

## Race Hating

### A Holy War

"I want to reach that grade of hatred and bitterness," rages the coloured dramatist and well-known jazz-critic Leroi Jones, "which my great, great great grandfather had, when he was put ashore in America."

For Jones, the leader of a group of militant black Avantgarde musicians, intends to fight against the white jazz-musicians with this old hate in future, because "the whites do not have the ability to play jazz". And: "For many decades absolute racial inequality dominates on the domain of music".

Since the beginnings of jazz about 1900 the negroes, indeed, developed new forms of style all the time, yet the white musicians earned the money with it. That is why the bandleader Fletcher Henderson had to disband his Big Band because of financial difficulties in the Thirties - he died very poor - whereas Henderson's arrangements brought a million dollar fortune to the white Benny Goodman.

The white cornet-player Nick LaRocca went on beyond: The leader of the "Original Dixieland Jass Band", which recorded the first swinging music in 1917, tried his whole life to dispute the negroes right to the jazz. So Nick LaRocca said wrongly: "In the early days the negroes had nothing else to do but to learn the playing of the instruments of the whites... and all they could play, was an imitation of the white music."

In fact, many white bandleaders, as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and Charlie Barnet, broke the race-barriers by taking coloured musicians into their bands; but the Negroes of Swing were not allowed to share the same table with their white colleagues nor to sleep in the same hotel. Because of this discrimination jazz-artists - as the singer Billie Holiday and the alto sax-player Charlie Parker, did not go on stage together with whites anymore.

The critic Brooks Johnson says: "A negroe has to be twice as good as a white musician to get a job at all".

Leroi Jones wants to change that now. He pronounced a "holy war" against the white partners and formulates a declaration of war:

1. Only negroes are able to play important jazz;
2. all innovators of jazz were negroes and are negroes
3. Jazz is a black music of protest, which can be understood by negroes only and a few whites, who are familiar with the mentality of the negroes.
4. all jazz- negroes are exploited by white business-men.

These demagogic simplified postulates assured (guaranteed) him, the "Prophet of the black cultur-revolution" (so called by the magazine "Down Beat"), the following, especially of the youngest avantgarde - generation - musicians, who see the devil in every white man and preach the black predominance on their instruments; for instance

- the tenor-sax player, admirer of Malcolm X and former teacher Archie Shepp ("I play nigger-music")
- the music-mystic of Chicago Sun Ra, whose eleven-headed "Solar Arkestra" is reflecting the lively feeling of Africa which has been lost in the western world (Jones),
- the tenor-sax and trumpet playing brothers Albert and Donald Ayler, whose Free-Jazz ("We play peace") parodies European coffee-house folklore;
- the drummer Sonny Murray, who named his provocative drum-solis "Right" and "Virtue".

The theory of life of this radical jazz-club is reduced to simple formulas. Black means for them "pride", "nature", "beauty"; white "exploitation", "double-dealing".

Even in a out-of-tune-piano of a night-club sees the 29 year old Archie Shepp from Florida, a "plot of white authority". And he sees in the USA "a state with the badest racism of the world" - "perhaps with the exception of North Rhodesia, South Africa and South Vietnam". Allies he recognizes among the communists: "Fidel Castro is black, Ho Tshi-minh is



black".

With white people, who do not want to let themselves be slandered, the jazz-rebels are finished in any case. That is why they liquidated the European-diatonic system of the jazz-music until now, and they ~~blew~~ do not play their raging angry chorusses "by chords, but by feelings and those feelings no white man can understand" (Jones).

As an example for this misunderstood black emotional life dramatist Jones quotes the song of Bessie Smith in his play "Dutchman". Jones means that Bessie has requested (called) ~~in-a--~~ the audience in her blues: "Kiss my ass, kiss my stubborn black ass."

adapted from "Spiegel" No. 8 / 1967

Dear Kochi, your's,

Again I tried to translate

an article from a weekly magazine in Germany. The 'Spiegel' is really a well-informed magazine and you may compare it with 'Life Time' or 'Newsweek'.

I just read a small note in the newspaper that a black civil rights worker had been killed by a bomb in Natchez. Will there be no end of killing people because of their colour or their ideas? A news like this supports me in killing my friends not to believe in this propaganda about 'justice' and 'liberty' in the States. But injustice is also found in other places of the world. I heard of cruelties in Aden done by the British. I must ask if it is possible to live in a good world and to be a human-being? I hope we all fight for the right cause.

Truthfully

Christians