoted to other large-scale heavy industries. The technological innovations that followed put Berlin into a category of its own in Europe.

Briefly threatened by the 1873 crash, after which the city’s finances made a steady recovery, big industrial and chemical firms became major employers. Companies like Siemens and AGFA brought prosperity and cutting edge industrial technology. Creating the infrastructure of a major modern capital came by way of the construction of new transport links such as the new *Stadtbahn* or over-ground city railway and the Siemens-built streetcars, a new
underground sewerage system and electric street-lamps. Electrification grew steadily as competition dictated to industry and fashion demanded privately. The city was reported to be generally un-endearing to the residents of the capital itself who were alienated from its rapid growth and changing appearance. Populations of other German regions were even less impressed, as the ‘new Berlin’ was considered vulgar and artificial: an unrecognisable fake city at the heart of the new German nation.

From the outset Berlin was almost universally considered an atypical German city, even considering that most capital cities generally are different from the dominant culture. The choice of the city as the ‘new’ appointed capital created opposition emanating from various parties for different reasons. In spite of Berlin’s burgeoning reputation predominantly as a staid military garrison town, Kaiser Wilhelm I thought Berlin was unruly, feminine and had too many civilians. In 1848 the Kaiser had been forced to flee to Potsdam after an attempted revolution, which may have fuelled his misgivings, as well as the city’s predominant reputation as a socialist stronghold. The Kaiser’s fears were realised, as there were two assassination attempts on his life in 1878 that occurred within a fortnight of each other. Although it was found that neither of these incidents was the work of political extremists, the information was suppressed by Bismarck who encouraged the belief in SPD (Social Democrat’s) involvement. In fact, the Social Democratic Party, formed in 1875, favoured steady social reform and not revolution. However, Bismarck’s subsequent restrictions that were placed on socialist meetings and publications backfired, as they instead radicalised the socialist movement in Berlin.

Despite the city’s central position in Europe, the geographical placement of the capital was not popular with non-Prussians, even less so for those who considered eastern Germany to be the frontier to the “Slavic wilderness”. The land around the city had no natural resources and the soil was agriculturally poor. Until the mid-nineteenth century, regional or provincial identity were all-important and these “regional loyalties and a sense of diversity remained a reality”. The populations of what were to become regions in a centrally controlled Germany generally possessed strong local identities. At the time of unification these populations also harboured national ambitions; regions like Bavaria, whose own capital, Munich, was the centre of the plastic arts at the time, were put out by the choice of capital. For many Germans it may have seemed they were being asked to give up their
defined (local) identity for what was an undefined rootless national one, traits that appeared exemplified by Berlin.

In spite of the objections to the choice of capital the idea of a ‘German pride’ had indeed grown. It was Bismarck’s vision to achieve a capital built from this sense of national pride and Bismarck attributed German sensibility to a collective devotion of a certain form of German arts and culture:

National unity would not have been attainable if the embers had not been glowing beneath the ashes. What fanned the flames? German art, German science, German music, not least the German Lied.\textsuperscript{17}

Historians such as Eksteins are more prosaic, concluding that national pride was more likely due to social change. This explanation is given further weight by Taylor’s reading of the conservatism within the arts around that time and implies that conversely it was not German art that “fanned the flames” of nationalism but an upwardly mobile and expanding middle class that indirectly created a new type of art.\textsuperscript{18}

In the years directly preceding German unification, political figures, including Bismarck and the Hohenzollerns, understood the necessity of creating a centralised, German nation state to rank among other European nations, whilst simultaneously there was a sense of national unity facilitated by “an outgrowth of social change whose most consequential feature at the time was a development of an entrepreneurial spirit in a segment of the middle class”.\textsuperscript{19} The same pride that had often turned into an unpleasant wave of “virulent nationalism” in the wake of the 1873 crash.\textsuperscript{20}

In the new united Germany a culture of emphasising differences ensued. Xenophobic fears were propagated at every level of German society, and Berlin’s eastern proximity did indeed assist the ease of migration of many searching for a new and better life or fleeing persecution. Though entrepreneurship was at the basis of the newly formed nation and officially encouraged, the \textit{nouveau-riche} were simultaneously derided. Conservatives and socialists alike eyed those who moved through the social ranks with suspicion. After unification middle class ambition clashed with aristocratic control; nowhere was this clash
as open and obvious as in Berlin. Perhaps as an attempt to form a national identity clear marks of distinctions began to be made (or re-made) to define Germans against ‘others’.

Those with new money were socially divided from those with old. As part of the burgeoning bourgeoisie, many people became involved directly with the arts for the first time. With a new supportive network of patrons, art extricated itself from its previously established benefactors. It was by this means that the original and later incarnations of the Berlin Secession artists liberated themselves from the closed order of the Royal Academy and the Association of Berlin Artists and became “wholly independent”. Paret stated that the European Secession groups were responding to “two phenomena… developments in painting and sculpture; and an expanding urban society”. Artists, such as Max Lieberman, had social standing and independent wealth that gave them many connections and financial independence. However it was the new supportive infrastructure of dealers, buyers, collectors and interested public that ensured their success. Included in this middle class set eager to patronise and deal in art were many German Jews.

Paret attributes the extraneous link between Jews and modernism with this new market rather than the artists, composers, musicians and performers that created the art. He noted Jewish artists made up only a small proportion of modernists. However, anti-Semitism was not based on facts or figures but on myth and fantasy. Apart from overstating Jewish affiliation with modernism, conservatives automatically linked them with the erosion of societal and artistic horizontal and vertical boundaries. Assimilated Jews were thought to blur the boundary between Jewish and German culture and were referred as Grenzjuden, or “Jews at the border”, additionally they were “Simultaneously insiders and outsiders”. Apparent “ingrained sceptics”, Jews, though belonging to both groups, were perceived as “unable to maintain unquestioned allegiance to either”.

Max Liebermann was one of the founders of the Berlin secession (1898) and became president of the Prussian Academy of Arts (1920-32). He was very much a part of the Jewish community though he saw himself “fully integrated into German culture, free to ignore his Jewish background or to express it in some form”. Though his work showed no special discernable indication of ‘Jewishness’, his artistic influence was repeatedly attacked
using racist rhetoric. Paret concluded “He was, above all, criticised for introducing Germany to modernism…”

Liebermann brought French impressionism to Berlin, which had met considerable disapproval, but it was the 1892 exhibition of Norwegian Edvard Munch’s paintings, that the Association of Berlin Artists sponsored, that caused uproar. The exhibition proved too controversial and was closed three days after opening; it was this furore that indicates the extent to which the art establishment felt threatened. German realism was challenged by Munch’s paintings, which offered a different perspective and rendition on truth in his “emotional readings” of his subjects. In spite of the art establishment’s efforts to curb ‘foreign’ influences German expressionism flourished in the exhibition’s wake. Artists, such as one of Die Brücke’s founding members, Ernst Kirchner, controversially represented personal feelings and other ‘un-German’ subject matter. Unlike Liebermann, expressionists, such as Kirchner, enjoyed the clash with the art establishment. Liebermann was set between an establishment that was deeply conservative and losing its power to control the art market and a new generation of artists that relished controversy. The ambiguity of this position coupled with his ethnicity meant he is an example of the insider/outsider status that Paret proffered for assimilated German Jews.

Prussia had granted Jews citizenship in 1812, the first in any German state to do so, and many Jews tried to assimilate into German society. Just as the geographically different nation states made up the map of Germany, Bavarians, Saxons and other regional Germans were all encouraged to be part of the German ‘oneness’, whereas Jewish people, identified by religion and thought to be of different blood, were the Nation’s ‘other’ and suffered an ambivalent form of tolerance. For all the region’s ‘acceptance’ towards its Jewish population, Berlin’s gentiles and in many cases even German-born Jews, were not accepting of the Ostjuden, or Jews from the East, during the late nineteenth century. In 1860 there had been almost 19,000 Jewish people recorded as living in the city, by 1880 that figure had risen to almost 54,000. Most of this number comprised of Ostjuden fleeing persecution, who had left their respective homes with very few possessions or money, but also German Jews from surrounding provinces who had, like many other Germans, arrived in Berlin looking for better work opportunities in the capital.
In the nineteenth century the contrasting stereotypes of the ‘Bolshevist’ and the ‘capitalist’ were not yet as common as that of the ‘wandering’ or ‘eternal Jew’. The biblical analogies, coupled with the reality of the times, ensured that this stereotype persisted. Other typecasts included ‘artist’ and ‘genius’ as attributed by Nietzsche in his reading of Wagner’s The Flying Dutchman (Der Fliegende Holländer, 1841) asking rhetorically “who else is a wandering Jew?” Nietzsche thought Jews had learned from generations of suffering through wandering and possessed a ‘spiritual independence’ because of it. Nietzsche’s idea matched the general view of Jews as inherently itinerant whereas most German Jews thought themselves settled as that was their experience. The preference for the myth over substance was intractable. This relatively sizable ‘foreign’ presence added to Berlin’s reputation for exoticness and otherness. Consequently the capital became world renowned for radicalism and ‘foreignness’ and not for Bismarck’s founding ideals of German culture.

Foreigners were not the capital’s only source of exotica as the city provided a home for ‘unsafe’ characters. Berlin had a reputation as a rough and ready city, as it attracted its fair share of undesirables. These included disparate parties such as political radicals, prostitutes, thieves, beggars and opportunists. Berlin’s size and layout meant that distinct neighbourhoods emerged, vice laws were less rigorously implemented than in other cities and two populations seemed to inhabit the city, one that lived by day and one by night.

Reports about the capital in the late nineteenth century show the city’s growing population of workers ruffled conservative feathers as they became increasingly politically organised. Karl Heinrich Marx had come to Berlin from Bonn in the autumn of 1836 and it was in Berlin that he encountered sharp class divisions, which encouraged his involvement with radical groups at university. Though Marx died in 1883, his ideas and ideals gained ground throughout Europe as workers became more aware of their power when united en masse. There were 20,000 workers in Berlin factories in 1895; by 1907 that figure rose to 70,000. In the same year it was reckoned that 35.8% of workers were women and many of those worked in the light industries as they were thought to be more dextrous than men and would accept lower wages. The ‘army’ of these workers lived and worked in crowded conditions in purpose-built buildings. Large called the factories that the men and women worked in as “a kind of industrial barracks” whilst they and their families were most likely to be accommodated in what were generally known as Mietskasernen or rent barracks. These
multi-occupant dwellings were built as quickly as the capital expanded. They were based on a design around a courtyard, with the relatively more ‘well to do’ on the street side and the poorer and smaller single dwellings towards the back, unsurprisingly called *Hinterhof*.

‘Red Berlin’, as it became known, became the ‘headquarters’ of the proletariat underclass that worked in heavy industry and lived in the northern and eastern suburbs, while the captains of the same industries grew “secure in their villas in Charlottenburg and Grunewald”.34 Even poorer than those with work were those without. Overcrowding and a shortage of housing meant high rents and many (*Schlarfburschen* or *Schlarfmädchen*) could only afford to rent a bed for hours at a time, while others had to make do with sleeping in the street, courtyards and train stations; between 1900 and 1905 a shelter on Fröbelstrasse was used by 2,000 people each night.35 Small pox, typhus, cholera, venereal diseases and tuberculosis were rife among these people as most had no proper hygiene facilities, medicine or care. The divide between those with money and those without was acutely obvious, creating schisms economically, politically and geographically.

This division was represented in new German art and culture particularly in expressionist paintings, naturalist theatre and literature depicting subject matter of scenes and characters from the underworld or poor workers’ lives. Although Paret claimed that the more established artists involved with the Berlin Secessionists were apolitical apart from as “free-market force” they often used the capital’s labour force as subjects for their work, the mere depiction of poor people in high art was sufficient to coin the term *Armeleutemalerei* or “paintings of poor people” in debates about art.36

Workers were not the only group organising themselves into efficient brotherhoods. Many criminals belonged to gangs and enjoyed the privileges of membership in their respective ‘club’ that they could only join after an apprenticeship in prison of at least two years. Members of these *Ringverrine* (‘sporting’ associations) were responsible for most of the drug running, smuggling, thieving, prostitution, protection rackets and murders in the city; and became mythologised and romanticised about in later years. Gangs were associated with the underworld and also night time. In line with the plan to make the capital world renowned as a modern metropolis, Berlin’s authorities were keen to promote the city as a national and international tourist destination, full of culture and colour. Arguably, this partially explains
the lackadaisical way in which various vice laws were enforced. For instance, the 
*Ruhepause* or rest period between 23:00 and 04:00, compulsory for licensed premises since 
1866 was easily side-stepped through an application for a “special exemption” that was 
hardly ever turned down. The German capital became known as the “city that never went to 
bed”.

As Berlin developed from a garrison town to a military and tourist capital, the number 
prostitutes multiplied. Many were women who had come from rural areas to the capital in 
search of work. Though female sex workers were by law expected to register, very few 
actually did; in 1900 only approximately ten percent of prostitutes were registered.

‘Ladies of the night’, although supposedly banned from Unter den Linden and other areas of 
note, did not cooperate with this curtailment and plied their trade all over Mitte. Large 
writes about the duality of Berlin in terms of day and night:

> The coffee houses were filled during the afternoons with portly bourgeois ladies 
stuffing themselves with kuchen, but during the night they catered to parchment 
faced men who brought along private supplies of morphine and cocaine. At the 
corner of Friederichstasse and Behrenstrasse stood the Panopticum, a kind of 
amusement gallery… By night Wilhelm Voigt and company gave way to 
hookers so numerous that, as one observer complained ‘no decent women can 
enter the area without being considered fair game’.

The relationship between the layout of Berlin and the psyches of its inhabitants was often 
exploited in songs, writings, paintings and photographs. The acutely contrasting districts 
were built for the separation of social hierarchy. As well as the division between day and 
night, the geography of the city with its disconnected neighbourhoods allowed inhabitants to 
lead a double life. Part of the lure of metropolis was that it allowed for the reinvention of an 
individual; in Berlin the possibilities for self-creation allowed for more ‘extreme’ and/or 
repeated incarnations. Berlin facilitated the schismatic tendencies of its citizens and, in 
return, acquired the reputation of a dangerously duplicitous place. Citizens could lead 
multiple lives, and much of the behaviour that was considered out of bounds in other places, 
even other capitals, was ignored.

Deceptiveness, artificial appearance and a fractious personality were often engendered as 
female attributes. In the same way that a wife was considered ‘neutering’ to a man so the 
temptations of the unattached woman was thought to lead a man astray from his righteous
path. Features of the city became synonymous with the dangerous female, particularly at night. In his book about the city at night, Schlör noted that “In men’s texts, both belong together: yearning for the city and yearning for ‘women’, fear of the city, fear of women”.  

The character of the femme fatal had been well established, Nietzsche reiterated the legitimacy of the outcome of Bizet’s opera *Carmen*, that Don Jose was compelled to kill his unconquerable ‘love-enemy’ Carmen.

For Nietzsche and his future followers, all women, ‘good’, as well as ‘bad’, were to be avoided. The effect of wives and marriage was gauged as malefic on men as his comments on Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman* suggested. He professed civilised women spiritually “castrate” their male victim by the act of marriage. Women and, by association the city, were then the ruination of “Aryan” men, as their spiritual journey from “individual[ity]” towards “universal[y]” was undermined by desire/love and thwarted by marriage.

Nietzsche thought men’s entanglement with women, “the origin of evil”, and their subsequent disentanglement, as part of the process of their journey towards transformation. Consequently, a man’s natural power was threatened equally by the civilised city during the day and the seductive city at night.

Prostitutes were not always female; by 1914 there were between one and two thousand male prostitutes, mostly young boys, operating from well-known homosexual hangouts and pick-up spots such as the postcard shop in the Panopticum of bars along Friderichstatt. Homosexuality was for the most part overlooked by the greater community, with the exception of public office. Rich and well-educated gay men often enjoyed each other’s company at private dinner parties and on entertainment excursions. Within this Berlin clique, Wagner operas were particularly fashionable, as they were throughout Berlin in other groups of the general community born or brought up in similar economic circumstances. This opera-going fraternity was essentially conservative in their tastes and bourgeois in their values. Gay men were as defined by their status, gender and education as by their sexuality.

Berlin cultural life was underpinned by music and opera and the reverence afforded to composers, performers and conductors was exceptionally great. Although the audiences taste was noted as “conservative”, music was less subjected to the censorship of the theatre and newer music also found an audience. Richie wrote:
Wagner took the inspirations of the middle classes and transformed them into music…Wagner did not want to write ‘mere music’ but Gesamtunstwerk – a complete work of art which over the course of the evening would transform the fragmented, alienated bourgeois audience into a collective whole. His work with its crescendos and chromatic passages, was designed to bring the listener to ever greater levels of ecstasy so that by the end he would be submerged in a world of honour and glory and history which would make the materialistic society around him seem crass and vulgar in comparison.  

Though Wagner’s operas are currently seen as the epitome of what typifies ‘German’ music, this was not always the case. Although hugely popular in his day Wagner was not in official favour with royalty (though he wrote Kaiser March for the celebrations in Berlin in 1871) since he was tainted with pro-revolutionary associations from his earlier years in Dresden.

In 1874 Nietzsche, correcting a ‘misreading’ of his first edition of The Birth of Tragedy, despaired of contemporary music that was generally deemed to convey the “German spirit” as a “first rate poison for the nerves”. He instead connected Wagner’s music with Dionysus and the Ancient world, giving added credence and gravitas to Wagner’s own claims that Gesamtkunstwerk was the music of the future. It was within The Birth of Tragedy that he set out the diametrically opposed qualities of Dionysian and Apollonian: The passionate, explosive and ‘natural’ quality of all Dionysian art is set against the beautiful, perfected and artificial one of Apollo. It was the combination of these contrasting artistic principles Nietzsche believed gave birth to art of value. Inferring that while two polar ‘opposites’ in art may be used separately they may also combine successfully. Though their respective criteria, method and meanings may all be contradictory, art harnessing the diametrically ‘opposing’ forces increases artistic merit.

Other theatrical polarities existed, often built on the more mundane lines of class, education and wealth. The Schiller-Theater, built in 1906, and the Deutsches Opernhaus in 1912, both built in Charlottenburg, symbolised “two opposing schools of thought on the contemporary function of the theatre.”

Traditionalist attitudes adhered to familiar historicist principles which saw the theatre as an agency for the promotion of moral values through the greatest dramas that the world had to offer. Particularly in the decorative features of its interior the Deutsches Opernhaus reflected the philosophy that, as a solemn temple dedicated to art, it should manifest those forms which have proven their timeless qualities through the centuries.
For the sponsors of the Schiller-Theatre the emphasis lay elsewhere. Their aim was to introduce great art to the man in the street who until now had not been able to afford it. To express this philosophy the Schiller-Theatre had an auditorium consisting of a single ranked bank of seats, with no boxes and no upper tiers. The audience confronted the stage action en bloc, united in their enjoyment of a shared experience.20

Although Taylor contrasted the Deutsches Opernhaus with the Schiller-Theatre they were both built to promote Berlin’s status among the musical and theatrical vanguard. The artistic direction at the Deutsches Opernhaus had to take into consideration the conservative expectations of its audience, including the Kaiser, and was tempered accordingly. Prussian officials in turn were only too happy to maintain the status quo of so called high-art in music, as well as in the visual arts and theatre, even though popular culture, such as cabaret, was proving more attractive with the middle classes. The management of places like the Schiller-Theatre targeted audiences that were supposedly fresh to the experience of serious live-performance and generally could not have previously afforded the price of a theatre ticket. Richie refuted there was a bourgeoning proletariat musical or ‘straight’ theatre, as the working classes preferred to frequent the new reviews that spawned popular hits, celebrating the city’s daily and nightly excursions into consumerism and revelry.51 It is suggested more politically aware productions originated from educated members of the middle classes and played to like-minded members of their own set.

The playwright Gerhardt Hauptmann wrote Sonnenaufgang, Hanneles Himmelahrt, Die Ratten and Die Weber and consistently focused on inequality and social problems in Berlin. His naturalist productions were financed by the private association of the Freie Bühne or Free Stage. Members paid a regular fee in order to watch plays that would have fallen foul of censorship laws and/or non-commercially viable productions. Die Weber’s first public performance at the Deutsches Theater caused a scandal that culminated with the theatre company being summoned to court because of the play’s incitement to riot and the Kaiser publicly withdrew his subscription from the venue. The company won because the court decided that the high price of tickets did not allow workers of any numbers to attend the play.

Productions like Hauptmann’s Die Weber played with new ideas of “mass psychology” as “people mesmerized and controlled by the eerie monotonous sound of the spindles which
dominate the stage”.

The unerring sound of industry and transport became a constant background to Berliners’ lives; reconstructing it ‘meaningfully’ on stage drew attention to its presence and influence outside the theatre. The noise of the spindles also represented the endless rounds of work, time and mundane drudgery that most had to endure. Likewise, Alexandra Richie associated the late-nineteenth century new, technologically advanced capital with a “pitiless” and “so inhuman air”.

Fear of “alienation of the individual” became the common theme of the time both from the Left and the Right; though the theatre occasionally took up these themes in new works, theatre audiences of all classes generally preferred escapist fantasies over more politically aware productions.

Max Reinhardt is credited as being one of the pioneers of incorporating cabaret into theatre as early as the 1890s. He was attracted by the form’s mixture of artistic disciplines that “offered the exuberance and the variety of theatrical experiences” lacking in the theatre of the day. His Schall und Rauch (Sound and Smoke) cabaret in 1901 was advertised by a poster that pictured a Pierott smoking a cigarette, a jarring image of an actor’s off-stage repose. Reinhardt, together with Friederich Kayssler and Martin Zickel, all dressed in Pierrot costumes introduced the premiere. The performance included parodies of performing art including Hauptmann’s naturalist theatre. Reinhardt intended to draw attention to the new fashion for fragmenting theatrical styles into “boxes” and “advocated pluralism: he wanted to celebrate the arts of the stage in all their variety and diversity”.

Nietzsche insisted that only art, not God and religion could play a part in Man’s (or a man’s) salvation. From Darwinism, Marxism and Freud’s unfolding naturalistic theory on psychology, it was nature, rather than God, was increasingly referenced. Whilst the city seemed to draw people from all walks of life, it was conversely seen detrimental to the soul or spirit, for the soul was still valid in a godless universe. The romantic idea of returning to one’s more ‘authentic’ self through experiencing nature was part of this movement. The sentiment was given authority by the depth of philosophical deliberation and by its prevalence in popular taste. Though this force seems anti-modern, it was as relevant as the enthusiasm for the new scientific wonders. As a response to increased industrialism and urban living a fashion evolved for revelling in all things outdoors, ‘worshipping’ nature and the cult of völklich. This trend developed in various forms including woodcraft, naturism
and the study of spurious pseudo-science of ‘races’, craft skills, and a renewed interest in classicism.

1.2 The cult of machines and the impact of war

In the summer of 1914, the nationalist fervour that swept over Germany turned to euphoria at the declaration of war. Demonstrations of patriotism was shown by groups that with hindsight seemed at odds with such a war, for example homosexual and women’s rights activists and the Association of German Jews in Berlin all joined in the fervour. Many artists not only supported the war but also voiced their enthusiasm. Expressionists had thought themselves revolutionary in their struggle to overthrow the art establishment and then to replace it, but by the eve of war there were also dadaists who wanted nothing to do with the echelons of high art but rather to destroy it completely. Though they differed in their ultimate objectives their shared belief was that the war would destroy ‘polite’ bourgeois society, ironically the same society that became their main audience.

The shared outcome that expressionist literature, theatre, art and music seemed to promise was the rise of a ‘New Man’; a “virile and pure” individual rising from the ashes of conflict.\textsuperscript{57} Thus, Jelavich wrote expressionists were amongst the youngest of artists, the “first to volunteer – and the first to die”.\textsuperscript{58} Being that the majority of these artists were young and male it is no surprise that two reoccurring themes of expressionism pre-war had been clashes between generations, especially fathers and sons and the battle between the sexes. The reality of war transformed their subject matter from personal to more societal. Jelavich noted that the drama and grand gesture that characterised expressionism pre-war was equally suited to the anti-war art that was created once disillusionment set in.\textsuperscript{59} Yet, the abhorrent speed and force of technological warfare that caused destruction and mayhem was almost impossible to exaggerate.

Dadaists had proclaimed expressionism “too traditional”. Though expressionism failed to live up to its avantgarde aim of creating a non-elitist art-form any art must have seemed ‘too traditional’ for a movement created to destroy art.\textsuperscript{60} Jelavich made the distinction between expressionists’ turning to militant pacifism and the dadaist’s continued call for more “cruelty”.\textsuperscript{61} It was dada’s Berlin period, that had commenced with the post-war arrival of Richard Huelsenbeck that was ultimately characterised by pro-war statements.
Two of the founders and leading exponents of dada, Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings, left Germany for Switzerland, Ball leaving, among other reasons, to dodge conscription. They had been a part of Munich’s cabaret scene in the first decade of the twentieth century and had been influenced by Frank Wedekind’s provocative satire. Hennings had been a star of the Berlin cabaret scene and remained one of the only professional performers associated with dada. Ball, a “confirmed pacifist” publicly criticised German mentality and culture in writings and performances.

Though the beginnings of dada generally point to the short-lived Cabaret Voltaire’s musical performance and readings, Goldberg ascribed the irreverence and much of the practice of dada to originating earlier. Ball, accredited the foundations of dada to the Futurist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, with whom he had been corresponding. Marinetti’s pro-annalistic influence certainly characterised post-war Berlin dada. The Futurists ‘worshipped’ new technology and relishing being part of the machine age. The pre-war emphasis on armaments and machines had created what seemed like a new type of war. Tanks, air combatant aeroplanes and airships and submarines, in their infancy when the war started, were increasingly deployed as the war progressed. Opposing forces used long-range artillery that from behind their respective trenches could be heard made the clash seem to be a battle of machines and not of men. Futurists were extreme in their exultation of machinery and its promise of unearthly speed and power, encouraging aggression as expressions art’s most pure form. Their manifestos also point to an obsession with a complete break with all past practices and values including ideals of beauty and virtue.

In March 1911 Francesco Pratella wrote a second manifesto on music, his La Musica Futurista Manifesto Tecnico aimed to eliminate past musical traditions. Replacing the “non-existent” values and measures of consonance/dissonance, modes and scales with enharmonic music, “young artists, once and for all, will stop being vile imitators of the past that no longer has a reason of existing and imitators of the venal flatterers of the public’s taste.” Russolo concentrated on an audio art-form which he played on instruments of his own making, collectively called Intonarumori and wrote his own manifesto entitled The Art of Noises as an ode to the new machine age.
Futurism was of Italian origin but its influence quickly grew internationally due to Futurist’s excellent publicity skills and energetic purpose. Within Marinetti’s founding manifesto was an ode to war “we will glorify war – the world’s only hygiene - militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom fighters…” Mines, shells, bombs, grenades and chemical warfare had resulted in the maiming, mental instability and deaths of millions of people. The grim but dramatic reality overwhelmed the promised pristine glamour of the Futurist’s idealised war. August Macke, a German artist most associated with the futurists died a suitably Futurist death in battle in Perthes les Hurlus, Champagne, 1914.

In Berlin workers became more politicised as the war progressed as living conditions worsened. Bread, the food staple of the poor was rationed in 1915, and soup kitchens were introduced to help feed the destitute. Substitute foods and drinks were constant topics of conversations, as ‘fake’ food became the only food. In the later war years when many of the young volunteers had been killed or critically injured older men were conscripted into the army front line as replacements. Many of these men were from Berlin’s factories, and they brought their active, leftwing political awareness with them, spreading Communist and socialist ideas amongst the already discontent soldiers.

Jelavich noted the increased polarisation of views that later would become synonymous with the Weimar republic. So too the revival for another battle: delineating the lines of who and what were German and who and what were not. The war had amply demonstrated the destructive potency of similar forces that had helped create metropolises like Berlin. Freud pointed to the parallel between colliding polarities of thought: the psychic combat of love and hate, the physical law of attraction and compulsion.

Absent was a middle ground. There had been no reasonable justification at the heart of the ‘romantic’ battle and no romance in the strategy of technological warfare. Germany’s national capital was developed at a time that romanticism met its own ‘beautiful death’ in the form of decadence whilst replacing with the new structures of social engineering and technological advancement. The lack of any meaningful middle-ground that, for Herf, were ideas of liberalism, a burgeoning Bourgeoisie or return to Enlightenment, meant that after the war there was only the possibility of a return to extremes.
The late-nineteenth century saw the beginning of a new division, a renewed effort to return to the rational and established orders or the new expression of fragmentation into subjective modes. Philosophy and the arts corresponded with technological innovations and social changes. Mobility, both socially and geographically had meant the self-made man or woman became a possibility, increasingly this had meant creating a ‘self’ far removed from the traditional dictates of their class, birthplace, religion or sometimes even gender. Nietzsche’s conception of a godless universe gave rise to questions of the divine right of the grand patriarchal figures of kings and emperors.

Nietzsche, a figure synonymous with late-nineteenth-century romanticism, pre-empted many modernists as his work underpinned their ‘new’ rhetoric. The principle of a possible evolution of oneself to a more enlightened being without adherence to the traditional code of choosing ‘good’ over ‘bad’ or fear of God became the foundation of many previously ‘unthinkable’ ideas that were exalted well into the new century. Whether reading Nietzsche from the naturalist slant or the newer postmodern it is clear that the literal self-made individual became a possibility to which future generations were enthralled by. Nietzsche also saw fault in conventional descriptions of modernity as rational and clearly defined, as modernists set criteria that was born out of emotion and fear of natural (or nature’s) chaos. The experience of war put pay to many of modernists’ ideals yet it also created a new breed of fanaticism, dissolution and most importantly for this study, cynicism.

An artistic manifestation of this erosion and fragmentation shown in society was exhibited in the (re)emerging practice of intertwining various artistic disciplines for live performance. This multi-disciplinary approach, evident in Ancient Greek theatre and reworked in the mid-nineteenth century through Wagner’s idea of Gesamtkunstwerk, was pursued again in naturalist theatre.

World War I provided the invigoration of expressionist art and a continuum of the breakdown between high art and popular culture. Courtesy of the ban on foreign imported films during the war, there was also a fully-fledged German film industry complete with a huge and growing domestic market.
Chapter 2.
Willkommen in Berlin: Street Theatre

It was Berlin’s fate to be the twentieth century’s dystopia: a city of expressionist anguish… The Berlin streets were no adventurous field of experience. They served as an incriminating byword for the contagion of modernity.¹

The intensified polarity of views that had been evident before World War I became even more obvious in the Weimar republic. There were those who wished to re-establish the order of pre-war Germany and those who wished for new orders. Of those who pushed for the new there were similarities as well as polarities in process and ultimate objectives. These struggles for ideological power and other predominant features of life in the capital helped shape and re-shape its culture. Accordingly leading figures in art and music attempted to translate the Zeitgeist of an era full of acute contrasts. The search for a personal, collective or national identity became key for all manner of cultural pursuits and artistic practices. Peter Conrad’s quote above indicated that what happened elsewhere in terms of modernity was represented most clearly in Weimar Berlin and therefore most effectively as a study of the times.

To understand whichever work of art or entertainment of any era first one must examine its context, historically, geographically and socially. Examining the culture of Weimar Berlin in the context of time and place is particularly important since the majority of renowned works from the inter-war period set out to communicate a message about relevant contemporary issues. Richard Schechner’s idea that revolutions are a kind of carnival, the crowd as improvisers and the spectators undergoing theatrical experience is appropriate to Weimar. The influenza epidemic and the daily street battles between would-be revolutionaries were similarly dramatic. Hysteria surrounded the farce that was Germany’s hyperinflation and was both comic and tragic. In this setting dada was not out of place or so absurd. The excessive nature of this street ‘theatre’ separated it from the mundane. Weimar’s ongoing crises, revolutionary atmosphere and colourful nightlife meant that with the aid of photographs, film, recordings and reportage, documentation of the ‘carnival’ became a
series of ‘exciting highlights’ whist the everyday drudgery and hardship that had initiated political insurgency moved to the background.

The daily routines and concerns of Berlin’s inhabitants followed distinct patterns, as well the divisions between those who lived by day and those that lived by night, there were also closed communities that lived in self imposed ghettos and individuals who consistently stood out or blended as they travelled through each neighbourhood. The journalist Joseph Roth created detailed portraits of what was happening ‘in the wings’ at times when all the eyes of the world were on the main action ‘on stage’. Fictional novels and stories exploited typical Berlin ‘characters’ and set them against the backdrop of Berlin’s ‘theatrical’ setting. In Alfred Döblin’s *Alexanderplatz* and Christopher Isherwood’s *Goodbye to Berlin* the city of Berlin was as intrinsic to the plot as any character. Their respective contemporary comments on Germany’s capital were as critics on the merits and shortcomings of fashionable theatrical events. Roth’s reports show Weimar Berlin had become a place were fantasy and reality were not always distinct. Paradoxically, there seemed a sense of excitement in the writing of these comic tales of woe.

Fear of the future was as marked as the cult of futurism and constant tension between the two viewpoints existed within narratives of cultural products of the time. There was an impression that people wanted to be anywhere but ‘in the moment’ and sought-out the most sensationalistic type of fantasy they could find and/or afford. Berlin continued to home migrants and immigrants and the exoticness of these groups in turn fed into Berlin’s reputation as a destination or visit but not to settle down. Mass unemployment, a consistent feature, contrasted strongly with the growing numbers of women in new jobs and the repercussions of both these trends impacted on the balance of power between genders. The mayhem of the post-war years did not disappear; instead it was ‘covered’ by a thin veneer of colourful excess and artistic industry.

There was a marked historical fault line within the era itself, which was more clearly felt in the capital than elsewhere in Germany. The periods of 1918-26 and 1926-33 appear distinct. The earlier period was characterised by political dissention, an influenza epidemic, national bankruptcy and hyperinflation. In contrast, the later dates revealed the reasonable stability that ensued as the economy improved and the capital started to resemble a thriving
internationally renowned metropolis. Yet throughout the Republic’s span there was restlessness and experimentation as all manner of boundaries were continuously eroded and re-defined.

2.1 Post-World War I Berlin

The Kaiser (Wilhelm II) abdicated on 9th November 1918, two days before the official armistice. Conservatives or *Mittelstand* and nationalists felt the loss of the nation’s father figure as the end of certainty, made worse since the Kaiser was also head of the *Evangelische Kirche* (Protestant Church of Germany). Equally, others rejoiced at his departure as Germany as the symbol of unquestioned authority had gone they could imagine an ideal German future fit for a new century. The abdication was announced by Phillip Scheidermann: “even without the Kaiser’s consent” as a general strike was called and thousands of workers marched down Unter den Linden with revolutionary zeal.

The fraught father-son relationship featured in expressionist work, regularly found a meaningful ‘end’ in the son’s newborn-freedom with the severance from the father, either by the father’s death or abandonment of his role. Beyond the father figure, any traditional authority had become suspect. Bookbinder noted that the Council of Intellectuals, a body comprising mostly of expressionist writers and artists, “demanded the abolition of all academic institutions [and] the nationalization of all theatres”. The absence of the traditional patriarchal figure in Germany created the illusion of an ‘orphaned’ state, which the Right took advantage of as they sanctioned the ‘Fatherland’ itself as an authority, whereas the Left promoted Internationalism and brotherhood between all men, albeit under the guidance of ‘un-German’ male role models such as Lenin or Marx.

The predominant mood immediately post-war was one of grief. This atmosphere seemed to pervade all aspects and strata of German society as a direct response to defeat in the war and its repercussions. The militarism and modernity that had been proudly associated with the new century had left a nasty ‘after-taste’. Any utopian ideas about how machines would lead to a perfect future were left in serious doubt. As well as distrust towards new technology, national pride had been shattered and many Germans continued focusing their hatred on wartime ‘enemies’, blaming political leaders or looking for internal scapegoats. Over a million Germans had been killed, and the ‘acceptance’ of blame, the massive financial
reparations and the redrawing of the European map in favour of Germany’s war enemies resulted in the growth of collective resentment. A new form of virulent nationalism emerged that persistently blamed those European nations and ‘races’ that had supposedly profited from the war. Within this group, later to spawn the National Socialists, the lines were clear and familiar: everything German was good and everything non-German was bad.

The outcome of the war provoked fury not only on the Right but also on the Left, which questioned the legitimacy of the war itself. The progressive discontent that had grown within the ranks of the Wehrmacht worsened upon the soldiers’ return. Many of them who marched into Berlin were shell-shocked and/or wounded and all were hungry and tired. They found the capital crippled by poverty, disease and neglect.

Food rations had been cut again, coal was non-existent and the influenza epidemic or Blitzkatarrh was sweeping through the city and claiming 300 people – mostly young women – a day. The centre looked shabby and desolate, broken windows remained smashed, people fainted on the pavement while dead horses were ripped apart and slabs of meat carried off to frozen homes…and crime began to soar in the frenzied struggle for food.

Richie highlighted the impact of influenza on the malnourished city’s populace, indeed, loss and death became what the author called an “obsession” and “violence [became] mundane”. Reminders of the brutality of war were highly visible as amputees and other horrifically disfigured men begged in the streets or played chess outside bars, yet, it seemed that as Berliners grew used to ‘normal’ violence their appetite for more sensational aspects of death and mayhem grew insatiable; popular fiction in books and films often featured crazed killers, sadism and sexual violence.

Entire families, made homeless by destitution, a situation often exacerbated by the ‘disappearance’ of the man or men of their households. The problem of impoverishment was made more serious by the influx of returning German soldiers looking for employment within the city. In the late Summer of 1920 there was a ‘homeless revolt’ against the shelter on Fröbelstrasse, as each person who had sought cover for the night was required to sign a document which stipulated that if no alternative accommodation had been found by the would-be tenant within five days the signatory would be liable, as law decreed, to be jailed for “up to six weeks in prison” then transferred to a workhouse. A wave of dissatisfaction with the status quo within Germany caused many to search for new political ideas on how to
re-build the fledgling nation, including the new Soviet model based on Marxist theory and Bolshevist practice.⁹

Much is made of the extreme opposition of the country’s Right and Left factions, although both were united against Weimar’s more moderate constitutional government led by their top-hatted President, Friedrich Ebert, and coups were a constant threat. His working-class roots annoyed the Right and his ‘appeasement’ of the establishment infuriated the Left. In Berlin, there was a ‘tradition’ that no one could trust a leader who did not wear a well-decorated military uniform. The National Socialists and Communists and several other bands of men of the same ilk were similarly idealistic, opinionated and frustrated with the regime. Bands of these politically motivated extremists marched around the streets of Berlin, mostly in private armies. The capital had already acquired a reputation as an unruly place, full of radicals and subversives, but in view of national defeat and in light of Russia’s 1917 Communist Revolution, Berlin’s chaos rose to new dimensions, both at its political core and on the street. The new republican government felt it necessary to convene in the relatively more peaceful town of Weimar within the province of Thüringen (Thuringia).

In an attempt to quell the surge of uprisings against the new government, it “semi-officially” sanctioned ‘soldiers’ into the streets of Berlin.¹⁰ This Freikorps was an ‘army’ modelled on the young, physically ‘perfect’ officers who had led what Richie termed as “suicide attacks” in the war.¹¹ German soldiers are discussed at length in Theweleit’s Male Fantasies, and he considered them the embodiment of everything constructed as wholly male, traits that were traditionally considered good and defined as an opposite force of everything bad – hence feminine. Thereby, in Berlin, the ‘body’ of the soldier was launched as the shape and sound of masculinity in extremis.

The noise of constant marching and chanting of these ‘soldiers’ in the streets was incessant, so too the gun and mortar fire as one military-style faction opened up on another; it was to the background of this ‘encouraging’ noise that many men felt under obligation to join the throng to counter the ‘opposition’ or to prove their masculinity. There was also an atmosphere of total confusion: Richie wrote that “Crowds of young men rode around in lorries terrorizing people and demanding that they ‘join the revolution’ but as they all wore
bright red few could tell if they were Social Democrats, Spartacus members or something else entirely.”

The hyperinflation crisis that started during the war due to Imperial fiscal policy was made worse by post-war reparations and exacerbated by strikes in 1923. Money was printed in a futile attempt to ease the situation but only made matters worse and inflation spiralled. Suicides increased as life savings were made worthless, people spent any money they had immediately knowing it would be useless the following morning and bartered their valuables for food. A black market economy quickly developed and crime and prostitution soared. Fundamentally, it ended the idea of the traditional German work ethic and saving for the future. Middle-class women and their families no longer saved money for their dowries rendering it unnecessary to preserve ‘virtue’ for their wedding nights. Coupled with this, due to fatalities during the war there was also a ‘surplus’ of single women against numbers of men, all of who had to find a way to support themselves and often dependents financially. Female ‘emancipation’ was somewhat inevitable as pre-war male ‘protection’ ceased to be an option.

Berliners had to watch as foreigners lived the high-life and bought prime property, as Richie explained:

Berliners experienced an inversion of values and a new moral relativism far more acute than that seen after the 1873 crash and by the mid 1920s many of the social ties which had bound the Berlin upper and middle class together had completely broken down….The higher the prices rose the greater the abandon, the madder the nightclubs, the faster the dancesteps, the louder the jazz bands, the more plentiful the cocaine. But this was not the joyful dancing of the so-called ‘Golden Twenties’; it was an insane dance of forgetting, a dance of despair.

Prostitution grew beyond its ‘normal’ bounds as every desire was catered for, including sex with children or pregnant women, as one’s body often became one’s sole asset and currency in the crisis.

In October 1923 the young music student Kurt Weill wrote a letter to his teacher Ferruccio Busoni reporting that the price of an average concert hall ticket was the “fantasy price” of “up to a billion marks”. He also observed that even in this desperation “One glance into the audiences of the concert halls makes one realize that Berlin will not give up its music”. He went on to say that each audience dressed themselves akin to the composer they were about
to hear, “But what all their faces do have in common is a touching look of blissfulness, that despite of all that’s been happening they’re still able to sit in an illuminated concert hall and are allowed to listen to music.” Soon after, with the introduction of the Rentenmark, the suspension of reparations payments, a new budget and currency restrictions the economy appeared to stabilise; the addition of the Dawes’ Plan followed and the inflation crisis eased.

Berlin expanded in the autumn of 1920, incorporating many outer suburbs into central or Old Berlin. This made the German capital the third largest city in Europe with a population of 3,858,000. The expansion further aided the geographically duplicitous nature of the city along with integrated transport links under the Berliner-Verkehrs-Betriebe (BVG) in the form of streetcars, over-and underground trains and buses. In 1923 commercial flights began to operate out of Tempelhof airport and a few years later Lufthansa was created and soon operated to fifteen destinations. Transport and speed became a focus for collective pride and every record of speed or distance was joyously celebrated. There were thousands of cars in the city by 1928, adding to the appearance of dynamism; special maps of the newly expanded city and other car paraphernalia and motor-wear were not only bought by motorists but became fashionable. Schlör remarked that the “rapid succession of inventions immerses the city in an ever brighter light generating the sensation of living ‘fast’”.

The underlining theme in Andreas Huyssen’s book *After the Great Divide* was the link between women and mass culture. The 1920s was the era that marked both the biggest shift of employment between the sexes and rise in consumerism for industrially made products and culture. The new technologies and industries brought about further changes in employment demographics and fiscal representation between genders. Women, many of whom had stepped in men’s jobs during the war became less inclined to stay at home before marriage; the female workforce became more employable than the male for their flexibility, communicative skills and willingness to take lower wages or part-time hours. Machines had taken over many of the heavy jobs in the factories that had previously employed hundreds of men, while light industry work, that had replaced many crafts of yesteryear, could be done by either sex but offered relatively low wages. The large new department stores that sold ‘everything’ and the many other service industries such as hotels and restaurants offered more women employment opportunities and the administration and secretarial posts...
presented still more. Women working in the entertainment industry reflected this new phenomenon as Large described: “the kicklines [were] just body parts in mechanised unison, the show business equivalent of busy hands over a factory conveyor belt.”

As in previous decades German Jews continued to experience a double life: on one hand they were as fully assimilated citizens, often notable in banking and business circles as well as in the arts, sciences and medicine but on the other, a ‘race’ apart. In Germany, the Jewish population never rose above one percent, and though their visibility seemed greater in Berlin, Jews never accounted for more than five percent of the city’s inhabitants. Jews had been promised equal rights in 1812 and 1871, but these were only officially granted after the war. This development was not welcomed by all; Friedrich wrote “To a nation shattered by defeat and revolution, the emergence of Jews in public life seemed somehow a sinister development, quite apart from the old religious antagonisms.”

This feeling of something sinister at work often became attributed to various people or groups of people; the ‘devil’ was seen everywhere. For example, Friederich quoted “an observer” describing the Polish Jew, Karl Radek:

> behind his mask of ‘youthful ardour’ there lay an expression that resembled partly a wolf and partly ‘a street urchin’ after a particularly successful prank. A truly impertinent, amusing, and frightening Mephistophelian face.

Radek was an envoy of Lenin and certainly Communist, but when the Jewish cabinet minister Walter Rathenau was assassinated, the German Chancellor, Joseph Wirth made speech in the Reichstag, after which he pointed his finger, proclaiming, “There sits the enemy, where Mephisto dribbles his poison into the wounds of the people, there is no doubt the enemy sits on the right.” Just as Jews were blamed for the ills of Capitalism and Bolshevism, the devil was implicated as ringleader for both the Right and Left; the figures of the ‘clever Jew’ and the ‘cunning’ Devil became ever increasingly interchangeable.

Unlike assimilated Jews, the Ostjuden were a closed community, who had fled for decades to Berlin from many Eastern states (see chapter 1) but there was a new wave of immigrants after the war bringing the total number to approximately 80,000 in all Germany. Before his assassination, Walter Rathenau, as many German Jews had, expressed his distaste for these foreigners “…they live half willingly in their invisible ghetto, not a living limb of the
people, but an alien organism in its body”. Roth reported “All in all some 50,000 people have come to Germany from the East since the war. I have to say, it can seem as though there were millions, the impression of so much wretchedness is double, triple, tenfold”. In Roth’s 1921 article ‘The Orient on Hirtenstrasse’, he described Berlin’s “strange and mournful ghetto world”. Roth, characteristically tired of Weimar Berlin’s sensational activities, delved instead into uncelebrated aspects of Berlin life. The strange attire, resolute exoticism and remoteness of these people made them appear a race apart to Roth and others, even to German Jews.

2.2 The Pleasure Industry
As well as immigrants, Berlin was also a magnet for tourists, eager to experience the new hotels and attractions. Most tourists of the 1920s had been attracted to Weimar’s various amusements easily bought with foreign currency at a high rate of exchange in their favour. They often treated Berlin as their playground, careful to avoid the problems of the city such as the chronic poverty and political turmoil. By day visitors frequented places such as the Panopticum in the Lindenpassage that displayed waxworks of famous people and other curiosities or watching spectacles like the Six-day Race. By night they would typically take in one of the many girlie review shows on offer or a typical Berlin nightclub, go to a barefisted boxing match or an all-women mud wrestling contest. Roth balked at many of the nightclubs’ standardisation into “industrialized merriment”. He went on to describe the entertainment inside:

In the corner the band is installed, not to sit but to perform incessant and foolish movements that remind one of the exercise “marching in place”. Merely switched to the world of bacchic militarism from that of war, the saxophone – profane trump of a profane, so to speak, penultimate judgement- flashes and gleams, moans and wails, yelps and croons. The musicians do not wear jackets. They sit in their shirtsleeves like bowlers, in sport shirts like tennis players, in that relaxed Anglo-Saxon uniform that seems to suggest that the production of sound and noise is more a sporting vocation than an artistic one. Bar girls all over the world are made out of the same substance of beauty, with little concession to the local variation of climate, geology, and race, poured equally over every country by a prodigiously lavish godhead, to produce that international, slender, narrow-hipped type of child woman in whom vice is paired with training, knee-jerk modernity with traditional seduction-by-haplessness, active and passive suffrage with the willingness to be bought. In every city there is a prototype young, or rather, ageless, player in male dress (this is the only indication of its sex): smooth features and slicked-back hair, padded shoulders and compressed hips, baggy, billowing pants and pointed patent leather boots – and the casual demeanour out of fashion magazines, the nonchalance of a window dummy, the fake worldweariness in the glassy stare, and the thin lips touched by nature itself in homage, of course, to
Roth was clearly not entertained by the “industrialized” entertainment though those providing it did not seem to be enjoying themselves either. However, the “bacchic militarism” and “fake world-weariness” had formed itself into some sense of a style.

Berliners’ brusque manner, termed *Schnodderigkeit*, was evident in the musical cabaret and nightclub scene Roth described. Ritchie had attributed the beginnings of this attitude to the strong military presence in the nineteenth century that she thought had seeped into the manners and social skills of Berlin inhabitants and exhibited in extreme formality and economy of social interaction. Large thought instead *Schnodderigkeit* was born out of insecurity in response to accusations of “barbarianism” by their European neighbours, evidenced in the contrast between Berliners’ formality with their apparent “rudeness”. The emotionally detached style and off-handedness was wonderfully typified by Berliner Marlene Dietrich. Her notorious ‘rudeness’, particularly off-stage, contributed to her legend as much as her stage and film talents. Dietrich’s manner gave an air of this ‘world-weariness’ as though nothing shocked or disturbed her. Growing up in and around Berlin she would have been aware of Berlin’s more sensational and grim aspects that contributed to this cool repose that she made so fashionable.

After studying the violin to a promising level Marlene turned to cabaret and acting for a career instead. Whereas once middle-class women would not have been consumers of mass entertainment, by the 1920s films, theatre, cabaret and radio were popular across genders and classes. People from all walks of life dreamed about becoming stars of the stage or screen. The hyperinflation crises had affected many of the middle-classes, who were forced by necessity to break their moral codes and rules of social etiquette. The traditional marriage dowry became impossible and therefore left many young women unwed and women were far less inclined to save their virginity for their wedding night. Married women from this class traditionally did not go out to work but many were now forced to. Survival became a priority; numerous women, who if born a generation before would not have thought of working were forced to find jobs in the new department stores and offices and even sought employment in the many clubs, bars and venues that Roth despised rather than in the more
respectable hotels, restaurants and factories. Hence, they avoided jobs that had been the preserves of the working-class and instead hunted ‘glamour’ and possible greater financial return.

Show business quickly capitalised on the lifting of restrictions concerning obscenity laws and Girlkultur became a feature of Berlin for tourists and inhabitants alike. Various permutations of erotic revues could be found all round the city, often involving rows of women in synchronised ‘dancing’, complementing the marching rhythms on the street and the sound of the technically-led age; like Roth, Richie connected Girlkultur to industrial commerce and surmised “these revues revealed...sex was just another commodity”. Similarly, by the mid-1920s gay culture also became a commodity for Berlin to market. Homosexual and Lesbian nightclubs such as the Silouette or the El Dorado became as much tourist hangouts as same-sex social establishments.

Berlin was renowned throughout Germany and abroad for sexual freedom for both men and women and attracted gay men and lesbians. Among these, British writers, poets and painters such as W.H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Francis Bacon and Christopher Isherwood found a sense of acceptance in Berlin that they could have only dreamed of at home. In his chapter ‘Homosexuality, Class and Dress’ Shaun Cole noted that even the privileged position that men like Spender enjoyed, living in a circle protected by class and money, could not afford them the liberty of an “out gay man” as exemplified by Evelyn Waugh’s “wholly exotic” character Anthony Blanche, based on Waugh’s friend Brian Christian de Claiborne Howard: “because he is not English, [he] is already marked out as different.” In addition Cole takes into account Richard Dyer’s thoughts on being ‘doubly different’ as gay and artistic. Therefore, as a foreign, gay artist in Berlin, one was immediately ‘at home’ and could be candid about sexuality and lifestyle. W.H. Auden arrived in Berlin 1928, delighted at the availability of same-sex partners. A year later Isherwood visited at the invitation of his friend. Large deduced Isherwood was, for the first time, able to express himself sexually because he met men outside his social class and nationality.

2.3 Tales from Berlin

Isherwood’s Mr. Norris Changes Trains (1935) and Goodbye to Berlin (1939) were tales based on portraits of fellow inhabitants of the city before 1933. These ‘portraits’ provided
a glimpse of political disorder, ‘wildness’ and low-life glamour to English speaking readers, he also introduced various ‘types’ that found in Berlin. Friedrich thought Isherwood’s strongly sketched caricatures managed to construct “a matchless portrait of the city”. In 1935, Isherwood admitted that the short stories were to have been the beginning of a novel, provisionally entitled *The Lost* that was never realised. He had told Otto Friedrich that he had also considered calling the would-be book *The Rejected* highlighting that his characters were not typical Berliners but “outsiders, quite isolated from the life of the city” and exemplified by the rich Landaurers who as Jews were cast apart from acceptable society. Isherwood’s stories became some of the most influential forces in shaping future generations’ ideas of Berlin and Berliners. Although misfits and mavericks populated Isherwood’s Berlin, perhaps historically, these colourful characters, though more numerous in the capital than elsewhere, were more rare than the stories suggest.

Isherwood’s stories demonstrated the newly fashionable, or re-discovered position of a writer as an objective entity; in *Goodbye to Berlin* he wrote in first-person while claiming himself incapable of judgment: “I am a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking”. Though he wrote this in *Goodbye Berlin* it became a feature of style at the time, mirroring the trends in literature. This ‘passivity’ paradoxically accentuated the emotional content of various scenes. In *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*, there was a description of how Otto, a “boy” the ‘narrator’ first met at a Communist meeting in Neukölln, related how upon the provocation by his girlfriend’s refusal to give her money to a man collecting for the Communist cause, felt compelled to “slap” her face “not hard’ he assured us but violently enough to make her turn somersault over the bed and land with her head against the wall; the bump had dislodged a framed photograph of Stalin”.

Not only does this passage illustrate Isherwood’s reporting style that often contained ironic comedy elements whenever ‘tragedy’ struck, but also clearly demonstrated the priority of loyalty for men in Berlin at that time; political party over personal. In addition the reader is alerted to a greater irony of the situation: Otto needed his girlfriend to give her money on his behalf. Furthermore, the working-class were duty-bound to donate money they could ill afford, an act the Communist party professed to deplore. Blind belief was central to the issue, as Otto was an example of an unquestioning devotee, a slave to emotion, verifying his masculinity, as well as ideology. On the other hand the narrator recorded, resolutely and uncommitted to any ‘side’. Isherwood’s opening gambit in *Goodbye to Berlin*, which
indicated his (the narrator’s) objectivity, was invested in the premise of a camera as an objective force. The camera’s susceptibility to manipulation appears unquestioned.

*Goodbye To Berlin* was segmented into chapters as scenes or character portraits, similar in the form and style to that of Roth. Roth’s articles are descriptions of real people, places and events, though because of his spare style these often read like short stories populated by ‘characters’. Roth wrote ‘Night in Dives’ (1921), about displaced people at ‘home’ in various seedy hangouts, his ‘vignettes’ took place in the Café Dalles, Reese’s Restaurant, Albert’s Cellar, the Cigar Box and the Tiger pub; none of the characters seem worthy of pity and yet they are pitiful figures, unable to extricate themselves from the very patterns of life that pain them. Though Isherwood’s characters were not all the typical underdogs that Roth preferred to write about, they possessed an equivalent ambiguity. Through Isherwood’s pose with an “eye of a camera” there was no good or bad, right or wrong though within the text there were subtle implications that did indeed manipulate the emotions of the reader.

Although both tourists and inhabitants frequented Berlin’s standard nightclubs, Isherwood preferred workingmen’s drinking establishments. He, like Roth, mocked nightclubs, their patrons and even performers, emphasising the ‘fauxness’ and unglamorous reality that underpinned the ‘trade’. Simultaneously he indicated the ‘addictive’ quality of such places through his narrator character, who had made a mental note when visiting ‘The Lady Windermere’, an “arty informal bar”: “I decided, as so often before, never to visit a place of this sort again”. Sally Bowles, the pivotal character of the second chapter of *Goodbye to Berlin*, exemplified the cheap glamour on offer as way of entertainment in such places and even the ‘truthfulness’ of fakery: “She sang badly without any expression, her hands hanging down by her sides – and yet her performance was, in its own way, effective because of her startling appearance and her air of her not caring a curse what people thought of her.”

Sally’s performance of a run-of-the-mill love-song is anti-performance: she invested nothing of herself in it, nor applied any dramatic illusion to the love she sang about. The ‘bad’ singer made ‘good’ because her true statement within the performance was an offer of herself, not in love, singing a song in a bar.
Isherwood was an outsider to Berlin and as such he could pose as a ‘camera’, unimpassioned by Weimar. Alfred Döblin lived and worked as a doctor in Berlin among his working-class patients in Friedrichshein, a north-eastern suburb of Berlin. Alexanderplatz was a hive of activity as a marketplace and a busy junction in the 1920s, behind which lay the homes of the newest immigrants to Berlin. Döblin’s novel Berlin, Alexanderplatz chronicled the relentless struggle of life for most Berliners through his protagonist Franz Biberkopf, a man trying to reform in an atmosphere that conspired against his personal struggle. Döblin’s criminal cast of characters were the descendents of the members of the Ringverrine and Berlin’s night-world. The backdrop to Berlin: Alexanderplatz was Wilhelmian in architectural style and the atmosphere of the working-class’ Hinterhof, with overcrowding, unusual ‘family’ groupings and the precarious nature of tenancies that these courtyard dwellings afforded were even grimmer than Isherwood described.

Fact, fiction or combinations of the two, Döblin’s novel, Isherwood’s tales, and Roth’s reports of Weimar Berlin became useful counterbalances for the usual process of historical accounting that highlighted the sensational whilst ignoring the mundane. Rather, these texts accessed historical street dramas through ‘impartial’ narrators’ observations of a diverse selection of ‘ordinary’ people and outsiders: characters that disobeyed the traditional literary code of being wholly good or bad. Complex layering, self-awareness of medium and distancing emotional issues from emotionalism was in-keeping with fashions of the time and also pre-empted features of postmodernism.

Berlin’s ‘street theatre’ and pleasure industries provided colour and excitement, perhaps enjoyable at a distance, Roth, Döblin and Isherwood wrote ‘witness’ accounts of life in the city viewed at closer quarters. The constant political instability expressed in mass demonstrations and violence on the street made the city threatening by day and the commercially forced-gaiety, dangerous by night. Simultaneously, Berlin’s exciting atmosphere was attractive for those with foreign money, who took full advantage of its relatively lax moral codes and a magnet for opportunists. The divisions between classes became increasingly less clear as many of the middle classes lost their wealth in the inflation crises and took part in activities that they would never had dreamed of in previous years. The new media, such as Illustrated newspapers and magazines, cheap novels, cabaret, films and radio were consumed across classes, genders, denominations and religions. People were
united in seeking sensationalist fantasy and romance to escape their problems and the new media were perfect for supplying them.

Weimar Berlin became a city of illusion. The distinct neighbourhoods represented either security or ghettos for their inhabitants, but their ‘closed’ characteristic also provided perfect cover for those led double lives. Isherwood’s first-person narrator (Brian) gave his views only to readers (his audience) rather than the people that surrounded him. Döblin’s character Biberkopf possessed loyalties that were mutable, as a result he was easily and dangerously manipulated. Both authors demonstrated that Berlin was as tricky to live in towards the end of the Republic’s reign, as it was immediately post-war. In the city of extremes of all kinds, those who were clever only showed disinterest at whatever they were told or shown. This fitted with Berlin’s inherited *Schnodderigkeit* and gave Berliners a reputation for a detached and brusque manner.

Understanding the social history, geographical layout and general culture of Weimar Berlin allows for a deeper insight into the arts of the time. The shallowness of Berlin’s gaiety was a quality utilised by artists and propagandists alike in fragmenting and ‘twisting’ pictures and words to subvert well-known original images or sayings into new meanings. Since there was no clear authority, everyone and everything could be a target for derision.
God once built a house for the community of believers; the hotel, by contrast, is ‘a negative church’ where no one belongs and in which no one believes. This is its convenience. It is a place where modern men can enjoy the benefits of nonentity or annihilation, vanishing into an undetermined void.  

This chapter is devoted to examining Weimar Berlin’s reputation as the cultural capital of Europe. In the ‘golden twenties’ Berlin seemed a place to enjoy endless possibilities. The sensational aspects of Weimar and its brevity made it an irresistible draw for newer generations to wonder at. New art, theatre, literature and music flourished, as well as other popular entertainments such as cinema and cabaret. However, in his book written in the 1970s, Otto Friedrich warned his readers not to look back on the period with rose-tinted glasses “because it was so utterly destroyed after a flowering of less than fifteen years, it has become a kind of mythical city, a lost paradise.”

As explained in the last chapter, Berlin seemed an ideal place to visit during the 1920s and early ‘30s, if not an easy place to live. Conrad’s quote above expresses the godlessness of a hotel and the unholy freedom it offered to its guests. The connection between the Kaiser’s desertion of his kingdom (as place) and God’s abandonment of his (as modernity) is articulated by Conrad in ‘The End of the World in Berlin’ about the frequent use of the hotel lobby in popular 1920s detective novels, “Detective stories are fables about guilt in a modern world from which God has abdicated”.  

Mark Bould too, traces the roots of American film noir, the femme fatal and vampires and ‘schloch horror’ movies to, what he called their “pre-history”, in Weimar Berlin’s cinema. The city was famous for its hotels, a novel entitled Hotel by Vikki Baum evoked Berlin in the 1920s.

Within this period expressionist subjectivity gave way to Neue Sachklichkeit or new objectivity, a reawakening of conscientiousness of a collective spirit and from the new perspective of the camera. In addition to Conrad’s promise of nonentity for ‘guests’ at ‘hotel
Berlin’, they could turn detective: working out the plot of their lives and character from clues left by others. The process of self-inventing and self-erasing, reinventing and re-erasing *infinitum* became more than fashionable: it was the mechanism for survival. Instead of the possibility of the ultimate transformation into Nietzsche’s ‘new man’ there was an endless search and continual reinvention.

A ubiquitous character emerged, the ambiguous pierrot-with-a-difference, a ‘shimmy’ figure that came to symbolise Weimar Berlin. Neither traditionally masculine or feminine but an entity in-between, the figure was depicted as an eternal performer off stage or on. Occasionally the character was not demon or devil but a fallen angel: an immortal, eternal witness. This creature became a regular in the Berlin cabaret and images of it were seen everywhere, it appeared to be at the centre of any action and a complete outsider. The image had been promoted in various forms of souvenirs including dolls. Reinhardt’s satirical cabaret, *Schall and Rauch* was re-invented after the war, but in the new era’s image, sharper and additionally acerbic in observation and wit. Likewise, the newer cabaret’s ‘pierrot’ changed with fashion, increasingly more cynical, fearless and world-weary.

Berlin became a cultural magnet for creative types in spite, or perhaps because of the city’s perils of marauding militia and years of financial and social instability. Artists manifested theoretical ideas into cultural commodities that provoked dialogue, among them, the painter, George Grosz, the playwright Bertold Brecht and the composer Kurt Weil, who among others became household names during Weimar despite their young ages and relative inexperience. Foreign artists also flocked to the city in its cultural heyday. Unlike many visitors, the poet Stephen Spender understood living in Berlin was for more testing for the inhabitants, and observed “everything that happened there appeared symptomatic of the crisis in modern civilisation”.

Adorno one of the leading figures in thinking about the unique properties of music and aspects of listening. He also was one of first to recognise the impact of technology would have on the production and consumption of music. Exploitation through the cultural industries was central to his argument. Adorno refuted there was value in popular music such as jazz in comparison with Brecht who used its appeal along side new theatrical
techniques of performance to reach as many people as possible in order to inspire his brand of socialist reform.

Weimar culture has often been identified with the ‘feminine’. Proportionally there were many more women than men after the war and there collective presence was highly visible out in public and away from their traditional sphere of the home. Female performers were on the ‘front-line’ in the so-called pleasure industries, some of who created their own specialist acts that became legendary.

3.1 Fine lines: Art, Entertainment, Politics and Theory

Germany’s defeat in the war proved a catalyst for many artists and musicians galvanising a generation into action. New modes of expression that fitted with contemporary precepts of philosophy and psychology were put to practical use in music, visual arts, poetry, literature, theatre, film and cabaret. Reinhardt’s nostalgia of a unified stage, where all performers and artists were either only good or bad had perhaps never existed, but the trend during the Republic’s years for warring factions between artistic movements was never greater.

Andreas Haus noted that after World War I most intellectuals showed enthusiasm for Nietzsche “with a critical attitude toward culture and a propensity for heroic individualism”. Nihilistic tendencies were most evident in Berlin’s post-war dada.7

The heritage of Nietzsche was acutely apparent in works such as Menschheitsdmmerung (Twilight of Mankind) an anthology of verse by twenty three like-minded poets, published by Kurt Pinthus in 1920. Taylor concludes “in Nietzsche they found the high priest of the irrational, the charismatic prophet with an inflammatory message, a spiritual leader whose disciples saw themselves as an elite”. Simultaneously dadaists would attack expressionists for their high mindedness, even simulating defecation on their artwork and attacking them in manifestos.9

The disparity between the two main artistic directions of the era, expressionism and the later Neue Sachklichkeit, has been regularly stated. Expressionism’s concern had been for the individual, the central figure that was a young male ‘I’, stylistically it suggested ‘escape’ into a dream state where nothing could be relied upon to exist and thus, as Haus recognised, fatalistically nihilistic. Neue Sachklichkeit’s preoccupation was for the collective, revelation
in the real and the optimistic. What emerged through the period was an awareness of play between subjectivity and objectivity that was especially useful for social comment and satire.

Although there seemed a clear artistic distinction between the periods of 1918-26 and 1926-33 in line with the general social and cultural climate of Germany, there is evidence of gradual evolution rather than revolution. Though seemingly poles apart, both expressionism and Neue Sachlichkeit were an investigation into identity and psychology, sociology and politics and both were born out of a desire for freedom from past aesthetic values. The artistic styles moved from subjective and chaotic to objective and organised parallel to the major political upheavals: the breaking down of old order and building anew. For instance, with the increasing desire for politicisation, hence popularisation, of the ‘artistic message’, it became necessary to simplify metaphors or express clear forms.

Expressionism had overturned the fashion for neo-realism, impressionism and the more popular and fanciful forms, replacing ‘beauty’ with personal truth as the key ingredient by which to measure art. Ernst Krenek, the author of Jonny Spielt Auf refuted Neue Sachlichkeit was a direct reaction against expressionism but suggests expressionism lacked the mass appeal that was needed to carry all-important political messages. The sanctified image of the opera house ironically suited those who were refused entry to the realms of ‘high art’ by marking them out as revolutionary. The traditionalist attitudes that governed the Deutsches Opernhaus proved to be the perfect example of establishment that the avant-garde riled against. Their idea of internationalist art was not the full blown, expensive productions with imported stars that were popular with middle-class audiences but the united force of the many against the interests of the elite. Like palaces and churches, this rarefied and ‘solemn temple dedicated to art’ was anathema to their aims.

The detached style and objective pose of this ‘new objectivity’ pervaded every artistic and commercial enterprise; Bertold Brecht’s epic theatre epitomised the style. His characters were not the traditional theatrical heroes and villains but dependents of circumstance and Brecht’s plots became devices that he thought exposed the systems that governed the contemporary status quo.
This did not mean that traditions of the theatre were not incorporated into the new, especially since the use of those forms raised the awareness of the nature of the traditional and its relationship to the contemporary. Explaining why he had wanted to create *Mahagonny* as a “tribute to the senselessness of the operatic form” Brecht explained, “The rationality of the opera lies in the fact that rational elements, solid reality is aimed at, but at the same time it is all washed out with the music”.11

Brecht collaborated with Kurt Weill, who he had first met along with Lote Lenya in a restaurant in 1927. Lenya recollected that it was Weill who had expressed that he would like to “set some of his poems to music”.12 On 17th July, the same year *Mahagonny Songspiel* or *The Little Mahagonny* was premiered at a “high brow” festival in the Deutsche Kammermusik, Baden Baden, shocking the audience, who whistled with disapproval, Lenya reported that the cast returned the gesture.13

The new technologies were the perfect aid to such a style revolution as cameras, typewriters and vehicles become the means and the focus of many artists. The relative affordability of radio, recorded music and cinema stirred the imagination of the world of arts and entertainment, increasing audiences to a mass level. Though Horkheimer and Adorno reported these popular media were “an achievement of standardisation”, the means of which is in the hands “of those whose economic hold over society is greatest”, these technologies also provided new platforms for artists who were seriously politically minded.14

Theodor Adorno was keen that people should understand that ideology was tightly woven within the fabric of everyday life, including popular culture, whether translated through traditional or non-traditional mediums. In Adorno’s criticism of *Gesamtkunstwerk* he admonished its chief promoters, Wagner and Nietzsche, for introducing a form that is bound up in impossible demands, corrupting the ear with the ‘seduction’ of the eye. In his book about Adorno, Witkin elucidated:

> …the eye perceives reality as a world of solid graspable objects is an instrument of bourgeois rationality; and organ of concentration of effort, of work, it is adapted, to an objectified and commodified world. The ear, by contrast, is archaic. It has something passive and unselfconsciousness about it. The desire to render all the senses equivalent and interchangeable in a social world governed by the division of labour could not survive exposure to ordinary cognitive consciousness.15
Adorno thought the ear a more independent receiver, so long as it remained unaffected by vision. His preference for the ear meant that he championed the new music of the 1920s that utilised revolutionary tonal systems such as Arnold Schönberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire* and Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck*. For Adorno the music captured the complexity of the time, moreover, this complexity added to the ability of the ear to remain objective. Although Witkin used the words “passive and unselfconsciousness” to describe the ear in the quote above, it should be read more as an absence of preconceptions, for in reference to Adorno one cannot think of condoning passive listening.

Adorno’s favoured works were not safe ‘classical’ offerings; Schönberg, by then a professor at the Prussian State Academy of Fine Art, suffered his *Pierrot Lunaire* to cause a “riot” on its premiere on January 5th, 1924 and Berg’s *Wozzeck*, also using Schönberg’s twelve-tone system and *Sprechstimme*, provoked a mixed response; Weill called the opera “ultramodern” and was keen to report to his sister that there had been a commotion even before the performance had begun with a “scandal during the dress rehearsal”.16

Adorno was less than impressed by the contrasting popular force in music at the time: jazz. The musical style was ‘everywhere’, even incorporated into ‘more serious’ works such as Krenek’s *Jonny Spielt Auf* and Brecht and Weill’s *Dreigroschenoper*. Although Brecht had comparable political motives to Adorno, the differences between artist and art theoretician in the presentation of art differed strikingly. Brecht favoured the forms of popular entertainment as a means of ‘getting to’ the masses; he also appreciated that technology aided the objectification and deconstruction of the form of entertainment itself. For Germans, jazz was inextricably linked to Black culture, America and Jews. “Black entertainers embodied one aspect of America – something spontaneous, wild uncivilized (sic), unencumbered by European culture”.17

The era’s artists continued with their preoccupation with more ‘primitive’ cultures, searching for an antidote to the apparent complications of urban life. This was not exclusively a Berlin phenomenon, nor especially German since those who professed to like jazz were considered daring in their taste. From cabaret to concert halls the use of drums or predominate rhythms in music denoted an empathy with the notion of uninhibited ‘natives’. 
Josephine Baker, the American born dancer and singer, already celebrated in Paris, came to Berlin repeatedly during the 1920s to exceptional enthusiasm. Though some thought her act ironic or kitsch most where simply fascinated with the exoticism of a near-naked black woman dancing in a banana skirt or with a snake. To most Berliners, Baker, as an African-American female dancer, represented a unique blend of modernity: a mixture of primitivism exuded in her ‘native’ dances plus the modern aura of America.

This need to cultivate faux-primitivism and find a connection with ancient selves was often combined with futurism. The deceptively simple trend of functionalism in architecture demonstrated this in its use of clear shapes reminiscent, for example, of Pablo Indian huts, with incorporation of modern materials and concepts such as concrete, glass and external lighting. The fascination for exoticism, primitivism and futurism were everywhere: juxtaposed, layered, fused, integrated and interchangeable. Adorno, a member of the Frankfurt School, was aware of the ‘dangers’ of ‘indulging’ the masses, as he was aware of the ease of misunderstanding recognised signs and symbols when used in whatever manner.

The Novembergruppe or November Group took their name from the November (Russian) Revolution of 1917. The group distanced itself from any former movements including pre-war expressionism that it considered elitist. Members included Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weil, the composer Hanns Eisler, architect Walter Gropius and painters Otto Dix and George Grosz. Most had first-handedly experienced the horrors of war and wanted to use art to raise political awareness. Although pre-war expressionism had helped facilitate a personal reaction against authority and expected sense of duty, post-war, the style’s subjective mode evolved to accommodate an outer-awareness of an individual’s role (or self) within society.

The Group’s left-wing political agenda critically analysed Weimar society intending its audiences to comprise of ‘ordinary’ people. Similarly to pre-war expressionism, subjectivity was encapsulated in a myriad of experimental styles, but perhaps because of the need for delivering messages to many people, the work, typified by Dix and Grosz, often featured a sense of comic grotesque that was entertainingly macabre. This ‘un-German’ display of non-sentimental critical comment in art became increasingly sensational, and under the Kaiser’s rule would have been vetoed just as Munch’s exhibition in 1902 had been, but in the age of the Republic, the avant-garde became “a new cultural elite.”
Café culture in Berlin had been founded decades earlier, and just as Marx had joined the Doktorklub that met at the café Stehely to discuss philosophy and contemporary literature, the tradition continued with intellectuals and would-be intellectuals alike. The Romanisches Café, a favourite of Roth, had a revolving door ‘policed’ by a doorman who indicated whether customers were entitled to be seated in the room on the left reserved for the wealthy or the right for aspiring artists and less generous tippers. Upstairs one could people-watch or play chess while tourists were often shown to a room with a glass partition well away from the main ‘action’ of gossip and dealing. Grosz and his circle, among them Huelsenbeck, made a colourful entourage at Café de Westerns. The café, more familiarly referred to as Café Grossenwahn (Café Grand Illusion or Megalomaniac’s Café) had once belonged to the actress Rosa Valetti and housed The Wild Stage club in the basement of the café. Grosz and his group of friends would discuss and plan infamous dada performances here. Their initial show had been fairly impromptu affair, but for their second they produced a press release and promoted Husselbeck’s manifesto *Dadaism in Life and Art*.

George Grosz expressed the feelings of a generation of impassioned youths keen on committing themselves to causes and movements of the time. When he first arrived in Berlin, he wondered at all the attractions of the city but, as Large noted “Although Grosz loved Berlin for its glitter, he also appreciated the grime”. Pre-war, he chronicled the gaudy goings on in the city, but after his return “Heaven and Hell exist here side by side”.

Grosz was associated with German expressionism and dada and also a member of the German Communist Party (KDP). Dressing in outlandish clothes, as Large described “dressing in theatrically checked suits, powdering his face and carrying a skull-topped cane” he cut a conspicuous figure. Together with Wieland and Hertzfelde, Grosz founded *Milak-Verlag*, a publication that contained leftist political rhetoric fused with art and literary fiction. The journal was banned on distribution of the first copy, given out during a mock funeral procession, Grosz famously dressed as ‘Death’. Undeterred, in 1920, the Milak Company put on Berlin’s First International Dada Fair.

The general message of the fair was that dada was not art but anti-art. Grosz would perform outrageous acts such as “performing a tap dance while pretending to pee on a painting by
Lovis Corinth, “Art is shit” he cried”. Using slogans such as “Art is Dead, Long Live the New Machine Art of Tatlin” they underlined their reverence and enthusiasm for the new Soviet state and constructivist art as their challenge to the establishment and its corresponding art world. Both Grosz and Hertzfelde used the technique of photomontage to bizarre ends, in a deliberate expose of ‘truth’. Weimar authorities were outraged at the irreverent attitude of the event and Grosz, as one of the organisers was taken to court and fined.

Although he professed himself a communist he managed to enrage as many comrades with his tactics as his bourgeois targets. There is an ambiguity in Grosz’s work, a Large articulated, “One cannot escape the impression in Grosz took a certain perverse pleasure in the depravity he described.” The Dada Fair signalled the climactic ending for the movement as the members went their various ways and Grosz joined with Piscator’s Proletarian Theatre.

3.2 Bauhaus

Bauhaus, so closely associated with the culture of the inter-war years was not situated in Berlin until 1932 after a tenancy in Dessau that started from 1925. The school’s first home was in Weimar, opening its doors, April 12th 1919. The town had been already associated with eminent German composers and literary figures such as Bach, Liszt, Goethe and Schiller; the radical reputation that Bauhaus acquired eventually expelled them from the conservative town. The significance of the school’s principles and working methods, particularly with the introduction of its revolutionary 1923 manifesto: Art and Technology-a New Unity, brought about a lasting influence.

Bauhaus was the vision of the architect Walter Gropius, great-nephew of renowned architect Martin Gropius and son of another Martin Gropius who had been director of education in Prussia and principle of the Kunstgewerbe Museum in Berlin; the museum housed in the building Walter’s great-uncle had designed. Grand Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar invited Gropius to apply to take over what would amount to the mergence of Kunstgewerbeschule (art school) and the academy. Convinced by the weight of the Gropius name and his plans, the Grand Duke and Weimar State Council awarded him the post. Gropius had ideas for innovations in teaching methods as well as artistic practice. Not all his
ideas were original but had grown from others’, in which traditional crafts could be incorporated with up-to-date technology to be viable in a contemporary market. It was due to his innovations and organisation that the theory was put into practice.

Many of Gropius’s ideas were either attempts at reconciliation between diametrically opposed principles or recognising the relationship between creator(s) and the object created. It was part of Bauhaus’ first manifesto in Programme des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar (1919) to eradicate the division between craft, (commercial and purposeful) and fine art, (non-commercial and esoteric). To this end all students would be taught, or rather guided, through their course by a master craftsman and a master artist. There was also a practical course on the relationship between “sound, colour and form” “to harmonize the physical and psychic qualities of the individual.” Whether creations were large, important municipal buildings, artworks or everyday objects Bauhaus’s guiding principles remained the same, the conscious implementation: “Rules of rhythm, proportion, light value, full and empty space, accompanied by a practical training based on observations of nature, would form a new unity.”

In 1922 a Constructivist Congress was held at Weimar, among the guests Hungarian Lázló Maholy Nagy, who incorporated technology as part of the process of his work and as a style statement of the finished article. He had moved to Berlin from his native Hungary in 1919, stating that his preference for the German capital was expressly to do with the advanced technology in the heart of an industrial nation. Together with his collaborator Kurt Schwitters, Maholy Nagy would go on to use billion-mark notes at the time of the hyperinflation to make a collage of the German national emblem of the eagle, consciously making it resemble more of a vulture.

Maholy Nagy and Gropius had met in Berlin in December 1920 and at the time of the Congress were still in discussions about a teaching post at the school. The constructionist plea for art to become conscious and objective and in support of fellow workers was the rallying cry from the forum. It was also a wake-up call to those like Paul Citroën who could see this set of ‘imported’ ideas making his own work and job at Bauhaus redundant. Constructivism although consistently connected with the Soviet Union, was in theory an approach that its practitioners considered internationalist.
Although the Congress’ proclamation suggests a watershed for the school, the struggle between art and science and subjectivity and objectivity in theory, method and application had already existed, as van Doesburg’s appraised sensing “romantic and nostalgic tendencies”. A type of constructivist influence increasingly crept into Bauhaus’s style during the 1920s, despite Citroën’s and others’ protestations. Though it increasingly became adapted and even accepted by some as German it retained its reputation as internationalist. Bookbinder quotes a former student Gunta Stöltz, “We made an effort to become simpler, to discipline means and to achieve a greater unity between material and function”, this allowed for a new evolution at Bauhaus from art amalgamated with craft to art incorporating technology. By the following year the Constructivist Congress, Bauhaus had a new manifesto: *Art and Technology- a New Unity*

Lothar Schryer, who had up until that time been director of the Bauhaus Theatre Group had concentrated on ‘feelings’; a style that jarred with Bauhaus’ new resolution. Schreyer inevitably resigned and Oskar Schlemmer, who was already employed at the school, was appointed in his place. Almost immediately Schlemmer presented two works he had been involved with a year earlier at a Bauhaus party entitled *The Figural Cabinet I* and *The Figural Cabinet II*, the second, a projected variation of the first. *The Figural Cabinet I* implemented cabaret techniques to parody Bauhaus’s new-found faith in progress whilst referencing the expressionist 1919 film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Goldberg attributed the performances’ success to the “mechanical devises and overall pictorial design reflected both the art and technology sensibility of the Bauhaus”.

Schlemmer’s investigations, fully fledged within his mechanical ballets, focused on cognition and the ‘hard-wiring’ of the human machine, emphasising construction and concealment in the use of masks and props. This incorporation of machine-made ‘things’ underlined the ‘mechanical’ movements and made the pieces appear progressive whilst de-emphasising the individual in chorus work whereas the use of masks drew from the Classical theatre, and presented a cohesion that looked new but recognisable. Kay Kirchmann considered overall, Schlemmer’s artistic presence balanced a romantic desire to “renew the world and…constructivism…as a mirror image of the turmoil of the contemporary world”.
3.3 Theatre and Theatrical Song

In 1917 Max Reinhardt helped establish ‘Das Junge Deutschland’ to encourage new and young talent, and after the war rebuilt a circus that seated 3,000 “to realise a dream to bring classical drama to the mass audience which he foresaw the theatre would soon have to serve”. His new grand open-air theatre, rebuilt in the expressionist style in 1919 by Hans Poelzig was christened the Grosses Schauspielhaus, however Reinhardt, noting the post-war economic crises and sensing an increasingly virulent climate of anti-Semitism, left Berlin and then Europe. In December of that year in the basement of the Grosse Schauspielhaus’, a second Schall und Rauch was put on using writing luminaries such as Tucholsky, Mehring and Holländer and implemented many of the technological devices that Piscator and Brecht later used in their work.

Under Felix Holländer’s management and artistic direction Reinherdt’s Deutsches Theatre strived to keep up with new theatre. In the first years of the 1920s Holländer likened Brecht’s prospective influence to Hauptmann’s before him, and offered Brecht premieres of two of his first productions in the capital, Baal and Trommeln: the two men fought over artistic differences from rehearsals onwards. Though such a theatre was a draw for the purposes of prestige, more intimate venues became preferred for their commercial viability, artistic freedom from interference and atmosphere; often the new methods of performance were also better suited to small-scale productions.

Performers began to take theatre to their audiences rather than the other way around, and companies such as Piscator’s Proletarisches Theatre performed in beer-cellars and trade union halls. The aim of his theatre was to appeal to peoples’ reason rather than let them wallow in emotion. Taylor credits Piscator’s 1924 production of Die Fahnen as a “totally new form of theatrical experience” He goes on to describe the style of production:

A kind of dispassionate reportage, a multimedia assemblage of heterogeneous episodes, some spoken, some sung, some projected by camera on to a screen as still or moving pictures – in short, the antithesis of everything the European tradition had come to recognise as logical, homogeneous, consistently motivated ‘dramatic’ drama.

Erwin Piscator is credited as having first “grapple[d]” with the complexities of combining stage and screen, “film - hiding behind an artifice of its own – exposed the artifice of live
acting; it undermined subjective preoccupation with the individual on stage. Piscator also saw the possibilities of integrating the ‘reality’ of film footage with stage ‘fiction’ for political impact to critical and popular commendation. He overcame the challenges of the contrasting ‘natures’ of the two disciplines by drawing attention to their unique properties and utilising them for full effect. Implementing film screens not just as backdrops or as context but integral to the theatrical experience, complementing or juxtaposing the live action. This interplay of recorded and live work forced a more minimal acting style. The style was maintained by necessary adjustments to lighting that additionally gave the productions a stark quality.

Brecht had collaborated with Piscator on an adaptation of Hasek’s story of Schwieck with Grosz designing sets which included conveyer belts (more accurately treadmills) operating in opposite directions, puppets, masks and trick films that all added to the dynamics of the production. Piscator’s ideas aligned with Brecht’s in many ways. Piscator emphasised the need to encourage a reasoned response from audiences rather than what he considered the “forced empathy” of traditional theatre, although Brecht concedes in “The Epic Theatre and its Difficulties” “it would be quite wrong to try and deny emotion to this kind of theatre”. Again, akin to Piscator’s rationale of the incorporation of film into live performance, Brecht too noted the artificiality of film undermined the subjective concern with a single stage character and thus the overall tale or moral became more evident. However, it was cinema’s popularity that made Brecht examine it as a resource for his political expression and confront notions of the Bourgeois theatre. An idea that must have permeated through Brecht’s partnership to Weill as Bryan Gilliam outlined three techniques that were effectively employed in Weill’s ‘operatic reform’: pantomime, film projection and film montage.

Bertold Brecht grew up in Ausberg, Bavaria, moving to Munich to attend Ludwig Maximilian University amid the post-war chaos. The commotions included various political uprisings in Munich but it was in his home town at a protest against the murder of the leftist revolutionary Kurt Eisner that particularly effected Brecht; the demonstration had resulted in six deaths and tens of arrests. The student switched from science to literature, immersed himself in political thought and became a member of Munich’s satirical arts
scene. Already a particular fan of Frank Wedekind’s work, Brecht followed in his lead by setting his socially aware poems into songs.\(^\text{45}\)

Brecht had good reason to aspire to Wedekind’s reputation, for besides the elder’s ability to express his ideas as a performer in intimate revues, as a play-write his work had reached a multitude of people at the Deutsches Theatre no less and to great applause. The mixture of respect from one’s peers, critical acclaim and notoriety was alluring for Brecht, Lenya surmised “Behind all his posturing and charm was a gnawing concern for his own myth and forever assessing people what they could contribute to him (and invariably getting it)”.\(^\text{46}\) Similarly to Wedekind, and as well, Brecht looked as much to circuses, cabaret, zoos and sports for ideas on staging and performance as he would prove in *Mahagonny* set in a boxing ring.\(^\text{47}\) Brecht thought of the title as early as 1923, it evoked the bands of brown shirts of the fascists that he frequently saw in Munich and elsewhere. For Ewen “‘Mahagonny’ signified for Brecht the philistine’s Utopia, the cynical, stupid coffee-house state which was brewing out of anarchy and alcohol”.\(^\text{48}\)

Adorno amongst others conversed in theory around a type of Marxist rhetoric; these were not confined as isolated discussions at universities but part of the intellectual art milieu throughout Germany. Brecht was not only interested in art in the aesthetic sense but as a commodity within the political economy. The process of deconstructing theatre and the search of a method to deliver a reformed objective led to a clearer understanding of the “prevailing system”. On his reflection of compatriots who had concentrated intently on their output without considering its role within the “machine” Brecht warned against complacency, “for by imagining that they have got hold of an apparatus which has in fact got hold of them”.\(^\text{49}\)

Ewen surmised Brecht’s literature had always been connected to music in some way; Brecht was happy to harness this ‘powerful tool’ for similar reasons that caused Adorno such consternation, Ewen described Brecht’s musical taste as “extreme, one-sided, even bizarre,” but that the “stain of the ‘popular’ never left him”.\(^\text{50}\) From the beginning of his career the most feasible way of ‘spreading the message’ was to play solo impromptu spots at intimate gatherings. Kim Kowalke noted that these songs Brecht sang were never “independent texts *per se*” since “the author’s, composer’s, performer’s protagonist’s personas all coalesced
into a single voice – Brecht’s” but this was perhaps an ‘accident’ of necessity made ‘happy’ by the undiluted force of such a direct performance. Brecht could play the clarinet and the guitar. He frequently accompanied himself on guitar while singing Bänkeslang or Moritat at the Lachkeller (the Laughing Cellar), a venue for a type of political cabaret often called Überbrettl. Brecht’s singing and performance was apparently a mesmerising feat of emotional dexterity, well matched by his accomplished guitar playing using many ‘colourful’ chords.

Against Adorno’s theory, Brecht suggested music should “set texts in a particularly lively and easily assimilated way” so as to exploit what was popular in order to ‘evangelise’ the message. Brecht stipulated that music must be “socially gestic” underlining music’s role in his work. His actors employed the Brechtian performance technique of promoting through ‘gesture’ a wider political message rather than inviting empathy or identification from members of the audience. Brechtian texts were deliberately double layered with the more important socio-political subtext running through what Brecht called ‘subject matter’. Music acted as decipher for the subtext and in this way music was at the heart of Brecht’s message and not just to make the subject matter more palatable. Furthermore, Brecht insisted the role of music via its performance was closest to the motivation for his creations: “Subject matter in itself is in a sense somewhat banal, featureless, empty and self-sufficient. It is only the social gest – criticism, craftiness, irony propaganda, etc. – that breathes humanity into it”.

The musical score was a mere sketch of what would be realised once performed, as the musician/singer must deliver the social gest, the choice of that interpretation tested the ‘worth’ of the music. Therefore, the function of the performer is elevated to that of the lyricist or composer in responsibility for successful delivery of the message. Though Brecht covered many possible attitudes in which to gest, his favoured was typical of Weimar Berlin and borrowed from the city’s satirical cabaret: “For this the most suitable gests are as common, vulgar and banal as possible. In this way one can judge the political value of the music score.” Traditionally, a singer strove to ‘be at one’ with the words and expression (musical timbre and ‘physical’ gesture) of the song and to deliver in a beautiful manner de mode. Brecht demanded that the relationships between the words, music and performer were
more vital than any one or the sum of these entities. He thought the differences of perspectives made for a more truthful experience.

Brecht’s voice was untrained, unlike his first wife, the opera singer Marianne Zoff. There were two female singers in *The Little Mahagonny* Irene Eden and Lenya. Lenya highlighted the contrast between herself and Eden, a coloratura from the Berlin Opera, by describing herself as a “coloratura of a different kind”. Proud for being able to work without a score and of her non-singer voice, Lenya demonstrated beginnings of a new value system that went against conventional markers of ‘accomplishment’ and cherished the uncultured. New theatre’s musicals, like the satirical cabaret, ‘imitated’ the voice of the man or woman ‘of the street’ as a mark of non-elitism to their potential audiences and as a rejection of past high art ideals to their peers.

Similar to Grosz, Brecht constructed an image that would best project his intended role as well as his personality. Unlike Grosz’s colourful flamboyance Brecht deliberately chose to ‘dress-down’, cultivating an image that belied his bourgeois beginnings and dressed the antithesis of a popular playwright or performer. In the following quote, Friedrich describes this “Brechtian character Brecht created for himself”:

> He almost invariably wore a driver’s cap and a black leather jacket (with a soft white shirt underneath). His hair combed forward over the skull, was clipped short around the neck and ears, and generally had two-day growth of stubble…He took a certain pride in having bad teeth, too, and he was often grimey, since grime was partly a matter of economy and partly a matter of proletarian solidarity.

Ewen indicated the ‘costume’ was not authentic but a staged pose only convincing at a distance as he included an account of Brecht wearing expensive silk shirts under his proletarian uniform. It was ironic Brecht devoted so much attention to his ‘creation’ in view of his artistic considerations and having observed “the individual, [is] now in a state of complete dissolution”.

Brecht attempted to reverse the process of theatre, to explain conditions that help construct a character; “today, when the human being has to be seen as ‘the sum of all social circumstances’ the epic form is the only one that can embrace those processes which serve the drama as a matter for a comprehensive picture of the world”. Therefore, Brecht’s characters were created as he considered real people to be, neither good nor bad but shown
to be responsive to prevailing circumstances, though goodness more “natural to man” as “cruelty needs intense effort…the price of goodness in a world like ours too often runs high!”

Kurt Weill was born in Dessau, 2nd March 1900, son of a Jewish cantor. The family, although evidently religious thought of themselves equally German, as their roots could be traced back to 1360 in southern Germany. In April 1918 Weill went to the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin to study philosophy and music. He took his studies seriously but was well aware of the world outside of the school. In a letter, to Hanns, one of his elder brothers, 15th November 1918, Weill wrote how glad he is that “all arms have been put to rest” and his concern for the lack of strength of moderate political forces, "Under pressure, the Jews will be used as an effective of distraction by each party".61

As a student Weill commented that he was torn between the popular and modern forms: “I’m leaning more toward a finely constructed comic opera; for all that I’m drifting into modern currents again”.62 He was part of a new clique of musicians that showed itself at the Hochschule but understood that this leaning had to be balanced with tradition, since his professors were “definitely not modern”. Jürgen Schebera noted that young Weill’s music as in his String Quartet in B minor (1918) had “every sign of post-Wagnerianism” but also contained a “new chromatic harmony [that] is equally pronounced” in motifs that were to occur as ‘trademarks’ in later works such as Dreigroschenoper.63

Dreigroschenoper was not only the most famous collaboration between Brecht and Weill but became ubiquitous in Weimar Berlin: as Taylor concludes “If one had to choose one work to characterise the Berlin of the 1920s at its headiest and most sophisticated, that work would have to be Dreigroschenoper”.64 The original eighteenth century Beggars Opera by John Gay was still internationally popular and its subject matter relevant even in the late 1920s, as the opera’s three and a half year stint at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith London proved.65 Lenya related that the producer Ernst Josef Aufricht was searching for a play and it was in response that Brecht put forward his “little sketch” of his play based on Gay’s opera.
Since Brecht was an active communist and Kurt Weill was Jewish their collaboration was instantly marked out as immoral and potentially corruptive. *Dreigroschenoper* was first performed on August 31, 1928 at Berlin’s Schiffbauerdamm and was an immediate success. The show was a mirror of the era and offered two of its most apparent characteristics: sensationalism and cynicism; the dialogue was frank and often shocking and the intentional estrangement of the audience towards the characters was startling. Ewen related that “Its acid irony, and parody of operatic sentimentality and make-believe are in keeping with the anti-sentimentalist demands of the period”. With a dig at expressionist drama Brecht has Peachum say to his faux beggars “Only an artist can tug at anybody’s heart strings nowadays”. The music’s relationship was deliberately at odds with the words, as the ‘sentimental’ was distanced by virtue of a melange of recognisably traditional folk or classical tunes but played off kilter or layered by equally recognisable jazz figures. Pearsall notes the contribution jazz made to Weill’s work, but also suggests that the word ‘jazz’ be used in the loosest possible terms. Naturally, this begs the question of what is jazz? Jelly Roll Morton argued that jazz was not a musical style *per se* but a style that may be superimposed on any other style of music.

Brecht deplored Pabst’s film rendition of *Dreigroschenoper*, and had gone as far as taking his creative dispute to court. For him the film’s translation of dramatisation from stage to screen was made less ‘artificial’ and therefore less expressly political. However, the film’s Brecht-trained actors employed minimal facial expressions and physical gestures that fitted the close exposure of the camera; the seemingly dispassionate rendition of songs effectively heightens the emotional content rather than dampen it.

**3.4 New Entertainment**

Cabaret acquired its reputation as a corruptive influence by managing to upset all manner of people regardless of political leanings or strata of society. Sometimes featuring satirical comedy that poked fun at establishment figures and contemporary politics, cabaret more commonly included material that poked fun at all manner of German stereotypes, especially the hypocrisy of middle-class morality. Programmes often contained overtly sexually explicit or ‘deviant’ material and featured jazz, the ‘foreign’ ‘Jewish-nigger’ music considered the epitome of un-Germaness. The Berlin cabaret was known for its distinctive expression of ‘equality’. Nobody was safe from criticism or mockery and nothing was
sacred. More disconcertingly, songs and sketches were often indecipherably ambiguous and audiences were left wondering if they had been insulted or praised.

“The spirit of the clown – a grey and mocking laughter” became synonymous with the German cabaret but its origins were from the nature of the cabaret itself. This quality of blending or layering the funny with the macabre is echoed in Erik Satie’s words “They laugh because they think I’m joking”. Illustration (i), a porcelain head, manufactured in Germany during the 1930s captures this double bluff in an expression that is both comic and sinister. Performances were exciting to watch because of their precarious nature; nothing and no one was safe from ridicule, including members of the audience.

Cabaret was a foreign import, originally from France. Appignanesi cited 1881 as “the birth of modern Cabaret. From then on Cabaret was marked out by these two elements. Where artists could meet to perform performance works for each other and artists’ adoption of popular satirical or protest song”. The flexibility of the stage set-up and relatively uncensored material also became features of cabaret, as did a fascination with the seamiest aspects of low-life and the manner in which performing artists provoked and even insulted their audiences. According to Appignanesi the German branch of the performance style more serious and aggressive.

_Girlkultur_ was more popular than the kind of cabaret that facilitated political satire; nevertheless there were artists who bridged the gap between insightful comment through performance and entertainment. Besides Marlene Dietrich, other notable stars who had managed this feat included the actress and dancer Valeska Gert, the singer Claire Waldorf and the infamous Anita Berber. Among Gert’s performances were physical depictions of emotional states such as her ‘death-agony’ dance or satirical dance-mimes as in ‘Canaille’ in which she created the character of a “sensitive whore”; “her every motion signifying the way in which her body had been exploited for money.” Brecht applauded her performance work, likening her technique to his own epic theatre and invited her to perform in his Red Grape cabaret. Appignanesi said of her performances “her grotesque, highly stylized (sic) body gestures, could be thought of as alienation techniques.”
Claire Waldorf, not a native Berliner, nevertheless became the quintessential singer of the Berlin style: her ‘anti-beautiful’ approach interpreted contemporary lyrics by fusing a fearless voice with careful nuance. Lyrical content that veered from the erotic to the sentimental featured strong rhythm and/or melodic wit and made her hugely popular, apart from with the authorities who had censored her scenes from films as in Rudolf of Berlin for “anti-militaristic content”, and for her male style dress deemed “unsuitable”. Appignanesi thought her loyal following “stretched from the most popular to the most sophisticated”, while Richie referred to her audiences as middle-class that Waldorf had played up to by her invention of herself as the quintessential working-class Berlinerin. Her songs often chronicled the issues of the day as in Willi Kollo and Hans Pflanzer’s song Es gibt nur ein Berlin that referred to the constant emergence of new political parties.

Anita Berber’s on and off stage antics were often referred to, to exemplify either the moral iniquity or “epitomise the spirit” of Berlin of the time. Originally trained in classical ballet, she would dance naked regularly at the White Mouse and modelled for the painter Otto Dix. Stories of her drug taking and sexual antics provoked scandal after scandal. The journalist Grete Müller remembered that “Anita stood on the zenith engulfed in desire, in gossip and the hot, artificially bright light of the nightclubs”. She died in Berlin aged twenty-nine from tuberculosis exacerbated by excessive alcohol and drugs, her premature death only added to her allure as the representative figure of Weimar Berlin.

The Idea of what the Berlin cabaret was like came mainly from the film Die Blau Engel or The Blue Angel (1930). Marlene Dietrich played to type as a seductive cabaret artist. Based on Heinrich Mann’s Professor Unrat, Sternberg’s film was one of the first films with sound and was simultaneously made in German and English; the English version principally to compete in the United States. Though cabaret was performed in its various forms in many countries, Berlin’s cabaret became enmeshed in the imagery of the film. Sternberg’s choice of Friedrich Holländer to write the songs gave the ultimate aura of authenticity of time place to the featured cabaret. Marlene’s character, her stage performances and the ‘goings on’ in the screen venue were both enticing and alarming for non-Berliners although the film’s portrayal of the ‘shocking’ Berlin cabaret was actually tame compared with its real-life counterpart.
If *The Blue Angel* was good depiction of Berlin cabaret, so Marlene’s early life was a perfect reflection of the times she lived through. Born at the turn of the century and brought-up during the last years of imperialism she witnessed repercussions of World War I and experienced Weimar Berlin as a young woman. Dietrich was born Marie Magdalene Dietrich, in a typical *Mietskasernen*, December 27th, 1901 in Sadanstrasse, Schöneberg. Her parent’s status was middle-class and a testament to the strict Prussian military codes that existed at the turn of the century. Her father, a police Lieutenant, had fulfilled the required five-years military service to join the force and her mother, Josephine, had a dowry just enough to be considered worthy of marrying an Imperial Policeman by his employers. By all accounts, she barley remembered her father and grew-up in a matriarchal environment with her mother, elder sister, maternal grandmother, aunts and female cousins to provide role models. She saw them as graceful, glamorous creatures and studied their mannerisms and style. From childhood there seemed an awareness that for her at least gender was a construct and not innate, still a child Marie invented a new name for herself fashioned from her first name and the diminutive of her second: Marlene. Biographer, Steven Bach noted that in the process she had combined “the Virgin and the not-very”. In addition she also invented a male alter ego, as occasionally she would ask to be indulged by her family as an honouree boy called ‘Paul’, insisting the name was pronounced in the French manner. This was one of the first indicators that Marlene enjoyed playing with gender roles. Knowing that unlike her elder sister Elizabeth, she resembled her father, Marlene took pride in playing the only ‘male’ in the all-female household. Marlene was used to the military: as a daughter of a military man and from her schooling at Auguste-Viktoia Schule in Charlottenburg, which had evolved its system from the Prussian Army regime. Despite her upbringing she was uneasy watching soldiers marching happily off for adventure upon the outbreak of World War I. Dietrich’s first kiss was from a visiting soldier on his way to the front, it awoke both feelings of sexual maturity and an deep appreciation of the severity of war as she acknowledged the probability that he would not return.

Marlene proved gifted in music and in her dancing classes. Her aptitude for the violin was great enough for her mother to have invested in a quality instrument. Bach described: “She exhibited patience in pursuit of the purity the violin requires. Rhythm, modulation, elegance of expression and tone…” Her performance debut June 1917 was for the Red Cross. She
had worn Mexican boy’s costume complete with sombrero and played ‘La Paloma’ while
girl dancers whirled around in colourful skirts and banging tambourines. Perhaps, in view of
the instability in Berlin, Josephine had sent her daughter to further her classical studies at the
Musikhochschule in Weimar around the time that Bauhaus started. Whilst she was popular
at her own school, she also mixed with students and teachers from Bauhaus as they shared
the same boarding house for lodging, meals and studio space.

There are differing accounts for her giving-up the concert violin, a ganglion on her wrist, an
injury that forever weakened her fingering but also that these were mere tales she told to her
mother after deciding she would rather be an actress. With her classical aspirations thwarted
and in the post-war economic climate that had rendered her mother’s widows’ pension to a
pittance Dietrich needed a job. At once she would combine her musical talent with her new
dreams at the cinema, accompanying silent films with her violin. The young Dietrich had
relished going to the cinema and like many was a huge fan of Henny Porton, she would
follow the star to her house, serenading her with her violin or send her gifts.

Due to the lack of foreign fare during the war years, home- grown forms of light
entertainment prospered, and a fully-fledged German film industry had flourished to meet
the demand. Cinema’s influence in other art forms at in the inter war years and its
continuing tradition in music half a century later. During the Republic Berlin was the centre
of European cinema; films like Dr Caligari’s Cabinet (1919) Metropolis (1926) and the
Blue Angel (1930) have become classics and evoke the era they were created.

*Dr Caligari’s Cabinet* (1920) directed by Robert Weine was the most stylistically
significant film of the era, a deliberate attempt to translate German expressionism to the
screen it left any sense of solid reality behind. The painted canvas sets showed houses,
bridges and streets at startling angles, trees cutting across them. The actors, Werner Krauss
as Caligari and Conrad Veidt as the somnambulist matched the backdrops in stunning staged
’strange performances. Veidt had a reputation as beautifully effeminate, angular long and
graceful women adored him and he reportedly retuned the feelings. The dissolving of the
boundaries between various disciplines of art in the film became a feature of expressionism.
Apart from the high budget quality films there were hundreds of cheaper films churned out for the voracious appetite of Berlin’s cinemagoers, mostly melodramatic schlock-horrors. The direct influence of the great classics and the indirect inspiration of the more common type of films of the period on later generations is undeniable, but in addition cinema had strong effect on all manner of arts and entertainment during Weimar and this filmic “essence” has also been ‘passed down’.
Chapter 4

Officially Degenerate

…They [Nazis] thought that jazz music was Jewish…

NO TRUE WOMAN WEARS TROUSERS

This chapter is about who and what was designated unfit to be seen nor listened to due to inherent ‘corruptive’ influences during the twelve years the Nazi party was in power. Designating what constituted degeneracy in art and music was a separate issue from that of dividing between high or low culture; although these shared many corresponding features they were not identical. The National Socialists were determined to eradicate all that Weimar represented and went to great effort to discredit any art or movement that had come to prominence during the proceeding era. To illustrate the ‘immorality’ of such art and music touring exhibitions were mounted: Entartete Kunst in 1937 and Entartete Musik the following year.

Nazis sought scholars who supported their own ideas and identify theoretical shared recognisable commonalities of ethnicity, sexuality, gender or political present in art and music. Spurious papers were written on supposedly recognisable inherent features in composition or performance. ‘Independent’ thought was suspicious as subversive without any other justification. Various styles of music were thought liable to adversely influence people and the most obvious example was jazz as its popularity coincided with the Weimar regime. The popular style was thought to embody corruptive power. Though the Nazis demonised modernist art and music, technology, so much a feature of modernism, seemed not to threaten the regime to the same extent. Jeffrey Herf’s work on reactionary modernism presents a way of explaining this discrepancy.

Devising positive or negative categories of all sorts was not a new practice. This ‘habit’ of praising or reviling various artworks had been employed for centuries and continued during the Republic in spite of the new art’s criteria. However, under the Nazis division between
‘good’ and ‘bad’ was raised to an unprecedented level of obsession. The types and genres of artistic works labelled ‘degenerate’ were disparate and diverse and yet all branded with the same damning ‘iron’. The maligned had no collective front against their critics who were by contrast united in condemnation and taste. The forces of conservatism in German cultural opinion that existed during Weimar were traditional, radical and fanatical. These three groups together managed to silence much of Weimar Berlin’s thriving artistic community and their output.

The large formation of a unified conservative force ensured that there was a welcome reception for experts who gave credence to its view. In addition music scholars such as Hans Pfitzner linked atonality with the treachery of internationalism while Hans Joachim Moser linked merit or weakness in music to race. These testaments of scholars in turn became the ‘legitimate’ foundations for the Nazi’s sweeping anti-communist, anti-Jewish, anti-Negro, anti-American, anti-homosexual and anti-feminist cultural policies. Regularly censorship was arbitrary and not as clear-cut as might be supposed. That aside, the organisation of listing what and who were deemed degenerate not only became a guide for patriotic Germans who wished to feel affirmed in their beliefs but also fuel for those who wished to express rebellion against establishment. Jazz, a style that employed atonality, associated with African-Americans and often played in Europe by Jews was unequivocally deemed degenerate.

Just as Brecht had thought that there was a distinctive way in which music was played in order to make it sound Fascist, referring to a “hollow social gest detectable as “pomp””, so the Fascists insisted there was a recognisable sound to degeneracy. ³ Not as Brecht would have it, in the manner of artistic interpretation, but using the idea that these traits were intrinsic within the music itself. Often there was nothing Jewish, homosexual, communist, ‘Negro’ or feminist in the music they had banned, as all music and art was subject to a complicated and arbitrary ‘game’ of scrutiny.
4.1 Modernism and Ethnicity

Identifying elements in art that would constitute degeneracy for the National Socialists should be a simple task, but as Levi noted that not only were the criteria inconsistent between different aspects of culture but “Goebbels proved equally as unpredictable in matters of musical censorship”. Even without the accession of the Nazis there was a waning of pride nationally of the popularity of works that were considered to be in detriment of the conservatives’ agenda including Weill’s *Dreigroschenoper*. However, within the social climate of early-1930s Germany it became less prudent to be seen supporting or attending anything nationally or morally ‘suspect’.

The Third Reich predictably wanted to distance itself from the preceding era and launched a campaign of eradication of almost everything and everyone that had gained in popularity or notoriety during those years. There was a systematic suppression of certain forms of art and entertainment, some above others. Satirical cabarets and/or art advocating communist ideals were targeted almost immediately as these were thought to directly undermine the Government’s power and popularity. In Berlin these attacks were obvious because it was considered the artistic hub of political dissent and irreverence. After their most unsurprising purges changes became stealthier rather than deprive the public favourite entertainment alternative renditions were provided.

National Socialists also set about re-writing German and World history in their bid to eliminate all forms of opposition and political rhetoric including in art, belief in their ‘version’ of events was aided by the political chaos and chronic unemployment. The barrage of anti-Semitism was set to enforce or reinforce feelings of national pride and German identity and provided a scapegoat for all ills that had befallen Germany including defeat in World War I.

Pseudo-scientific theories about race had already been used as an analytical tool to place value on the moral rectitude of art such as in the work of social and economic historian Werner Sombert, who made much of Jewish people’s oriental and desert origins as way of explanation for their supposed propensity towards various artistic modernist principles. The
lack of vegetation in the desert supposedly caused their “abstract intellectuality” and their “dependence on the artificial, the contrived”. Furthermore, the shifting sand dunes of the Jews biblical environment allegedly enabled them to empathise with others and change personal perspectives. Sombert used his “desert origins” theory to explain why Jews were so adept at living in artificial and contrived urban environments which was why this “nomadic” race could never be truly German.⁶ Therefore, even before Weimar, Jews had been equated with both modernism and the metropolis and thus synonymous with the Republic. In this manner the Weimar era was branded Jewish by Nationalists, referring to it as the Judenrepublik.

These earlier assumptions that associated Jews with modernism were still accepted in the early-1930s; to denigrate one was to degrade the other. Tom Ambrose wrote that unlike their Eastern European counterparts, German Jews “rejected the cultural protection of the ghetto and had moved out into the mainstream of German life.”⁷ German-Jews who sought to integrate with their Christian compatriots were frequently viewed with suspicion, especially from conservative quarters, which particularly begrudged a Jewish person success in prominent fields such as in the sciences and the arts. Levi’s trilogy of main conservative strains in Weimar German society showed the breadth of ill feeling towards not only the new success of Jewish men and women in the arts but also against newly fashionable artistic Modernist practices.

The upper and upper-middle class traditional conservatives who aimed to preserve their position in society, the mostly middle-class radical conservatives who aimed to rescue the ‘spiritual origins’ of German culture, and those who took “support from a plethora of nationalist and fanatical political parties and associations, all rallied against Modern culture mostly indiscriminately.”⁸ All three were repulsed by the “progressive” forms of music and art that rose to prominence that are now associated with the era. Though these three forces were separate in terms of class and thereby their respective rhetoric, ultimately their conclusions were similar; any music that was perceived new, foreign or un-German was detrimental to the German listener. Levi remarked “it was the Nazis who gave practical coherence to such idealism” and “forge a broad alliance of conservative opinion”.⁹ This
alliance provided a groundswell of boisterous support for the National Socialists as they were interested in having influence in art and entertainment as well as most things.

Conservative composers and teachers such as Hans Pfitzner, who taught in Berlin until 1934, concluded that there was correlation between a weak nation and “artistic decay” blaming ‘internationalist Jewish influences’ for a hand in both.\textsuperscript{10} In the same vein as Sombert’s backhanded complements about the Jewish intellect and imagination, Pfitzner praised individual Jewish musicians like Mahler but argued “his compositions were entirely removed in ethos from true German spirit”.\textsuperscript{11}

The musicologist Hans Joachim Moser, the director of the National Academy for church and school music in Berlin (1927-33) and professor at the University of Berlin (1927-34) went further than Pfitzner in his condemnation of Jewry in his theory between the relationship between weakness in music and in race in his three volume \textit{Geschichte der Deutschen Musik} (1922-4). The opinions of Pfitzner and Moser as respected members of the musical fraternity wrote mainly to protect their place in history but as Levi pointed out this “cloaked racism in an aura of musicological respectability”.\textsuperscript{12}

Levi observed Nazi official policy was more concerned with ‘degeneracy’ exemplified in the visual form rather than the audible. Indeed, the 1938 \textit{Entartete Musik Exhibition} was a lesser event than its visually concerned predecessor of the year before. \textit{Entartete Kunst} had been officially opened by Hitler, after and amid a huge promotional campaign, massive public attendance and newspaper interest.\textsuperscript{13} Most of the artworks were accompanied by pseudo-scientific, racist explanations as to why the piece was detrimental to the German psyche along with photographs of the deformed or insane. Despite only six out of the one hundred and twelve artists was Jewish, an advertisement poster for the exhibition superimposed a stereotypical Jewish silhouette in a deliberate attempt to subvert modernist style, though this demonstrated method comparable to the very style they were so fervently denouncing.\textsuperscript{14} The exhibition was purposefully styled in a cramped and chaotic fashion in an attempt to emphasise the supposed bad taste of individual pieces and anarchic spectacle of the whole.
Inspired by the popularity of *Entartete Kunst*, Hans Ziegler decided to organise an equivalent exhibition of music. In 1930 Ziegler had been working in Frick’s Education Ministry in Thuringia, when the province was under Nazi local government. He had also been a theatre administrator after the Nazi accession to National power and in 1937 was admitted to Goebel’s Reichskultursenat. In spite of these credentials, according to Levi Ziegler mounted *Entartete Musik* outside the orbit of any official organisation. There was no published catalogue for the exhibition that used a parade of portraits and photographs of a wide range of contemporary composers that supposedly exemplified degeneracy; some of their music was made available via gramophone recordings in six listening booths. The exhibition’s main focus was on the degeneracy implicit in music of the Weimar period and for the most part captions accompanied each exhibit that pointed to or cast aspersions on their character and/or their racial origins.

The centre of the exhibition hall was given over to a giant poster exclaiming the “pernicious influence of jazz”. Levi Illustrated the way in which categories and their attributes that things were ‘simplified’ for the German public:

Ziegler opened the proceedings with a specially prepared lecture which he called *Abrechnung* (reckoning). The contents of his speech were published subsequently in a small booklet notable for its provocative illustrations, which included a front cover displaying a grossly caricatured negro playing a saxophone with a Star of David on his lapel and reprints of some of the material in the [*Entartete Kunst*] exhibition itself. Using a choice quotation from Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* to justify his crusade (“the human being who recognises the danger, who sees with his own eyes the possibility of remedy, has the damn duty and obligation not to work on the quiet, but to openly meet and overcome the sickness”)…

Ziegler’s combining ethnicities and musical forms in a pictorial figure implied ridicule and was packaged for impact and his use of Hitler’s words was an attempt to bring ‘gravitas’ and/or an official stamp of approval.

Henze’s quote used in the beginning of this chapter is only part of the quotation given in full below:
They thought that jazz music was Jewish – ‘black music’, they called it. Jazz was absolutely taboo, and jazz composers and jazz performers were considered like outcasts of mankind, beastly music making, animalistic.\(^{17}\)

Hans Werner Henze grew up in Nazi Germany, but the worry about the negative effects of jazz started before Hitler was Chancellor. Internationalism, atonality, motivic composition and cacophony all receded in comparison to the terror felt by conservatives in response to jazz and its huge popularity.

### 4.2 Jazz

In 1923 recording went from an acoustic to an electronic process and the radio or wireless was born. Sound waves transformed into invisible electrical energy, transmitted by a wireless signal and then converted back into waveform. To a listener, removed from the source of the sound, the process must have seemed like magic. Although some of the corresponding technology had initial technical difficulties such as microphones not reproducing the high frequencies that were necessary for covering the overtones for the separating high pitched instruments one to another whilst losing low pitched ones in a ‘fog’, the commercial potential for such a device soon became apparent. To get round these limitations compositions that featured instruments like the oboe, clarinet and saxophone were chosen for broadcast. Jazz proved to be ideal for early radio.

J. Bradford Robinson went to great lengths to show that the music called ‘jazz’ played in Weimar Germany was not ‘authentic’ jazz. Remarking on the worthless German currency of the time as a deterrent for African-American jazz exponents and the lateness of the availability of genuine recorded US disks for radio broadcast, he deduced that German jazz had developed in “parallel with, but quite separately from, the music of America’s jazz age”.\(^{18}\)

To concede to Bradford Robinson, this German jazz did not sound like most American jazz, but then most forms of European jazz incorporated indigenous styles of each respective region. Even within the United States itself, cities like New Orleans, Chicago and New York produced different styles of jazz, having developed regional ‘accents’. Jazz was an intrinsically organic genre of music that reflected the musicians who played it. For young Europeans one of the most attractive features of jazz was its American ‘otherness’, and the response to this otherness did not necessarily constitute ‘separateness’.
Bradford Robinson recounted there were few appearances of African-Americans of note that visited Berlin to give authentic (Black) renditions of jazz for Berliner musicians to hear directly. Still, it cannot be ruled out that incidents of cultural exchange did not take place in a less direct fashion.\(^\text{19}\) Robinson’s assertion that only Black musicians playing jazz could be exclusively thought of as authentic is inaccurate at best since by the 1920s the style was not new and had spread beyond the realms of US ‘race’ records and segregated shows. Moreover, his claim’s inference that German jazz composers and musicians endeavoured to be less original than their American contemporaries is false since originality was at the core of jazz. Its ‘degenerate’ reputation stemmed partly from the consistent variables that were as numerous as the composers or artists that wrote or played it. As an unquantifiable entity, with improvisation as its key feature, it was considered unscholarly and bereft of means to measurable its musical merit.

In Berlin, as in many other places in Germany, Jewish musicians were customarily the main players in light and popular music; quick to respond to fashion and taste they embraced jazz to meet the demand. Apart from native Jewish musical talent, Berlin was also newly home to immigrant Ashkenazi musicians who were especially adept at incorporating new elements into existing songs, covering ‘hits’, or creating new songs in popular forms and styles. The term \textit{klezmer} comes from the same word in Hebrew meaning musical instruments denoting a small band of secular music players though the word is used more frequently to indicate the popular music played by East-European Jewish musicians. They played a variety of music for a variety occasions and to Jewish and non-Jewish audiences. Musicians who had grown-up around \textit{Klezmer} traditions were especially employable in Berlin’s numerous cabarets and nightclubs because of their “non-formal” skills of learning by ear and improvisation.\(^\text{20}\)

Jazz was the popular music of the 1920s, and if there was a lack of original and authentic jazz exponents within Europe this was also due to the demand for live jazz musicians being greater than the supply. Some musicians responded to this need by delivering an approximated imitation of the form to audiences. Jazz was associated with cosmopolitan cities, modernism, sex, nightlife and above all America, and most audiences were more interested in what jazz represented than with authenticity of the form, making the most of
any group of musicians called a ‘jazz band’. Though many distinguishing features of jazz, like that of improvisation were often lost, it did not seem to matter to the average European listener since a jazz band’s primary purpose became to backdrop energetic new dances like the Charleston and the Black Bottom.

Apart from German jazz’ alternative development to its American ‘cousin’ it adopted a different ‘other’ and this was perhaps of prime importance in forming the German version. Since Jews were the primary players of jazz in Germany, a legitimate German ‘other’ became identified with the form. This may also account for the Nazi’s fusion of Negro and Jewish attributes with jazz, which in turn made it even more attractive to young audiences.

If jazz represented the most diabolical taboo for the Nationalist Socialists then what constituted fit and proper in German music was more problematical, particularly in new music. Brecht’s idea that music was mere ‘subject matter’ until the musician’s ‘gest’ would ignite it with a decisive quality was not of interest to the Nazi regime. Although the poster of Entartet Kunst was evidence that they understood the principle of the reflective pose, National Socialist sympathisers continued to espouse theory that all art was imbued with meaning and worth within the score, for instance, musical devices associated with modernism such as sprechstimme were frowned on unreservedly. Stylistically, like the period’s preferred corresponding architectural style, music had to become a ‘monument’ for the ‘Thousand Years Reich’. Henze reflected that rather than the ‘neo-Germanic’ sound the Nazi’s wanted, most of the officially ‘blessed’ music was closer to his description of “neo-Neanderthal”.

Music created in the period was supposed to arouse patriotism and heroism. This was not a simple task and many composers and works regularly were switched from sanctioned to non-sanctioned and vice versa. Carl Orff, a supposed favourite of the Reich was castigated in 1933 for his overuse of percussion in Carmina Burana, the ‘excess’ signifying primitivism and rhythmic patterns its ‘foreignness’. This was before the choral work became approved years later, whereas Wagner continued to be championed in spite of a waning in popularity by 1938. Overall, Levi concluded the classical “status-quo” was not too altered during the Third Reich, as the regime favoured traditional works rather than new.
Composers such as Max Trapp and Gottfried Müller made music that placated the ruling party by following pro-Nazi guidelines set out in 1933. These works tended to incorporate variations of themes and even ‘heroic’ keys already associated with the Nazis’ list of great composers or as in Müller’s case played tribute to Nazi sympathies as in his Deutsche Heldenreliquem. Levi suggested that pro-Nazi music critics responded positively to the more ‘neutral’ Richard Strauss’ Olympic Hymn because it was written in the key of Eb and “submerged in the musical argument Duetscheland Über Alles” could be heard. In the same manner popular music used German folk songs, patriotic themes or military references to avoid castigation; there even pro-Nazi cabaret written and performed in the vein. In composers’ eagerness to please, much of the music brought about comments like Henze’s and assertions of sonic sentimentality and melodrama; any attempt at pastiche in these instances was entirely incidental.

Hitler’s pro-Nazi cabaret and popular theatre was written about in Klaus Mann’s book Mephisto. Set in 1936 it was a tale of an actor renowned for playing the figure in Faust. As the actor’s portrayal of Mephisto changed in line with the political climate’s dictate the actor’s life parallels that of Faust. The actor, stranded in Germany as a prisoner of his craft’s use of his native tongue wanted to simply do his job.

4.3 Modernism, Bauhaus and Technology

Elements that had endeared jazz to its audiences and enraged conservatives and the political right were comparable across modern art. No movement embodied the contemporary response to internationalism, futurism and primitivism better than Bauhaus. During the Weimar era Bauhaus gained in national and international reputation and influence, assuring that the outside world looked to Germany as a centre for innovation in design, architecture and other art forms. However, this achievement brought criticism from some quarters, Bauhaus represented the metropolis and all that this implied.

During the inter war years the local population of Weimar and surrounding Thuringia had been outraged by the ‘scandalous’ school. The artistic inhabitants at Bauhaus did not mix well with their more provincial neighbours and the distance between the two groups nurtured a myth of Bauhaus as a hotbed of radicalism and debauchery. At some levels this
cultivated and enhanced the school’s anti-establishment reputation at the time and in retrospect, but it also meant that the ‘goings-on’, practice and products of Bauhaus were examined very closely for evidence of anti-Germanness.

Though individual practitioners and teachers had political leanings, under the collective of Bauhaus they were actively persuaded by the directorship of Walter Gropius to act apolitically or as politically ‘silent’ as possible. Though this official policy ensured non-political activity or advocacy from inside the school, the outside view of the art college was that it was a “centre of Bolshevists and Spartacists” In ‘The Bauhaus and the Weimar Republic – Struggles for Political and Cultural Hegemony’ Justus Ulbricht stated that unlike the faculty at the School that only showed solidarity and unity when “defending themselves against external enemies” those ‘enemies’ were very much aligned in their extreme anti-Bolshevism, anti-Semitism, nationalist thinking and aesthetic traditionalism and attacked Bauhaus continuously and with conviction. Konrad Nonn attacked Bauhaus from Berlin as early as 1923, before he became, in 1929, a leading figure in the Nazi ‘Battle League for German Culture’ together with Paul Schultze-Naumburg, who subsequently “proceeded to expunge every trace of the Bauhaus tradition in Weimar.”

The discrediting of Bauhaus principles and practice pre and post-1933 by the National Socialists had meant that the School became associated with the Left, Modernism and degeneracy. Furthermore, the closure of Bauhaus in Berlin by the Nazis in 1933 re-entrenched the view that Bauhaus was in direct conflict with the new regime and contravened their ideas on German art. Subsequently this reading proved useful to both East and West during the Cold War conflict, which upheld these apparent clear lines of distinction for their own ends.

It should follow that in accordance with the Nazis’ hatred of Weimar’s modernity they should have also reviled modernist ideas of revolution via a technological advancement. Yet, the Third Reich has since become connected with visions of the technological utopia of gargantuan public buildings, Volkswagens driving on immaculate autobahns, military equipment and industrialised mass-execution. Jeffrey Herf postulated on this theoretical
dilemma that resulted in his idea of ‘reactionary modernism’. He thought the success of rapid capitalist industrialisation without the support of an adequate bourgeoisie or liberal class was at the core of democracy’s failure in Germany and had led to the groundswell of extreme political forces. This coupled with the “reconciliation of romanticism and modern technology became a matter of national identity”. Thus, given that the nation was created in 1871 in the wake of romanticism and the beginning of high modernism, the German state became synonymous with a utopian-industrial style that fragmented in Weimar as an aid to self-analysis then solidified into self-glorification under the new German regime.

In addition, Herf noticed that Nazis learned the “language of Kultur” utilised words such as ‘authenticity’ and applied them to issues of racial purity and nationalism in the arts. Herf expanded on the regime’s ‘profundity’ of key words in a list of opposites. Nazi German/good words such as soul, experience and form contrasted directly to a host of non-German/bad words, in these instances: mind, analysis and chaos-formlessness, in keeping with Nazi governance. This list of non-German/bad words were judged likely to corrupt the purity of the German/good spirit and corrosive of its society but in turn would provide yet more clues as to what was thought ‘powerful’ enough to challenge such a regime. Herf’s columns of polar-opposites are reminiscent of Theweleit’s examined in chapter 1; this theme of the weak/feminine and the strong/masculine principles reoccurs. Kate Haste deduced that National Socialist rhetoric defined the party and the state as totally masculine and the masses “feminine”. Haste noticed Hitler’s engenderment of the masses was shown as early as in Mein Kampf and his “contempt for women and the masses”. Hitler appeared to also confuse his would-be supporters with children:

The psyche of the broad masses is accessible only to what is strong and uncompromising. Like a woman whose inner sensibilities are not so much under the sway of abstract reasoning but are always subject to the influence of a vague emotional longing for the strength that completes her being, and who would rather bow to the strong man than dominate the weakling - in like manner the masses of the people prefer the ruler to the suppliant and are filled with a stronger sense of mental ability by a teaching that brooks no rival than by a teaching which offers them a liberal choice. They have very little idea of how to make such a choice, and thus they are prone to feel that they have been abandoned. They feel very little shame at being terrorised intellectually and they are scarcely conscious of the fact that their freedom as humans beings is impudently abused; and thus they have not the slightest suspicion of the intrinsic fallacy of the whole doctrine. They see only the ruthless force and brutality of its determined utterances, to which they always submit.
Once the Nazis came to power, Joseph Goebbels, Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda set about putting in to practice the party’s theory by ‘restoring’ men and women’s “separate domains”.  

4.4 Women and Sexuality

From its beginnings in 1921 women were not part of the hierarchy of the Nazi party. Its manifesto only referenced women once, the point assured protection for mothers; the Nazi ideal woman was firstly and foremost a mother. Outside this perfect model women did not seemed to exist, as Haste pointed out that in the pomp and pageantry of the enormous 30th January 1933 celebration parade “there was not a single women”.

Society ladies who supported the National Socialists were needed to bestow, what Haste termed “respectability on the party” as many people still considered them “red-neck[s]”. Magda Goebbels epitomised the Nazi ideal, pretty, fair, racially pure, mother of six children and who would sacrifice everything for the ‘higher ideals’ of the Nazi’s cause; which she proved at the end of World War II by poisoning her children before herself because she could not bare to think of them in a world without the Führer and National Socialism.

Steps were taken to persuade women designated ‘genetically fit’ to procreate and discourage others who were not. Apart from some short bursts of success in the initial stages of implementation, overall and long-term none of the measures proved successful.

It was no coincidence that the ideal Nazi woman was in stark contrast with the female icons of Weimar. The virtues of home-grown, ‘natural’ women were extolled whilst the exotic and erotic beauties were berated. The fashions and pursuits of the previous decade’s metropolitan and cosmopolitan women were denigrated as artificial and/or imitating men. The sophisticated and emancipated ‘type’ that had became synonymous with Berlin was regularly referred to as and “agent of degeneracy”. Sport and physical culture was actually encouraged for health, as women’s bodies became property of the Reich, Hurst stated “Health was women’s duty, for their bodies were receptacles for the future fitness of the race”.
This chapter has considered the terms and definitions of what constituted degeneracy in art and music at this time. Criteria for what was deemed fit or unfit for the German public to see and hear has been shown but also what the purpose was of eradicating ‘progressive’ forms of music and art. As Levi pointed out both the Weimar musicologists who abhorred modern music and those who made it, legitimised the National Socialists obsession with categorising everything and everyone either good or bad.

Germany’s ‘other’ i.e. its Jews, and other others became less distinguishable one to another during the Third Reich as they became equated with various elements of ‘degenerate’ modernism. Whereas, modernity was a response to events in history that in turn offered new opportunities for social standing in society. What is more, Jews’ apparent lack of identity, or conversely a ‘shifting’ oriental identity, that was thought facilitated their apparent easy assimilation is as false as the view that suggested Blacks possessed hereditary gifts of originality (childlike/primitive) or capable of complex rhythm (non-Western/primitive) thus providing the only source of authenticity in Jazz.

By briefly outlining both the official Degenerate Art exhibition (1937) and it unofficial musical offspring (1938) it is possible to see how the German public was presented with an ill-informed and deliberately de-formed view of many forms of modern art and music. The Entartet Musik Exhibition’s most central exhibit was the derision of jazz perhaps because its popularity presented the biggest threat. The style’s greatest asset was that it was variable and contained a multitude of possibilities for those who played it and could be used for different commercial ventures. the Nazis demonised Jazz and its musicians, which subsequently made the style an audible symbol of defiance. Aside from primitivism, for Europeans, the American ‘otherness’ proved attractive as fantasies of the ‘New World’ and echoed all the ‘democratic’ opportunities of the music in a pristine place of the future, away from ‘old Europe’

The label of degeneracy stamped onto Bauhaus stems from its early years as a metropolitan entity inside an ultra conservative provincial location. The apolitical stance inside the school never convinced Bauhaus’ enemies who were unified in their condemnation. However, the same accusations that eventually closed the school down in Berlin at the ascendance of the
National Socialists also ensured longevity through future designers, artists and musicians. Ironically, the inverse of what the scholars championed as ‘true’, ‘German’ and ‘good’ became the weapon with which to taunt the establishment and to express personal grievance against the state.
Chapter 5

Travelling in Time: From One Berlin to Another

It was only a matter of time before the East German State collapsed into the arms of the West.¹

The previous chapters outlined how Weimar Berlin became the centre of fervent artistic activity until the Nazis suppressed creative freedom but ironically, the city’s reputation grew after 1945 through the ‘spin’ of National Socialist propaganda. This chapter is about the history and social conditions that prevailed in Europe after 1945 until the tail end of the Cold War. The impact of World War II reverberated around the world and its significance is impossible to overstate. Germany, divided into East and West along the lines of the two leading ideologies of capitalism and Communism eventually resulted in Europeans living in fear of nuclear annihilation spun from the superpowers’ stalemate.

In order to find out how British musicians and fans related to Weimar culture in the later part of the Cold War period, shapes of the pieces of the ‘jigsaw’ must be found before examining how they fitted together. In Britain, from 1945-75, sources of information on Germany were four-fold: firstly, from British history books, films and documentaries; secondly, through word of mouth; thirdly, from fictional books, television, comics, and films made retrospectively; and lastly from contemporary news stories. All of these sources were readily available and World War II was a favoured topic for discussion for many years.

Post-war fiction nearly always marked Germans out as covertly sinister and/or super-efficient and invariably cast as villains. Often depicted as cunning but disfigured or handicapped, which was not a representation of villains that is exclusive to Germans, the image of a German was as likely to be blond, tall and well built, attractive, clever and disciplined, in fact not dissimilar from how Nazi’s propaganda depicted the perfect Aryan. The British hero against the evil German was a typical scenario acted in playgrounds around the country. The powerful glamour of the villain was often more seductive an image than the British or even American hero since they had the power to instil fear. It was either a
‘sinister’ connotation of ‘Germaness’ or the alternative “picture of the average German as a brutal and arrogant bully” that fed into the iconography and music and became a useful tool of anti-establishment expression for various rock genres and subcultures.²

Davies divided what he termed as “Europe’s wasted years” into three: the disintegration of “Allied unity” 1945-48, the continuing breakdown of those relations in the Cold War period, 1948-89 and (Mikhail) Gorbachev’s reign in the Soviet Union 1985-91.³ While Davies gave a comprehensive and balanced account of European History 1945-91, it was too broad and long a period for detailed discussion here. Though it is necessary to explore the immediate post-war period as a setting for what followed, it would be fairer to say that this ‘unity’ had served its purpose, namely victory over the common enemy, post-war relations merely re-adjusted to suit the purpose of each nation.

Loosely dividing the world into two, irrespective of what would become the Eastern Bloc or the Western nations, the powerful were entirely dependent on ‘selling’ diametrically opposed principles to their respective populations, thus, the act of division was inevitable and the ‘demonisation’ of the ‘other side’ suited both. It is not essential that the ‘Gorbachev years’ need to be ‘framed’. It is sufficient that along with the demolition of the Berlin Wall, and with it a breakdown of many Communist (Soviet style) ideas and practices that polarised tension eased, and musicians, East and West, explored other ‘otherness’ for inspiration.⁴

Foreign visitors to Berlin in the 1970s and ‘80s were liable to be different from their predecessors. The glamorous element catering to contemporary and nostalgic tastes remained a strong draw but more people came to experience the kind of anti-glamorous reality that Isherwood and Doblin had proffered in their fiction. It was the capital of capitals, where individuals could re-invent themselves as extremely as they dared; once again the geographical placement of the city marked it out as international rather than German. Berlin continued to be as exciting and dangerous as ever with a challenging arts scene, colourful nightlife as well as political extremist groups pursuing their own agendas, not to mention spies from East and West. Many young West Germans were attracted to the city’s drama while for others it was also a useful way of escaping military or community service.
5.1 Social and economic issues

Many of Germany’s cities were in ruins by the end of World War II. As in the aftermath of the previous world war, starvation and diseases were rife. The country was divided into four zones: French, British, American and Soviet.\(^5\) In the American sector the new anti-Nazi laws meant that one in four adults was “found to be liable” to have contravened these laws.\(^6\) Citizens who considered themselves morally impeccable were newly informed that their behaviour was wholly repugnant, as skeletons literally came back to haunt them. Teachers, professors and other dignitaries were unceremoniously led away to ascertain degrees of possible involvement with the former regime. People were adrift as newly released inmates from death and concentration camps and refugees poured in from lands now under the control of new powers. Most of these had no home to go to.

Aside from the human cost, the war had ruined most of Europe financially and destroyed its infrastructure. After the years of reported new technological wonders, speed and labour saving gadgets, people were reduced to moving rubble digging with nothing but their hands. France and Britain, although officially victorious, were broken and bankrupt, the Soviet Union had incurred terrible losses but through its leadership’s resolute efforts to ensure compensation and strategic manoeuvring was gaining power on the world stage even if it meant more hardships, not only for East Germans but also Soviet citizens. The United States had more power than when the war had started. World power now lay decidedly between the Soviet Union and the United States and as Howarth believed, “If Stalin had had split Europe into two, Truman proposed to divide the world”.\(^7\)

In the endless causes and effects of history aspects are often played down or ignored. Even innocuous or seemingly positive events are inescapably linked to those that are deemed negative. Besides an individual’s viewpoint of what is acceptable to talk about or remember, is a communal and politically controlled ‘thinking’ on past events. Post-1945, many Germans deliberately or subconsciously avoided talking about time in between the wars as well as the wars. For the many who had been members of the Nazi party (of which there were seven million) or took part in atrocities there was adequate reason to have ‘forgotten’ the past, but for average Germans there also seemed to have been an acute awareness of what one was or was not supposed to recall.
In order to bring to justice the many war criminals that had ‘disappeared’, the Länder governments formed a central body. In the Federal Republic, fifteen years after the war, ministers and officials were among those investigated as former Nazis, for example, Theodor Oberländer, who in 1960 was Federal Minister for Refugees. Terence Prittie remarked on this event two years later, “Reminders of this kind are deeply disturbing. For they throw established society into question.”

Prittie had been a prisoner of war during World War II and returned there in 1946 as a correspondent. The scandal retrenched the common international negative view of Germans and all things German. Prittie pleaded for understanding of “the average German citizen” as “the Nazi era left a state of material chaos, but the mental confusion that was also left behind was much worse.”

Prittie thought it was the German propensity for a “quest” that was misinterpreted as fervent by others, reckoning “it may have not been coincidence that so many soldiers carried Goethe’s Faust in their knapsacks during the Second World War”. This adventuresome spirit may have been a genuine, shared national trait for many but it may also have been a necessary display of allegiance to classic German heroic romanticism among the ranks. Prittie also used the enduring popularity of Goethe’s book as an illustration of “dualism of the German spirit”, recognising Germans’ identification with Faust as a natural empathy with the character’s “immense capacity” to embody extreme polarities.

Alexandra Ritchie cultivated this link having entitled her book on the history of Berlin Faust’s Metropolis. This inherent understanding and ease of duality may explain why the post-war division of such an atypically German city became a fittingly German symbol.

During the following decades investment, mainly through the Marshall Plan, in new transport, general infrastructure and industry paid off. West Germany had a chance to rebuild its economy and in many cases gained a competitive edge over many of its ‘unaided’ neighbours. The Marshall Plan was named after General George Marshall, American Secretary of State, who first announced his plan at Harvard University, June 1947. The plan, for the Americans, was to primarily counter the spread of Communism and was finally given the go-ahead March 1948. It was to give financial aid for any European country in exchange for “economic co-operation, agreement to share information about resources, and membership of a permanent organisation to oversee the working of the plan.”
Good implementation of foreign investment brought relative but noticeable personal material wealth for many West Germans even in comparison to other Western European nations but particularly to the Socialist East. Stereotypical characteristics of this ‘new German’ were to display wealth by the ownership of new acquisitions and a pious attitude towards paid work. Talking about the ‘average German worker’ in the early 1960s, Prittie noted the devotional attitude towards employment rather than politics, “With this country divided between two power blocs and under enemy occupation, he saw little purpose in worrying about big issues. So he concentrated on his job, spurred on by the desire to build up what he had lost.”

Besides the benefit of foreign aid and a strong work ethic, the Federal Republic was free from the burden of manufacturing arms, since it was forbidden from doing so. In addition the trade unions called for comparatively few strikes, from 1950-60 industrial production rose by 161 per cent and the deficit of homes reduced from six to one and a half million.

The growth of the economy had meant there was a shortage of labour in certain jobs and workers from other parts of Western Europe were tempted enough to fill the gaps in employment, though the largest group of economic migrants came from Turkey. Officially, by 1973, there were 2.6 million foreign workers registered in Germany, unofficially there were many more.

The 1960s United States-led youth counter-culture drew attention to the apparent lack of personal and shared ‘happiness’ in Western values; the ‘average German’ fitted the stereotype adequately. The physical, immediate reminders of war had been erased sufficiently for a younger generation of Germans to question firstly, the true value of Germany’s new material wealth, secondly the former generation’s role during the Third Reich and thirdly the acceptance of the United States as an “enemy becoming a partner” at whatever price.

With all traces of the National Socialist cultural industry eradicated, North-American culture had filled the void. Ritchie noted a small critical backlash had developed against the cultural import of Germany’s victors by the 1970s. Post-war American culture that had been “welcomed as a breath of fresh air” was later thought “a corrupting imposition of hypercapitalism, materialism and Kitsch”. John Tomlinson acknowledged the “dominant
presence” of US-led media and cultural industries but qualified these entities were most easily perceived as imperialist because they were the most public.\textsuperscript{18} Therefore, it is no surprise that coupled with its conditional financial investment, the ‘gift’ of Americana was interpreted by some as the typical behaviour of a post-war colonial paymaster.

By the 1970s the FRG government found themselves at ‘war’ with groups like Baader-Meinhoff and the RAF. 1977 was called the ‘German Autumn’ on account of the number and scale of German terrorist activities by subversives who likened the acts of United States and West German leaders to those of the Nazis. If some West Germans thought their government puppets of the United States, East Germans could not help but notice their state’s fate was inextricably linked to that of the Soviet Union. Soviet style statues, signs and slogans were publicly prominent wherever one travelled throughout the Eastern Bloc.

In the later stages of the war atrocities committed against Soviet citizens by the German militia were revisited upon Germans, most notably women, by Soviet troops. Aside from the fear generated as a result of German propaganda exaggerating Soviet crimes, there were few left who had not been, at least indirectly, affected by actual offences by the time the war was over. This made many flee westwards to non-Soviet occupied zones, as did others, loath to live under Communism. Nevertheless, there were many Germans who had been awaiting socialism as form of political evolution and saw the newly powerful United States influence as a backward step. In April 1946 the Social Democrats and Communist parties united and became the SED, which would rule East Germany until its demise. Though not in the same numbers, there was also migration east to a ‘brave new world’ for example, the singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann who emigrated from Hamburg, aged seventeen in 1953. In line with the Soviet Marxist aspiration, many Europeans saw the “inevitability of the transformation of capitalist society into socialist society”.\textsuperscript{19}

Though the Western viewpoint saw one dictatorship: Communism, replacing another: Fascism, East Germans were told that the Nazi regime came to power under a capitalist democratic system and all fault and exploitation was in that system. Anna Funder interviewed many East German citizens and observed: “It seemed as if they actually believed the Nazis had come from and returned to the western parts of Germany, and
somehow separate from them”; through Soviet liberation Marx’s ‘revolutionary transformation’ had taken place.\textsuperscript{20}

The Soviet Union took reparations from the German sector and an agreed percentage from other sectors in any form it could, stripping many German assets.\textsuperscript{21} Though defensible, the whole-scale dismantlement and redeployment of the scarce resources meant that East Germany was bereft of any means to re-build itself save for manual labour. Even in comparison with most of war-torn Europe, including the remainder of Germany, East German conditions were dire. Any ‘awareness’ of the Soviet economic policy as damaging was dismissed and the extreme austerity of the post-war period was explained in Leninist terms, as part of the unavoidable “political transition period”.\textsuperscript{22}

This ‘transition period’ could arguably be said to have lasted as long as the late 1980s and had a resultant side effect. Although having a building programme as ambitious as its Western neighbour, much of the physical ‘face’ of the German Democratic Republic was not destroyed, re-built or changed unless deemed necessary, such as essential housing or when creating political landmarks. Removing landmarks of the past and in order to demonstrate the new ideology, the Kaiser’s Palace was replaced with the Palast der Republik or People’s Palace (finished 1976). Apart from these examples much of the GDR looked startlingly ‘preserved’ in a post-war, even pre-war condition to visitors.

As previously stated, the Communist party line professed repeatedly to despise the Nazis and aligned the previous regime with the new enemy of Western democracy and capitalism. Contrary to this, there were many corresponding features between life in the National Socialist state, and the socialist state that replaced it. As under the Nazis, Communists officially divided and classified good from bad Germans including cultural figures. Revisions that deemed Germans ‘good’, as in the cases of Goethe and Beethoven, also made them ‘forerunners of Communists’ and thus East German, whilst Hitler and all fascists became West German. This distinction had nothing to do with place of birth or the geographical location where the individual lived and/or died. In many cases it was a purely subjective selection; occasionally classifications changed as ‘enemies of the people’ became officially ‘figures of national importance’ or vice versa.\textsuperscript{23}
After some Nazi party members were sacked from public jobs they were often reinstated having officially changed their “political livery from brown to red”, though “No historian was permitted to link East Germany with its Nazi past”. Other methods Communists employed can be directly compared with the previous regime, in some instances all too easily.\textsuperscript{24} The \textit{Arbeitsbuch} (log of employment, illustration ii) first issued to a Berlin working class woman during the Third Reich, within which entries were continued in the same manner under the East German Communist regime until 1953, evidence the Soviet zone did not have sufficient funds for replacing basic documents, even if it bore the much-loathed swastika and Nazi regalia. It also implies the maintenance of the strict policing of all its inhabitants’ activity.

Similarly, the Nazi’s regulation of youth activity was noticeable in the GDR. The state officially exalted its nation’s youth, an expectation that this should be reciprocated. There were many ways the young could demonstrate their devotion to the GDR. Children were encouraged to join the Young Pioneers at six until nine years old and the Thälmann Pioneers between ten and thirteen. At fourteen they could take part in the ceremonial \textit{Jengendweihe} in order to join the Freie Deutsche Jugend (FDJ), or Free German Youth. Richie revealed indoctrination and a militaristic style to these clubs “from a young age they took part in mock manoeuvres and complicated war games and visited military installations”. They were equally a good source of cheap labour for, among others, the ‘FDJ Berlin Initiative’ of which there were 377 different projects including planting trees, converting industrial wasteland into parklands and taking part in mass new housing projects such as the one in Marzahn.\textsuperscript{25} An individual’s good record in the FDJ was necessary for access into higher education along with proven family commitment to the Party. For young adults with less conformist tendencies official ‘alternative’ youth cultural pursuits were still officially organised.\textsuperscript{26} If the Federal Republic offered limited options of American style cultural activities and products, there was a choice to forgo those ‘pleasures’ but in the GDR there was no choice and no opting out of officially sanctioned activities.

Western-style music was officially banned for approximately thirty years on grounds of its inherent subversive nature and probability to corrupt and lack of moral value, which, just as in the West, made it all the more alluring. In areas in proximity to the Western border, including West Berlin, it was impossible to control radio and television reception. The Stasi
(secret police) and their informers were especially interested in young people, who were spied on in public and in private for signs of possible subversive activity. This included listening to Western music and or wearing associative ‘uniforms’ such as blue jeans. Any youth organisation had to be particularly careful as to what type music was played or listened to by its members. Officially sanctioned ‘popular’ music had to conform to a ‘people-friendly’ message. Just as in the West, German youths’ bad behaviour and their preferred music became synonymous; hence a ban on such music was thought to eliminate any possible future anti-social conduct.

In 1965 there had been a “rock riot” in Leipzig. Ryback wrote that this incident and other more general “outbreaks of hooliganism and youth violence” were on the agenda of the Central Committee of East Germany’s Communist Party eleventh plenary assembly a month later; the Committee “decided to eradicate manifestations of Western pop culture in East Germany”. Walter Ulbricht, then head of state, despaired of the banality of Western pop songs while Erich Honecker declared that East Germany had been caught unaware of the corruptive power of Western beat music and such an influence was wholly “underestimated”.27 Initially after Honecker had been appointed party leader in May 1971 he ended the ban on watching Western television and relaxed dress codes, but as Large stated, “For all the early talk about openness and experimentation, Honecker’s regime kept its citizens on a very tight leash”. 28

5.2 Eye of the Storm: Berlin

As the first occupying force in the capital, Soviet troops took full advantage of the situation, some of it on command in the knowledge their time in sole charge was limited. Once there, the United States, British and French forces divided up Berlin similarly to Germany. The reduced population of Berliners rose again as numbers of homeless and starving in the capital increased. This was mainly due to the arrival of displaced ethnic Germans coming to a city of which where forty per cent of it was destroyed, along with any sense of order.29 By 1947 US and British national zones merged and relations between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union grew tenser, in Berlin the relationship was a virtual standoff.

In June 1948, the Federal state’s constitution was written and 1st September its parliamentary council convened at Bonn; by 1949 Bonn was made West Germany’s official
capital. On 3rd August 1948 Stalin demanded that the German Democratic Republic be internationally recognised with Berlin as its capital, though the nation had to wait until 7th October 1949 before ‘self-government’. East German leaders were thought ineffectual in Berlin even if they had been ‘schooled’ in Moscow. The occupying force supplemented rule and discipline by severe censorship, withdrawing the right to travel, even by bicycle, without a license. Berlin’s geopolitical position also meant the Western Allies were keen not to relinquish power. They insisted that in order keep control of West Berlin, it never should be governed by the Federal Constitution Court, unlike the rest of the FRG; this act rendered West Berliners, as Large termed “second-class citizens”.30

A huge amount of funding went to rebuild West Berlin, for it was to be a ‘show-piece satellite’ or island of Western democracy within the Communist Eastern Bloc. In response to the imminent formation of the Federal Republic of Germany and the replacement the Reichsmark with the Deutschmark within Western sectors, the Soviets closed all ground access to West Berlin for almost a year, 1948-49. The Western powers responded to the Soviet’s blockade with daring airlifts of essentials goods for 318 days to the two million inhabitants. This drama all added to the ‘heroic’ reputation of West Berlin; the gesture, though necessary, was fully exploited for its symbolic value. The ‘threat’ of B29 bombers sent to British bases in the summer of 1948, which may or may not have been carrying atomic bombs added to the heightened atmosphere. The fractured city, already a centre for bartering and the black market became synonymous with bought information, espionage and underhand political exchange.

The Berlin wall began as barbed wire in 1961, and through its incarnations in different materials grew ever higher and wider. It not only divided the city in two but also surrounded West Berlin. People leaving East Germany for the West went from a steady flow to panic as rules and restrictions became tighter. By the 1970s, a strange ‘game’ ensued, as West German protesters were ‘allowed’ to ‘occupy’ ‘useless’ East German soil called Lennè-Dreieck without interference whilst taunting West Berlin police. More sinisterly, GDR authorities gave shelter to anti-capitalist terrorist fugitives.

West Berlin was not an easy place to live and work for most people. Due in part to the blockade, unemployment grew to over thirty one per cent by 1950. In the same year the
**Berlinhilfe** or Berlin aid was introduced, followed later by various tax breaks as inducements for West Germans to stay. The wall’s omnipresence was inescapable and its existence contributed to the haemorrhaging of ‘normal’ workers and their families.

West Berlin’s political activism was present in the early 1960s by dada-like groups such as Subversive Action but these did not have the reputation for violence, unlike groups that were formed after June 2nd 1967. A student demonstration against the visiting Shaar of Iran, outside the Deutsche Oper where he was attending a performance of the *Magic Flute*, turned violent and a student named Benno Ohnesorg died in the fray. Mayer Albertz later blamed the intensity of response of the police on West Berlin’s “geopolitical vulnerability”; the response of the journalist Ulrike Meinhof and other would-be activists was justification for better organisation and more violence.31

Other incidents, such as the shooting of the Rudi Dutschke, a Sozialistischer Deutsche Studentenbund member, by Rightist Joseph Bachmann 11th April 1968 sparked off a violent riot aimed at Deutsche’s former employer, the conservative publication *Springer Verlag*. The city was also refuge to Andreas Baader and Gudren Ensslin, who together with Meinhof formed the group known today as Baader-Meinhof. The main targets of groups like these were symbols of the West’s consumerist society and FRD ‘capitalist conspirators’. The Rote Armee Fraktion, or RAF, formed 14th May 1970, as those involved in springing Baader from Tagel jail unified. Meinhof was found dead in jail under ambiguous circumstances 9th May 1976 and “thousands of mourners” attended her funeral in Berlin.32

Terrorist activities became increasingly daring in the following few years and involving international connections. Incidents like the famous kidnapping and eventual killing of president of the West German Association of Employers, Hanns-Martin Schleyer, and the bombing of a favourite Berlin nightspot of GIs, La Belle discotheque. As Large pointed out “Berlin seemed unable to escape its association with political extremism and terrorist carnage”.33 The Belle bombers had operated with Stasi help from East Berlin, where members of the RAF were often given sanctuary.

Baader, like many others, first came to West Berlin to escape military service, as men were exempt from the draft there. By the 1970s and ‘80s more disaffected West German youth
arrived to get away from becoming the ‘average German worker’. Some chose an alternative lifestyle and lived as *Hausbesetzer* or squatters in one of the many empty buildings that were especially numerous in areas close the wall. Western foreign students came to Berlin looking to experience ‘life at the edge’. By the late 1970s, intimidated by the number of squats that grew in some areas, authorities forcibly tried to close them leading to full-scale clashes with police. Not all those who came to Berlin seeking an atypical lifestyle were openly subversive, as Ritchie reported:

…its soft core primarily consisted of the artists, intellectuals, students, teachers, architects and gallery owners who descended on the city for its for the high salaries, low rents and the feeling of self-importance of living in the hippest place in Germany. Like a kind of bohemian SS. They tended to dress entirely in black.  

The Berlin wall was a real and symbolic of division for both the Eastern Bloc and the Western allies. As well as a physical and political divide the wall came to represent many other bio-centric schisms. The city’s architecture, amenities, clothes worn by inhabitants and their respective cultural pursuits had developed into two distinct styles. Berlin’s respective authorities built predominantly to modernist tenets but interpreted through diametrically opposed ideologies. American and Soviet style architecture took over the city, West and East. The S-Bahn and U-Bahn network was amended to keep the different populations mobile and yet separate. Trams continued running in the East but were replaced by buses in the West.

Much of the land next to the wall was settled by characters sympathetic to the ‘opposition’, those who revelled in the unusual situation, or in the West, immigrants. The unique atmosphere it created on both sides became a draw for those who felt alienated by their respective societies, though in the East, because of its close proximity to the forbidden West, authorities would try to house trusted and loyal members of the Party.

Bauhaus’ reputation proved mutable for the Socialist regime of the GDR. The school’s national and international reputation became amalgamated to both causes: initially in the GDR and elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc, the Nazi’s cry of ‘cultural Bolshevism’ translated into Bauhaus’ reincarnation as demonstrating the success of collective socialist practice but later, after 1949 Bauhaus began to be “attacked as a corrosive bourgeois influence.”  

In
contrast in the West, Bauhaus came to represent the most successful model of theoretical and applied Modernism.\textsuperscript{36}

Brecht returned to Berlin October 22\textsuperscript{nd} 1948 from Switzerland, having recently been a defendant in the American McCarthy’s anti-Communist trials. He had been called to stand before the House Committee on Un-American Activities on September 29\textsuperscript{th}, 1947 and appeared on the day giving “ambiguous statements” that Ewen determined were either through a misunderstanding of language or “sheer perverseness”.\textsuperscript{37} In November of 1949, a month after the GDR was officially ‘born’ Brecht was authorised by the Ministry of Popular Education to found the Berliner Ensemble. Undoubtedly Brecht was in favour of a socialist state but he was cautious enough to keep a Swiss bank account and Austrian citizenship. The uprising of Berlin workers on June 17\textsuperscript{th} 1953 against increased productivity targets, prospective collectivisation of farms and increasing economic hardships ‘encouraged’ by ‘outside forces’ shook the young GDR government.\textsuperscript{38}

Wolf Biermann found employment with Brecht’s Berliner Ensemble. By the early 1960s Biermann was writing songs that dared criticise the state whilst maintaining his commitment to socialism. Biermann was one of the few who had experienced what it was like to live both sides of divided Germany yet life had become almost unrecognisable on both sides after 1945. The extreme contrast of regimes could not be exaggerated, the American style of culture to the West and the Soviet socialist style to the East were different in almost every way. Although the regime in East Germany appeared to encourage the incorporation of German folk culture, what form it took was carefully screened. Both sides had youth uprisings and political agitates that were sometimes notably ‘in tune’ with the ‘other’ Germany’s political leanings.
Chapter 6
The Changing Face of Influence: David Bowie

My plastic rock ‘n’ roller was much more plastic than anybody’s and that was what
was needed at the time.¹
David Bowie

David Bowie is central to the investigation of the relationship between Weimar Berlin and
1970s and 1980s pop music. Bowie realised the potential of ‘playing’ with the ‘language’
and imagery of rock ‘n’ roll mythology by exploiting the cynical ‘vocabulary’ and poses of
Berlin cabaret. By 1972 he had already made four very different albums David Bowie
with varying degrees of commercial success. Bowie work had already shown sympathy with
Nietzsche’s philosophy and expressionist style as shown by some lines from his song
‘Quicksand’ from Hunky Dory

I’m torn between the light and dark
Where others see their targets
Divine symmetry

At the time Bowie had been using all sorts of techniques of song-writing, arranging and
performing, defining himself and his art album by album, yet perhaps not quite capturing the
Zeitgeist, as the ‘poetic’ styles of the 1960s were too subjective for a new generation of
teenagers.

When RCA released The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars in the
summer of 1972 Bowie was more than ready for success. The album directly and indirectly
commented on the construction of rock and pop culture by using a reflective form of
musical art. Not particularly remarkable for musical originality, as generally most styles he
employed were ‘borrowed’ from various popular forms, it was his skills of subverting rock
‘n’ roll sensibilities and pop clichés that set him apart from other musical artists of the time.
Bowie’s lyrics were at the centre of his success, he told ‘stories’ that captured the public’s
imagination, using different literary devices and tailoring form and vocal performance to fit the varied musical styles.

Bowie was possibly an un-likely ‘voice for a generation’. By the 1970s he was no longer motivated by a responsibility towards of a type social reform and eschewed his “1969 dalliance with the hippie movement”. In interviews he distanced himself from the expected political rhetoric of other rock stars and instead aired his unorthodox views on society, music and sexuality that reinforced his ‘alien’ status.

*The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* had made him the quintessential glam-rock artist and his ‘worldly’ music suited a new disengaged generation of pop and rock fans separated from ‘the summer of love’. Bowie even occasionally applied a sense of Weimar Schnodderigkeit for affect. In the wake of the late-1960s dream of utopian love and peace that had never dawned and in a climate of economic depression and continued Cold War stalemate, 1970s British audiences identified with Bowie’s cynicism. In spite of what Christopher Stanford called his “Weimar fixation” Bowie was interested in incorporating ideas and styles into contemporary art rather than recreating the past.

Allan Moore noted that “Bowie’s work forced concrete distinction between explicit ‘persona’ and musical ‘style’”, a feature of the cabaret of Berlin’s inter-war years. Bowie played with reality and fantasy, self and reflection. This was demonstrated through not only on his recordings and on stage but also the ‘fictional’ character(s) he ‘acted’ off-stage, exploiting the full potential of the ‘star’ as an alternative persona. Exploitation of taboo subjects and breaking silence over double standards on and off stage echoed the thrill of Berlin’s assortment of live shows and satirical cabaret and their infamous performers off-stage antics.

Bowie constructed the ‘superstar’ Ziggy Stardust in his own image. At times Bowie hid behind his creation, even ‘delegating’ responsibilities to his ‘doppelganger’. If Ziggy was the manifestation of Bowie’s unconscious fantasies he also fulfilled the role of a conscious study of a rock-god, a prototype of a Nietzschian superman living beyond the laws of civilised Man to be destroyed by the ‘love’ of his fans: a victim of fame like many rock stars of the time.
In the atmosphere of the austere, post-World War II period there was a dark and powerful glamour about ‘Germanness’. David Bowie, born in 1947, would have grown up among stories and films of German spies and Teutonic seductresses. For most people in Nazi-occupied-Europe the reality of war was a daily grind against subjugation and restrictions. Perhaps in Britain the menace and fear of what evil lay beyond the English Channel meant that the threat became exaggerated. This was in addition to the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation during the Cold War between the East and West. German forms of music came to represent an alternative ‘other’.

This chapter is concerned with David Bowie’s glam period, focusing on his groundbreaking album *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*, its follow-up *Aladdin Sane* (1973) and *Diamond Dogs* (1974) until his move to the United States and into ‘blue-eyed soul’. Hoskyns confined glam to the period of 1970-4 and defined the music as “prefab, anti-craft, allied to artifice and the trash aesthetic” in contrast to the musical trends that preceded and replaced it, though elements of glam were evident in Warhol’s factory’s ‘trash aesthetic’ of the 1960s in New York and later found in British punk. There is an examination of Bowie’s role as one of the chief purveyors of glam, his fascination with fashionable elements of Weimar Berlin and his perspective on popular music as an art form.

**6.1: The Age of Artificiality**

1960s counterculture had emanated from the West Coast of the United States generating music that became an international force by the time glam-rock mania took hold on the British pop singles chart in the early 1970s. Singles sales, radio play, tabloid publicity and fashion ensured glam-rock made a huge impact. Hoskyns suggested Bowie and fellow glam rock originator Marc Bolan saw glamour as an “antithesis of hippiedom”. In simple terms it seemed glam’s celebration of “affluence, capitalism” and “show business” replaced the “puritan” and ‘innocent’ youth counterculture that preceded it.

Glam was a British phenomenon that sold well domestically and in Northwest Europe. Without real commercial success in the US it could not be considered to rival established rock forms in global business terms. Even in the United Kingdom glam never usurped American blues/rock styles in album sales. Many American artists such as Lou Reed and the
duo Sparks, who had fitted the glam style would only reach sizeable audiences via the British market first. Therefore tangibly, artists who had stuck to the 1960s countercultural anti-glamour styles of music enjoyed an affluence that glam rock stars could only aspire to.

The schism that existed between ‘authentic’ rock and ‘artificial’ pop during the 1950s and 60s was as wide as Nietzsche’s renditions of the separate forces of Dionysian and Apollonian styles of art. Rock, based on the music of American rural blues and Black culture, was viewed as an authentic experience ‘handed on’ from ‘brother to brother’ whilst pop was classified as light, commercial and ‘girlie’. Allan Moore identified the underpinning of a ‘purist’ attitude towards the blues as a desire for an “authentic essence” born out of a misconceived, patronising and “insidious” form of racism. As in the ‘tradition’ of 1920s primitivism, many who produced or bought into this form of ‘authentic’ blues experience exoticising Black people, particularly Black men, were in search of authenticity in their own lives. Interest in the ‘fathers’ of blues’ usually only extended to myths of Black masculinity: inherent rhythm, naturalness, menace and sexual prowess. Hoskyns recognised the “effeminacy and androgyny of glam rock overturned the scruffy heterosexuality of the Woodstock generation”.

Paradoxically, glam music was also typified by an underpinning of blues-based rock, although it was a simpler version of the contemporary style demonstrated by ‘serious’ rock artists. This formulaic and deliberately commercial musical style, introduced by Marc Bolan and his band T. Rex, thereafter exemplified glam. His one-time manager, Simon Napier-Bell, called Bolan “a wonderful fraud…His guitar playing was unbelievably bad” recalling when he had seen Bolan as a “fey hippie” in the late 1960s. Bolan described what is considered the first glam song ‘Ride a White Swan’ as a two-minute thirty second, funky, foot tapper” and Hoskyns called it “that brilliantly combined kiddie-singalong cadences with an electric neo-rockabilly groove”. The excitement that greeted the single’s release was not about dextrous musical ability, originality of the style or channelling some notion of a natural self but theatrical statement and a ‘magical’ aura of a ‘star’.

Especially in recorded form, pop music challenged all other art forms to fulfil the avantgarde objective of being equally available to all in its original and intended form. Comparing Warhol to Bowie highlights the success of pop music in fulfilling this aim.
Warhol incorporated techniques of mass production as each painting was made by the same regulatory process, signed by Warhol and then considered by the art-market to be an original artwork. Warhol’s mechanically produced ‘pop’ pictures sold to a limited market because of their high fine-art prices, thus rendering poorer patrons obliged to ‘make-do’ by buying facsimiles in prints and postcards or viewing originals in gallery visits. In contrast, Bowie’s original work was available for a fraction of the price and therefore, could be owned by diverse and large numbers of people.

Weimar culture was evident in Warhol’s work and the entourage that surrounded, worked and ‘hung-out’ in his Factory. The factory and its ‘workers’ have come to represent the most recognisable symbols of 1960s New York arts scene. Warhol’s ‘superstars’ were a small number of deliberate or accidental misfits who, during the course of the decade, emerged as the epitome of New York’s most audacious personalities. Just as the self styled artists and performers of Weimar Berlin, these ‘superstars’ boasted all manner of ‘freak’ characteristics as they battled for Warhol’s attention. Warhol himself promoted his own eccentric image as “a dumb blond” as though making one of his own works, “no one saw through the mechanism of the ‘star’ cult better than Andy Warhol himself”.11

Bowie wrote ‘Andy Warhol’ on Hunky Dory, the artist as subject matter. Bowie’s song did not please his muse, but the lyrics show Bowie’s admiration for Warhol’s insight into the nature of fame and his ability to make himself a star through the understanding of the mechanics of that process: “Andy looks a scream, hang him on my wall. Andy Warhol silver screen, can’t tell them apart at all”. Brian Eno, himself firstly associated with glam as a musician with the band Roxy Music, said glam was about “changing identity or thinking up your own identity”. Although it is apparent that Bowie had understood the construct of stars earlier in his career, the Factory ‘superstars’ showed him just how far it was possible to go with construction.12 Warhol had revealed the nature of superstardom by focusing on its veneer. Although he insisted that he and his art were one, in his work he created a distinction as the ‘stars’ he painted became evidently more detached from the ‘real’ person ‘underneath’.

The atmosphere he encountered at the Factory captivated Bowie, as much as its artistic output did. He especially venerated Lou Reed “a demonized Apollo” from the Velvet
Underground and Iggy Pop, a “Dionysus on heroin” from the Stooges, both of whom were every bit as immoderate in their behaviour off stage as on and their respective bands “the antitheses of sixties utopianism”. Speaking on glam, Bowie showed his appreciation of Reed’s contribution to the genre “He gave us the environment in which to put our more theatrical vision… He supplied us with the street and the landscape, and we peopled it”.  

The simple song structures and visual props led to a spate of copyists all hoping to cash in on what was an unashamedly commercial musical ‘phase’. Roxy Music and David Bowie were considered exceptions. Moore thought Roxy Music’s self-titled album *Roxy Music* was “totally dominated by open-ended harmonic patterns” that created a style of tension and mystery, instrumentally complex but “minimally structured” whilst their imagery was deliberately styled to resemble a non-specific rock band in a distant future. Bowie took musical inspiration from various sources as Sandford described *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars* as “lyrical ballads, factory floor clatter, sci-fi droning to crafty pop, folk to country heavy metal to music-hall soft-shoe”. 

Infusing his songs with theatrical devices Bowie declared: “I think rock should be tarted up, made into a prostitute, a parody of itself. It should be the clown. The pierrot medium”, Bowie had by this time already appeared in a pierrot drama earlier on in his career in 1968, when he appeared as Cloud, the narrator figure in the mime artist and dancer Lindsey Kemp’s *Pierrot in Turquoise* performing among other songs Threepenny Pierrot. Bowie’s character’s “constant changes deceived and tricked the hapless hero”. Within the piece *Pierrot*, played by Kemp was rather an innocent victim of love, a part more comparable to the figure of the Pierrot in Glen Tetley’s ballet *Pierrot Lunaire* created 1962 to music by Arnold Schonberg, itself a take of Michel Fokine and Igor Stravinsky’s tale of unrequited love between puppets in *Petrouchka* 1911. It was Bowie’s character of Cloud, dressed in white make-up and Elizabethan ruff was the trickster narrator figure that would more closely resemble the Berlin cabarets white face figure and would reoccur in various forms subsequently in Bowie’s work and surrounding mythology. 

Roxy Music and Bowie’s work combined art with commerce, deliberately self-conscious and littered with recognisable musical and literary references, the music became testament to their cultural-education. Bowie’s work was popular across the classes, the assumed
Bowie acknowledged Stanley Kubrick’s film *Clockwork Orange* (1971) in his glam period and based on the book by Antony Burgess of the same name (1962). The film was set in a British city in the future though Burgess never specified place. The poster for the film proclaimed ‘Being the adventures of a young man whose principle interests are rape, ultra-violence and Beethoven’, though more accurately it was about the right to choose between good and evil without the submission to the state for earthly reward. The harshness of the surroundings and the clean bright colours including the makeshift ‘uniforms’ of the band of ‘droogs’ and other male gangs made their way into glam, likewise the ‘impoliteness’, coded references (that required a glossary from Burgess) and the central figure’s anarchic/leader roles were evident in Bowies glam concepts.

The play, John van Druyten’s *I am a Camera*, and the musical versions of Isherwood’s *Goodbye to Berlin*, based on the ‘Sally Bowles’ story, became the measure of which all glam Weimar references were gauged by. Joel Grey was a particularly ambivalent Master of Ceremonies on stage (1966) and on film (1972). In the book Sally transformed herself from an upper-middle class English young lady into wannabe *ingénue* by her excursion to the decedent nightmare and chaos of Berlin just before World War II though the film version Sally became an American. Fred Ebb and John Kander paid homage to the work of Weill, revealing the significance of his work in their own compositions for Cabaret for stage and screen. Their music and Bob Fosse’s sensational visuals used the ‘ unholy’ essentials of *Dreigroschenoper* more than Isherwood’s observational style. Sally’s (Liza Minnelli) singing style was as far from the original apathetic effort of the original text.

**6.2 The Mask**

Bowie tapped into the ‘trash’ aesthetic using music as well as visual representation to exalt the surface and sensational elements of popular culture. His album *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders form Mars* finally brought him the acclaim and commercial success that had eluded him for so long. Sandford eulogised the album: “This was some of the most inspirational and ultimately timeless music of the seventies”. In his ‘guise’ as Ziggy Stardust, the character Bowie nonchalantly described as “Woolworth’s meets
Nijinsky”, he played with reality and illusion on stage and off, acting his made-up ‘icon’ to such effect that even he acknowledged he had trouble ‘casting off’ his Ziggy-persona.¹⁸

Just as George Grosz had famously shocked Berliners as he paraded down the Kurfurstendamm in 1918, dressed as ‘Death’, taking performance art out onto the street so Bowie’s rock persona as Ziggy Stardust provoked similar outrage by Ziggy/Bowie’s ‘shocking’ statements to journalists and his garish attire both in performance and in public. Thus, he took his ‘character’ off-stage and into the ‘real’ world, managing to confuse the fans, public, and in some respects himself, dressing up in a ‘costume’ only removed once a new character and ‘play’ was created.

Even if Brecht and Adorno had diametrically opposed views on popular music they both recognised its power, Bowie too appreciated this, and similarly to Brecht he thought he could utilise its potential. The nature of the English language proved useful because of the profusion of words or phrases with double-meanings. British society’s strict class divisions and double standards meant there were many taboo areas to give his work notoriety. Many of Bowie’s songs exposed ‘secrets’ or broke taboos; these tended towards the sexual variety. The ambiguous love triangle in ‘John I’m only Dancing’ being one example First recorded April 1972, performed live in July and released in September (although re-recorded and released the following year) it was not included on The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars but had been planned as the follow-up to the first single ‘Starman’.

The lyrics gave no introduction to the scenario, inferring the listener shared insight, the term ‘John’ indicating a sexual ‘punter’, hidden identity or interchangeable person.

‘John I’m only Dancing’ was created to be ‘seen’ as well as heard. Bowie’s incorporation of fine art, theatre and cinema was deliberate. Popular music lent itself to a multi-disciplinary approach.

we were trying to include certain visual aspects in our music, grown out of the fine arts and real theatrical and cinematic leanings – in brief, everything which was on the exterior of rock. As far as I’m concerned, I introduced elements of Dada, and an enormous amount of elements borrowed from Japanese culture, I think we took ourselves for avant-garde explorers, the representatives of an embryonic form of postmodernism.¹⁹

Bowie’s incorporation of German 1920s culture was a deliberate attempt to channel the era’s excesses and be able to articulate the practices in a scholarly way. The Japanese
elements Bowie talked about were in the obvious accoutrements and in the tradition of Western translation of Japanese theatrical practices that normally would take a lifetime of study. Bowie wore a mini-kimono in performance and reportedly copied his ‘Ziggy’ hairstyle from the bright red Kabuki ‘lion’ wigs that the Japanese fashion designer Kansai Yamamoto used on his models for a photo-shoot for the fashion magazine Harpers. His kimono was a Western-style silky dressing gown rather than the heavy, multi-layered traditional kimono and obi belt, and his hairstyle was not so different from the fashion for British contemporary men and women.\(^{20}\)

By the early-1970s an “industry sprung-up … to satisfy the desire for books, pictures, records, and television shows on what Berliners call \textit{Die goldenen zwanziger Jahre}, the golden twenties”; Weimar’s increasingly fashionable status meant it was no longer ‘cool’ to refer to it whilst Japanese culture was still considered fairly obscure.\(^{21}\) Bowie had said “clichés are very important” and this adoption of Japanese elements exoticised, eroticised and intellectualised his character and performance work without drastically challenging Western perceptions of that culture.\(^{22}\) The mention of ‘obscure’ influences on work was in accordance with his desire to be thought of as an artist rather than a transitory pop star. Like Brecht and Grosz, Bowie was as interested in creating his own mythology as he was for immediate commercial success.

Standford’s perspective credited Bowie’s iconic status as creating thousands of copyists. This is true to the extent that there were many Bowie/Ziggy ‘clones’ throughout Western Europe but Bowie’s deco influences could also be seen elsewhere. High fashion and interior designers such as Yves Saint Laurent, Karl Largerfield and Tony Walton were all keen collectors of art deco and had already expressed their passion for the era by referencing it in their work on the catwalks of Paris, in private and public interiors and in stage and film sets by the time of Bowie’s album’s release.\(^{23}\)

The impact of Bowie’s music and image was immense but it was facilitated by the surrounding nostalgia. Pegg stated Bowie was the first to fuse “nostalgia and futurism” in rock music, this polar-presence was felt in numerous ways.\(^{24}\) Bowie’s ‘play’ with time was conscious, as in January 1973 he had said “I usually pick different eras and go back and pick incidents that happen[ed] in the Thirties and Forties, and push them through to the Eighties
and see what conclusions could come from what happened then”.25 His costumes reflected this statement, hence his sharp-shouldered suits and hats that were reminiscent of the 1930s yet in neon-bright and metallic colours. These clothes were an extreme version of high and street fashion of the day, possibly exaggerated in an awareness of the style’s combination of origins. An alternative to the ‘flower power’ era of the late-1960s that had focused on ‘innocent’ and rural ideals a taste developed that glamorised urban settings with reference to an epoch that expressed artifice and modernity.

Bowie’s nostalgia for the pre-war/World War II period was not personal. Whilst mentioning of the 1930s and ‘40s he knew few people had fond memories of decades that suggested unemployment, depression and war; his longing was for excitement and glamour, a boy’s world of danger and spies, told to him in tales from people his parents’ age. Like the expressionists’ homage to Classical heroes as related through Nietzsche’s writing of supermen, Bowie’s imagination focuses on the most exciting elements from an era he had read or heard about.

Bowie’s futuristic vision was consistently doom laden throughout his glam albums. From the lyrical content of his glam songs his vision of the future was apocalyptic or an Orwellian nightmare. The song ‘Five Years’ that Bowie teasingly referred to as “optimistic” was a multiple character study of human behaviour punctuated by a chorus that ‘announces’ Earth’s inevitable demise. Longing for a time in the past whilst fearing the future was not exclusive to the early 1920s or 1970s, as the same could be said for many eras but there was something peculiar to art and entertainment in the inter-war years and again in the 1970s and ‘80s that often demonstrated dualism, this included the distinctions and clashes of futurism and primitivism.

Diamond Dogs had a corresponding vision of the future as in the dystopian ‘liberal’ worlds of Brecht and Weil’s Mahogany and the underbelly of utopian society in Lang’s film Metropolis. In the song ‘Future Legend’ Bowie’s science fiction landscape is inhabited by “peopleoids” who “prey on the rich elite” whilst residing in “Hunger City”. According to Welch, the effect on Bowie’s voice made it sound like a “decapitated robot”, although Bowie’s production treatment of the song denoted a ‘send-up’; the “rock ‘n’ roll rave-up” accentuated the restlessness and desperation of the “peopleoids”, underlined by an
aggressive undercurrent in Bowie’s lyrics and sung in a tempered vocal style. The separation and ‘play’ of the elements made each more pronounced that added-up to a ‘warning’ that those most alienated from society become alien to their own and others’ feelings, thus society creates its own monsters and the cycle becomes more vicious.

Although Bowie linked *Diamond Dogs* with George Orwell’s book *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) which critiqued the totalitarian regime of the Soviet style system of socialism decades after its optimistic beginnings, ‘Future Legend’ implied socialist leaning is not unintentional. Unlike Brecht or Orwell, Bowie had no official political predilections and therefore was never ‘letdown’ by political promises; it was the nature of power that interested him. Although biographers are keen to point out Bowie’s ‘inauthentic’ roots as a born outsider and a failure to become one, his music still identified with ‘monsters’ and outcasts, the power base for rock ‘n’ roll. Authenticity was never an issue for Bowie as most of his work underlined that authenticity was the most carefully constructed artificiality of all.

There had been plans for a West-end musical of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and a film to accompany Bowie’s Orwell inspired album. Though they never materialised, Bowie’s promotional stage show for *Diamond Dogs* was clearly theatrical and fifty dates long. There were many props, costume changes, complicated sets and lighting systems and two hours of choreographed dance sequences; Bowie sang from a hydraulic boom over the audience for part of the show, thus piercing through the ‘proscenium arch’ from stage to auditorium. There was an attempt to provide context for each song and overall but also to connect the work with threads of alienation and disintegration of modern society.

Bowie’s theatrical production of his stage show for *Diamond Dogs* took rock ‘n’ roll to a new extreme, it also parodied the tradition of musicals as its dark subject matter clashed with the over the top production. Bowie realised that no art-form other than pop music was as wholly capable of sending something up whilst revering it, whether the ritual of stardom as in *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* or a utopian dream such as in *Diamond Dogs*. Mixed media presentation, ideally co-ordinated by the artist, could facilitate the clashes and contrasts of cultural and period signifiers in consciously inappropriate contexts; to this end pop was a perfect medium for postmodernism. As Pegg
claimed: “if there was one consistent aim [of glam] it was the diversification of culture and the dismantling of tribal allegiances”.  

6.3 Perspectives on Rock and Roll Suicide and Time

Glam artists were keen to exploit the fundamental artificiality of the music business. Ziggy was a type on stage, his crafted movements, gestures and music deliberate and theatrical, off stage Bowie ‘acted’ the rock star type, whatever pop stars had gone before Bowie took the tabloid antics to a new extreme. This in turn reflected back onto his musical art until according to newspaper publicity that the blur between art and life blurred into one. Even then, Bowie’s art reflected back the ‘cracked actor’ exposing the entire process of manufacture of the ‘star’. Carr and Shaar Murray wrote:

In a world where manufactured was a deadly insult, Bowie invited the audience to admire the ingenuity and grace with which the manufacturing process was carried out. He invited spectators to share his aesthetic distance between his function as performer and his function as conceptualist, as creator. As an act of sleight of hand, it was masterly. In one creative bound, Bowie had torn away the veil that covered up the plumbing and wiring of rock, challenged other performers to deny that – when they faced up to the truth – they were as carefully packaged as he was...

Bowie’s career had grown steadily throughout the 1960s, culminating with hit single ‘Space Oddity’ in 1969 but he despaired of ever achieving the international stardom he had sought. Pegg calculated the theme of Bowie’s *Hunky Dory* had been an “absence of inspiration” and fear of an impending musical obsolescence. By contrast his following album was ostentatiously theatrical, its subject matter ‘superstardom’ Though Pegg’s assessment that Bowie’s motivation behind *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* was a desperate bid for fame, he conceded along with Hoskyns, that Bowie consciously possessed an instinctive feeling for the *Zeitgeist*.

Glam marked certain rock ‘n’ roll elements and exaggerated them to the point of parody. Features that in production are traditionally kept to a minimum or in the background become unusually prominent on recordings. For example guitar improvisations and solos played in mock displays that sent-up progressive rock’s virtuoso performances. In performance as Ziggy, Bowie would feign fellatio on the guitar of Mick Ronson thereby drawing attention to the macho posturing of the archetypal rock guitarist and the supposed sexual power of the guitar. This observation is fundamental to the myth of Ziggy Stardust since Bowie’s created
persona was not ‘just’ a singer but a brilliant rock guitarist, a proper rock musician, as indicated in the line from ‘Ziggy Stardust’, “but boy could he play guitar”.

Bowie layered many of the sensational aspects and patterns of superstardom including the ‘curse’ that came with the blessing of fame. This had been evident in the untimely deaths of Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones, Keith Moon of the Who, Jim Morrison of the Doors, Tim Buckley, and Jimmy Hendrix. These short but intense lives had appeared to fulfil the criteria of Nietzsche’s supermen and echoed too, the expressionist models of young men as the centre of the universe. Just as astronauts and outer-space were in the public’s consciousness with recent space exploration, supermen rock stars fitted with notions of esoteric spiritual beings and inner-space. Bowie combined fantasy and real space exploration. The ‘trash’ aesthetic incorporated these flights of fancies into an image of wearing makeshift metallic costumes and face-paint; Bowie signified a desire to transcend mundane existence. Fans copied this dress code as they clamoured to join Bowie’s ‘special’ world. The positive feeling and wonderment towards technology regarding space travel contrasted with the fear of advanced technological warfare throughout the Cold War. ‘Starman’ and ‘Five Years’ both from The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars demonstrated these polar views.

Space became a backdrop to the album. Though Ziggy was not an alien he possessed many ethereal qualities. In his performances, Bowie drew from his mime and dance training using light gestures that highlighted the staged concept. The theatre of rock ‘n’ roll became both inner and outer space. The song ‘Ziggy Stardust’ builds a composite archetypal superstar rock singer/guitar hero loved literally to death by his own fans. In this construct a clear expressionist ‘type’ was evident as Ziggy was a sacrifice. Ziggy’s appearance as a ready-made star was testament to his quality of artifice since he was both born a star and a rock and roll robot. Ziggy does not become a sacrifice, he believes he was born to be a sacrificed. His anti-religious death is inevitable, a ‘truth’ in rock ‘n’ roll religion.

Bowie sings both ‘Ziggy Stardust’ and ‘Lady Stardust’ in third person, thus distancing himself from the figure and assuming the position of an artist referring to his artwork; reflections of himself as performer by way of admitting objectivity in performance and of vanity. The third person or narrator device also alluded to a clichéd representation of a
fractured personality disorder; the singer/narrator’s recoil from the fatal scene in ‘Ziggy Stardust’ and the line “oh how I cried when they asked me if I knew his name” in ‘Lady Stardust’ already suggested a feigned crisis of identity before Bowie reported there was one in 1975.

Bowie created a remote ‘persona’ which added to his/Ziggy’s mystique. Hoskyns observed that Ziggy was made “deliberately unsexy” which exaggerated his unearthly quality. This was in contrast to many of the types of cross-gender characters who eagerly displayed sexual particularities and expressions of either/both genders that he had witnessed at Warhol’s Factory. Ziggy was supposedly androgyne, a transformation aided by Bowie’s slim physique, angular features and fearless dress-sense for skin-tight one-piece suits. Hoskyns also used the word “doppelganger” in reference to Ziggy’s role of ‘acting’ for Bowie when Bowie did not want to appear. Like Warhol, Bowie created a character “with a trick of being physically present and at the same time in another world”.

Ziggy’s dummy-like quality coupled with his unique powers of ethereal seduction drove his fans into frenzy, evocative of the robot-Maria in Lang’s Metropolis who had urged the workers into a rampaging mob. Though Bowie often called himself cold and un-emotional even a “photo-stat machine”, others reported him as sensitive and fey. In his lyrics for the album he made his doppelganger intentionally hollow, the perfect carbon copy of a rock star who “went too far” and exaggerated his effeminacy in descriptions depicting beauty with terms like “creature” and “grace”, which are usually reserved for women or effeminate men. The ‘real’ Bowie was resigned to the unfairness of rock ‘n’ roll and immune to it, rendering himself outside this ‘rock ‘n’ roll world’ as he sang “I smiled sadly for a love I could not obey” for his ‘dark twin’ or sang songs “of darkness and disgrace” or “darkness and dismay”.

Hoskyns’ doppelganger analogy was also fitting because of the Teutonic overtones to Ziggy’s first name; the diminutive of the name Siegfried or Sigmund is often ‘Ziggy’, the ‘S’ pronounced as a soft ‘Z’ in German. The Germanic theme perpetuated further by a profusion of lightning inspired motifs reminiscent of the Waffen SS insignia in the artwork and paraphernalia surrounding Ziggy; the use of the symbol escalated in its use for his following album Aladdin Sane, even featuring in Bowie’s make-up on the front cover, a
neon-bold lightning strike splitting the entire face into two that drew attention to the double-meaning of the title a-lad-insane and Bowie’s duality as star/man.

As previously explained, most glam rock songs were arranged around the blues-rock formula that came to prominence in rock ‘n’ roll and pop of the late 1950s and early 1960s. For instance, music was played in 4/4, using three major chords with a simple lyric structure of verse, chorus, verse, chorus, middle-eight, chorus and full chorus. This was a device to distance the music from the more ‘serious’ progressive rock sound around at the same time. Although Moore credited Bowie with pioneering the “return of the three-minute pop song” he enjoyed creating relatively complicated and intricate rhythm patterns, chord voicing and structures, also experimented with lyric arrangements and styles.\(^\text{39}\) Although there are songs that conform to conventional rock an’ roll formula on his glam albums Bowie’s work often defied pop conventions. For instance, against the commercial pop formula ‘Five Years’ chorus only happens after two minutes and fifty seconds of a faded-in introduction and an extended verse.

‘Rock and Roll Suicide’ from *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* and ‘Time’ from *Aladdin Sane* are both overtly theatrical or what Carr and Shaar Murray called Bowie’s “European pieces”. Both contain forms of *sprechstimme*, delivered with a slightly irregular vocal meter and culminate with musical theatre type finales.\(^\text{40}\) In this respect they are Bowie’s most transparent references to Weimar’s cabaret. Both songs are also suitably theatrically melodramatic and shocking in their subject matter as in ‘suicide’, Bowie once again using his infinite mirror device in the line “you’re watching yourself but you’re too unfair” and the personification of ‘Time’ who “falls wanking to the floor”. Kamin and Goddard commented “he’d extended cabaret to some outer limit”.\(^\text{41}\)

In retrospect Sandford thought ‘Rock ‘n’ Roll Suicide’ became the anthem for Bowie’s fans and not as might be expected the hit single ‘Starman’, written to a more conventional pop formula, or ‘Ziggy Stardust’ that had ‘painted’ the eponymous figure of Ziggy. Belatedly realising its commercial potential, RCA released the single ‘Ziggy Stardust’ two years after the album’s release. Bowie said that ‘Rock ‘n’ Roll suicide’ was not about real suicide but a “declaration of the end of the effect of being young” and as such was an ode to the death of not fearing death.\(^\text{42}\) The song that pastiches both rock ‘n’ roll and jazz, is an indication that
Bowie has come to terms with the ‘game’ of popular music, giving-up any traces of a youthful ideal an “artist-as-hero” or musical “authentic essence”.  

‘Rock ‘n’ Roll Suicide’ in the time signature 12/8, did not contain a chorus as such but built to a crescendo in a repeated refrain of “You’re wonderful, gimme your hands”, that in performance would often be sung looking into the audience as though each one of them was Ziggy. The song, written in key of C Major stuck to the more usual progressions of E Major, F Major, G Major and A minor until the build of the song’s momentum. Moving further from its initial pattern, it increases intensity from a ‘comfortable’ C Major to A Major, repeating the chord pattern for emphasis. The swelling of passion in the musical arrangement reflects the lyrics as the rhythm moves to 4/4 steady beat for four bars until resuming to 12/8 after which Bowie’s vocal grows from singing to shouting “Just turn on me you’re not alone”; the “not” strongly highlighted on the first 3 eighth notes, and “alone” on 4, 5, and 6, leaving the music to occupy the last six beets as a ‘response’ to this ‘call’ in what Welch called “the ultimate piece of group therapy”.  

‘Time’ (sound illustration 2) was a type of homage to Berlin cabaret, below is the first verse:

```
Time, He’s waiting in the wings
He speaks of senseless things
His script is you and me, boy

Time, he flexes like a whore
Falls wanking to the floor
His trick is you and me boy

Time, in Quaaludes and red wine
Demanding Billy Dolls
And other friends of mine
Take your time

The sniper in the brain, regurgitating drain
Incestuous and vain
And many other last names
I look at my watch it says 9.25 and I think
“Oh God I’m still alive”

I should be home by now
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Bowie ‘anthropomorphises’ time, using metaphor in curious mixtures of menacing gestures until a defining point, whereupon he uses first person and employs the naturalistic gesture of
looking at a watch and exclaiming line “Oh God I’m still alive” in a manner that suggests both wonderment and disappointment. It is as though Reinhardt’s pierrot from the poster of Schall und Rauch stands “waiting in the wings” and having seen it all before his grand gestures are a parody of what is going on centre stage. Bowie’s pierrot ‘Time’ is a cruel trickster: his theatrically grotesque displays are knowingly provocative and comic whilst the ‘reality check’ of the “his script/trick is you and me boy” lines let slip the last laugh is on us all, mere mortals, as we fool and amuse ourselves with our ‘pleasurable’ pastimes as time ticks by without us noticing. Time is the eternal performer, neither good nor bad but always open to suggestion, even ‘his’ shocking melodramatic behaviour is “synthetic debauchery”, a term first applied to Bertold Brecht’s work by the critic John Willet. 46

In ‘Time’, the perspectives on ‘truth’ and preference for death, over a life enslaved equated with real-life over fake-performance. This alerts the listener to Bowie’s awareness that he is one of Nietzsche’s higher beings or free spirits, whilst simultaneously mocking those not ‘in the know’. In the later part of the song there is a crescendo, after which Bowie sings, “all I had to give was the guilt for dreaming”.47 Nietzsche’s New Man is found and then lost again, reoccurring ad infinitum in a world of mirrors, double takes and wordplay; the 1960s generation is derided for their gullibility and ‘innocence’, their drugs used as aids to higher consciousness are ridiculed for their impotency. As In the song ‘Ziggy Stardust’ Bowie’s perspective resolutely infers a preference for life over death, as, like Brecht he “sees a transfiguration possible only in and through life”, Ziggy’s death within the song denoted only ‘another’ pop-culture sacrifice in a perpetual series, only truly gratifying for the iconography traders left to exploit the “leper messiah”.48

Bowie’s lyrics capture the most provocative figure in the Berlin Kabarett, or cabaret, that of the all-knowing, Mephistophelian ringmaster, in this case ‘Time’. Bowie had changed position from ‘Ziggy Stardust’, wherein he sang from the perspective of the world-weary onlooker. The personification of ‘Time’ “waiting in the wings” was a separate entity to Bowie, whilst he ‘plays’ the performer occupying centre stage. Both ‘Rock ‘n’ Roll Suicide’ and ‘Time’ illustrate a writing and performance style that was deliberately theatrical and ‘visual’. Even allowing for the theatricality of progressive rock music of the period, Bowie stood out.49 In his shifting of perspectives Bowie distanced himself further from methods employed by the more naturalistic-type counter-culture that reigned in popular music in the
late 1960s and that he had been part of. Instead, he defied its “overestimation [of] the value of truth” by fragmenting himself into fated and controlled positions of ‘truth’ and knowledge.  

A solo piano ‘introduces’ ‘Time’, its solitary status is amplified by its placement within a large hall reverb. The effect’s authenticity or electronic approximation is not as important as the largeness and emptiness of the room suggested. Bowie’s vocal performance is delivered in deliberate rhythmical prose rather than conventionally sung. This technique alludes to sprechstimm suggestive of the Berlin cabaret, and at times Bowie breaks out into close-pitched patterns irregularly throughout the structure.

In terms of delivery there is a discernable allusion to boredom even before the exclamation: “you scream with boredom” in the middle of the second verse, after which the lead guitar itself takes on an imitation whining-scream. Bowie is ‘playing’ bored, as if he pre-empts boredom on behalf of those who are discerning, and bored at those who not. The distinctly staged quality of the arrangement, production and performance led Carr and Shaar Murray to state “…in Brechtian drama, the performer remains a performer, no matter what he is enacting”.  

It was within Bowie’s voiced disillusionment with the sensational aspects of his time that paralleled a host of writers and artists from the Weimar period.  

The ‘divine symmetry’ that Bowie spoke of in ‘Quicksand’ was good and bad, heaven and hell; Bowie positioned himself as a latter-day Nietzsche, echoing the central theme of Beyond Good and Evil. After pop culture’s late-1960s affair with all things Dionysian, which Nietzsche had also brought to mass attention through The Birth of Tragedy, Bowie wanted his knowledge accredited. He thought his work ahead of the fashionable crowd and beyond predictability. ‘Quicksand’ on the surface is about drowning in despair but Bowie was always focused on rebirth. He proclaimed himself beyond the static heroes and villains of popular fiction and the premeditated ideas of others and even himself; in his erosion of boundaries he is at once losing and finding himself, and as such he is a figure not to be trusted or relied upon not to change.

Glam used principles rock music that had never been seen or heard before. There was a certain feminine mystique about the masks and the powers of artifice. It was not a feminine
revolution in any sense. Strangely, no glam artist was a real woman. It was the ‘unleashing’ of the ‘bitch’ that characterised the glam artists. Bowie detested the clichés that pervaded glam such as the feather boas and the glittery dresses, even though he had used both, one time or another in his performances. The assumption that glam meant that there was a ‘trashy’ woman inside every man was too glib for him. The musicians that followed in his wake took their cues from Dames of the British pantomimes rather than drag artists of Weimar.

On stage Bowie’s aim was not to compel the audience or listener with a ‘beautiful’ voice but instead used what Kamin and Goddard considered a “cabaret voice”. His stage presence was also different from that of his peers. Whereas they might have appeared to engage with the music as though ‘possessed’ by it Bowie’s technique denoted control and consideration for the stage as Kamin and Goddard duly noted “Bowie makes stillness an active ingredient” and “Every gesture then was larger than life”.

Bowie fully utilised Brecht’s advice to use banal social gesture over any other treatment for preference in order that the audience can more objectively judge the power play between words and music, hence the determination between what is being said and what is really being said. Brecht’s legacy was in Bowie’s glam rock formula, combining an artistic layering of fine art and kitsch both in material and performance. Bowie proved rock and pop was a mutable force and not confined to one type of production or medium whether via an expensive stage show or a simple rendition of a song, as unlike others he did not confine himself with one style of music or performance as these were only the means to an expression and not the expression itself.

All three albums of this period The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust, Aladdin Sane and Diamond Dogs, whether intentionally or not, commented on power structures in rock ‘n’ roll, on the ‘street’ and in society at large respectively. Each ‘concept album’s’ scenario became a study of contemporary society. Their Kaleidoscope of miss-matched musical, lyrical, production and performance styles accentuated the value in theatrical intent rather than authenticity. To the same end it worked to keep the listener ‘working’ objectively rather than identifying with the lyrics. Bowie’s insistence that he was acting a character rather than the more traditionally being himself and writing autobiographically only
reinforced this. Bowie had used glam to demonstrate the more sensational attributes credited to Weimar Berlin culture within popular music, especially gender ambiguity, sexual experimentation, including voyeurism and ‘decadence’. He had also picked-up on correlating factors between the eras of Weimar and the 1970s, including Futurism and technology and political tension between the far Right and Left.

Bowie utilised the different aspects of popular music’s promotional tools of recordings and stage shows for commercial gain and also to forge an artistic niche. His writing and stage-craft allowed for further opportunities for self-expression and created distance between himself and his contemporaries, some of whom, as already indicated he thought ‘beneath’ him. Bowie related that he and other pioneers of glam had thought of themselves as “avant-garde explorers”. The assuming of ‘leadership’ fitted with what is normally associated with the avantgarde, yet his retrospective admittance to being “elitist” does not, since part of the remit of the traditional avantgarde was to eradicate elitism.

Ironically, whilst much avantgarde art is elitist despite the artists’ intentions, Bowie became figurehead for newer generations of artists, most of them without formal musical education and unintentionally turned to be the great leveller of rock music. In comparison with the practised and virtuoso style of rock musicians of the same era, fans that were inspired by glam musicians made their practice sound deceptively simple. Fans could realistically imagine themselves as pop stars with the purchase of relatively cheap equipment and minimal musical tuition.
Chapter 7

Berlin Personified: Lou Reed

If you want to have this stuff taken to a level that’s worth considering, you can’t compare yourself to other stuff that’s on record. You start looking at Brecht and Weill.¹

Lou Reed

In the mode of Brecht and Weill’s *Mahogany Songspiel*, Reed’s *Transformer* album comprised of a series of vignettes. Reed’s *Berlin* confounded sensory perception in an audio-film-noir, full of cut sequential narrative, hidden meanings and loaded words and sounds. The album was an exposé of a sadomasochistic relationship in a gritty urban setting. In ever more intimate turns each song revealed ‘secrets’ more terrible than the last. Reed’s spoken-song barely shifted pitch in melody that emphasised rhythmical articulation. Reed’s record company damned *Berlin* as a musical work to be endured rather than to be enjoyed. Reed thought it was a painful but necessary album to make and did everything he could to ensure that the ‘non-commercial’ album was released.²

Glam rock improvised with references from gay culture for a renewed sense of dangerous ‘otherness’. The fascination with ‘gayness’ in the early-1970s was partly fuelled by the gay rights movement; gay men and women would no longer keep their sexuality secret. Lesbianism, homosexuality, bisexuality, androgyny, effeminacy and ‘butchness’ became topics discussed and exploited in the serious and tabloid media alike. Exploration of male sexuality frequently borrowed from female stereotypes though not always positively. Reed’s treatment of these topics was controversial at the time and after. *Transformer* was ‘populated’ by types that many homosexuals and lesbians were trying to distance themselves from and Reed’s portraits of women were not always wholly contemporarily politically correct.

Reed’s album *Transformer* (1973) had made his reputation in Britain and could be considered Reed’s ‘coming out’ album in gay and commercial terms. *Transformer* typified the glamorous and throwaway lifestyle of decadent urban life. Many of the songs drew on
Reed’s time at Andy Warhol’s Factory, shedding artificial light on its cast of colourful characters. He conveyed them as the daring and exotic creatures they cultivated; this is particularly clear in his song ‘Walk on the Wild Side’. Though the album proved a commercial and critical success for Reed it also became problematical because of its apparent strong connections with David Bowie, a musician he considered more a disciple. Lou Reed professed feigning ‘gayness’ for Transformer and Reed’s sexuality became a debated point ever after.

In Berlin (1973) Reed developed ideas based on the balance of power within the complexity of a ‘romantic’ relationship. In tune with the theatrical experimentations of Weimar Berlin literature, theatre and cinema, Reed interwove ever-changing dynamics between ‘the couple’ with alterations of objective/subjective perspectives. Though the woman had the emotional upper hand in the relationship she eventually commits suicide as society’s disapproval of her lifestyle and lack of self-control and hope overwhelm her. Reed’s material and manner of performance were considered challenging for Reed fans let alone an ‘average’ listener. The ‘degenerate’ atmosphere that Reed created through subject matter, musical arrangements and performance fixate a ‘voyeuristic’ listener. Containing all the ‘wrong’ elements, Berlin is prime example of musical material National Socialists would have tried to eradicate within their reign decades earlier. Instead of reworking the more usual glam rock themes that glorified ‘degenerate’ behaviour evident on Transformer, Reed’s songs on Berlin were tales of harrowing experiences, cautionary tales for anyone thinking of following Reed on the ‘wild side’.

Reed’s Berlin was the ‘underbelly’ of Transformer. Berlin was a stark, bleak and claustrophobic study of a relationship under the stress of the same sort of decadence that Transformer eroticised and made exotic. If Transformer attempted to recreate Weimar in early-1970s fashion along with the films and styling of that time then Berlin was a contemporary take on West Berlin, whilst using theatrical techniques identified with the same city during the inter-war years. Reed thought the album could have set in any major cities’ urban environment, yet the possibility that it could have prompts the notion that it typified Berlin. Reed’s carefully crafted use of expressionistic ‘cinematic’ devices recalled Berlin’s heyday as the experimental film world’s capital.
7.1 Transformer and the Phantom of Rock

Reed’s reputation suggested an anti-commercial, anti-fashion non-conformist type of musical artist. Yet, in the early 1960s Reed had worked as a songwriter for Pickwick International, a company that operated the most commercial end of the music industry in New York, which if nothing else, must have grounded him in music business terms. In direct contrast, he, and the classically trained Welshman John Cale, formed a collaborative partnership in 1965. Their output conflicted with traditional ‘rules’ of popular song writing. Sterling Morrison and the drummer Angus MacLise soon joined them; the only rule between the men was that no one should play a blues riff. The Velvet Underground as recognised today was made complete by the replacement of Angus MacLise with Mo Tucker. The band’s name derived from a trashy sex exposé by Michael Leigh. The Velvet Underground was ‘adopted’ by Andy Warhol who gave them money for equipment and rehearsal space. It was in this way that members of the band became Factory regulars.

Warhol persuaded the band to allow Nico, a Berlin born model-turned-chanteuse, to front the band on occasion. Nico’s unusually deep-pitched vocal range, German accent and Weimar influences made what was already an atypical American band seem even stranger to domestic audiences who were generally listening to West Coast bands such as the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane. The Velvet Underground had little time for the hippie counter culture and vice versa. Although some of West Coast rock and acting royalty would attend their shows when the band ventured towards Los Angeles, within the working life of the band commercial success eluded them.

Through Bowie’s name-dropping of the Velvet Underground in the British press, the band were known to Bowie fans even before they heard the music. The band’s lack of commercial success and mass appeal only enhanced their cult status, their exclusivity entirely in keeping with the ethos that developed with Bowie fans. After Reed resigned from the band in 1970, practically guaranteeing the band’s dissolution, Bowie continued to praise him publicly ensuring that “His work was highly appreciated in Britain and the new generation of rock stars, spearheaded by Bowie, welcomed him a hero”.  

Reed’s first solo album, *Lou Reed*, had been poorly received, critically as well as commercially. Bockris thought Bowie was “one of his [Reed’s] brightest disciples” but it
might have seemed to Bowie fans that it was the other way round. It is generally agreed that Bowie-mania started after his television performance promoting ‘Starman’ was screened on Top of the Pops, 5th July 1972. Just before Bowie’s career breakthrough, he had offered himself as co-producer of Reed’s second album that would become *Transformer*. Bowie’s star was ‘shooting’ just at the time that Reed came to London to record at Trident studios and Reed had yet to prove himself. The sound of Mick Ronson’s unmistakable guitar playing was another audible link from *Ziggy Stardust* to *Transformer*; likewise Bowie and Ronson’s backing vocals. Ronson also co-produced and mixed, wrote the strings and bass lines, song arrangements and played piano and recorder parts for *Transformer*, which added to the correlations made between albums. Bowie’s involvement in the project was used as a promotional tool for Reed’s album by RCA, and the subsequent success of *Transformer* must have raised questions for Reed as to whose triumph the album was.

Bowie continued to extol Lou Reed as “the most important rock ‘n’ roll writer in the world” though it must also be considered that Bowie’s then wife, Angie, referred to her husband’s apparent reverence of Reed as a clever tactical career manoeuvre. Considering that Reed was his “only serious competition in his market niche”, he needed to bring Reed into “his Circle”. Whether or not this was the case, it seemed that after Bowie’s involvement in *Transformer*, Reed’s most commercially successful album to date, Reed took every opportunity to play down Bowie’s contribution to his career and any similarities between them.

It is not easy to judge which artist was influencing, or indeed using, which as a means of career advancement. On July 8th 1972, Reed shared the stage with Bowie as a guest at a charity concert at the Royal Festival Hall on London’s South Bank. He sang three Velvet Underground songs but dressed in what Bockris deemed a Bowie style glam outfit: “made up and sparkling in Bowie’s designer’s jumpsuit, six-inch platforms, and black nail polish”. RCA coined Reed’s new glam figure the ‘phantom of rock’, as Reed modelled himself on his (and Bowie’s) projected fantasy of what he was: “a sexy wolverine, homosexual junkie hustler, and advocate of S&M”. In this instance Bockris believed it was Reed that was a Bowie copyist.
On the front of the sleeve of *Transformer* was a high contrast, black and white photograph of Lou Reed with his guitar (by Mick Rock); the high contrast turned his face and guitar ghost white and the black make-up around his eyes and his black clothes enhanced his phantom of rock persona. Lou Reed became his own out-of-this-world special creation. This persona became the ‘narrator’ singing ‘Walk on the Wild Side’. As narrator he possessed knowledge of others’ past, present and futures and in this there was a supernatural quality to the ‘role’ he wrote for himself. Like the snake in the garden of Eden or the Master of Ceremonies in the film *Cabaret* there was a ‘devilish’ quality built into the role.

The cover, both back and front, contextualised the title word ‘transformer’, and more than hinted at the content. Not only did Reed and his record company maximise the potential of his image through the artwork on the front cover, but also revealed Reed to be the transformer: as he transformed reality into a glamorous other-world. The picture concurred with the glam fashions of the day, but Reed’s heavy use of white Pancake, thick black eyeliner and black lipstick set on the cupid’s bow harked back to the heavy screen make-up of the silent movie era that was enhanced by the high contrast treatment of the photographs. This impression was convincing, as a 1978 cover of a Manchester based fanzine depicted Reed in an expressionist type caricature as a vampire.  

The back cover showed an anonymous “well hung stud” staring from under the peak of his leather cap in the direction of a sexily dressed male-to-female drag artist, whose hand covered ‘her’ crotch. Reed described ‘her’ as a “sylph-like forties female creature”, though the figure’s leotard-come-sheer-shirt and tights are not particularly reminiscent of a 1940s clothing or styling. Reed believed the stud to be “looking into the mirror”, though the ‘mirror’ is only evident in a rectangular border around the photo, and the “creature staring out at him” gazed more in the direction of the stud’s feet. Reed’s vision of the stud looking at himself reflected back as a glamorous woman meant the stud was realising the possibility of himself transformed. Reed’s reading is more romantic than the simple one the picture may have suggested: that by dressing up in women’s clothes a man, however well endowed, may be his own fantasy woman.

Reed had an offer to turn Nelson Algren’s novel about “heroin addicts and hookers” *Walk on the Wild Side* into a stage musical, an opportunity that never came to fruition.
Nevertheless, the offer did lead Reed to write the most commercially successful single on *Transformer*, also called ‘Walk on the Wild Side’.\(^{15}\) The song was a perfect example of Reed’s ability to create a ‘play’ that layered meaning upon meaning. Lyrically by the use of an unusual cast, based on the Warhol’s Factory ‘superstars’, Reed’s verses become character-study vignettes. The choruses that were ‘narrated’ by Reed in reported speech had each character using the phrase “take a walk on the wild side”.

It is unnecessary to discuss the people that Reed based his characters on at length, it is suffice to say that Holly, Candy, Joe, Sugar Plum Fairy and Jackie all lived on the outside parameters of mainstream American society’s norms in terms of sexuality, sexual practice and drug use. The “wild side” refrain became an ode to the uncharted area outside the wholesome American ideal, and the “walk” taken literally coaxes the listener to join a sexual/drug *pas de deux* with each but it was also an encouragement for commitment to make reality of one’s fantasy, as Reed indicated his cast of characters had.

For all Reed’s audaciousness he admitted in a *Rolling Stone* interview with David Fricke in 1989, that though his lyrical subject matter had been hailed or derided as groundbreaking or “taboo” by commentators of the 1960s and 1970s, the areas of drug taking, transvestism, sadomasochism and bisexuality had already been thoroughly explored in “movies and books”.\(^{16}\)

Reed saw making music as corresponding to other forms of popular culture, not limited to the orthodox methods of composition he had been employed to do as an employee in Tin Pan Alley. If Bowie likened himself to an actor or painter: “To me, music is the paint… It’s not the picture. My music allows me to paint – myself. Myself. I become the picture” then Reed declared himself a playwright:\(^{17}\)

> Writing songs is like a play and you give yourself the lead part… And you write yourself the best parts that you could. And you’re your own director. And they’re short plays. And you get to play all kinds of different characters. It’s fun. I write through the eyes of someone else. I’m always checking out people I know I’m going to write songs about. Then I become them, if I’m around them for more than an hour, I’ll start doing it. And if I really like it I’ll keep it until I meet someone else who has something else. But I don’t have anything myself.\(^{18}\)

> My songs are little plays and I give myself a big role, but they’re different people. After a while maybe it should dawn on people that it all can’t be the same person.\(^{19}\)
Reed admitted to definition even less than Bowie did, if Bowie did not want the responsibility of a being cast as a character he would have to inhabit for all ‘immortality’ then Reed refused to be cast at all. Reed is ‘wild’ in ‘Walk on the Wild Side’, as the essence of an artist, embodying each ‘character’ in the song as well as the narrator/singer. He was the ultimate guest that traveled from character to character, body to body.

Also Implied in Reed’s emphasis of the word “wild” was knowledge of it. Reed, like the master of ceremonies in the 1972 film *Cabaret* knew what the listener did not but wanted to, furthermore, he knew of the eagerness for this knowledge. As one who had been transformed Reed opened up the possibility of an ‘other’ world, a place that was in contrast of all that was civilised. In the context of the metropolis, and the alternative communities that inhabit it, civilised day only appeared to turn into wild night but this was suggested as another illusion. The song proposed that whilst conventionally people who live by day merely sleep whilst the others ‘wake’ at sunset that was not always the case. Day and night or civilised and wild, these are parallel forces that live together, they do not replace one another wholly; by day a person can appear civilised, his or her ‘true’ nature hidden then transform into a wild creature of self-invention. Reminiscent of the duality and deception intrinsic to life in the city, duplicity is within each one of us. The listener may get lost once they walk on the ‘wild side’ (or loose themselves) but only through being lost will they truly find themselves. This was connected to the overall theme of the album: expression of individual freedom, against imposed normality creates transformation.

*Transformer* is presented as a cabaret show. Reed presided as master of ceremonies and quick-change artist. Like Bowie and Roxy music Reed’s music is not always typical of glam style. Many of the songs on Transformer did not conform to typical blues based formula and rock instrument arrangements: ‘Perfect Day’ was a type of torch song reliant on a simple piano arrangement, ‘Walk on the Wild Side’ was deliberately ‘lazy’ in its shuffle beat and sparse jazz arrangement. ‘New York Telephone conversation’ was in Broadway musical-style but deliberately produced to sound as though still in a rehearsal room and ‘Good Bye Ladies’ and ‘Make Up’ were arranged to sound ‘amateur’ as if in a seedy Weimar bar played by second rate musicians past closing time, with tuba and a sparse ‘dry’ snare and high-hat sound. On ‘Goodbye Ladies’ this was particularly pronounced in the ‘jazz
orchestra’ build-up. These two songs resembled what was taken to be the typical Weimar cabaret sound, using timing to emphasise subject matter not pure meter. The creation of a musical ‘atmosphere’ which supported the theme took president over demonstrations of virtuoso performance skills.

Within the more conventionally arranged songs, typical rock and roll elements were exploited to the point of parody, as became the hallmark of glam rock. For example, within the high-camp lyrical teasing of the short (2'55) ‘Vicious’, for rock and pop music the percussion was uncharacteristically loud in the mix. From the first chorus the distorted electric guitar seemed to pointlessly ‘freak-out’ in-between lyrical puns and increasingly became more ‘viciously’ played, taking over focus of the song from Reed’s vocals. Wild guitar improvisations usually associated with longer progressive rock songs of the time, included interludes of instrumental solos.

‘New York Conversation’, about telephone conversations of New York ‘socialites’ incorporated sounds of faint ringing. ‘I’m So Free’, ‘Andy’s Chest’ and ‘Satellite of Love’ all contained loud and over-stated backing vocals that Bowie was fond of; Bowie’s voice could be easily be recognised. As in Bowie’s own glam work, Reed’s sophisticated and precise writing and/or performing words were often at odds with the ‘clumsy’ and literal musical analogies and backing arrangements. The exception was ‘Perfect Day’ that became an ‘honest moment’ on the Transformer ‘stage’ and in that way the ploy of the artist revealed his ‘real’ face/self, an audio version of the tradition of female impersonators removing their wig and smudging their make-up.

On Transformer Reed exemplified Bowie’s form of glam combining clever artistic layering of fine workmanship and kitsch both in material and performance. Many of the songs, but most notably ‘Warhol’s Chest’, ‘Make Up’ and ‘New York Conversation’ contained indirect or double coded phrases within the lyrics and even titles. There was layered meaning both lyrically and in performance. Warhol, had been shot in the chest by the extreme feminist Valerie Solanas in 1968 and Reed’s song at once referenced, in surrealist type language, Warhol’s paranoia, fantasies and dreams; a treasure chest full of ideas inside the man who Reed looked-up to. ‘Make Up’ was about physical transformation and voyeurism but also observing psychological transformation. Reed’s performance ‘New York Conversation’
was a comedy study of controlled sensitivity: Reed sung in a more emotionally detached style than usual, as befitting the disinterested character and shallow language ‘he’ or ‘she’ employed. Using prolonged slides from note to note “Oh how sad”, and again in equal measure on “Oh I’m Glad”, Reed demonstrated that the character over-dramatises outwardly yet remains unmoved emotionally.

On ‘Walk on the Wild Side’, Reed’s characteristic flourishes were brought to the fore. Reed was noted for his lyrics as much as his music and every word counted. Therefore, when a line jars or sounds banal the listener is assured that the jarring or banality was deliberate and part of the message. Reed sang against a ‘laid-back’ rhythm section that took its cue from the stand-up bass. Reed’s voice had been described as “monochromatic” and at once this put him at odds with other pop and rock stars. There was a nod to ‘jazz’ in the arrangement by the drum kit played with brushes and a guitar played to the same rhythm as Reed singing lightly accented, dotted note de-doo de-doos. These ‘de-doos’ Reed said were a reference and homage to the Black doo-op groups that were popular in the 1950s.

The line “and the coloured girls sing” was written in the wake of the 1960s civil rights movement, including the rise of Black consciousness and feminism. The words “coloured girls” presumably referred to Black women and draw attention to Reed’s deliberate political incorrectness. He identified with those marginalised by mainstream society, in the tradition of homosexual men calling each other ‘poofs’ and ‘queens’ he was calling to ‘his own kind’, Reed might have simply be extending the privilege, although he also had also acquired a reputation for “misogyny”.

Gaines confessed that she was not a fan of Reed and yet commented the “brutal feelings of fear rage and disgust that Reed expressed never seemed gender specific” though Bockris also wrote of Reed’s violent tendencies, not only in his artistic expression but towards his female and ‘female’ partners in real life. Suzanne Hyman was a witness to a public display of Reed’s violence towards girlfriend Bettye, that erupted seemingly out of nowhere and “was clear that he wasn’t kidding around” though this outburst must be tempered with simultaneous reports of Reed’s hardening drug habit. Reed’s bad treatment of Bettye was not only physical as he would often “needle” her about his “gay past” “and drive her crazy by telling her how much he missed sucking cock”.

...
This appeared to build a case of misogyny but such behaviour was in keeping with the image Reed liked to project, nor was it unusual or unreasonable within his set, as Gaines pointed out “Reed as faggot junkie was another peacock, just like all the young dudes of that era”. Reed’s mood swings and illicit activities did not only victimize women, the effects of his caustic agile tongue were frequently felt by other members of Warhol’s Factory, and his violent outbursts were often a feature of recording sessions with Bowie on Transformer. His predilection to select women who were not ‘armed’ to deal with his behaviour would indicate a taste for sadism but not necessarily misogyny. The misogynistic tag did not fit the man who in the mid-1960s chose, because of her musicianship, to work with a female drummer, an act that most male musicians of the time would never have considered. In spite of his anti-fashion sentiments, misogynistic behaviour was very much an archetype of the 1970s.

People like Lou and I are probably predicting the end of an era, and I mean that catastrophically…any society that allows people like Lou and me to become rampant is pretty well lost. We’re both very mixed-up, paranoid people – absolute walking messes. I don’t really know what we’re doing. If we’re the spearhead of anything, we’re not necessarily the spearhead of anything good.

Like Bowie, Reed appeared to take a perverse enjoyment in shocking people. He acquired a reputation for outrageous behaviour with no real consideration for surrounding company, “taking situations to extremes”; Reed would also hint that he was mad.

In terms of his sexuality, Reed fitted the glam stereotype; his reputation and his involvement with Warhol and his set meant that he could play the ‘transformer’ to perfection. The gay rights movement encouraged many men and women to come ‘out’ but for any public figure, even in entertainment, an admission of homosexuality or bisexuality was considered shocking because it was traditionally thought career suicide. Whereas Bowie had ‘flirted’ with bisexuality “making it hip”, Reed gave no definite headline grabbing sound-bites about his personal sexuality but publicly gave an air of sexual ambiguity.

the album Transformer referred directly and explicitly to gay life and transvestism. The subject matter was not new, but Reed’s attitude towards it was – he was now openly identifying with a subculture he had always viewed obliquely, from a protective, ironic distance.
Reed, like Warhol, was interested in the aesthetic value and power play of sex rather than the act itself. Warhol was known to display voyeuristic tendencies and Reed too sensed power in the art of watching. Reed’s supposed ‘new’ involvement with the subculture was maybe no more than acting the part, his character another persona to hide behind, subterfuge was all part of the game of glam. By listening to Reed’s *Transformer* the audio-‘voyeur’ felt daring yet still quite safe, like tourists of 1920s Berlin. *Transformer* was an invitation to an extreme ‘party’ without having to experience any real ‘danger’.

Gay rights activists worked to eliminate the demonisation of homosexuals and many gay people distanced themselves from persistent stereotypes. Reed’s songs celebrated people that even other gays men and women began to feel uncomfortable about. Reed’s persona combined a presence of gayness and ‘badness’, perhaps as a response to the worthy reputation of gay politics or a deliberate reaction to the idea of homosexuals as victims.

Jeff Schwartz, in his 1996 study on ‘Sister Ray’, was indignant at others’ denials of Reed’s gay credentials. That Reed was included in a list of British glam artists considered ‘gay tourists’ Schwartz believed unjustified. In addition, Schwartz thought there was a commercially motivated attempt to “heterosexualize” Reed’s work in the late 1980s. Certainly there was evidence that supported Schwartz’s view, as Andy Warhol’s entry in his diary for Sunday, December 19, 1976 indicated. Warhol reported that he called Reed’s cross-dressing boyfriend Rachel ‘she’ “because she’s always in drag”, whereas Reed always referred to his partner as ‘he’ thereby openly content with the homosexual partnership.

Bockris noted in *Transformer* that the “normally apolitical” Reed did not merely make a “camp gesture” but made a “rare political statement”.

### 7.2 Berlin: City of Transformation

If *Transformer* was arranged as a cabaret show by way of each song distinct from one another, Reed portraying or introducing his audience to a variety of colourful characters, then by contrast *Berlin* was, as producer Bob Ezrin wanted, a “film for the ear”. *Berlin* deliberated on the devastating consequences of the kinds of personal ‘freedom’ that *Transformer* advocated. Reed’s album was not popular with many critics or the public alike at the time of its release but has sold steadily ever since. RCA had so little confidence in the album they made Reed agree to make two commercial products in similar mould to
Transformer in exchange for releasing Berlin. The Rock critic, Albert Goldman thought the album’s most successful aspect was of all of glam rock’s evocations of Berlin’s Weimar cabaret Reed’s Berlin proved the most effective. Ellen Willis thought the album was explicitly about the “divided city” as a “metaphor” for the “war between the sexes”. Whereas, John Rockwell writing for the New York Times commented on both the cinematic quality of the record and its highly charged sexual undertones and influences:

Berlin is a typically dreamlike saga of a sadomasochistic love affair in contemporary Berlin. But the contemporary is enriched by a subtle acknowledgement of Brecht and Weill, and the potential sensationalism of the subject matter is calmly defused by a hopeless matter-of-factness.

How much of Berlin is in Reed’s 1973 album Berlin? Although Reed said it was set in contemporary (1970s) Berlin, did he borrow from Weimar culture unwittingly or, like Bowie, deliberately? Even Reed’s visit to the city was debated, as there were conflicting reports over whether he actually went to Berlin in the early 1970s. Large wrote not only did Reed visit the city but that the visit provided him with “inspiration” for his album, whereas Wrenn denied Reed ever visited Berlin during that time. However, both Wrenn and Large agreed Reed used the city’s name as a symbol: Wrenn, that Reed’s album title conveyed the symbolism of the “subject matter” within, although he did not say if he meant the divided city of the Cold War era or Weimar Berlin, whereas Large thought “In this record Berlin is a symbol of longing, loss, and stark antinomies, as it was for some of the cabaret artists of the early 1930s”. Whether Large rightly or wrongly credited Reed with a ‘research’ visit to Berlin, he too believed that simply the word ‘Berlin’ conjured up “longing, loss, and stark antinomies” that these attributes were similarly connected to the two eras, though fifty years apart.

Rockwell acknowledged both contemporary and Weimar Berlin in Reed’s work. The claustrophobic atmosphere that he managed to weave through the lead melodies using close interval notes gave it an uncomfortable intimacy. The unusually sparse instrumentation created a different kind of unnervingly bleak atmosphere. Claustrophobia and bleakness were part of the dichotomy of Berlin’s urban life noted during both eras. The absence of range in Reed’s singing is an antithesis of any ‘trained’ or professional voice; there was no effort to beautify or impress. Reed evokes Isherwood’s description of Sally Bowls’ unpretentious manner of bad but effective singing style, yet this is a bluff because he
purposely exploited such an approach thereby using ‘technique’ rather than naivety. In ‘Lady Day’ the manner of description of Caroline compelled to sing in a bar upon hearing music emanating from the venue is close to Isherwood’s intimations that Sally made an ‘exhibition of herself’.

As Rockwell maintained any latent ‘glamorisation’ of the scenario is avoided because of Reed’s mundane treatment in the writing and performance. Comparable to Brecht and Weill’s Dreigroschenoper Reed treated the more sensational aspects such as drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, domestic violence, exhibitionism and suicide as ever increasingly violent and habitual cycles of negative responses. Akin to the characters that populate Dreigroschenoper, Alexanderplatz and the Berlin Novels there are no innocent victims, only characters in various stages of denial and self-awareness.

Large reflected upon Reed’s album post-listening, however Reed was against perception from memory and preferred the album to be listened to in ‘real time’. For Reed the album was about the “violence, both mental and physical” that the central couple experience, together and apart. Reed also stated that Berlin “takes place for real in Berlin in 1973” and “The lyrics are very direct, very to the point. It is a realistic story”. Reed reported the album’s themes were transportable to other urban centres as he said “it isn’t just Berlin, it could be New York too”. Reed was keen to distance the work from any suggestion of ‘usual’ Weimar connections so associated with glam and the type of expressionistic encoded layering with which Bowie had became synonymous. Reed’s priority was to separate Berlin from his previous album, not least since Transformer’s success only added to the pressure for Reed to deliver another similar work.

Conceptually the album had narrative with a type of beginning, middle and an end but the ‘story’ did not unfold so much as build layer by layer. The ‘play’ is not in Reed’s transformations from character to character as were in his previous album but changes of ‘perspective’. The ‘cinematic’ style was approximated in an introduction to the first song on the album and also the title track. The initial ‘tracking ‘shot’ as Reed counted eins, zwei, drei, finished with a brushed drum role, the listener was then ‘turned’ to a naturalistic communal rendition of Happy Birthday in a generic night spot.
‘Men of Good Fortune’, suggested a musing on the nature on the advantages and disadvantages of men of good fortunes versus men of poor beginnings though the first, third and fourth verses end with the phrases “And me, I just don’t care at all”, “Anyway, it makes no difference to me” and “But me, I just don’t care at all” respectively. The song suggested the Reed/Reed’s anti-hero has opted out not only of the surrounding ‘game’ of ambition and fortune hunting but also disassociates himself from his socio-economic background. In the mould of many of the famous real or fictional characters connected with Weimar Berlin Reed’s character was a man of self-invention, avoided affiliation, class or definition.

In Berlin there were bio-centric divisions throughout as Reed played with notions of power. ‘Woman’ was clearly the ‘other’ in ‘Caroline Says I’ and ‘Caroline Says II’ as Reed demarcated lines between ‘me’ the singer and ‘her’ Caroline and male and female. Whereas there was a convention of lyrics in first-person Reed ‘casts’ himself as narrator similarly to Doblin’s _Alexanderplatz_ and Isherwood’s _Berlin Novels_; a manner that took the ‘I am a camera’ style of the Isherwood stories. In addition, like Doblin’s protagonist Biberkopf, Reed ‘confuses’ the listener regarding the acceptability and culpability of the behaviour of the anti-hero/narrator and anti-heroin/her figures; the listener was left to judge.

Reed used a detached manner in both vocal performance and timbre as he explored the balance of power from one song to the other. In ‘Caroline Says I’ the woman has her independence “She doesn’t want a man that leans”. This is ‘scene’ where the woman has the upper hand, Reed sang “at first I thought I could take it all”. In ‘Caroline Says II’, the woman had been physically beaten by her lover but still he cannot provoke the emotional reaction he wanted. The listener knows it is the boyfriend that has been broken. It was rare men wrote songs that demonstrated women as the more powerful in a relationship. In ‘The Kids’ the children’s removal was her punishment for promiscuity and inconstancy, her suicide a final attempt to find peace. There was/is no permanence, in ‘Lady Day’ the anti-heroine moved from one transient state to another:

She climbed down off the bar  
And went out the door  
To the hotel  
That she called home
From pretend stage to pretend home, paid for with (his) “love and blood”, only with her suicide was there transformation. ‘Sad Song’, the finale on Berlin was the anti-hero’s song of transformation; her death became his sacrifice, releasing him from illusions; love, domesticity and place.

Reed may have based the figure of Caroline “Germanic Queen” on Nico, who had been raised in post-World War II Berlin and gleaned most of her musical influences from Weimar female singers. Certainly she had thought so, reporting Reed had told her so in letters.  

John Cale stated Reed and Nico had “some kind of affair” when she joined the Velvet Underground and ended with Nico uttering “I cannot make love to Jews anymore”. Reed was against Nico working with the band initially, then weeks later “fell madly in love” with her. In addition to her unquestionable beauty and imposing physique he had been equally impressed by her “amazing mind” and extreme character. Indeed, their relationship appeared as fraught as the one featured in Berlin, frequently quarrelling and both using their equal talent for cutting one-liners. When the romance between Reed and Nico ceased, Reed, deeply wounded had turned on Nico and even by the bitchy standards of the Factory was deemed “mean to Nico”, including constant jibes at her musicality and English comprehension. He then ceased to co-operate with her musically. Nico, not a person easily subjugated, had within a year switched her affections to Reed’s band-mate, John Cale. Nico saw the album as Reed’s attempt at an apology, to “make it up to me with the Berlin album”.

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Chapter 8

German Irony: Kraftwerk

There was no German culture, no German music, nothing. It was like living in a vacuum. The young people were into the American way of living; cars, hamburgers, and rock’n’roll. Germany had lost its identity. We all felt very lost. To be able to feel any bonds at all, we had to go back to the Bauhaus school. It sounds strange but to be able to continue into the future we had to take a step back forty years.¹

Kraftwerk avoided the usual symbolism of rock ‘n’ roll and took their artistic cue from Bauhaus and the international style. The band’s music regularly exalted machines and other modern wonders, creating soundscapes that emanated both wistful nostalgia and the optimism of futurism. More popular abroad than domestically, Kraftwerk appeared exotic among other American-style acts. Seemingly unconcerned with the usual pressures to conform for the sake of commercial success they appeared to deliberately move as far away as possible from rock ‘n’ roll sensibilities. Occasionally charged with parody, often their style appeared to comply with German stereotypes. Their positive responses to their outsider status reinforced their ‘otherness’ whilst the subject matter for their material frequently focused on transition, transformation and travel.

The two original members of the band, Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider spoke openly about their conscious mission to create music in the spirit of Bauhaus. Employing Bauhaus’ techniques, combining art and technology, Kraftwerk created an artificial world that they would have their audience believe they inhabited fulltime, denying themselves involvement with ‘normal’ life. Like Bowie’s Ziggy Stardust, their staged creation was played off as well as on stage.
Though consciously radical in style, the band’s work was not an exercise in Bauhaus authenticity. That they had chosen to reflect the school’s ethos in their work was a timely search for artistic identity in West Germany. Kraftwerk’s music and imagery played with the cultural and political concerns of both pre-World War II and 1970s Germany. Kraftwerk’s seriousness of intent and demonstration of expertise possibly distracted that there was something else beyond the straightforward homage to a bygone age: what Frederick Jameson referred to as ‘pastiche’. Differing from any music created during Weimar, Kraftwerk’s music was imbued with hindsight.

In their role as anti-rock ‘n’ roll artists Kraftwerk occupied a space that was undefined and thus transformable and gave them greater artistic freedom than most other musicians working in popular music. The band’s choice of iconography and musical subject matter was at times intentionally ambiguous and seemed to invite controversy. Kraftwerk’s most influential work was between 1974 and 1981. Autobahn (1974), Radio-Activity (1976) Trans-Europe-Express (1977) The Man Machine (1978) and Computer World (1981) exhibited many of the preoccupations of the German inter-war years including nationalism and a fetishist love of technology; subjects that were especially contentious when the albums were released.

Kraftwerk’s music could arguably thought ‘anti-romantic’, containing none of the usual references surrounding love or relationships save for one song: an ode to a professional model. A woman deified in ‘The Model’ for her robotic moves, calculated ambition and symbiosis with the camera. The song worked at face value yet also as satire: a sarcastic ode to the seamless world of impossible beauty and consumerism. The band cultivated their exoticism, a brand of camp that united their male sensibilities with machines. With their fetishist love of modern objects and values Kraftwerk sensualised the machine world.

It has been debated whether Kraftwerk sanitised their man/machine world by the omission of women altogether, as their former percussionist Wolfgang Flür detected, or buried her sinister forces though present by implication. Women, like the nuclear threat, considered too powerful to be referred to directly though existing in the ‘tricks’ of production and topics of artifice. Kraftwerk’s music exhibited one of the most female-associated traits: an innate understanding of consumerism. Horkheimer and Adorno’s opinions in Dialectic of
Enlightenment expressed their views on technology, mass production and consumerism. Following interrogation of modernity’s engendered coding, Andreas Huyssen’s theory of women as the threat and thrill of technology illustrates how the feminine became synonymous with malefic forces demonstrated by a favourite film of Kraftwerk, the seminal film *Metropolis*.

### 8.1 MachineMusic

Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider named their band after Düsseldorf’s largest power station, which set the droll humoured tone of future work.\(^2\) Kraftwerk liked to play with stereotypical views of Germans. In interviews they referred to their studio, Kling Klang as a ‘laboratory’ and described themselves as scientists rather than musicians. In addition they dropped hints of machine music’s power as a brainwashing tool and alluded to the possibility of ‘pure music’. In answer to an accusation that Kraftwerk’s music was ‘anti-emotional’ Schneider responded that their music was emotional but “not body emotion… mental emotion”.\(^3\)

This type of comment accentuated their image and aligned them to modernist artistic principles usually reserved for visual art, it also proved they had a dry sense of humour. If rock ‘n’ roll had threatened through its physical effect on the libido, jeopardising morality of all listeners and causing moral panic in the mid-1950s and ‘60s then Kraftwerk threatened through mental corruption, directly playing on widely held fears of German stereotypes and machines.

Bang’s comment, that he found their music “anti-emotional” suggested that music has intrinsic feelings, a romantic notion in itself. Far from correcting Bangs, Schneider reinforced his implication and built on it with the idea of ‘mental emotion’. Modern classical and electronic musicians and composers had intimated this type of mental-emotion or purity in their music before, the implication being that physical-emotion was a pre-evolutionary state of mental-emotion. This notion also corresponded with the conventional analogy that electronic instruments are less capable than acoustic instruments to evoke emotional response.

Ronald Pellegrino claimed electronic instruments have additional qualities to acoustic ones
since they can be “adjusted to respond to a specific environment” because “Unlike most acoustic instruments whose basic variables are set by physical limitations, electronic instruments have the potential for infinite variation within and beyond the audio spectrum”. Pellegrino’s quote was penned in the early 1980s but even in the 1970s these relatively new instruments were capable of a wide range of sonic possibilities, the motivation behind the science was to extend the “human range of expression through sound”. Optimistically, he made a case for these new instruments’ potential to supersede the traditional: “The compositional power of electronic instruments is a reflection of their nature as integrated extensions of human sensory and motor functions, the human need and capacity for emotional and spiritual expressivity”.

Bangs was only one example of the numerous rock critics sceptical of electronic music’s value, there was generally a dismissive attitude towards music created by electronic instruments especially synths. The rock fraternity mostly considered electronic music to be effeminate and of no significance. Much of rock ‘n’ roll was concerned with macho posturing and bravado, the electric guitar had honorary acoustic status as a super-organic instrument: the guitar’s iconography, portability and capability of extreme volume allowed for such status. The history of the synthesiser and other electronic instruments that had developed from expensive and advanced technological study also worked against its reputation.

Synthesizers in the 1970s became an audio equivalent of motor vehicles in the 1920s, available, but still prohibitively expensive for most musicians. By the 1970s, synthesisers had become synonymous with futuristic sound and ‘things’ beyond mundane experience. In this way, these instruments were infused with a sense of the possibility to transform the listener through experience. Pellegrino noted the invention of the synthesizer had escalated the evolution of electronic arts overall. The use of the synthesizer in works such as Wendy Carlos’ *Switched on Bach* (1968) used as part of the soundtrack to Stanley Kubrick’s science fiction film *Clockwork Orange* (1971) and heralded the beginning of electronic music’s transition from university to dance floor and from art into popular (commercial) culture.

Schneider and Hütter met at the Düsseldorf conservatory where they studied flute and electric organ respectively. In retrospect the experience was deemed to serve a necessary
process rather than to any end. Schneider’s father was architect of some repute, responsible for the construction of railway stations and airports after the war, a fact that consistently prefaced any biography and many articles since it fit effectively into Kraftwerk’s ethos. Hütter and Schneider possessed enviable amounts of expertise, experience, and confidence, contributing to all-round self-sufficiency, including financially. Karl Bentos, a later addition to the band and a student at the Robert Schumann Conservatorium (also in Düsseldorf) believed the extent of autonomy brought a certain kind of complacency as well as the significant advantages.  

Bussy thought Warhol provided the inspiration for the cover artwork on Kraftwerk’s first albums *Kraftwerk I* and *Kraftwerk II*. More accurately, the images of their ‘trademark’ traffic cones were less pop and more in keeping with industrial diagrams. The single variation of colour from orange to green on an otherwise black on white sketch represented a sequel or alternative, like Schlemmer’s mechanical ballets *The Figural Cabinet I* and *The Figural Cabinet II*, rather than direct reproduction since each album was intended to be experienced as a multi-dimensional whole. Nevertheless, the images provided better clues for the band’s future direction than the soundscapes ‘inside’. As Bussy noted “The sum total of their endeavours has the outward appearance of a streamlined, corporate business where the studio, the music and the image, have been manipulated into one unique entity”. It had always been of primary importance that Kraftwerk consciously promoted the idealistic and holistic approach borrowed from the avant-garde of the inter-war period.

In Bussy’s opinion, after these more ‘improvised’ albums Kraftwerk abandoned their avant-garde aspirations but Tim Barr thought Schneider and Hütter saw the band as one of the few real avant-garde musical projects of the time. *Autobahn* became the realised product of past ‘experiments’. Bussy noted that within their “self-imposed seclusion of the Kling Klang studio they have created a factory-like environment – a laboratory where musicians appear to work more like scientists than artists”. Kraftwerk rebuked the notion of the rock ‘n’ roll artists’ model of creating music as an authentic one, for them their way of creating music was in accordance to Bauhaus’ Arts and Technology manifesto, marrying artistic sensibilities with technological skill. Similarly to Pellegrino Kraftwerk believed “Electronic instruments speak the language of the twentieth century”.  

8.2 Ghosts in the Machine

Though machines of war and travel had been exalted it was not the case for domestic or light industry, the apparatus of mundane existence: the repetitive drudgery of women’s working lives and a routine domesticity was the one thing shied away from at all costs. Technological innovation transformed into ‘magic’ when used for the immaterial, challenging laws of nature such as in flight or breaking record levels of volume or speed but when technology was used as an aid to mundane activities such as domestic chores or a replacement for a factory’s manual-worker there were no such magical associations. On a practical level technology only served as reminder that people who did repetitive or menial work are replicable and replaceable.

Though Kraftwerk extolled the virtues of technology they did not balk at routine and mundane work, quite the reverse, they turned everyday repetition into artistic practice and their art. The image of driving Volkswagens or riding bicycles daily to their Kling Klang sound ‘laboratory’ soon became as important to the Kraftwerk formula as the work done inside. Kraftwerk’s music had once appeared to fit in with the music of other electronic ‘Kraut rock’ bands such as Tangerine Dream, Neu and Can but from the mid-1970s their use of repetition and ‘simpler’ arrangements made them stand out. Hütter bought a MiniMoog synthesiser in 1974 and incorporated its use in *Autobahn*, an album based on a car journey. The heightened artificially of Kraftwerk was expressed in the transformation of folk-style melodies and stripped down rhythms, created by or processed by machines.

Kraftwerk were influenced directly by the 1926 *Arts and Technology* manifestos of the Bauhaus school

The Bauhaus idea was to mix art and technology. An artist is not an isolated creature that creates for the sake of creation, but as part of a functional community. In the same way we are kind of musical workers. The spirit of Bauhaus in electronic sounds …Our roots were in the culture that was stopped by Hitler; the school of Bauhaus, German Expressionism. We didn’t have many musical influences. One was Stockhausen, one of the pioneers of electronic music. We felt somehow that the age of composed music had passed and we strived for simpler music, something that could be played on the radio without having to be adjusted to current styles of music.11

Hütter or Schneider repeatedly announced that they were ‘musical workers’ or as Mark Prendergast surmised “workers for a new electronic future”. Kraftwerk’s view of themselves
implied political allegiances to the Left though almost every article and book includes a mention of Schneider and Hütter *hoch bourgeoisi* or upper-middle class background.¹² In many ways their inherited aspirations for autonomy rather than need for success or upward social mobility allowed them to become ‘workers’. This might have accounted for their admirable confidence in their shared ambitions and everyday endeavours. Their relationship with machines was also presented as egalitarian “We are playing the machines, the machines play us, it is really the exchange and the friendship we have with the musical machines which make us build a new music”.¹³

Kraftwerk were one of the few prominent bands not to employ a manager. Hütter and Schneider did not want any interference with the project, long or short term. Hütter and Schneider managed Kraftwerk’s finances, something pop musicians usually avoided, and akin to Gropius for Bauhaus, made Kling Klang into a registered production/publishing company. Bauhaus GmbH had been formed as a limited company in 1925, the point of which was to “establish sole rights to the models developed at the Bauhaus, which were to be mass produced by industry” after the financial difficulties in the early years.¹⁴ Bauhaus had needed to forge links with commerce for two purposes: to secure finance for the school and to ensure a steady market. Kraftwerk’s needs were not dissimilar, as they licensed their recordings to EMI in order to use the record company’s industrial apparatus to maximise the market potential of the original work. The founder members of Kraftwerk’s business acumen meant they reinvested in the company, paying for the upkeep of the studio and generally ensuring their project could continue. They also enjoyed investing in the latest technology and regularly updated equipment, both pre-made models and parts to custom-build.

Michael Kane considered that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century there was a particular crisis in masculinity. Kane stated that in times of cultural instability the ‘other’ became a “scapegoat” in order to reinforce supposed “dissolving boundaries”.¹⁵ The scapegoat appeared as a double or a *doppelganger*, embodying all ‘other’ qualities, or alternatively a man-made creation equally imbued with similar attributes. This was exemplified by the Romantics’ fantasy of giving birth, as they “liked to compare their cultural production with both God the Father’s unaided creation of the universe and women's production of new human beings from their bodies”.¹⁶
In post-World War II work, the religious type fervour that surrounded technology in the modern age was spotlighted, its role as accomplice and means of accomplishment of mass destruction and mass murder. Mass culture was seen as killer of the individual and the unique: through associative history: the “Technological rationale...(becomes) the rationale of domination itself.” Horkheimer and Adorno retrenched the engendered modern position when associating mass culture with the feminine. As Huysen pointed out in a quotation from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* “mass culture in her mirror is always the most beautiful in the land” and thereby mass culture became an evil, wicked Queen. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* there was distrust of all technology and all that it created. As the ex-model Nico had said of Lou Reed “Lou likes to manipulate women, you know, like programme them. He wanted to do that to me. He told me so. Like, computerise me”.

To promote the *Menschemaschine* or Manmachine tour the band had replicas made of themselves. These mannequins were dressed in the same stage costumes as the band and often opened the show for them. In a disparaging comment in his book, *I Was a Robot*, Kraftwerk’s Wolfgang Flür conveyed his unhappiness that Kraftwerk were viewed as “…technocratic, unfeeling, cool, calculating, and, worst of all hostile to women”. The lack of intimate narrative in their song lyrics or their adherence to modern principles conveyed these ‘cool’ characteristics.

Kraftwerk’s biggest selling song, ‘The Model’ and was re-released from *Manmachine* in 1980. ‘The Model’ was often held to be atypical of their work by fans since the subject matter mentioned a human being and more astonishingly, a woman. Hütter explained her presence in the Kraftwerk repertoire by virtue of her model-mechanical walk and her relationship with a camera. Hütter could have also pointed out her function as the face of mass production and consumption. That Kraftwerk had to explain the existence of a single fictional woman in their catalogue of work showed that her ‘presence’, however mechanical and artificial, jarred with some fans.

The verses are only two chords from Am to Em. The folk style vocal melody followed the root notes of the chords. A riff replaced a chorus as the repetitive element; there is nothing complicated in the composition or arrangement, the ‘interest’ derived from the artificiality
of the synthesizer and the subject matter. The song notably concluded with the singer’s turn-around as he acknowledges desire for the model now “she is a big success”, a valuable commodity. ‘The Model’ is acting at being a perfect model woman. In her self-awareness she was artificial and manipulative but within the singer’s confession that he has changed his mind he revealed his artificial nature and desire to manipulate her.

Mass-production and reproduction are engendered by way of patriarchal society equating ‘I’ with the artist’s ‘original’ and the ‘other(s)’ with reproductions of each “other”. As each man’s view of himself is as an original the sum of his experiences and thoughts, a singular entity from where all else radiates. Historically men as writers have been narrators (objective voice) and/or thinking voice (first person). Women have rarely had the opportunity to use their own voice and therefore they were not heard. In visual terms they have been viewed only in relation to a man or men. Since She becomes only what a man makes or thinks of her, She is often a fantasy figure and therefore easily read.

In a similar manner to the masculine romantic genius guardedness of the softening and neutering effects of women the modern artist had to shun their bourgeois and beautifying nature. As Andreas Huyssen pointed out in After the Great Divide: “the gendering of the inferior mass culture as feminine goes hand in hand with the emergence of the male mystique in modernism.” Therefore, women were once again set as opposites and ‘other’, to be cast and cast off as mothers or (sexual) distracters. Women were instilled with power as prompters of basic emotions and desires. The identified male ‘I’ relationship to the female ‘others’ ensured not only that women merely existed in relation to a man but that their collective anonymity became overwhelming. The re-emphasis on man's (in)ability to create without a female presence coupled with the Romantic notion of spirit over matter meant that man-made creations were preferable to those of women. Women associated with all things lowly and earthly could reproduce matter but men could create spiritually and intellectually superior beings, each creation more awe-inspiring than any creation before. Whether the ‘other’ is the viewed from the neutral central figure or as in binary opposition where the opposite ‘other’ is convoluted as the negative, the male is forever associated with good, godly and the positive and the female with the bad, ungodly and the negative.

In fiction She plays the mother, the girlfriend, the lover and the daughter. The one female is
reproduced two dimensionally and then fleshed out with age and colour and various degrees of usefulness to fill a cast of thousands if need be, but in essence she, being one man’s fantasy, is the same woman replicated. Even in the performance of heterosexual intercourse he makes love to her rather than the action of two. This is not simple active and passive imbalance of power but a possessor and a possession, a collector and a collectable, an exhibitor and an exhibit. She is one of a type, a variation perhaps, an older version or a younger model. It also follows that a male artist who sees himself as the savoir of the world or misunderstood by the world is thinking of himself as hero among the masses. The masses are made up out of feminised men who do not realise their own power - and women. The masses have no names since they are all the same; replicas and reproductions are associated with all ‘others’ the only original is always the hero.

8.3 Decoding the Threat

Hütter and Schneider started their musical careers in the late-1960s at a time most of the general populace of West Germany preferred not to recall or draw attention to their nation’s past. As previously pointed out in chapter 5 and Hütter’s quotation at the beginning of this chapter, the collective ‘amnesia’ effected not only memories of the atrocities that happened during World War II but also German culture that was associated with the pre-war years. American servicemen stationed in West Germany after the war meant American culture took over as the primary and preferable source of influence. This was particularly clear near the Kraftwerk’s hometown of Düsseldorf.

In writing on the “culture and society” debate that had raged in post-World War II Britain Dick Hebdige reflected on the image of the United States:

Although during the Cold War the prospect of Soviet territorial ambitions could provoke similar indignation and dread, American cultural imperialism demanded a more immediate interpretative response... America was seen by many of these writers (Huxley, Fyvel Spengler and Hoggart) as the prime mover in this terrifying process, as the homogenising agent and from the 1930s onwards the United States (and its productive processes and scale of consumption) began to serve as the image of industrial barbarism; A country with no past and therefore no culture, a country ruled by competition, profit and the drive to acquire. It was soon used as a paradigm for the future threatening every advanced industrial democracy in the Western world. 26
The United States, with its comparative wealth, (mass) production values and consumer culture represented all that was temptation and hence ‘female’. Certainly post-World War II, people in Britain and throughout war-torn Europe were primarily concerned with surviving: rationing, making do and mending and rebuilding. Living for the present and planning for the future was a serious business. Whereas in the United States, where the economy had been bolstered by the war, the future was the thing of dreams and imagination, futuristic European modern design was often combined with American practical application and mass production, streamlining many everyday objects, from automobiles to toasters.

It was the absorption, assimilation and hybridisation of modernity and the domestic, the highest to the lowest, the old world and the new world, the kingdom of masculine and the realm of the feminine that was met with panic and derision by “responsible” critics. Hebdige conceded that Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory pervaded as “concerned ‘responsible’ commentary as harbingers of cultural decadence and the feminisation of native traditions of self-denial.” Hebdige used ‘feminisation’ to communicate an opposing force to ‘self denial’, therefore, the root of scorn from those acting as ‘responsible’.

Although the United States was blamed for creating the desire for bright, shiny, sexy ‘things’ in allied Europe, there were still strong parallel domestic cultures. Whereas in West Germany, where there had been a deliberate mistrust of all things German by the allied occupying forces, a non-discriminatory erosion of German culture began. By the 1970s, those on the Left were anti-capitalist, hence anti-American and their familiar political rhetoric was chiefly of the standard socialist kind. Whereas, Hütter and Schneider, who had noticed the pervading Americanisation in West German aspirations for the lowest common denominator commodities of “cars, hamburgers, and rock ’n’ roll”, selectively sought to reintroduce German culture. At the time much of their attempt was met with suspicion and dismissal in West Germany.

The United States developed into yet another metaphor for domesticity and artifice, luxury and frippery. Kane conversely thought “Americans feared that the decline of the frontier lifestyle and the increasing ‘Europeanisation’ of America constituted the
feminisation of culture and of the American male”. Europeanisation equalled urbanity with its correlations of feminine decadency and repressive civility. Although Kraftwerk became reasonably popular in the United States they were also considered weirdly camp, their music acceptable for the dance floors of major cities but not for the ‘heart of America’.

8.4 Mothers of Invention

Ralph Hütter explained, “Historically, we feel if there was a group in Metropolis, maybe Kraftwerk would have been that band”. Despite Kraftwerk’s insistence that they were the ‘band of Metropolis’ they never attempted the full score to Metropolis even though they were asked at the time of the launch of the film set to video in 1984. Kraftwerk’s work practices were notably painstaking and time consuming and perhaps turned down the opportunity, unable to fulfil commercial considerations concerning deadlines. Gottfried Huppertz firstly composed the score for an orchestra for Metropolis’ premiere in Berlin on 10th Jan 1926. As a consequence of Kraftwerk turning down the job of providing sound to Lang’s vision the work went instead to Georgio Moroder who composed a new underscore, and a compilation of rock songs sung by various artists including Freddie Mercury, Pat Benatar and Adam Ant.

In his chapter ‘The Vamp and the Machine’, Huysen explored contrasting and conflicting messages on technology in Lang’s Metropolis. Observing that the film contains both negative and positive views on technology Huysen analysed the narrative as a means to decipher the ultimate message of the film. Huysen connected machines and female sexuality, demonstrating that the burning of the robot was an exorcism of the feminine spirit, thereby exorcising the dangerous and destructive element so that the pure utopian view of the machine remained.

…the film actually vacillates between two opposing views of modern technology, which was both part of Wiemar culture. The expressionist view emphasises technology’s oppressive and destructive potential and is clearly rooted in the experiences and irressible memories of the mechanised battlefields of World War I. During the 1920s and especially during the stabilisation phase of the Weimar Republic this expressionist view was slowly replaced by the technology cult of the Neue Sachlichkeit and its unbridled confidence in technical progress and social engineering.
The word robot stemmed from the Russian word for work, and many of the first prototypes for many fully automated beings were designed to work at jobs considered boring and repetitive, including assembly line work and domestic duties.

Heide Schonemann echoed Huyssen’s sentiments:

> In the twenties the Expressionist imagery of technology as a nightmare existed side by side with the Constructionist fascination with technology both found their place in avant-garde art. In *Metropolis too*, this is not an element to be underestimated. The beauty and the horror of the machine world excited many artists. 26

In the biography, *Fritz Lang: The Nature of the Beast*, Mc Gilligan agreed as he revealed Lang had been influenced by artistic contemporaries whose ideas and styles had fed into Metropolis, namely Bauhaus teachers Lyonel Feininger and Oskar Schlemmer, expressionist artist Paul Klee, architects Bruno Taut and Hans Poezig, and sculptor Rudolf Belling. *Metropolis* was a masterpiece of deco styling, much of the cityscape was inspired by a trip Lang made to New York. The Mayerhold style theatricality/physicality of the chorus of workers and the imposing sets transport the viewer to the time it was made rather than the future it purports.

The story revolved around the working ‘masses’ and a pampered elite. A judicious political activist called Maria threatened the equilibrium of the global city of Metropolis, a paradise above ground and machine-driven hell below. In order for Maria be discredited and then destroyed, the head of Metropolis employed a mad scientist to create a robot or to use Huyssen’s word “Maschinemensche”, in Maria’s image. The real Maria was held hostage as her impostor caused havoc promoting chaos within a mutinous rebellion and provoking sexual desire by acts of wantonness. As the workers were whipped up to an emotional frenzy they turned against robot-Maria and burned her at the stake. Not only was the machine made pure by the exorcism of burning out the witch/whore from the robot (while, as Huyssen deduced, the peace-maker and mother figure is restrained and thereby contained) but it also showed the actress in techno-drag as a robot who, impersonating herself, is burned from the celluloid.

Kraftwerk’s song embodied the potentially dangerous nature of technology, modernity and consumerism as it exalted them. Equally, there was an authenticity in Kraftwerk’s pastiche,
commenting on infamous Bauhaus parties Schlemmer thought the “satire and parody” displayed at the revelries captured “the original spirit of Bauhaus performance”, arguably qualities that are more synonymous with postmodernism. Kraftwerk not only displayed artificiality in direct contrast to rock music’s ‘authenticity’ but also were self-aware of its use.

Through Gropius, Bauhaus refuted any political leanings though the school was thought to favour internationalist tendencies that were frowned upon by nationalists and conservatives. Kraftwerk were criticised too, especially by other Germans, particularly the Left, for being too stereotypically German. Kraftwerk had imitated certain stylised tendencies in what Jameson called pastiche; ‘humour’ was apparent but not the mocking of parody. Stylistic references that Kraftwerk used were not to deliberately provoke offence, their music and artwork was deliberately vague as regards any political allegiance, and they intentionally promoted openness to interpretation.

Kraftwerk played with codes of ethnicity in their work through the subversion of the German stereotype. Identity was explored from examining and reclaiming a German perspective. In Kraftwerk’s insistence that their work be linked to the theoretical concerns of Bauhaus and internationalist preoccupations of modernism, they illustrated a desire to explore and continue German concerns of the 1920s. Most of these modern ideas were reviled during the Weimar era by nationalists but were ironically frowned upon in Kraftwerk’s own time by other Germans, particularly the Left, for being too stereotypically German. Their inherent ‘otherness’ in world without women was no stranger than glam, a style that included virtually no female ‘stars’.
Chapter 9
David Bowie: About Face

It started in Berlin really, from *Low* onwards. I wanted to get into a personal kind of songwriting rather than rely on theatrical, the dramatic, and the audio experience. I was unhappy. There were various things I had to sort out in my own life: I had to sort out what I wanted to do. I wasn’t planning anything. So I began sorting out all my functions. It was a redefining period. I’d become too used to the American rock ‘n’ roll life-style. It was in its own way a period of introspective music. A sort of German seriousness about which probably had a lot to do with my music that followed.¹

By the mid-1970s Bowie was commercially successful in Europe and his stage shows were generally well received but glam had not propelled him to the international superstardom he had desired. Bowie sensed that the genre was ‘tired’ with too many copyists. To break into the United States market he created the style of what Bowie later termed “plastic soul” with his album *Young Americans* (1975) (the style would later become more widely known as ‘blue eyed soul’).²

Bowie’s next work, *Station to Station* (1976) proved transitional, whilst his record company were looking to reap the rewards of another lucrative work in the manner of *Young Americans* Bowie had already begun to move away from its musical style. After various personal traumas that had accumulatively brought about physical and mental breakdown he returned to Europe to exploit the later Weimar period’s more ‘objective’ style, turning to less conventional electronic instruments and more ‘abstract’ forms of writing and arrangement. As Kamin and Goddard found “He found the new Germany wasn’t ‘the lush decadent thing everyone imagined’. So it was here he aimed to part ways with the lush decadent thing he himself had been in the past”.³

Bowie’s glam albums exhibited the ‘touristy’ and sensational Weimar Berlin cultural characteristics. This chapter shows that Bowie’s ‘Berlin trilogy’ comprising of the albums *Low* (1977), *Heroes* (1977) and *Lodger* (1979) displayed a more studied approach to the era. Fundamentally, living in Berlin changed Bowie’s view of the city, past and present, as well
as his political outlook and lifestyle. His working practices altered by incorporating the latest technology to his ‘art’ through ‘painterly’ expression. While Bowie’s work was still based on expressionist techniques the ‘trash aesthetic’ was abandoned in favour of a more sombre element particularly evident in the soundscapes that formed the reverse sides of both Low and Heroes. Unlike Kraftwerk he collaborated on projects with established musicians and producers who contributed to the creative process on the ‘Berlin trilogy’, notably Tony Visconti and Brian Eno. The outrageous attire of former years was discarded in favour of a ‘costume’ of the ordinary man and as his music grew more experimental in style his everyday working activities became more focused and routine.

Bowie’s music began to reflect mid-1970s Berlin and accordingly this period became associated with the sounds of his work. The film Christiane F. Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo, retrospectively married Bowie’s music and presence in West Berlin to represent time and place, and also for what Chion termed cinematic ‘added value’.

9.1 Bowie’s Golden Years

We were very miffed that people who’d obviously never seen Metropolis and had never heard of Christopher Isherwood were actually becoming Glam Rockers.4

Bowie’s concern, that after the initial wave of glam, musicians had lost touch with the roots of the genre and thus he foresaw its imminent demise. The style’s failure to translate into sizeable sales figures across the Atlantic pushed Bowie into re-thinking his musical direction. He openly admitted his intentions in his statement to an American publication “…with Young Americans I thought I’d better make a hit album over here”.5 His excursions into funk and soul proved commercially successful and culminated in a number one selling single ‘Fame’ in the United States but it only reached number seventeen in the United Kingdom. This is an indication that Bowie’s British audience preferred Bowie’s music openly ‘artificial’ work rather than his “Incredible bluff” of ‘plastic soul’.6 ‘Disco’, as the style was to become, was not yet mainstream but was popular in the United States with young ethnic groups and gay men. Like Weimar artists, Bowie borrowed from sources equated with threat and the risqué; attempts to imbue work with these qualities.
In the tradition of German expressionists following Nietzsche, he believed in a transformative power. Bowie was convinced of Nietzsche’s superior man, in 1976 he addressed the issue directly and declared “I want to be a Superman” and expressed disappointment that “man isn’t a very clever mechanism”. Bowie’s described the process of his transformation from glam to his new phase “I stripped myself down, chucked things out and replaced them a completely new personality…its just like a car, man, replacing parts.” In addition to his continued expressionist transformation Bowie echoed modernist preoccupations with technology and constructivism by deconstructing his own invented persona.

‘Golden Years’ was the first track recorded for *Station to Station*. In view of Bowie’s poor physical and mental state, the song denoted a sense of bitter irony as well as a ‘shallow’ truth. At the time of writing, *Young Americans* had helped him achieve his long awaited goal for international fame and his career as the archetypal rock star held fast in Europe; Bowie did indeed appear to be living in his golden years. On the other hand, he was in a poor state: emaciated and in the grip of a chronic drug dependency, he had split with his manager, fulfilled his record company contractual obligations and his marriage was problematic. Those around him feared for his health, even his life. In addition Bowie derived no real pleasure from his work admitting there had been “no enjoyment” making his latest album. The dissatisfaction caused an epiphany as Bowie reasoned the experience had acted as “plea to come back to Europe”.

‘The Return of the Thin White Duke’ was the opening track on *Station to Station*. The unusually long introduction acted as a device to increase anticipation as the listener was forced to await Bowie’s newly created persona: the Thin White Duke. Within the character of this deliberately cold-blooded aristocrat there are undertones of vampire. Bowie took pride in emphasising the character’s lack of emotion, as if he equated it with invulnerability and immortality. Kamin and Goddard concurred and extended the analogy further, describing his latest persona as “ascetic ultra-Aryan, the old European brought back to life”. Pegg agreed that the character was an “emotionless, Aryan superman”.

Though these descriptions appeared assured there is no evidence that Bowie stated his character was Aryan or even German, only European. The idea of an Aryan vampire
slightly jarred considering that traditionally racial prejudice led to correlations between vampires and Jews; as late as 1931 Bela Lugosi could be seen wearing a six-pointed star as a pendant, as part of his costume for the Hollywood film *Dracula*. Kamin and Goddard and Pegg’s description of The Thin White Duke was in part due to Bowie’s ‘flirtation’ with fascism, giving interviews that showed his idea of fascism and the far-right politics was romantic and fantastic.\(^{12}\) That Bowie had adopted a cold, perfectionist and emotionless character only implied a type of Germaness seen in post-war in popular films such as Billy Wilder’s *Foreign Affair* 1948, starring Marlene Dietrich. It gave Bowie a new kind of glamorous power.

On May 2\(^{nd}\), 1976, at Victoria Station, London, Bowie was photographed performing what appeared to be a Nazi type salute whilst sitting in the back of his Mercedes Benz. Bowie has always repudiated that he saluted, attributing the shot to clever camera work creating a ‘heil Hitler’ out of an innocuous wave. If true, it illustrates that the furore caused by his controversial interviews had caused the media to fabricate gestures in accordance with his new character but in conflict with Bowie. In the aftermath there were more hints by the mainstream and music press of right-wing leanings in response to the *Station to Station* live show. With the real growing presence of the National Front in Britain, these aspersions were especially serious.

In fact, the lighting and theme of the show was in a similar vein to Lou Reed’s *Transformer* show years earlier, both shows evoked an era that cannot be attributed to Nazi style but to the high contrast fashion of the mid-art deco period.

\[
\text{a brilliant glare of black and white expressionism that emphasised the harshness of the}
\]
\[
\text{music and reflected upon his image as a white-shirted, black suited creature of Herr}
\]
\[
\text{Ishyvoo’s cabaret.}^{13}\]

The state of affairs worsened with Bowie’s image as the Thin White Duke being used in a 1977 Rock Against Racism poster, along side Enoch Powell and Adolf Hitler. Bowie’s espousals of his fascination with “mythological aspects of Nazism” made a hasty retreat after the wave of negative publicity.\(^{14}\) In the wake of the controversy Bowie said, “It upsets me. Strong I may be. Arrogant I may be. Sinister I’m not…What I’m doing is theatre, and only theatre”.\(^{15}\)
The character of The Thin White Duke was equally a response to his alien status as a European within the United States. Americans often viewed Europe as the ‘old world’, the land of ancestors and the decadent past. Kamin and Goddard wrote “No young American, here was the old European brought back to life”. Bowie felt a lack of any culture he could connect with in Los Angeles and filled his time studying the occult and abstract ‘philosophies’ on power in addition to his well-reported drug abuse. On the point of total breakdown, refusing to see old friends, unpredictable in his behaviour, suffering from chronic insomnia and unhappy in his work, Bowie became a pessimistic recluse; in his own words his new character shared similar traits: “He was an isolationist...he had no commitment to any society”.

Bowie’s life must have seemed no less strange and dramatic than the alien character he played for his starring role in Nicolas Roeg, The Man Who Fell to Earth (1976). This character lost purpose and focus, corrupted by Earthly ‘pleasures’ and the ‘delights’ of popular culture. Also implicit in the film is that the character is not so much an alien but a time traveller, a man from a doomed future venturing into the past in order to save the Earth from a future apocalypse. Although Nicolas Roeg, the director had said “I don’t think that the personalities of the director or artist should be made public. It destroys every kind of illusion”, the role Bowie played only added to Bowie’s mystique. The film was perfect vehicle for Bowie, who by keeping the costumes and haircut, styled himself on this latest film role; these continued twists of real and artificial blurred the boundaries between life and art ever further. As Sanford noted Bowie’s second single from Station to Station, ‘TVC15’ “dealt with a parallel world in which the screen became life”.

9.2 The Berlin Trilogy

After a period of lodging at the Hotel Gehrus in 1976, Bowie took up residence in a typical apartment block that Sandford situated at 155 Hauptsrasse in the West Berlin central suburb of Schöenbourg. Living in an outpost of the West but within the Eastern bloc conveyed an aura of danger; Bowie’s Berlin trilogy made full use of location to convey the precariousness of life in West Berlin. While in the walled city of ‘strangeness’, Bowie devoted himself to playing the part of an ‘ordinary’ person. The fantasy of Berlin gave way to the reality: as Bowie started to experience Berlin for himself and live out his ‘fantasy’ he traded his extreme and colourful characters.
Instead he devised a disguise and a routine like a member of the proletariat class. Kamin and Goddard thought “maybe Germany saved his life. It cooled him out. He found in Germany ‘a feeling of social responsibility that is overpowering’ … that there was more to Berlin’s than North America’s reputation for decadence”. Just as Friedrich had “Brecht the radical, dramatized not revolt but stoicism and surrender” Bowie’s music began to reflect a newfound personal and public consciousness.

Whereas expressionists had attempted to imitate the properties of music through a visual medium, Bowie’s approach was to incorporate visual expressionist terms into his music. Expressionists had sought to disengage with their male inheritance and all it represented: progress, the rational and enlightenment. Where visual art was paraded in public, applauded for its definitive objective pose, music had been relegated to the domestic sphere, a non-specific form that provoked and indefinable emotional response. Kamin and Goddard noted Bowie’s regard for expressionist painters with their works’ “strong colours often clashing, strong eruptions of feeling.” They went on to compare Bowie’s song writing in similar terms “it pits forces one against the other, a lyric against a background, a melody against a rhythm, one phrase against another.” While previously, Bowie had worked through an itinerary of Weimar Berlin archetypal features from afar, he newly found plenty of contemporaneous inspiration from living in the city, making full use of fragmented, multi-layered and a full of contradictions, Pegg described it as an “arrested crossroads between East and West, and past and future” which left plenty of scope for Bowie for inspiration.

In accordance with Eisler and Adorno’s theory in ‘Politics of Hearing’, they credited music as containing simultaneously the high modern and the ancient, among other ambivalent qualities. Their rendition of music’s qualities was close to expressionist aspirations, eager for universal yet subjective truths and ultimate statements that constantly evolved. Bowie ascribed music with a comparable ambiguous nature, “you should never give a clear message. You should shroud it in some way. This way you give the listener something to discover”. Bowie was comfortable with an art form that essentially or associatively represented contra forces.
Eisler and Adorno’s assertion that music was corrupted by collectivity also featured in Bowie’s new phase. Bowie was not so much writing and composing for the communal experience of a large audience as he had in the past but rather for a lone discerning listener. Unlike Eisler and Adorno, who were scathing of the “layman’s ear” referring to this ‘type’ as “indefinite and passive” as opposed the “musical expert”, Bowie contemplated that listening was not a singular experience but often a changing, fragmented or evolving event, comparative to the activity of travelling. For example in sequence: introspection, focusing on past events followed by gazing through a window and contemplating the muted colours of a passing view, followed by more introspection, this time of a philosophical mode, then detailed observation and speculation whilst glancing from passenger to passenger and finally jolted into an ‘awakening’ at a next stop announcement.

Kamin and Goddard described Bowie in the same words as the theatre critic Kenneth Tynan described Bertolt Brecht “as the kind of man you always see in a train terminal, always going to some unknown destination”. Bowie came to Berlin in order to loose/reinvent himself and deconstruct/reconstruct his stage persona, outwardly his new look corresponded that of Brecht’s ‘man of the people’ in a deliberately inconspicuous ‘uniform’ of a contemporary ‘ordinary man’. Pegg observed in detail:

> After years of living in a relentless glare of celebrity David revelled in the anonymity that Berlin offered…he had stopped dying his hair; he gave away his designer clothes and wore jeans and checked shirts. Disguised by a wispy moustache and a short back and sides…he discovered the joys of exploring a city on foot and bicycle.

The creation of Bowie’s most indefinable sound was created from the transformation he was negotiating. Though *Low* and *Heroes* were deemed dissimilar from previous work, the albums were essentially further reflections on Bowie’s public and personal identity. Within the walled metropolis, a city he felt his “spiritual home”, he and in his work stopped self-referencing rock ‘n’ roll in cabaret fashion and began instead to embody the unending variables of everyday Berlin. This included “affinity with outsiders” including “artists, immigrants, punk and drag queens” as well as ‘lost souls’, suffice to say he had been all of them.

The book, *Christiane F. - Der Kinder Vom Bahnhof Zoo*, or *Us the Children of Zoo Station*, was published in 1978 and film was made of it a few years later, directed by Ulricht Edel’s (1981). It delved into West Berlin’s teenage drug scene and related prostitution. The film’s
mundane settings of insalubrious suburbs and a neon-lit urban centre could have belonged to any major city but as the central figure’s ‘habit’ and routine become evermore frantic, a parallel became apparent between the central figure’s desperate attempt to escape her destructive rituals and her need to leave the walled city. The station was symbol of an illusion of hope, as departing trains signified the possibility of freedom and something better, whilst incoming trains bring new aspirants.

David Bowie had been Christiane F’s pop idol and was featured in the film. His ‘Berlin trilogy’ provided the soundtrack, thus, he is written into the real history and ‘soundtrack’ of his fan’s life during the mid-1970s and provided the soundtrack to the ‘fictional’ account a few years later. Christiane’s passion for Bowie, evident in her record collection, on the back of her bomber jacket and her excitement to see him live, waned as her drug addiction developed from recreational pills to full-time heroine addiction. Her first ‘taste’ of heroine took place in the stadium’s car park after the concert (where Bowie performance of ‘Station to Station’ was featured). Ultimately she sells her entire record collection, including her duplicate copies of Changesonechanges in the street for twenty Marks. Towards the end of the film the hand to mouth existence bore a striking resemblance to the accounts Roth gave of the pathetic outsiders in the post-World War I period in Berlin.

Bowie’s ‘Berlin Trilogy’ was used throughout the film in the manner that Michel Chion theorised, “through the phenomenon of added value, it interprets the meaning of the image, and makes us see in the image what we would not otherwise see”. ‘V2 Schneider’ from Heroes was used alongside the over-ground train pulling into Bahnhof Zoo which segued into ‘Look Back in Anger’ from Lodger as the thirteen year old Christiane made her way down into the discothèque ‘Sound’ and teenagers are shown ‘playing’ at being decadents. The song has an ‘agitated’ style including “frantic percussion”; Bowie’s ‘off-kilter’ vocal performance sung in appropriate moments about the angel of death with closed eyes announcing “its time we should be going”. After another trip to Sound the clique head to Bahnhof Zoo and run and roll, in somewhat choreographed manner, through the station’s corridors accompanied by ‘Heroes’, as though responding to the music. Towards the end of the film ‘Sense of Doubt’ from Heroes transformed Bahnhof Zoo into ‘zombie central’. The glamorous fantasy over, the reality of living the ‘fantasy’ sets in.
The reverse sides of both *Low* and *Heroes* pushed boundaries of popular music into an area that had previously existed only for art-music. Talking about *Low*, Bowie had said composing within conventional pop song structures, particularly the use of words, was not conducive to conveying his “reaction to seeing the Eastern Bloc, how West Berlin survives in the midst of it” and felt compelled to utilise the unique opportunities that new music technology provided the “required textures”. Kamin and Goddard wrote that his about turn was aptly timed: “And it was in Germany that he came upon a new kind of modern rock ’n’ roll: the sound of technology…this experiment at that time saved his career.” Bowie seemed to have gone from pop star to experimental musician. Whatever Bowie’s protest to the contrary and however obscure the music may have seemed, his albums were always intended to be commercial products. The very corruptive influences that Eisler and Adorno had warned against concerning the treatment of music were Bowie’s playthings, harnessing technology in order to provoke emotion and delivering the musical-art to an “amusement industry in all its branches”. Adorno had always cautioned against the interference of technology over the skill of an expert listener as with “Technical malleability, music can be made to serve regression ‘psychotechnically’”.  

Tony Visconti, co-producer with Bowie had contributed to the final sound of the albums from the period. Visconti provided constancy in Bowie’s work and kept the albums commercially viable whilst Bowie protested he “didn’t care” whether *Low* “might ever be released”. *Low* was released in January 1977 and was the first album of the ‘trilogy’. It was recorded in Château d’Hérouville, close to Paris, France, but mixed in Hansa Ton By The Wall Studios, Berlin. The starting point for the album may have been an attempt at writing a score for *The Man Who Fell To Earth* that later had to scrapped because of tight deadlines. It evolved into a dark audio-manifestation of Bowie’s mind-set. The challenge of minimalist composers like Phillip Glass and German electronic avant-garde music, particularly Kraftwerk, provided him with a new direction. What increased the fascination with Kraftwerk was their “European sensibility displayed through their music”. Bowie was already convinced he might process or as he called it “mistreat” acoustic instruments or environmental sounds as he did not want any imitative sounds from any synthesizer or other machine.  

His discovery of Berlin led him to discover the importance of environment and there, in an environment of machines, with Brian Eno evolving new systems of music, he came to want to understand the interaction of man and machines – those scary monsters.
Much was made of Bowie’s collaboration with Eno. Eno likened his role to that of sculptor against “David’s tendency to paint”. Describing Bowie’s artistic method of frequently “throwing new colours on the canvas” whilst administering his skills of “cut[ting]” and “strip[ping]” to keep “something tense and taut. It’s a good duet”.\textsuperscript{39} In this way Eno presented himself as the ‘masculine’ principle of the rational and definite to Bowie’s more ‘feminine’ style as expressionist painter. He also introduced Bowie to move further away from cut-up and linear-narrative techniques of earlier incarnations.

Bowie settled on an everyday routine and more fixed method of creation that provided a working model he has kept to. In what Pegg described as “a three-phase studio methodology…of backing tracks first, followed later by guest overdubs and instrumental solos, followed finally… by the composition of lyrics and the taping of vocals” Bowie settled down to create music as a regular-rhythmic work process.\textsuperscript{40} Kraftwerk had diligently announced the incorporation of regular working practices in the manner of Bauhaus within their music making routine. Although he riled against any suggestion that Kraftwerk provided any influence to his work process, it is worthy of note that within the industrial city that had housed Bauhaus and Brecht’s proletariat theatre Bowie shifted from irregular and non-repeated methods to create more conventional forms of music to a more fixed routine to create more experimental output.

Hansa Studios was situated at 38 Kothener Strasse, a short bike ride from Bowie’s rented home. The building of the studio had suitably played its part in Berlin history as a former social meeting place for the Gestapo. It was five hundred yard proximity from the Wall and in view of an East Berlin watchtower policed by armed Russian Red Guards with binoculars that meant it provided a “provocative”, “dark” and “stimulating” atmosphere.\textsuperscript{41}

The title song of the album \textit{Heroes} was a theatrical tour de force by way of increasing emotional intensity courtesy of its technical production and arrangement. In a turnaround from Bowie’s earlier work and his preoccupations with Nietzsche, immortality and superman, ‘Heroes’ all but vilifies ambition and idealism save for the desire to be free from both. The subject matter centres around a couple daring to dream of living a normal life despite the drama that surrounded them and was a testament to what Bowie encountered in Berlin and Weimar art.\textsuperscript{42} In ‘Heroes’ the anonymous proletariat are Brechtian style heroes
who are the true kings and queens, caught physically in No Man’s Land between superpowers.

The metaphorical language used in Bowie’s earlier work disappears, stripping down lyrics to simple short and direct phrases. The pared down language was combined with a classic tale of ‘love conquering all’ and ‘pictorial’ forms of balance and duality were a constant feature: Man and woman, “king” and queen” “I” and “you”, “them” and “us”, the “other side”, “the wall”. The drama is built into the music by virtue of Eno’s use of technology in the recording process. He set three microphones in front of each other, the first inches from Bowie’s mouth, the next twenty-foot further and then another at fifty. Each microphone was fixed with a noise gate that would only open over and beyond a certain level of volume.

The technology helped to give the impression of a changed ‘perspective’ and extended the point of ‘view’ from near to far, so that the ‘I’ and ‘you’, personal in the beginning, changed to a more ‘objective’ universal story by the end. Bowie’s vocal performance reiterated the cinematic style ‘zoom-out’.

Bowie also switched between two tenses, from the future to past and back again. Not only does Bowie extend the ‘view’ geographically but also in time; the present expands to encompass the past and the future. The lines written in past tense could be recalling another life entirely indicating that heroes, even after death, live on through the heroic acts of others:

I remember standing by the wall  
And the guns shot above our heads  
And we kissed, like nothing could fall

The kiss become “a life affirming act” when within a setting of desperation and under constant threat. The kiss also became a gesture of defiance and a transformation: through being joined as ‘one’, the ‘oneness’, physically and spiritually enabled the kissing couple to ‘rise above’ taking sides. Unison developed into a theme by the repeated use of the phrase of “one day”, yet with double meaning: transient and ever hopeful. An act of heroism becomes a momentary flash and something constant. This ‘life affirming act’, an ‘electric’ moment in no-mans-land.
Chapter 10

Punk and Post-punk: England Projects into No-man’s Land

I looked over the wall and they’re looking at me
Sex pistols from ‘Holidays in the Sun’

Primarily this chapter is concerned with the second generation of musicians that used Weimar Berlin’s culture to propagate their own art. These artists, mostly British, had grown-up listening to Bowie, Kraftwerk and Reed and absorbed their heroes references. In some cases they exploited these more literally than their predecessors. The wearing of the symbolic swastika that caused such controversy in the mid-70s was just such a case in point.

The crises of acute unemployment, sensitivity about immigration and the resultant riots meant that any references to Weimar Germany were considered an incitement to trouble. A surge of youth consciousness about the imbalances of power inside Britain made social economic conditions comparable to Weimar. Similarly to Berlin dadaists, punks were highly visible and audible politically but did not fit in to any official political party. The punk ethos of rebellion for its own sake was not all nihilistic, as it created new modes of expression; this was demonstrated in their everyday living as well as on stage. The strongest comparison lay within the erosion of lines of demarcation: divisions between genders, ethnicities, moralities, real-life/fantasy and authenticity/artificiality. Though this period echoed Weimar Berlin it also reflected and commented on 1970s British contemporary society.

In her assessment of Simon Reynolds and Joy Press’ book, Angela McRobbie wrote: “In Sex Revolts the history of rock (…) becomes indeed much more than that. It becomes a history of post-war culture.” Inherent between East and West were strict bio-diametrically opposed principles. These were frequently based on distinctions that posed as good and bad,
and thus rendered ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’. Viewed from 1970s Britain, East Berlin was perceived as the capital of a state of strict new order and the West a haven of disorder and kitsch glamour. The ideology of the East became more stereotypically ‘masculine’ and the West, ‘feminine’.

Many fans of glam rock and more specifically Bowie, Reed, and Kraftwerk had gone to form their own bands. Punks often combined subverted forms of disparate elements, and of these most notably combined masculinity and femininity. This ‘middle ground’ often featured gay themes and/or imagery, as these were recognisably neither wholly conventionally male nor female. A feature of those involved in punk was that they consciously or unconsciously refused to adhere to any given set of standards and therefore provided an alternative, alternative.

Though rhetoric on the British punk scene is conventionally confined to the years of 1976 and ’77, such a short span does not take into account the many musicians that were part of the original ‘cast’ of characters but had to wait some years for their music to be picked-up and released by record companies. This is particularly true of female punk musicians such as the Slits and X-Ray Spex who had repeatedly observed less original acts signed while they played to growing and enthusiastic live audiences.

Bearing in mind Paul Cobléy’s article ‘Leave the Capitol’ this chapter concentrates principally on London. Despite Cobléy’s argument that punk was nationwide movement the media spotlight radiated from London. Furthermore, most (but not all) bands members and fans that had originated from elsewhere in the country moved to London. The capital provided a home for the scene. Many of these people were actively looking to shake-off local loyalties and disregarded their roots in order to create new identities for themselves; London’s size and diversity was complicit to this end.

Although retrospectively punk has acquired a certain look and sound due mostly to sensational newspaper headlines, its major feature was an ability to defy definition. Borrowing from other subcultures ‘indiscriminately’ for music and fashion the youth movement resisted conventions of every other subculture’s codes and values. By so doing the followers challenged many existing norms and in some instances appeared to incite
persecution in the process. Punks crossed lines of class, gender, ethnicity and moral codes of
decency in their music, dress and everyday living. Like the purveyors of Weimar, an era
with which punks identified, their reputation were as degenerates.

10.1 Punk

Most Punks had grown-up in 1950s and ‘60s Britain, where rationing did not end until 1953
and generally people could not afford goods beyond basic staples; the ‘make do and mend’
wartime slogan was still a way of life years after the war had been won. During 1960s
‘swinging’ London, buildings evacuated, damaged or destroyed during the war still lay
empty, derelict or formed gaps along streets. As previously explained in chapter 5 of this
thesis, Britain’s social and economic climate became depressed during the 1970s and the
outlook for many young people was bleak. John Lydon, aka Johnny Rotten the lead singer
with the Sex Pistols, grew up in 1950s and 60s North London and recalled:

Now when I look back on the earliest part of my childhood, it reminds me of those
post-War war II black-and-white English movies. You’d see those dilapidated
wastelands of bombed-out buildings and a distinct lack of streetlights. You saw it even
in the sixties – a backdrop of desolated houses.³

Lydon’s experience was typical of many children living in London. Away from North
London a depressingly grey and tense atmosphere enveloped the country. Whether in inner-
London, the suburbs or one of the newly built satellite towns around the capital, the South-
east was far from the exiting and glamorous place people would have imagined from
watching films or looking through fashion magazines. In some of parts of the country the
economic conditions were much worse, which often corresponded to dire figures of
unemployment. Cobley noted that during the mid-1970s, London punks were somewhat
protected by the capital’s cosmopolitan atmosphere whereas their provincial counterparts
were completely exposed to hostility with no respite.⁴ As in Weimar Berlin, spirited
individualists were drawn to the capital for a what seems to be a contradiction in terms:
excitement in relative safety.

English society was generally still divided strictly by a class system. This guided where
people lived, which schools their children attended, their jobs and prospects, their lifestyle,
their aspirations, their values, and how they dressed, ate and talked. Knowing ‘one’s place’
was incredibly important as any deviation from one’s ‘roots’ was doubly punished. To be
branded a class traitor was one of the worst insults. The class structure was inherent in everything including music and the culture that surrounded it. Punk, originally a mainly working-class movement was initially written about as ‘noise’ by the intellectual music press. As the writer and painter Caroline Coon noted: “The whole stance of journalists, white macho journalists, was anti-intellectual. Their conceit was that working-class rock ‘n’ roll had to be stupid.”

Football and popular music were ‘acceptable’ favoured pastimes for working class boys yet these were not always ‘safe’ subjects for discussion. The choice of support of any football team and style of music gave away local, ethnic, and political loyalties. Being a ‘real’ football fan often meant risking life and limb. Before football hooliganism reached its peak in the 1980s along with media ‘outrage’, it existed as “mass violence, thousands against thousands” though “rarely got mentioned in the newspapers”. Violence was treated both as necessary evil and as spectacle: Lydon’s recollections of the area around North London’s Finsbury Park, a working class area at the time, also included watching professional gangsters “teddy Boys and slick mobster sorts” for colour.

Working class women and girls were not encouraged to participate in such violent activities. Public houses (pubs) were also out of bounds for most women whereas it was standard for men to spend much of their leisure time in them. Any women in a pub would, as Lydon puts it “be seen as a tart” and could easily become “victims” of male antagonisms. In a time when gender was actively debated in British universities and parliament women’s lives were normally restricted to the domestic sphere and the invisible margins of cultural life. Angela McRobbie agreed that working-class girls were doubly discriminated against, as “class struggle co-existed with patriarchal relations”. Generally women involved with the punk distanced themselves from late-1970s neo-Marxist feminism. That brand of feminism had grown from the Women’s Liberation movement of the late-1960s and had developed its own vocabulary and was not always understood by women outside its circle. The technical rhetoric and a strict code of ethics alienated those who refused to replace one set of (patriarchal) diehard rules with feminist new ones.

Female Punks were at an advantage over their ‘brothers’ given that girls were traditionally encouraged to play with dress and make-up. Women such as Poly Styrene and Siouxsie
Sioux, like their male counterparts, transformed themselves into living artworks using their bodies and covering them with symbols and signs. Women were frequently more adept and extreme in their ‘work’. Black women singers in popular music were almost always cast as sexually alluring and exotic whereas Poly Styrene dressed in a deliberately challenging manner by keeping her metal braces on her teeth and donning all manner of ‘ugly’ garish man-made materials.

Poly Styrene cast herself as common Londoner with a ‘natural’ voice to match in a similar manner to Clair Waldorf’s creation of her character in Berlin half a century before. Siouxsie Sioux on the other hand was not afraid of appearing sexy and commonly pushed the barriers of decency, even sophisticated women such as the music promoter Nora Forster admitted to being “stunned” by the stridency of her outfits and wondered at her “nerve”. These overtly sexual costumes were designed for use in bedrooms, strip clubs or porn movies, by wearing them on the street and public transport as well as on stage in rock venues Siouxsie ‘outed’ provocative sex and sexuality. In the eyes of the ‘uninitiated’ and those within the scene this act made her dangerously powerful.

These women and others like them succeeded in subverting these arguably submissive stereotypes into powerful and complex images. Just as Dietrich’s trouser suit and Berber’s public nudity challenged conventions and pushed the boundaries of decency so too did female punks. As Dietrich had done, these women carried their performance persona and exaggerated costume to the street. In a recent interview Ari-up of the Slits recalled being literally stabbed in the back by a stranger. It was dangerous to express oneself so artfully in public, doubly so as a woman: “It was bad enough when it was the guys. When it was women, it was just impossible”.

By not limiting themselves to traditional feminist guidelines figures like Poly Styrene felt at liberty to take on contemporary issues that many of her male counterparts ignored only because they mostly failed to question their own allegiance to traditional ‘rebellion’, in other words they did not see it. In ‘Oh Bondage Up Yours’, Styrene did not position herself in opposition to consumerism without seeing her and her peers’ role within it. Whereas the traditional male musicians would follow neo-Marxist thinking and condemn consumerism for pacifying the masses and/or stifling individuality as in Stiff Little Fingers’ ‘Edge of The
World’ though continuing to drink, smoke and/or take drugs. Styrene’s song about “plastic artificial living” dared point out that these rock ‘n’ roll staples were also profitable and mollifying commodities.\textsuperscript{12}

Divisions between ethnicities were also divisive in many British cities and London was not an exception. The sectarian troubles in the early-1970s Northern Ireland re-ignited anti-Irish feeling, perhaps worse so towards Irish Catholics if people could tell the difference. Decades before the use of the word ‘Irish’ often implied ‘catholic’ and jokes were often made an Irish people’s expense that made them out to be inherently stupid. To walk to his catholic school John had to “run” through a protestant area where phrases of racial abuse like “dirty Irish bastards” were hurled as well as bricks.\textsuperscript{13}

The labour shortages after the war saw the Commonwealth Citizenship Act of 1947 and allowed and encouraged commonwealth citizens to take up residence in Britain, most of the new immigrants were Asian and Afro-Caribbean. This ‘right’ was then limited by the Immigration Act of 1962, and then again in amendments 1968 and 1971. Many of these new immigrant workers settled and then were then often joined by relatives. A socialist witness recalled the 1970s surge of hatred towards immigrants as “suddenly there were people strutting the streets of Walthamstow with swastikas”.\textsuperscript{14} Widgery pointed out that there was as well ‘discriminating racism’ where Whites would have no qualms about living next-door Black people but were indignant about the existence of Asians in Britain.\textsuperscript{15} Rambo, (a pseudonym) a revival skinhead, enjoyed listening and dancing to ‘Black music’ had nevertheless admitted that he used to go “Paki bashing” or “rolling”.\textsuperscript{16}

There was a proposed ‘philosophy’ of punk as in Craig O’Hara’s book, this definition of punk, set out as a rules to live and die by was closer to the related but later hardcore scene that grew in 1980s and is often associated with the bands based in Washington, DC (United States). O’Hara defined subsets of skinheads, punks and straight edged punks all originating from the mid-1970s British subculture of revival skinheads, themselves an approximate incarnation of 1960s skinheads. Whereas the late-1960s ‘skins’ evolved from 1960s mod culture and were concerned with immaculate dress, the revivalists had a much more uniform look. In keeping with their original counterparts, the 1970s skins listened and danced to Jamaican ska and Reggae, though their main reputation was violence.
Mainly associated with far-Right nationalism, there were also gangs of equally far-Left skinheads. Subtle clues were given as to the political persuasion of these gangs. The choice of the colour of the laces in their Doctor Marten boots (doc Marten’s) were sometimes the only signal to differentiate between similarly attired gangs, for example red laces denoted ‘blood on the boots’. They wanted to be viewed as indiscriminately and implicitly violent like the gang in Stanley Kubrick’s *Clockwork Orange* or one of the private ‘armies’ that formed from newly returned soldiers to Berlin post-World War I. Their ‘power’ similar to the Nazi youth or hard-line Communists lay in their numbers, army-surplus ‘uniforms’ and preceding reputation. In keeping with the comparisons, many of these boys or men were unemployed and had no prospects for employment or had low paid, unskilled jobs with little hope of career advancement. The public’s awareness of the skinheads was about their general menace but the skinheads were very useful to extreme political parties as they made-up the numbers and noise quota at any party rally or march and were fearless in the face of their opposite numbers.

Many punk bands used iconography ambiguously, yet were puzzled or frustrated to see gangs with extreme political leanings amidst their audiences at shows. Occasionally musicians had to repudiate political associations with these groups. Sham 69 most famously suffered from such ‘misunderstanding’, their songs included chant style lyrics as in ‘Angels with Dirty Faces’, ‘Hersham Boys’ and ‘If the Kids are United’: anthems that suggested solidarity of brotherhood in their lyrical content.

The words had strong regular rhythms usually in a ratio of a single note per syllable and relatively few intervals between notes. The simple musical form of the melody line and the complimentary machismo subject matter of the words were easily chanted at football matches and on the ‘marching’ journeys to and from. Although none of the songs mentioned contained racist rhetoric, the band was adopted by militant right-wing gangs that supported the National Front and the British Movement. At a gig at the Rainbow in North London in 1978 British Movement supporters crashed the stage, gesturing Nazi salutes and chanting *Seig Heil*. Conversely, political organisations and less organised groups manipulated through music to suit their own purposes. It could be said these occurrences demonstrated Adorno’s theory on the manipulation of the masses through popular music. Bands, like
Football teams or ethnicity became symbols of identity, though at times allegiances seemed arbitrary and built expressly for the purpose of fighting.

If violent skinheads and other gangs represented the extreme factions of Weimar then the punks demonstrated the more ‘degenerate’ elements. Often their amorality and vice was not mere rumour or exaggerated as some of the ‘in crowd’ were periodically reduced to shoplifting or prostitution. The social stigma of these activities was also given a perverse punk-style twist as demonstrated by the Slits song ‘Shoplifting’ which punk fans sang as a celebratory anthem. Debbie Juvenile recalled prostitution “wasn’t that a bad a thing to do” as “It became part of the new London”.¹⁸ Weimar Berlin’s cabaret influence (via glam rock) were evidenced everywhere: Stevenson berated McLaren’s choice of film (Scorpio Rising) after a punk gig at the Screen on the Green cinema in Islington stating in a diary entry 29th August 1976, “I can’t help thinking most of the punters would have preferred a more mainstream stockings-and-swastika movie like ‘Cabaret’ since the style of most of them combines elements of glam, ‘Clockwork Orange’, ‘Cabaret’ and ‘The Rocky Horror Show’”.¹⁹ Stevenson recalled how glam fans had evolved into punks; his observation that the audience were ‘neo-Weimar’ was also entirely in keeping with the crowd’s view of themselves.

Although punks incorporated many symbols in their style of dress, including political and religious iconography, the most controversial of these proved to be the swastika. German born Nora must have questioned punks ‘decorating’ some of their outfits with Nazi regalia, including the infamous swastika:

The punks didn’t even know what the swastika meant. In Germany we couldn’t even talk about it. Punks used it innocently to show off. They were told that the swastika was forbidden and should not be brought up. Siouxsie wasn’t particularly educated about it at that time. To them it meant that it was taboo and antisocial. They never questioned what it stood for because they were too naïve. Do you think that Sid [Vicious] knew what the swastika stood for? Sid’s idea was that it was naughty, and that was as deep as it went for it. It didn’t mean ant-Semitism to Siouxsie or Sid.²⁰

That punks wore Nazi regalia to create dangerous personae was probable but Siouxsie and Sid Vicious should not have been the uneducated, naïve innocents since both were avid David Bowie fans and knew the furore his alleged ‘Nazi salute’ caused in 1976.
Sid Vicious, who according to Lydon “thought Bowie was God”, was pictured in a shirt bearing an upside-down insignia of the German eagle holding a swastika in its talons sewn above the head of a printed portrait of Marx. A symbol purposely worn inverted was usually a signal that the wearer was opposed to the meaning it conveyed. Siouxsie often adorned her early outfits with the swastika but it was only one part of her costume. Her attire appeared to be based on cabaret artists from Weimar Berlin and later copied for the film *Cabaret*. Some of the original satires’ stars had risked personal safety in the face of far right supporters for wearing the National Socialist ‘precious’ symbol who accurately surmised intent for mockery. However, like everything else the punks said or did they refused to adhere to any position or opinion, unlike the manager of the Clash who, because of personally offensive dress, had refused to allow Siouxsie and the Banshees to borrow the Clash’s equipment. Stevenson recalled Sid Vicious calling him a “tight old Jew”.

When Stevenson described Johnny Rotten as “anti-music, anti-fashion, anti-art, anti-sex, anti-world.” he implied that the ‘mouthpiece’ of the most Britain’s definitive punk group was wholly negative. Rotten’s ‘no’ was a refusal to be told who, what, when and how, to be. His autobiographical descriptions of early life chronicle his daily battles against conformity. Whatever shape and colour conventionality took punk posed as the antithesis. Punks were virulently hated by the media because of their steadfastness to not taking sides whilst being delighted at the projected hatred, as Lydon made plain: “The National Front put me on their cover of their magazine and called me an albino nigger – excellent phrase”. Within the amalgamation of opposites the punks found themselves loathed by other contemporary subcultures but seemed delighted at the fury they provoked.

Other contemporary subcultures were generally revivalist groups that copied their respective fashions, music and other pre-occupations from previous eras. Punks, on the other hand, combined disparate elements of many subcultures within their dress. For just one example, wearing a drape suit jacket, an item of clothing usually associated with the revivalist ‘Teddy boys’ with plastic sandals and a mini skirt or bondage trousers often provoked negative responses from the general population and revivalist subcultures alike. Whether or not a conscious act, donning another youth group’s ‘holy’ apparel signified disrespect. The implication of someone outside a defined subculture borrowing symbols of the group’s ‘uniform’ was interpreted as parody or ‘theft’. Initially punks were as likely to frequent a
disco, a gay bar or a reggae concert as a punk gig. Their eclecticism and its implication of non-deference for any historical allegiance or authority promoted moral panic and reinforced alienation.

Akin to Britain’s main culture the various revival subcultures such as 1970s Teds, mods and skinheads were clear-cut in terms of clothes, codes of honour, right and wrong and good and bad. Punk’s ethos was chaos. Stevenson cited “polarised thinking was central to Malcolm and Vivienne’s creative process” for example, the ‘One Day You’re Going To Wake Up And Realise Which Side Of The Bed You’ve Been Sleeping On’ T-shirt, that comprised of McLaren and Westwood’s ‘hates’ or ‘loves’ listed under columns titled with the above. However, punks most clear and consistent feature was that they disregarded conventional divisions. The endless partitions of etiquette dictated by class, wealth, gender and ethnicity were unapologetically challenged. Siouxsie verified the ambiguous nature of the movement before it was labelled ‘punk’ by the media, whereupon the public’s “fear turned to hatred”.

The public moral outrage against punk meant the subculture was never left out of the newspaper headlines that in turn fed the public hunger for greater media disapproval. This attention coupled with definition of the term ‘punk’ broadened the appeal of the movement but also dissipated the punks’ original ethos. Many bands aliened themselves to the ‘Rock Against Racism’ concert, organised by the Socialist Workers Party, the National Front’s response was to arrange a Rock for Racism gig and as Savage observed the “fierce opposition between these two organisations would eventually overtake all of Punk’s anarchism. On the point of fragmentation Punk found itself fighting on fronts which … it had not even know existed”.

Lydon dismissed punk’s associations with previous art movements, stating, “chaos is my philosophy”, and arguing against comparisons between punk and the French Situationists, needless to say, dada’s whole philosophy also revolved around chaos. Dada’s production of ‘anti-art’ made by ‘non-artists’ and their disregard of division between man-made and machine-made artifacts compares well to punk’s ethos of DIY (do-it-yourself) most clearly illustrated by their incorporation of ‘worthless’ but provocative objects like safety pins or dog collars as jewellery. Punk’s fragmentation of signs and symbols to diffuse or reverse meaning resembled early photomontage and Berlin dada’s political motivation corresponded
considerably with punk’s lofty ambition. Punk’s ‘shocking’ clothing was in part an attempt to eradicate distinctions between street and theatre, self and art object and were also features of dada. Cobley’s conclusion that (London) punks posed as outsiders in a theatrical display in order to incite the establishment was reasonable, as there was an inherent theatricality in punk styling vis-à-vis statement. However, his assumption that only inauthentic outsiders can exploit theatre remains questionable.  

The musical definition of the punk sound has become in retrospect, a vitriolic percussive singing over a fast basic rock ‘n’ roll chord structure. This elementary form exemplified punks’ preoccupation with ‘amateur’ expression over technical prowess. The Sex Pistols were the archetypal punk band and thus, their music became the uniform representation of the definitive punk style. In the movement’s heyday the definition would not have been so clear, as bands defined their unit in terms of originality of both music and image. Steve Severin, a member of Siouxsie and the Banshees, regretted the reduction of punk into meaning a singular musical style. Distancing his band from American influences he admitted “we perversely, saw ourselves as taking on the baton of glamorous art-rock – Bowie and Roxy Music – while incorporating our love for Can, Kraftwerk and Neu.”

As discussed in chapter 3, Brecht and Weill combined popular and ‘elite’ musical elements in their work. These contradictory features combined to create work that was both commercial and un-nerving. Correspondingly, punk bands sought to exploit the commercial potential of their work whilst proclaiming originality. An additional comparison of artists from both time frames was the fundamental purpose to express some sort of message about society. Even while some punk bands developed affiliations to political causes, just as Brecht was affiliated to the Socialists’, countless others did not align themselves with organised political movements. The Slits, as an all female band (in its first incarnation) resisted such persuasion, yet like Weimar politically motivated musical theatre most of their songs were about balances of power in contemporary issues.

The Slits incorporated reggae and jazz into their sound rendering and mixing features so they were ‘buried’ in the mix. Reggae was part of the soundscape of the British capital due to the stimulus of London’s Jamaican community. The musical style supplied a newfound ‘authenticity’ for the punk generation. Reggae’s associations with Rastafarianism and
associated political messages coupled with its macho aura made it equivocal in borrowed ‘authentic’ terms for male punks such as the Clash in the tradition of “white radicals looking to Blacks for a model of rebel masculinity”.31

Women, utilising features of the reggae style subverted this ‘authenticity’ and as such were true to the punk ethos of perceiving nothing sacred or unusable. The incorporation of jazz was another indicator that styles did not conform to a defined punk sound. The Slits’ musical phrasing was often irregular or in unusual time signatures as in ‘Typical Girls’, repeating a phrase at a different tempo as in ‘New Town’. Often a ‘rogue’ bar or part would be added or omitted as in ‘Shoplifting’. This was not the ‘female’ sound comparative to Hélène Cixous’ oceanic, ‘ebb and flow’ writing style, except in terms of a disregard for usual pop and rock conventions of limited formula rock (male) or progressive rock aspirations (also male). The differences were not in order to be different and the new was not for ‘newness’ sake. Cut (1979) combined the commercial accessibility of pop with disregard for any other pop conformity.

Not all of punk forwent traditional markers of validation. Some of those involved in the scene felt the need to ape manners of conventional rock fans. Hebgige thought punks borrowed their ‘authenticity’ from West-Indian ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’. Some also championed a type of authenticity in terms of musical purity.32 The fashion for recording live gigs and ‘straight’ recording with little or no overdubbing was considered an example of authenticity in music. Punk artists tolerated bootleg tapes passed hand to hand, free or for cash, as they were seen as a gesture against music as regulated commodity. ‘Pretensions’ of progressive rock, such as the use of expensive or ‘fancy’ equipment were seen as inauthentic. These impositions do not ‘sit’ well with punk’s supposed ‘no rules’ ethos, but can be seen in terms of the effort to distance themselves historically from cultural practices and musical styles around at the time.

Originally from New York, the duo Suicide blended sparse and percussive synthesiser sounds and an improvised-style vocal. Suicide was jeered on stage whilst playing support for the Clash; this was perhaps an indication of punk’s failure to sustain messages of musical and personal diversity. The crowd’s hostility was partially due to Suicide’s non-
conformism of what punk had been reduced to by the media and accordingly, the subculture’s increasing tendency to comply with more conventional pop and rock idioms.

Suicides’ stark expressionist qualities were marked in minimalist visual and music styling. Rather than using a kit drum, pulsations of notes from a synthesizer provide the rhythm. Alan Vega’s non-sung vocals were melodramatic free-flow narrations. As in expressionist dramas, the duo created musical art-performance based on subjectivity; by mode of necessity their live show was very stylised, the ‘two dimensional’ force of keyboard and vocal meant great attention was focused on the Vega’s idiosyncratic performance. This was further emphasised by their employment of an in-organic musical instrument. Altogether, Suicide’s creation was dark in subject matter and alien in form. They were thought victims of their own art’s success in that they created something so unique they failed to engage an ‘uneducated’ British audiences. It is also likely that it was not just the musical language that the audiences found unintelligible but prejudice against Vega’s American accent. The anti-American feeling among British punks were articulated by the headlining act as expressed by the Clash’s song ‘I’m so Bored with the USA’.

The Sex Pistols’ song ‘Holiday in the Sun’ illustrated the cynicism that many British (if not European) young people felt towards mainstream politics and ideology. In postmodern terms, historical incidents combined into a collage of sensational sound images only connected by association. For example, likening West Berlin to the concentration camp of Belsen. The song was also reflective of the exaggerated terms that littered punk for impacts sake. The media, official and unofficial political groups constantly produced sensational sound bites that used recognisable set phrases.

‘Holidays in the Sun’ is the sound of a group collapsing in on itself. Just after they had been thrown off A&M, the lyrics record the John Lydon’s paranoia and feelings of uselessness, suddenly pitched into the alien environment of Baader/Meinhof ‘Wanted’ posters and Turkish ghettos – and dominated by the Berlin Wall which it was then inconceivable to cross.33

During the 1970s there was a highly charged political atmosphere, as extreme political views grew increasingly common. Terrorism was rife as ‘freedom fighters’ from all round the world joined forces and occasionally causes. Whilst the Red Army Faction caused mayhem in Germany the Official and Provisional splits of the Irish Republican Army (IRA)
and Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) were ‘defending’ Northern Ireland and as a result anti-Irish feeling rose on the mainland. Immigration increased due to some extent by Asians exiled from Uganda. Britain had an austere environment with seemingly constant strikes, shortages and mass unemployment. The far-right and far-left parties recruited from those ungainly employed as response. Britain joined the Common Market In 1973, its membership supported by a referendum two years later. The country also had commitments to the commonwealth, NATO and its special relationship with the US. With the Nation’s shrinking influence on the world since 1945 Britain needed as many allies as it muster. In the mid-1970s the government had to borrow from the International Monetary Fund.

As John Savage pointed out in his book *England’s Dreaming* there were many corresponding factors between Weimar Berlin and mid-1970s Britain. He mentioned the rise of left-wing activism and Nationalism and questions of identity but there was also the increasingly tense atmosphere of the Cold War and meant many artists focused on the situation’s tension in order to release it. A generation who had felt under threat of nuclear annihilation felt moved to ‘wallow’ in the ‘darkness’ instead of seeking light relief in ‘happier’ music.

The premise that punk had a definitive sound was a myth. Many bands had a sound or a style that could not be successfully marketed to compete with the Sex Pistol’s or the Clash’s more commercially viable garage sound; a style of music that prided itself on its ability to articulate social comment on contemporary issues in an emotional manner that jarred with the machismo image of rock. Music that was indefinable, subjective or used any emotion other than anger proved difficult to promote in the context of the time.

Ted Polhemus, Baudrillard and others thought no youth cultures referenced the past before the 1980s, but there is consistent evidence of subcultures predating punk pillaging from history. For example, 1960s counter culture voraciously devoured the work of nineteenth century romantic poets like Byron and Shelley for style and lifestyle, as well as for content for art. According to Polhemus, punk was the last really new youth culture; though the music, style and rhetoric of punk were not ‘newer’ than any other before or since but an evolution from a history that bared little resemblance to the general mythology that governed conventional wisdom on popular music.
10.2 Post-punk

For my generation there was one sound that triggered off fear. But with the end of the Warsaw Pact and the end of the Cold War, that’s all evaporated. There was one sound that could rip open the skies: its started World War III has broken out! That went through everyone right through to the bone.35

Many of the influential acts of the 1980s were formed by those involved with and/or fans of the preceding punk movement. These artists created whole new styles in popular music and by doing so became defined by the media, copyists and surrounding subcultures. Labels such as the new romantics, electro-futurists, goths and industrialists grew from an ill-defined subculture that created their own artistic revelry. This set that evolved from punks were often termed ‘post-punk’. With their various styles of music and dress, the few commonalities that these musicians shared were a preoccupation with the ‘dark’ side of life and a willingness to balance commercial considerations whilst creating original styles of music and image.

Perhaps even more consciously than punks, post-punks did not adhere to traditional bi- diametric based principles but were interested in the ‘space’ in-between. This included issues of identity, some of which have been explored in previous chapters, such as gender, ethnicity and nationality. They emphasised ‘play’ between the polarities of day/night, reality/fantasy, mainstream/underground, man/machine and life/death. Unlike punks, post-punks appeared less interested in changing the conventions of society but rather desired to avoid them. Likewise they were not as invested in provoking response from the main culture.

Bands such as Siouxsie and the Banshees made the transition from punk to post-punk. Though the members had been highly visible in the punk scene they came to typify the newer era. In this evolution of subcultures there were also groups of youths whose motivation, music and dress excludes them from this work but were no less important in their impact on popular music or British culture of the 1980s.

The Berlin Wall provided tangible evidence of a stalemate by equally oppressive regimes; its existence emphasised many an artist’s posed status as apolitical romantic heroes. The
early-1980s British music scene exhibited two new trends, firstly, an increased use of the synthesiser and secondly, an expressionist style that, like punk, shied away from traditional romantic themes. Attacks on Western values, particularly systems of justice and consumerism were still in evidence, as they had been since the mid-1960s but increasingly the music showed self-awareness about pop stardom, a theme introduced by glam, and a degree of cynicism for any political ideology. That is not to say politics did not play a part as many songs were centred on the ‘individual’ caught between the two superpowers. As Blixa Bargeld, from Einstürzende Neubauten and the Bad Seeds reported in the quotation above, a feature of ‘underground’ music of this time was the subject of war and fear of imminent annihilation. Post-apocalyptic styling and tribal references abounded and there was a renewed interest in fashion drawing on renewed visions of primitivism.

Suicide’s furore into techno-expressionism had been unsuccessful in creating a meaningful following in the mid-1970s but a few years later there was a legion of bands and artists who would attempt to marry expressionism and new technology. New sound effects played live, in production or post-production aided these qualities in the music. This more subjective style of writing, performing and recording was less clear in motivation and subject matter. Lyrics became more nebulous in meaning and musical structure more fluid. Siouxsie and the Banshees and Bauhaus were more open than many of the time about their allegiances to Bowie, the Velvet Underground and German electro-acoustic music and their albums respectively Kaleidoscope (1980) and In the Flat Field (1980) released with a fortnight of each other, were precursors to the wave of bands with similar influences.

Dress and references to films, books and fairytales increased in importance for fans to identify with. Shadowy meaning became a style in itself, as did fragmentation, as illustrated by Joy Division and Einstürzende Neubauten respectively. The vagueness and deconstructive properties of the music linked it to fantasy and science fiction. Perhaps because these were ‘other’ worlds the music and corresponding subcultures were considered more ‘feminine’ in style. Two films that conveyed the array of styles were Blade Runner and Breaking Glass.

The punk movement had radically altered the structure of the British creative industries. Independent record companies, record shops, fanzines and club nights were started-up to
support the subculture in an effort to either promote music that was considered too marginal for major record companies or compliment the punk values. Aside from a few archetypal punk bands of the mid-1970s (who had signed to major record companies) most music had been accessed through a different chain of small businesses. These independent music companies that had started within the punk movement had moved away from the definitive punk sound but continued to promote new styles of music. Conversely, commercial exploitation of the punk ‘type’ continued in the early 1980s, though in a mainstream form.

That commercial success and popularity made it ‘inevitable’ that all art, including music, was cheapened by commerce and ‘dumbed-down’ by mass-recognition was prevalent before the 1920s but the debates about commerce and the culture industries led by the Frankfurt School came the fore as recorded media became omnipresent. The notion of art’s depreciation as it gained mass appeal was also highly topical in early-1980s popular music. The phenomena of rock music artists being valued, when esteemed by the few but devalued when appreciated by many was ironic considering their careers were dependent on rising record or ticket sales. Rock stars, stereotypically male, indeed become victims of their own success; in order to gain status their work must first appear misunderstood by the establishment but lauded by aficionados, also traditionally male. Subsequently, the music may be rendered worthless by the praise of ‘non-discriminating’ fans that make up a mass audience.

_Blade Runner_ (1982, USA) is now regarded a masterpiece of neo film noir. Although was not a success at the box-office, it appealed to post-punks and subsequently has been elevated into a cult film classic. Perhaps because it was a reflection not only on post-punks’ preoccupations but also because they saw themselves inhabiting a ‘real’ fantasy, the director Ridley Scott admitted he employed at least two hundred punks (sic) as extras.  

_Breaking Glass_ (1980) was released two years before the _Blade Runner_. The search for what or who was real (human) and what or who was machine (replicant) was common to both films in an attempt to define what is “the essence of human identity”. The similarity of the images of the female characters of Kate (Hazel O’Conner) in _Breaking Glass_ and replicant Pris (Darrel Hannah) in _Blade Runner_ are striking. Their white-blond peroxide hair cut into a frizzy bob, white make-up and black-kohl rimmed eyes were inaccurately first seen as
correlating to a punk stereotype, which although true enough, can be traced back to leading ladies of the 1920s silent screen. It is no coincidence that both films draw from imagery and narrative from Fritz Lang’s film *Metropolis*. (illustration iii)

The film *Breaking Glass* was a mainstream production with the intention of depicting youth culture. Its title was derived from one of Bowie’s expressionist ‘cinematic’ songs from *Low* also entitled ‘Breaking Glass’. It was an example of why post-punks felt compelled to distance themselves from punk, as an indefinable subculture had become reduced to cliché. *Breaking Glass* told a common rock ‘n’ roll story of a band forming, struggling for stardom then turned into victims of their own success, the central figure was a composite punk rebel named Kate, who grew increasingly aware of the fraught relationship between commerce and artistry. There were echoes of 1920’s Berlin in 1980’s London in the scene that showed a political-rally-turned-riot, yet the most obvious use of 1920’s Berlin is within the performance of the song ‘Eighth Day’.

In part imitation of Lang’s epic, for the climax of the film, the leading actress wore a neon-lit bodysuit as the band took to the stage of a large venue to perform their ultimate show. Her costume highlighted a ‘skeleton’ of electric circuitry rather than human bones. O’Connor’s movements in performance mimic the jerky movements of a machine like *Metropolis*’ robot-Maria: she had been created by the music industry and worshiped as a false idol by the masses, an abomination of her innocent former-self, her music corrupted by technology and commerce (illustration iii). Robot-Kate signified the impending doom, explicit both in the song she performed and the fatal tension between the inherent goodness of art and the evil of commerce. The result was the ‘inevitable’ artist’s physical, spiritual and mental-breakdown.

The song abruptly ended as Kate ran from the fantasy of the stage to the reality of the street and then onto a London underground train. She was then confronted with fans, replicas of herself and there she ‘melts-down’ from colourful superstar to burnt-out shell of her former self. This was not the martyred male rock star, dying in a blaze of glory but the destruction of a creation that reverted back to the weak female do-gooder who must be punished for taking centre stage. As technology was made pure through the exorcism by fire in
Metropolis, rock had to be rendered immaculate again with the expulsion of male-impersonators.

Eighth Day

The ‘finale’ employed the imagery and sound that the latest technology helped to create through a medium built and run for commercial exploitation. The singer’s breakdown
provoked a ‘breakout’, as the artist struggled to distance herself from the art that was destroying the ‘real’ her only to find that in the ‘real world’ there are hundreds replicas of her artificial/false self.

The ‘female’ trait of non-discerning consumption was once more brought to the fore. The performance of the song ‘Eighth Day’ echoed expressionist doomsday message of Man’s technological inventions destroying the world. Whereas Kraftwerk espoused the virtues of synthesizers and robots from the mid-70s onwards other artists who followed their electronic path featuring technological innovation viewed technology differently. Much of popular culture of the late-1970s/early 1980s showed technology as humanity’s undoing, instruments of pervading alienation whilst incorporating the latest musical technology.

First named ‘Warsaw’ after David Bowie’s instrumental track on Low, Joy Division took their new name from the slang term used to describe the vicinity where women concentration camp prisoners were forced to work as unpaid prostitutes in a novel by Yehiel De-Nur called House of Dolls (1955). He had written the book under the pseudonym of Ka-Tzetnik 135633, his given ‘name’ as an inmate at Auschwitz. Joy Division and the band Bauhaus illustrate how words exude kudos. The name of a band carried history and ‘flavour’, reflecting in status. The name ‘Joy Division’ had layers of meaning, the militaristic style fitted with their heavy electronic sound, the sexual innuendo and Nazi overtones suitably sensationalist, the relative obscurity of the reference added regard That they had called themselves ‘Joy Division’ implied identification with the used and abused, treatment sanctioned by authority. Dressed ‘down’ proletariat style, their stark stage lighting and use of black and white photographs heightened the extreme drama of their sound (illustration iv)

Unlike Kraftwerk, music and images of Bauhaus did not correlate to the art school directly save for a logo, their work was openly reminiscent of earlier Bowie, releasing their own version of ‘Ziggy Stardust’, their look a close study of Conrad Veidt from the silent film The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) (illustration v). The film had been co-written by the Austrian poet Carl Mayer, who had been wounded in World War I and sent to a psychiatrist for challenging his superiors. Cesare was a somnambulist, exhibited by Dr. Caligari. He ‘predicted’ death for customers at town fairs and at night was made by Dr. Caligari to
sleepwalk and kill them. Its themes of madness and death were secondary: the film’s primary concern was a comparison of Caligari to all political ‘masters’ commanding sleepwalking masses to kill and be killed for their own ends. Bauhaus used the school’s name for its related ‘Germaness’ and highly regarded artistic reputation, creating their musical world by ‘channelling’ the seminal expressionist film for parallels between the World War I experience and the omnipresent nuclear threat of Armageddon.

Setting features of primitivism in a futurist technological world became a favourite theme. Clothing styles, musical instruments, vocal techniques and resultant sounds all suggested an investment of creating a universe outside the accepted laws of physics. Disparate elements combed from classic science fiction and romantic horror combined to make music and dress that were simultaneously undefined yet recognisable. The first ‘goths’, skin as pale as death and dressed entirely in mourning black, took their cue not from the gothic literature of Poe but as a warning of the ‘future’ in an atomic age. Siouxsie and the Banshees are credited as the original goth band but they have always riled against the confines of the ‘honour’. As previously mentioned the band acknowledged their debt to glam artists, David Bowie among them, for it was through glam they found “a twisted sexuality, a black humour that was different”. In accordance with the proceeding punk movement, rules of contemporary political correctness were dismissed as post-punks often played with taboo subjects and images.

Thomson, who also disagreed with the label of goth, described Siouxsie as a cross between the “Ice Queen of Narnia and Charlotte Rampling in the Night Porter”. The two distinct characters are extreme: a cold, evil and haughty queen from children’s fiction and a concentration camp inmate forced to salaciously entertain Nazi officers from a 1970s film. His amalgamation of ice queen and sex slave implied Thomson’s own ambivalent attitude towards a woman choosing to express eroticism in performance without the conventional requirement for payment in ‘love’ or money. Siouxsie’s full command of her body as she moved on stage was far removed from the reputation that ‘ice queen’ suggested and her imaginative and dextrous use of her voice too powerful to have belonged to someone ‘entertaining’ under duress.
Siouxsie suffered from the un-erring attitudes that prevailed historically, most notably the absence of any conventional lines of demarcation between a sex worker dancing and a dancer dressed sexily. Anton Gill understood Weimar Berlin’s ‘flesh for money’ trade was not about sex but about commodity and power; Anita Berber’s name was often pre-fixed with ‘drug-addict’ or ‘sex dancer’ in spite of what made her a star initially: her excellence as a performer grounded by her classical dance training. Similarly to Berber, Siouxsie’s name is frequently heralded with terms such as ‘ice maiden’ and articles and interviews pay scant attention to her performance skills and vocal ability. As with Berber, Siouxsie was perplexing: her need for physical expression without the imposed boundaries of contemporary morality and disregard for the normal ‘payment’ in direct correlation with each spectator’s measure of desire has to be balanced with the choice of posing in a ‘uniform’ associated with a sex worker (illustration vi). Siouxsie’s subversion has to be seen within the context of commercial entertainment where female exploitation is the norm.

A penchant for exoticism and exhibitionism was demonstrated in post-punk in a comparable manner to Weimar Berlin. Within the subculture this fascination was not only possible as a spectator or an observer but also as participant. Audiences were as colourful as the bands they went to hear and ‘tourists’ were easily spotted. Various pieces of ethnic and erotic costume, regardless of original significance were incorporated into dress and similarly ‘unusual’ sounds would feature in the music. The mythology and exoticness of distant countries was mixed with other-worldliness. The name ‘Siouxie Sioux’ was exoticised version of her real name ‘Susie’ and her vocal technique includes making sounds outside the range of traditional rock or pop singers.

In the post-punk-world, the authentic ‘masculine’ principle seemed to erode, as men began to increasingly ‘feminise’ in order to free themselves of a rigidly defined ‘self’. The ubiquitous expression of men possessing a ‘feminine side’ was often used in the 1980s as more and more men were said to be exploring, experimenting and thinking about the construct of male identity, not only as a group but individually. Therefore, any ‘messing’ with the ‘neutral model’ was seen as a feminine influence (since women had no neutral model). The very process of deconstruction was thereby ‘feminine’ and deemed that in a man-made world, men were the builders, as in male-construct, and women, the destroyers. That post-punk was more feminist is arguable, since although the number of female
consumers of this type of music was proportionally high, in terms of participation, post-
punk’s head-count of women performers was not higher than in any other music associated 
with a British subculture.

The intention of creating through music a sensory evocation was expressionist at its core. In 
the wake of punk even direct musical language was replaced by suggestions as unrelated to 
sound as colours or textures to create musical. The banshees bassist, Steve Severin showed 
that not only was their overall musical direction subject to atmospheric description rather 
than musical terminology but their method of conveying musical ideas to each other as 
asking for a guitar line to sound like “a cross between the Velvet Underground and the 
shower scene from Psycho” was more in terms of a shared cultural identity in rather than in 
conventional musical terms.40

Bernard Hermann wrote the music for Hitchcock’s Psycho, though Hermann’s music is not 
only what is indicated by Severin’s proposal. The shower scene is both the climax and 
release of the viewers fear. The naked body of Janet Leigh invited voyeurism and lust and 
the curtain represented the fine veil between what should be a mundane task and an act of 
evil. The shower scene cannot be separated from Norman Bates the murderer. He was a 
twist of a young man and old woman, son and mother. The shower scene embodied the 
extreme emotions of desire and repulsion, love and hate. The Banshees debut album was 
called The Scream. The Banshees wanted to create more than music: a fully heightened 
sensual experience. What had distinguished pre-World War I German cinema was its 
desertion of realism in pursuit of atmosphere, the routes of film noir.
Conclusion

This thesis was an investigation into the influence of Weimar Berlin’s culture on the pop and rock music of the 1970s and 1980s. The two eras were examined closely in terms of social history and artistic output. The surrounding social history was researched for its impact on the respective arts scenes and vice versa. Most importantly Weimar Berlin arts and entertainment was compared with the music of the 1970s and early-1980s. Literal comparisons were occasionally clear but perhaps more significantly the essence of what Weimar was and what it became in retrospect played a more vital role. Nostalgia played a part, yet so did the ramifications of the Cold War, central to which was the city of Berlin.

In the general overview on the late-nineteenth century background on the beginnings on what would develop to radical new thinking on social reform and artistic parallels. The divisions between postmodernism and modernism started at the tale-end of the enlightenment’s influence. Understanding the objectives of the new Germany of building the capital of capitals established a vision of what was to be a solid national identity only to be undone by the limitations given the very nature of the ‘city’. The ‘story’ of what became Weimar ‘golden years’ in retrospect was built from the friction between the fantasy of unity and Grenzverwischer.

Seismic shifts in terms of what music, theatre and art meant forced participants to find new ways of reaching different audiences. This included the way the arts were housed, delivered and experienced. Nietzsche’s work played a huge role by the providing philosophical foundations of expressionist work, not only of pre-World War I artists but also those of the inter-war generation. Their ambition: the transformation of self, not by goodness or by god, but by (self)-discovery. Nietzsche’s promotion of Wagner’s Gesamtkunstwerk and urge to (re)balance the bi-centric Dionysian and Apollonian artistic principles helped shaped the desire for a new generation to create art holistically. The magical promise of technology and its destructive power established in the act of war, demonstrated technology’s mutable capability.
Ideas of what ‘city’ represented and the polarities inherent within it became major considerations. Berlin, the most modern capital in Europe became the city, facilitating the most extreme aspects. The fractured neighbourhoods, fast transport systems and nightly activities allowed city dwellers and visitors to lead double-lives, remain anonymous or reinvent themselves. This fragmentation of ‘self’ was evident in a myriad of separate subjective ‘alternative’ worlds. Cabaret, the art-entertainment most associated with the Berlin developed as a reflection of the complicated metropolis, as Berliners paid money to laugh at aspects of their lives and themselves.

Exploring the inter-war years historically and socially underlined the contrasts of spectacle and observation. The shared experience of war fashioned Berliner’s lives as resultant suffering had forced irrevocable social changes to all strata of society. The psychological emphasis of the absent father figure and necessity for a more lenient sense of morality provoked fear and resentment as well as new freedoms. Also, the change of the demographics of gender impacted on relationships, family, and a new consumer power for the cultural industries. The city developed into a hive of activity by day and night as technological advances even faster modes of transport, sound recording, radio and cinema meant that Berliners were at the vanguard of ‘cheap’ entertainment. The less salubrious pleasure industries confounded lines of traditional standards of moral decency in the jazz age. Jazz and speciality live acts as part of the Berlin cabaret with its unusual manner of Berliner Schnodderigkeit gave a unique flavour to the culture of the time and place. Literature that made the most of the newly fashionable pose of objectivity and observation.

Movements in art and culture including a reinvigorated form of expressionism and its relationships to Neue Sachlichkeit showed how various points of perspectives were brought into play. This impacted on the way in which artists created personas for themselves and cultivated a lifestyle in the city befitting artistic ‘philosophies’ and future legacies. The idea of invented and self-invented celebrity proliferated, facilitated by the cultural industries’ chief motivation: money. Technological developments had made new media if not cheap to access through cinema and radio, at least more affordable, with the result that audiences grew as the industries did. The balance of influence and power between art and entertainment on one hand and ‘consumers’ on other caused disagreement between theoreticians and artists alike. Adorno had timely concerns of the corruptive and
manipulative cultural industries’ appeal to an uneducated audience, especially in music, as Brecht, as a practitioner realised the potential of entertaining while ‘educating’. Also in contrast to Adorno, he saw the incorporation of new technology as benefit and enhancement to his fledgling dramatic techniques and staging.

Berlin dada and their performances set new levels of controversy and challenges to the art establishment. Entertainers performed evermore sensational and unusual acts for cabaret and reviews, creating stage personas that they often ‘acted’ off stage as well, among the finest were female performers such as Waldoff and Dietrich, rewarded with their identification with the German capital throughout their lives and after. The history and evolution of Bauhaus showed how a range of new imported and home-grown ideas in working practice and applied creativity revolutionised products, architecture, typography, and so on, emphasising an attempt to erase boundaries between art and technology and the incorporation of artistic principles to commercial markets.

Identifying and examining ‘un-German’ degenerate elements present in Weimar, as set out by the Nazi regime and deemed ubiquitous in Berlin, revealed an itinerary that would retrospectively become ‘badges of pride’. The officially blessed Entartete Kunst and the later non-official Entartete Musik provided clues as to the connections between exhibits and the methodology used to convince the German public of the unsuitability of the featured work and the existing conservative and nationalist scholarship that the Nazis’ based their inflammatory ideas promoted notions of hierarchy of races with the fixed Aryan at the top and the ‘nomadic’, adaptable Jew at the bottom.

Nazi models of femininity were compared similarly, as fashionable women of Weimar with their ‘disguises’ in new clothes and make-up for their changing roles in a variety of jobs and urban adventures compared unfavourably to the born-perfect Aryan ideal were reversed by female fans of glam and electro thirty years later. The Nazi sanctioned responsibility of women in an adherence to the older orders of a defined gender role, that of mother (for the master-race) and their preference for a ‘natural’ and healthy appearance was revolted against in full force by women punks who inverted and subverted definitions of beauty and desirability.
‘Travelling in Time: from one Berlin to another’, outlined changes that Berlin went through immediately post-World War II until the end of the Cold War. West and East Germany had models provided for them from predominantly American and the Soviet Union forces respectively. The contrasting expectations of youth were measured against the possibilities of freedoms to choose individual self-determination. The American model offered distractions of ‘things’ and ‘things to do’ not only available but desirable whilst the Soviet model put pressure on the young to fill their time with social obligations by making their life dependent on their participation. The United States and the Soviet Union had relatively ‘new orders’ that ‘fought’ anything that had gone before. After twelve years under the Nazis, Fascist dictatorship had permeated through each part of every citizen’s life. The Nazis had not provided alternative plans for possible failure and post-war Germany was in physical and financial ruin, therefore much of what might have been valuable in past German culture was abandoned because of the need not to offend ‘helping hands’. The resultant cultural polarities of East and West Germany were increasingly defined against one another rather in their own terms. Rebels on both sides correspondingly defined themselves in the language and objectives of ‘the other side’.

Glam music’s beginnings were found to be a response to the late-1960s counterculture and its demise due to ‘uneducated’ copyists by the mid-70s. Bowie’s ‘originality’ was due more to inventiveness than authenticity, his opinions of copyists affected by their lack of self-expression than anything else. Bowie’s creation of Ziggy Stardust ‘worn’ as a ‘mask’ on and off stage played with perspective and his songs from the ‘concept album’ The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars was created as an audio ‘staged’ production, even his title suitably echoed Brecht and Weill’s ‘Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny’ (the Rise and Fall of the city of Mahagonny) from Mahagonny Songspiel. Instead of Brecht’s boxing ring Bowie set the songs on a fictional rock ‘n’ roll stage, though live they would be played upon a real one continuously setting up refection upon reflection. The figure of Ziggy was a combination of a misguided Nietzsche inspired fool and fascistic fake-god. Brecht’s contempt for the shallow dreams of the masses was re-interpreted by Bowie who under pretext of giving the masses what they wanted (they, hopefully returning the favour) demonstrated the apparatus of commercial music and misconceptions of ‘ethnicity’. As Brecht had used the operatic form to be “washed away” by the music, Bowie deployed the formula of rock ‘n’ roll and undermined its authority by tempering music in the
production and performance for similar effect.\(^1\) The following two albums showed evidence both of Weimar Berlin’s more obvious cultural references but also British contemporary attitudes to the prevailing austere conditions affected by a severe economic downturn. Bowie’s glam albums were full of ‘crazed’ mutable urban characters that could inhabit any large capital city. Bowie set *Diamond Dogs* post-apocalyptically, thus ‘acting out’ fear of a generation, born into an atmosphere perpetually pregnant with ultimate violent threat.

Ralf Hütter’s and Florian Schneider’s artistic awakenings of ‘European sensibilities’ evolved from their mutual dissatisfaction with the late-1960s art-music scene and popular music’s alternative. Their objectives were to experiment musically for their own pleasure. Bauhaus was an ideal model in terms of working practice and autonomy for Kraftwerk. The control over their working environment, all aspects of their creativity and business meant that they did not have to suffer the ‘indignities’ that plagued other contemporary music artists. For their fans at least, the distinction between their working lives and personal lives blurred as they presented themselves as living ‘musical workers’ fully integrated with the machine apparatus of the studio and the city outside.

Although they were connected with Düsseldorf and the industrial heart land of West Germany, their musical art could never have been accomplished without the technological accomplishments, iconography and satire that flourished in and was retrospectively identified with Weimar Berlin. The city’s Internationalist and German expressionist styles and aspirations they demonstrated, the faux-folk melodies they propagated and experimental theatricality repeatedly ingrained throughout their work.
Hütter’s remarks sometimes gave the impression they played on prejudices against Germans. The ambiguity in their images and music led to allegations that they possessed dubious political leanings and Wolfgang Flür had to defend himself against accusations that Kraftwerk was anti-female. Kraftwerk’s lack of definition as regards any political allegiance was purposeful, their ‘deficit’ of ‘relationship’ songs part of the automate act. The static projection they disguised themselves was as real as ‘skin’ on their mannequins and robots. Their pastiche on German style and stereotypical subject matter was in defiance of the majority of the West German population’s failure to confront their past collectively and individually. Though their material they supplied ‘food for thought’.

Their lack of ‘romantic’ or ‘I’ to ‘you’ material in their repertoire was noticeable and a world created without women is not a feminist model but conventional popular music’s more ‘romantic’ male bands had also built ‘worlds’ without women in that they created music and toured in male units and alluded to all three commodities of ‘sex drugs and rock ‘n’ roll’ with equal consuming pleasure. ‘The Model’ was a study of the play between a man and woman from the point of the man. Through his eyes she was a perfect, ‘calculated’ beauty-machine but on his ‘admission’ he became as culpable for the process of consumerism as she was, there is deceit and self-awareness on both sides. Her mind (disposition) was changed by the presence of a camera, whereas his was changed by her new status, both ambivalent gestures that look at whether or not her or his minds were their own or learnt/programmed responses of consumer culture.

Huysen’s reading of Maria in Metropolis showed the full extent of how women had become at one with the malefic forces that surrounded fear of machines and the future and in discussing consumer culture how women were implied negatively for their collusion in consumerism. Kraftwerk never promoted the concept of the demonised feminised machine in any of their songs although their machines replaced ‘friends’ and ‘co-workers’. ‘The Model’ demonstrated that men were aware of there own responsibilities in the model of commerce. The demarcation between art and music, looking versus listening and listening expertly and inexpertly were all distinguished not by fixed bi-centricity but as alternative states of definitive and nebulous. Kraftwerk not only used the latest advanced technology in
the their music production, it was intrinsic to their compositions, subject matter and presentation.

Lou Reed’ Reed’s transitory opinions and his refusal to confine himself in anyway to the norms that defined other rock stars were evident. His album, the aptly named *Transformer*, was akin to Reed treating an album as a cabaret where each ‘act’ takes a turn. Unlike Bowie’s adoption of ‘Ziggy Stardust’ character as his own, Reed became the ‘phantom of rock’, a type of ghost. Reed never obviously ‘came out’ or used his religion in terms of self-definition but his ill-defined sexual identity and ethnicity were discussed in light of accusations of misogyny and the use of outmoded racial terms. The idea that he should be more politically correct in his art than in his life was an anathema to him, so too to patronise ‘outsiders’ with a form of self-censorship both on and off stage. That he should be accountable for his personal behaviour ‘off stage’ and answerable to the judgement of interested strangers was also of particular distaste.

Reed’s manner on and off stage was very close to the example of *Schnodderigkeit* shown by his one time girlfriend Nico, brought up in post-war Berlin who may or may not have been his muse for Caroline in *Berlin*. Reed was also closest to Brecht’s preferred style of social gest in performance, his inferences and emphasis kept to minimum in his spoken-sung vocal but his timing aware of all alternative meanings in every word in every line. Reed changed character with every song as a means of engagement with the subject matter - not to provoke sympathy, empathy or identification or awe.

The transitions between Bowie’s ‘golden years’ as a glam star and his life in Berlin as an ‘ordinary’ man working on his ‘Berlin trilogy’ were, on one hand a complete turn around and on the other an evolution of his expressionist style. Bowie’s self-promotion in the mid-1970s became more ‘artful’ though his conscious employment of sensational tactics earned him publicity but also enemies. Bowie’s work practices were discussed and showed that he although he adopted a more experimental language his everyday work practice was serious and methodical. Although he declared he was determined to create music without being conciliatory to commercial pressures, there were other figures such as his co-producer Visconti that kept in mind these considerations.
His collaborations with Eno rekindled debates about applying a set of artistic criteria belonging to a specific discipline such as painting and sculpture and relating it to music. Bowie not only compared his role as painter but also an actor and storyteller. The ill-defined nature of music and correlative lack of language and Bowie’s preferred style of expressionism that became part of his personal style might explain the mix of artistic disciplines. The progression of an artist’s association with time and place was answered by viewing Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo as art imitated life in the biopic of teenager who spiralled into drug dependency. Bowie’s music became the soundtrack of her teenage years and therefore intrinsic to the ‘plot’ of her life. In addition, his life and work was reflective of mid-1970s Berlin, evoking different stories of the city contemporaneously, perfect for a retrospective film aspiring to evoke the era.

‘Punk: England Projects into No-Mans Land’ showed Britain had distinctive parallels with Weimar Germany in many ways particularly in socio-economic terms. The crippling economic crisis and failure of the 1960 counterculture’s ‘revolution’, meant sexism, racism and class distinctions, although less than they had been, were still evident in all ways of most people’s lives. John Lydon, once Johnny Rotten of the Sex pistols, explained how and why his band formed in response to the austere atmosphere in London at the time. Their amateur pose belied their talent to write music that provoked controversy at every opportunity. Bowie had shown a new generation how manipulate the (complicate) media and punks maximised the potential of this trait.

Punk was the only mid-1970s subculture that defied a collective identity. In contrast to received wisdom the movement did not just appear but developed from artistic observations and diverse application. Their premise was based primarily on individual expression and not collective unity. Their fragmented costumes were heavily laden with symbols and symbolism associated with Weimar, many of the more recognisable ones worn for shock rather than offence. Though many male punks became solidified in to standardised type that allowed for the potential for commercial viability, their female counterparts were not as easily saleable because their punk identities tended to be contrary to what constituted as commercially desirable in terms of the female standard.
1980s post-punks and their outright refusal to conform to any of existing musical styles or fashion types built their art and expression diversely, though their sensitivity to the East West political situation translated into a mourning costume for predicted future death. Their mostly ‘dark’ fantasy worlds had no borders one to another or boundaries to the ‘real’ world. Their response to the Cold War was to exist as though the World War III had already taken place. Many of the styles of dress can be traced back to silent expressionist films. Film was part of their ‘other’ worlds, as were the non-identifiable sounds made possible by the relatively affordable new synthesesers and drum machines. The film *Breaking Glass* showed a simplified re-working of the end scene of *Metropolis* and highlighted the fear of being taken over by technology or commerce. The ‘romance’ of death and suicide in subject matter were devices to show fearlessness against the oppression of threat. Numerous post-punks went to live or visited Berlin as a ‘right of passage’ or a ‘pilgrimage’ to their spiritual home, a generation of British youth generally with no political allegiance to any one organisation save that of together living together ‘under the radar’ and transforming themselves beyond bi-centricity.

The effect of World War II was equally felt by David Bowie growing-up in the austerity of post-war Britain, the American Lou Reed, from New York, who was Jewish and reportedly homosexual and members of Kraftwerk, from the most industrial part of West German. The stereotype of ‘the German’ was stuck in the past and coloured imagination in various ways. For Bowie, Germans had meant fear yet glamour, for Reed, recognition of ‘forbidden’ qualities within himself and for Kraftwerk, hidden history and identity. The common ground for all artistic output was the search and refinement of identity, however transitory, often by what they were not. The list of what had been sanctioned as officially ‘degenerate’ by the Nazis was often their respective starting point for material. In an inversion of the Nazi era’s norm, the post-war period designated the most ‘forbidden’ type: the German. Bowie, Reed, Kraftwerk, punks and post-punks played with iconography and musical references as authentic European voices (in Reed’s case honouree) for a comparable alternative to US rock and pop.

The ‘feminisation’ of Weimar Germany due to increasing industrialisation and relative commercialism loss of men during World War I, most noticeable in the capital, was advantageous in terms of some freedoms but not in others. The sudden personal and societal
change that women experienced was a challenge as they had to incorporate many ‘masculine’ roles and in their every day lives. The colliding new factors seemed to amalgamate and make women collectively responsible for all the ills of the age.

The featured male artists of this thesis used a relative process of ‘feminisation’ to ‘shock’ patriarchal society rather than any solidarity with women per se. Glam rock exploited feminine traits associated with the city, particularly the city at night: musicians deliberately used ‘masks’ and costumes suggesting interchangeable personalities or for ‘required anonymity’. By the mid-1970s electro replaced the mask with the veneer of the machine prototype, a self-creation in fiction that was either destructive (female) or constructive (male). Reed managed to combine both of the above in his character ‘Caroline’ in Berlin in ‘Caroline Says 1’ and ‘Caroline Says 2’, double-bluffing in his confession of co-dependency. Kraftwerk used ‘The Model’ to comment on consumer culture whilst acknowledging the complicit male role. They also implicated their own weakness for desiring and converting the ‘latest model’ of ‘boy-toy’ music machine.

The issues that facilitated the popularity of art and entertainment had a direct relation to how much these works reflected their contemporary setting. Bowie, Reed, Kraftwerk, and other artist drew on these similar influences in Weimar Germany but have in turn become synonymous to the 1970s and ‘80s. Technological innovations that fed into the cultural industries helped create a phenomenon of readily available images and sounds that continuously added to artistic re-workings of similar themes of the twentieth century. The new forms of each era cannot be separated from those of the past, yet as Kraftwerk proved they cannot (re)capture ‘authenticity’ without commenting upon it with a sense of retrospect or hindsight.

It was never the intention of this study to shed any new revelations about Weimar Berlin’s art and music except as for possible correlative value. There were very few direct music analogies found note for note but more in re-workings of artistic theoretical paradigms and stylistic and historical references. The everyday and historical information has proven of equal importance as the more reported sensationalist aspects and obvious cultural references. Joseph von Sternberg’s Der Blau Engel, Brecht and Weill’s Dreigroschenoper and Isherwood’s The Berlin Novels all played their part in linking the two eras but were
eventually discarded by Bowie, Kraftwerk, Reed and their followers for more obscure references. The major ‘inheritances’ should not be played down in their importance for along with the potency of Weimar’s inter-war historical placement they conjured up a unique mythology.

Although issues of identity were relative to each artist they all gained insight from the era that had ‘thrown-out’ ideas of personal ‘solidity’ and replaced them with notions of fragmented or transitory personas. The approaches of this subject through the demarcations of identity by dividing nationalism, ethnicity, sexuality and gender were useful in terms of exploration themes and objectives but became more arbitrary in each chapter, as each division became another name for an indefinable force. The assimilated Jews of Germany in late-nineteenth century Berlin, supposed purveyors of modernism and patrons of new culture seemed no more or less directly involved with modernism as a group, just a more visible and definable force within it. Following on from the same anti-Semitic debates, the Nazi’s accusations that Jews were culpable for all the ills of the inter-war years including the feminisation of the era were founded on a divisions based on fear of the indefinable.

Technological innovation incited extreme positive and negative reactions in the inter-war years. Machines were ascribed with powers of good or evil rather than that of their human operators. Machines were thereby imbued with characteristics that mirrored the extreme emotions they provoked and the correlative link was set between technology and alternative forms of the unknown and/or unknowable and other others. Women, non-heterosexuals, foreigners and foreign places, outer-space, even prehistoric and ancient times, indeed anyone or anywhere that relied on imagination, gave shape and substance to what was otherwise a mysterious entity and were all fodder for projections onto machinery. The ‘feminine’ as a reoccurring projected theme on technology and machine, consistently reappeared whenever technology was mistrusted. As ‘other’, no other had comparative ability to convey evil and promote terror as technology imbued with the power of a woman.

The interchangeable boundaries of different art disciplines led to a glimpse of comparative studies on how they juxtapose one another. Reed’s insistence that his creative process was comparable to a novelist, playwright or screenwriter, Kraftwerk’s to musical-machine workers, Bowie’s to an artist in expressionist painterly terms and his collaborator, Eno’s to
sculptor, showed how difficult it was to convey the process of composition against other arts practices. Their work did not grow out of traditional music compositional, but from art that chose to offer alternatives to that model. Adorno too, might have put the modes of expression down to the indefinable nature of music and corresponding lack of vocabulary and it remains that musical explanations in a ‘foreign’ artistic ‘tongue’ worked better for these musical artists than traditional musicological discourse.

One of characteristics of the featured artists was they all created work that employed images, both static and moving, in addition to sound, live performance as well as recorded in their work. All informed by a host of relative techniques, many of those were in accordance to new technologies. These artists created complete works with similar objectives as Gesamtkunstwerk. Had this work extended beyond the early 1980s, analysis of videos would also have been appropriate.

The patterns that have developed grew from expressionism, in response and in reflection to, the ever-increasingly changing society of the late nineteenth century. Theweleit and Reynolds and Press’ work divide the fixed/hard/male and the mutable/soft/female qualities in bi-centric forms whilst the paradigm of the ‘male gaze’ uses the panoptical model of the man as ‘neutral’ and all others surrounding. There is nothing in this work that disputed that the male stars incorporated attributes and symbols of ‘others’ for their own ends. Yet, the bi-centric and the panoptical form are still problematical because they are both fixed. The expressionist idea that everything is mutable and the fixed form a fantasy is what separated Bowie, Reed, Kraftwerk, punks and post-punks from others before and continuing that tradition. The fixed neutral is not an enemy or an opposite, because it only exits in dubious theory: there is only ‘other’ and more ‘others’ evolving in continuous motion.

Berlin became the ever-changing symbol of an artistic practice defined by the mutability of the city, a place that between wars and ideologies divided time and place; its diametrically polarised forces so clear, that it people saw both sides as equally fixed and therefore not to be trusted. The most notorious characters were those who saw themselves as neither one thing nor another but created whole, made and not born. The German capital became the archetypal city and therefore all its associative values were exaggerated.
This study Covered a century of history and art theory, whilst it was possible to cover some areas in depth it was not possible for all areas. This work has proven how influential the inter-war years were as a source of inspiration for popular music from 1970s and on, still influencing contemporary acts such as Goldfrapp (GB) Marilyn Manson (US) and Ramstein (Germany). This work will go some way in providing foundations for analysing areas and music that could have been included for further study.
References and Notes

Introduction
4. With the exception of the 1960’s British beat ‘invasion’ that re-introduced blues to the US, Hyssen, *After the Great Divide*, p.42.

1: Beyond Divine Symmetry
1. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p.35.
4. In line with fashion, Nietzsche confined his hopes of greatness to a few men rather than all men and women.
5. The chapter was aptly entitled ‘Naturalist or Postmodernist’, *Nietzsche on Morality* p.1-29.
6. *Constructing Musicology*, preface ix
7. Though, as pointed out by Leiter the role of art was later to be replaced by science. *Nietzsche*, p.37.
9. Ibid.
10. Figure from Large, *Berlin: A Modern History*, p.12.
11. Eksteins notes “the six largest German firms in that (the coal-tar) industry took out, between 1886 and 1900, 948 patents; their British counterparts took out only 86” *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, p.72.
12. Richie, *Faust’s Metropolis* p.203 and Large, *Berlin: A Modern History*, p.40. Contrary to the Kaiser’s opinion on lack of militarism within the city, Richie comments upon the conspicuous profusion of military uniforms that could be seen; even civilian clothes conformed to military style. *Richie, Faust’s Metropolis*, p.205.
13. The March 1848 revolution was sparked by unrest in both Paris and Vienna weeks before. The Prussian King agreed to many of the reforming demands of the revolutionaries but the subsequent celebrations outside the palace turned into tragedy that left 254 civilians dead.
14. Large, *Berlin: A Modern History*, p.5. A map of Germany “by 1907” shows that Berlin was not actually as far east as readings of these opposing forces might indicate. Map from *Twentieth Century History* p.19.
15. Eksteins, *Rites of Spring* p.66.
17. Bismarck, from Tayor’s book *Berlin and its Culture*, p154
22. Ibid
23. For a fuller exploration of Jewish patrons and salons of Berlin read Barbara Hahn’s chapter ‘Encounters at the Margins: Jewish Salons around 1900’ *Berlin Metropolis* pp.188-207.
25. Ibid
28. Paret, *Berlin Metropolis*, p.34.
29. Though there was anti-Jewish feeling in Germany, it could be considered liberal in comparison with some of its neighbours, especially from within the Russian Empire. For example, under Alexander III (r.1881-94) there was a ruling that Jews were only permitted to live within the Pale of Settlement (western Russian Empire) unless given special licence. The inhabitants of many Jewish villages or settlements within the Pale suffered violent pogroms, particularly towards the end of the century. Emigration from the Russian Empire to destinations around the world rose from approx 58,000 people in the 1870s to 481,000 in the 1890s. Figures from *Berlin: A Modern History*, p.9.
33. Large, *Berlin: Modern History* p.100.
36. Paret, *Berlin Metropolis*, p.49. It is hard to apply Paret’s claims to artists like Kathe Kollwitz (who joined in 1901) who were certainly not apolitical.
38. “In 1900 only 1,689 women registered as prostitutes, but the police estimated 20,000 were active in the trade”. Large, *Berlin: a Modern History*, p.94.
41. Nietzsche *The Case for Wagner*, p.159.
44. *Ibid*.
47. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.25.
48. Nietzsche did not favour the Dionysian over the Apollonian as could be supposed when reading late-1960s literature referencing *The Birth of Tragedy* to glorify the Bacchanalian spirit of the ‘hippie’ era. This reading was further propagated by newer musicologists like Reynolds in his article ‘Ecstasy is a Science: Techno-Romanticism’ from the book *Stars Don’t Stand Still: Music and Myth*, p.199.
49. Taylor, *Berlin and its Culture*, p.195. The Deutsches Opernhaus was renamed the Stadtsiche Oper and latterly the Deutsche Oper.
50. Taylor, *Ibid*, the theatre was named after Friederich Schiller who ‘emphasised the need for man to resort to the inner will in order to defy the constrictions of society. Richie, *Faust’s Metropolis: A History of Berlin*, p.239.
56. *Ibid*, Jelavitch, p.216
62. Ball arrived in Switzerland with forged documentation and a false name and Hennings had
been found guilty of forging passports for those who wanted to avoid the war. Goldberg, *Performance Art*, p.55.


64.*Ibid*, p.62, 56 and 50.


66.Macke is often referred to as expressionist. Born Meschede, Westphalia 1887

67.Pratella La Musica Futurista Manifesto Tecnico’ (Trans not known).


70.*Reactionary Modernism*, p.232.

2 Willkommen Berlin


7.Chessboards and pieces were officially distributed in an attempt to keep unemployed men occupied. George Grosz, *Before the Deluge*, p.149.


9Ironically, in the spring of 1917, it was the German military and Conservatives who went to great effort and expense to ensure Lenin’s successful return to Petrograd (St Petersburg). Leading figures strategically aided the Bolshevist uprising against the Tsar, causing chaos and thereby diverting the Russian military away from fighting Germany. By October that year Lenin led Russia to revolution, and by April 1918 a red flag was raised over the Russian embassy in Berlin “followed by an enormous banner which proclaimed: WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE”. Richie, *Faust’s Metropolis*, p.290.


11.*Faust’s Metropolis*, p.305.

12.*Faust’s Metropolis*, p.301. National Socialists soon changed their uniform because of this confusion, changing their red shirts to brown.


14.*Faust’s Metropolis*, p.323.

15.*Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents*, p.32.


17.Figure Large, *Berlin a Modern History*, p.171.

18.*Nights in the Big City*, p.68.


21.*Before the Deluge*, p.94.

22.*Weimar, Germany*, p.106.

23.Figure from Friedrich, *Before the Deluge*, p.112.


32. Cole and Cole quoting Dyer *Don We Now Our Gay Apparel: Gay Men’s Dress in the Twentieth Century*, p.17 and 19. The character of Blanche is from *Brideshead Revisited*.
34. The two works were published together in the United States as the *Berlin Stories*. Friedrich strangely calls *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* “The Last of Mr. Norris” although I could not find any other references to Friedrich’s preferred title or a change of title before or after the date of his publication, *Before the Deluge*, p.303.
35. Ibid
38. *The Berlin Novels*, p.243. (Further study of Isherwood’s stories and their incarnations as the John Van Druten play *I Am a Camera*, the Broadway musical *Cabaret* and Bob Fosse’s film of the same name are studied in the next chapter).
39. *The Berlin Novels*, p.60 and 84
3 Out and About: Kunst und Kitsch

14. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* p.120 and 121.
20. Valetti appeared in the film *The Blue Angel* with fellow cabaret performer Marlene Dietrich. The Wild Stage club was credited starting the career of the singer Kate Kühl who was renowned for performing Brecht repertoire.
21. Goldberg assessed the manifesto as mostly an all-out attack on expressionism. *Performance Art*, p.56.
22. *Berlin*, p.144. Grosz was brought-up in the village of Stolp, Pomerania, attending art school in Dresden before moving to Berlin.
25. Grosz and Hertzfelde changed their names to the anglicised Gross and Heartfield.
27. Large, *Berlin: A Modern History* p.145
31. Probably the three most prominent names in German constructivism were Van Doesburg, Maholy Nagy and Lissitzky, Dutch, Hungarian, and Russian respectively.
35. ‘Oskar Schlemmer’, *Bauhaus*, p.280.
37. In the United States, he mounted the now famous production of Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* at the Hollywood bowl 1934.
39. Taylor, *Berlin: and its Culture*, p.246. Taylor also points out that though Brecht is now synonymous with the use of the term ‘epic theatre’ Piscator also used the similar phrase ‘epic drama’ in connection to his work and the term was generic at the time.
40. Gilliam draws attention to the cross-influences between film and opera during Weimar in his chapter ‘Stage and Screen: Kurt Weill and operatic reform in the 1920s’ from the book he edits *Music and Performance During the Weimar Republic*. Quote p.3.
44. Born February 10th, at 7 Auf dem Rain Ausberg near Munich as Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht, son of a minor official in a paper factory.
45. Wedekind died in 1918. Ewen presumes Brecht must have seen him perform. *Bertolt Brecht*, p.67. In Brecht’s *Brecht on Theatre* he wrote recollections of Wedekind including the shock of his death, p.3.
47. Set designed by Casper Neher.
49. Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, p.34 and 47.
51. ‘Singing Brecht versus Brecht singing’, *Music and Performance during Weimar*, p.77
52. Friedrich quotes the playwright Carl Zuckmayer and Herbert Ihering in their appraisal, *Before the Deluge*, p.244.
53. Brecht on Theatre, p.104.
54. Brecht on Theatre, p.105.
55. Ibid.
56. Lenya, *the Legend*, p.56.
57. Friedrich, *Before the Deluge*, p.243-4
63 Weill made three points in a letter to Hanns 7th December 1918, *Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents*, p.21. Schebera uses the phrase “pays homage” *Kurt Weill: An Illustrated Life*, p.19. Weill sought to become a pupil of Schönberg, who was living in Vienna, but his family’s financial circumstances prevented him from doing so. Letter to Hanns, 27th June 1919 *Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents*, p.24. Weill left Berlin to take up paid employment first in Dessau, then in Lüdenscheid and only returned to Berlin in September 1920, before being accepted to study under Ferruccio Busoni in the Prussian Academy of Arts and by 1923, already a member of the music division of the Novembergruppe, he supplemented his income by giving theory and composition classes.
70. Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, p.45
74. *Ibid*, p.16 and 27.
77. Waldorf originated from Hanover.
79. From Waldoff’s *Claire Waldoff*.
81. Müller, trans from German by Peter Remke, *Verrückt nach Leben*, p.81.
82. Schöneberg was outside Berlin at the time and incorporated into the city 1920. Her Mother full name was Josephine Dietrich (nee Felsing) and her father’s, Louis Erich Otto Dietrich. There was no record for her father’s death but when Marlene was around six her mother was listed in the telephone book as a widow.
84. Her mother’s employer, newly promoted Captain Eduard von Losch, moved his household, including the Dietrich family, to Dessau. Josephine became a Red Cross nurse and married the wounded von Losch late 1916/early 1917 on the eastern front only to become a widow soon after. The Felsing – Dietrich - von Loschs once again reverted to a women only household, though throughout wartime and after this became the norm. 85. Bach, *Marlene Dietrich: Life and Legend*, p.22-3.

4 Officially Degenerate
1. German composer Hans Werner Henze, ‘Music and Menace’, *Settling the Score*, p.106
7. Ambrose, *Hitler’s Loss*, p.16. * This is a generalisation since many German Jews had lived as members of wider communities for a century (even though still viewed as outside of society) whilst in the capitals and major cities of Poland, Hungary, Russia and other Eastern European countries there were as many middle-class Jews who lived and worked outside ghettos and shtetlach. In addition many Eastern European Jews made their way to Berlin, not only to escape pogroms but also to seek a life away from the ghetto, geographical and cultural.
13. More visitors attended the *Entartete Kunst* exhibition than the corresponding one exhibiting examples of ‘good’ German art.
15. For a more detailed description and analysis of the exhibition and its impact and also the context within which it operated, read the chapter ‘Entartete Musik: the War Against Modernism’, Music in the Third Reich, p.82-123.


17. Henze, Settling the Score, p.105


22. Settling the Score, p.106.


24. Fritz Stege’s suggestion on German Volksoper (May, 1933, Zeitschrift fur Musik) and Wilhelm Altmann’s (Sept, 1933, Die Musik) are two such examples that Levi provides, Music in the Third Reich, p.183.

25. In this case of Müller’s Deutsche Heldenrequiem these ‘sympathies’ were for fallen World War I soldiers.

26. Settling the Score, p.106.

27. Klaus was the son of Thomas Mann. The book was made into a film of the same name that won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film in 1981.


29. Ibid

30. Ibid, p.32


34. Haste, Nazi Women, p.77.

35. Hitler, Mein Kampf (part 2 of 18) p.47.

36. Ibid p.74.

37. Ibid p.73.

38. Magda Goebbels’ last letter to her eldest son on active service (Harald Quandt: only child of her first marriage to Günter Quandt) played her Nazi given part to the last, describing her murderous plans as defeat was imminent and signing off ‘I embrace you, with all my deepest, most heartfelt motherly love. My beloved son, Live for Germany! Your mother. Haste, Nazi Women, p.66 & pp.70-1.

39. Hurst, Nazi Women, p.78 and 96.

5 Traveling in Time: From One Berlin to Another

1. Richard Schechner, ‘The Street is a Stage’ Performance Studies, p.123

2. Terence Prittie, Germany, p.118


4. For a more comprehensive historical account of the period see more of Davies’ ‘Europe Divided and Undivided of 1945-91’ A History of Europe, p.1057-1136.

5. As agreed before the war in Europe ended in a meeting between the ailing Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill in Yalta February 1945.

6. Prittie, Germany, p.54.

7. Twentieth Century History, p.225

8. Germany, p.131.

9. In his contributions to Popular publications such as the Germany volume of the Sunday Times World Library Series that first went to press in 1962.
15. *Facts on Germany*, p.236
17. *Faust’s Metropolis*, p.482.
18. Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism*, p.58. Tomlinson writes about the presence pervading globally and not in local (West German) terms.
20. Funder, *Stassiland*, p.161. Funder also revealed many regular German soldiers, upon returning home to their families were almost immediately sent away to Prisoner of War camps by the Russians.
21. Most of this was to pay for Soviet losses during the war that included livestock and agricultural machinery as well as industrial and domestic equipment.
23. Richie marks out Martin Luther and Friederich the Great as later cases in point. *Faust’s Metropolis*, p.741 and 743-5.
29. Howarth reckoned sixteen million Germans were expelled from Central and Eastern Europe. *Twentieth Century History*, p.212.
31. *Ibid*, p.484. Meinhof quoted from her article for *Konkret*: “protest is when I say I don’t like a certain state of affairs; resistance is when I say that said state of affairs can no longer be allowed to exist” p. 488.
33. Ritchie commented “the band committed itself to violence and terror” to reach its aims and objectives. *Ibid*, p.491. For more information on the escalation of activities in Berlin and Schleyer’s kidnapping see p.490-1 from the same book.
35. Paul Betts, *Bauhaus*, p.44.

6 The Changing Face of Influence: David Bowie
2. Pegg, *The Complete David Bowie* p.221
12. Eno, *Glam*, p.8. The issue of authenticity was contested further by Warhol’s complicated process of ‘authorship’. Paul Morrissey ‘assistant’ said Warhol “seldom got involved” and “there was never
such a thing an authentic Andy Warhol” in his own screen prints. Others said that this ‘hands off’ approach was a pose. “Sometimes he didn’t sign his name” in the “era of readymades”. Warhol expert, Fred Hughes, revealed his pictures were not signed till they were about to be sold. Alan Yentob. Exec Prod. Imagine Warhol Denied, BBC 1, 24th January, 2006.

13. _Glam_, p.29. Bowie first heard the Velvet Underground’s music courtesy of his then manager Ken Pitt in 1966; he first met Iggy Pop and Reed on a trip to New York as late as September 1971.

15. Sandford, _Bowie Loving the Alien_, p.102.
18. _Ibid_ p.87
19. _The Complete David Bowie_ p.235
20. Reported by Pegg, _the Complete David Bowie_, p.239.
22. _In His Own Words_, p. 110.
25. _In His Own Words_, p.23, his avoidance of the decade of the 1920s was probably due to Bowie’s need to never state the obvious.
27. Bowie, _the Complete David Bowie_, p.236.
28. Carr and Shaar Murray, _Bowie, an Illustrated Record_, p.6
29. Pegg, _the Complete David Bowie_, p.234.
31. There had been female examples too: Janice Joplin, Mama Cass to name but two, but these deaths were not as ‘celebrated’ as the their male counterparts, as the grave of Morrison will testify.
32. Bowie had explored the contrast of the ‘specialness’ of space and the ‘mundaneness’ of ordinary life on Earth in earlier songs, ‘Space Oddity’ and ‘Life on Mars’ from _Hunky Dory_.
34. Honnef, _Andy Warhol_, p.8.
35. Bowie, Bowie: _His Own Words_ p.24
36. From ‘Ziggy Stardust’ and ‘Lady Stardust’.
37. From ‘Lady Stardust’.
38. Bowie claims he borrowed the name from signage above a tailor’s shop he saw whilst on a train (presumably in Britain), _the Complete David Bowie_, p.237.
39. _Rock: The Primary Text_, p.133.
40. Bowie: _An Illustrated Record_, p.54.
42. Bowie, _David Bowie: We Could Be Heroes_, p.53.
43. Moore, _Rock the Primary Text_, p.4.
44. Bowie: _We Could Be Heroes_, p.53.
45. from his album _Aladdin Sane_
46. The Theatre of Bertold Brecht, p.67.
47. Angie Bowie, David Bowie’s first wife entitled her autobiography _Free Spirit_.
49. For example in The Who’s _Tommy_ (1969) or Queen’s _Queen_ (1973), _Queen II_ (1974). The Who’s and Queen’s musical arrangements were still rooted in the tradition of 1960s rock, including virtuoso guitar improvisations.
50. Leiter, _Nietzsche on Morality_, p.266.
51. _Bowie_, p.54.
52. Appignanesi, _The Cabaret_, p.12.
54. _Ibid_, p.27 and 55.
7 Berlin Personified: Lou Reed

1. Reed, *Rolling Stone* interview with David Fricke in 1989, as written in the *Companion*, p.113.
11. *Lou Reed: Between the Lines*, p.66.
13. On the 1998 CD version the opportunity of seeing Reed’s ‘mirror’ is lost as the border surrounding the picture has been removed.
16. Reed, the interview in full in *The Velvet Underground Companion*, p.113.
18 Reed, Lou Reed: the biography p.203
32. Reed, Lou Reed: the biography, p.208.
33. *Lou Reed: the biography*, p.218. *Berlin* was recorded in the summer of 1973 at Morgan’s studio in London and Record Plant, New York. The tour to promote *Berlin* became another album based on a live recording at the New York Academy, entitled ‘Rock ’n’ Roll Animal’ (1973). The live album was part of deal that Reed made with RCA so that they would go ahead with *Berlin’s* release to make up for the predicted low sales. The sleeve of the live album is another high contrast, black and white photo of Reed performing on stage, the metal studs on his choker collar and wrist-cuffs blurred with movement to a shimmer. In similar mode to the picture of Reed on the front sleeve of *Transformer* it cast Reed once again as a phantom of rock. The Live Show used stark, intense, white spotlights on black background, in a similar manner to David Bowie’s *Station to Station* Tour that was later.
34. *Lou Reed: the biography*, p.221.
35. Willis, *Ibid*
40. *Ibid* p.62. He went on to entitle his (January) 1989 album *New York*, although not only is it very
different in style from *Berlin* being much more wordy and musically more ‘straight’ but deals for the most part markedly about issues entirely local to New York at the time.

44. Reed, *Ibid*.
45. Fellow Factory worker Gerard Malanga, *Lou Reed: the Biography*, p.118. The musician Hope Ruff said that she “could remember Reed talking to Nico as though she was a pile of trash”, from the same book, p.128.

**8 German Irony: Kraftwerk**

1. Hütter *Kraftwerk: From Düsseldorf to the Future with Love*, p.74
2. Born Florian Schneider-Esleben.
9. *Ibid*
10. Pellegrino, *The Electronic Arts of Sound and Light*, p.4
13. Hütter, *Kraftwerk: Man, Machine and Music*, p.96. While the founder pair reportedly treated their machines as co-workers they reportedly kept a tight reign on all future artistic direction after the additional recruitment of Bentos and Wolfgang Flür in 1974. Emil Schult was an unofficial fifth member of the band who also provided administrative support while Kraftwerk were on tour besides his role of “medium”. Barr thought that it had been conversations with Schult that had encouraged Hütter and Schneider to incorporate ideas of cultural identity within their music. Barr, *Kraftwerk: from Düsseldorf to the Future (with Love)*, p.66. Maxime Schmitt acted as Kraftwerk’s chief contact with EMI in addition to other day-to-day business activities.
16. Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, p.121
17. Huyssen *After the Great Divide* p.48
22. Hebdige, *Ibid* p128. Hebdige devoted a chapter *Towards a Cartography of Taste 1935-1962* in which he cites writers such as Hulton, Van Doran, Bertram and Pevsner’s negative views on streamlining etc p.45-76 uses the word “responsible” to represent such voices, p.128.
23. Hütter, *Kraftwerk: From Düsseldorf to the Future (with Love)* p.131 (originally from an interview from Future #5, 5th October 1978) Moroder’s version was released as a video in 1984. The soundtrack of Metropolis has once more been updated when in 1998 Paul Osborne composed a new score for the launch of the new DVD format. Instead, Kraftwerk had to be satisfied summarising the essence of the movie on a track on the *Mensch Maschine* (1978).
27. For a more detailed deconstruction of the rock V Pop read Deena Weinstein’s *Art Versus Commerce: Deconstructing a (Useful) Romantic Illusion*, in the book *Stars Don’t Stand Still in the Sky: Music*

9 About Face: David Bowie
2. Bowie: In His Own Words, p. 67.
5. Bowie, Bowie: In His Own Words, p.92. Although the specific publication is not given, part of the quote is also in Bowie: An Illustrated History that credited the source as an interview for Playboy in 1976, p.72.
7. Bowie, In February 1976 Bowie said ”Why did I feel that I was superior to people?” In His Own Words, p26.
8. Bowie, In His Own Words, p.93.
9. Station to Station had been provisionally entitled ‘Golden Years’ on the strength of the commercial potential of the track.
16. Bowie, Ibid.
18. Bowie, Loving the Alien, p.150.
20. Friedrich, Before the Deluge, p.322.
21. Eissler and Adorno, Audio Culture, p.75.
23. Pegg The Complete David Bowie, p.263.
28. Ibid
29. Ibid
30. The book was a first-hand account of the real Christiane F. as she had told journalists for Der Stern; it became a nationwide best seller before being translated into English entitled H: Christiane F. Pegg conversely reported that though the film was “sold to audiences as a true-life biopic, although it was later exposed later as plausible fiction”. Pegg, The Complete David Bowie, p.461. Though the book was credited in West Germany, for exposing the downward spiral of drugs abuse among and grime of West Berlin, the film was accused of glamorising it.
31. The concert had to be shot at the Hurrah club in New York (October 1980) in New York as Bowie was appearing nightly at the Booth Theatre, also in New York, playing John Merrick in The Elephant Man. Changesonechanges (1976) was Bowie’s first ‘greatest hits’ albums
32. Chion, Audio Vision: Sound on Screen p.34
33. Pegg informed Bowie was lip-syncing, the Complete David Bowie p.461.
34. Bowie, In His Own Words, p.97.
   39 Eno, *The Complete David Bowie*, p.261 As well as Eno’s metaphor for Bowie’s approach to
   making music, Bowie had found time and inspiration to actually paint whilst in Berlin.
40 Pegg, *The Complete David Bowie*, p.263
42 Pegg cites Otto Mueller’s painting *Lovers Between Garden Walls* (1916) supposedly admired by
   Bowie at the Brüke Museum Berlin. Bowie had also recalled seeing two lovers meeting at the Wall
   from a window in Hansa Studios. *The Complete David Bowie* p.79
43 Jerry Silverman described the kiss in Johnny and Jones’s ‘Westerbork Serenade’. Johnny and Jones’s
   were a Jewish duo who had written and recorded the song during their internment at Westerbork
   camp in Holland 1944 before they were sent to a death camp.

10 England Projects into No-mans Land: Punk
9. In the *Culture Society*, p.76.
15. *Beating Time*, p.20
17. Widgery reports that support staff and friends of the band were known to be fascist supporters which
   caused Sham 69 to harbour split loyalties, eventually the lead singer, Jimmy Pursey refuted any
   fascist beliefs by the band themselves. *Beating Time*, p.80.
18. *Vacant*, p.57 (first quoted in Savage’s *England’s Dreaming*).
   shirt as a Westwood design from Westwood and McLaren’s shop SEX, *Rotten*, p.123.
22. *Vacant*, p.53. For a fuller picture of the debate surrounding the ‘swastika debate’ read Mark Sinker’s
   article ‘The Etiquette of Punk’, from *Punk Rock: So What?*.
25. Stevenson, *Vacant, A Diary of the Punk Years 1976-79*, p.16. Although the T-shirt designed and sold
   by McLaren and Westwood’s shop ‘SEX’ Stevenson suggests that Bernie Rhodes was really
   responsible for the T-shirt, *Vacant*, p.16.
36. *Movies of the 80s*, p.154. Though Ridley uses the word ‘punk’ he meant it as a generic term.
Confusingly, by the early 1980s no one would refer to themselves as a punk, unless they were not.

38. Thompson, *The Dark Reign of Gothic Rock*, p.41-4

**Conclusion**

Appendix

1  David Bowie/Ziggy Stardust
2  Cover and reverse side of Lou Reed *Transformer*
3  Cover of Kraftwerk *Man Machine*
4  Cover of David Bowie *Heroes*
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Film still, Cabinet of Dr Caligari on postcard

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Appendix

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