Introduction: "Trading Bobbed Hair and Bisexual Boots for Pink Lampshades and Telltale Brooches: Kul'turnost in the Post-War Period"

In the 2008 Russian musical *Stiliagi*, Mels, the hero of the film, sets out to make the most illicit of purchases.[1] His search takes him down to the docks and to various other shady parts of town, including what appears to be a haphazard black market for musical instruments. His choice of instrument is just as questionable as the places that he visits - he wishes to purchase a saxophone! When he finally finds someone who will sell him this coveted item he is warned that perhaps he would be better off purchasing a gun, for as everyone knows a saxophone is far more dangerous. He is then taken to a bar filled with drunken sailors, workers, and Rubenesque barmaids with garish red lipstick where he must first supply his would-be seller with numerous pints of beer before he can even set eyes on this illusive instrument. Although the film is a highly dramatized musical and was not meant to serve as a documentary record of the early 1950s, in certain regards it does give voice to the experience of those who sought to play or listen to jazz in the early post-war years. Saxophones were in fact banned from the stage from 1948-1953, a fact much bemoaned by Soviet composer Isaak Dunaevsky, and jazz was targeted by the public and government officials alike as a decadent, Western music.[2] Youngsters who wanted to play or listen to jazz were suspect and a common phrase of the time was "today they dance to jazz, tomorrow they betray the motherland."[3]

Although jazz had flourished during the war with jazz bands playing all over the Front and even during the siege of Leningrad, the post-war period presented several obstacles for the continued development of jazz on Soviet soil.[4] Communist activities in Greece and President Truman's

1 *Stiliagi*, dir. Valerii Todorovskii, Krasnaia Strela. The name "Mels" is a combination of the initials of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin.

2 Dunaevsky was also criticized on numerous occasions for the use of saxophones in his orchestra. He found the idea of banishing saxes from variety and dance music absurd. As he said, the substitution of violins and cellos for saxes was well-intentioned but he could not take listening to any more foxtrots or tangos that were played with violins or cellos because such performances were "banal and the intonation necessary was foreign to these instruments and they were inappropriate." See Dunaevsky, "Peredaem Legkuio Muzyku," *Sovetskaia Muzyka,* September, 1949, No. 9 p. 45. Saxes were banned from Soviet light music in 1949 and the "amnesty" was not issued until February 1955, Dunaevsky "Nazrevshie Voprosy Legkoi Muzyki," *Sovetskaia Muzyka*, June, 1955, No. 6, p. 23.

3 note about the prevalence of this phrase in Soviet jazz memoirs

4 Aleksei Batashev, *Sovetskii Dzhaz*, (Muzyka: Moscow, 1972). See in particular the chapter on jazz in the war, "Musicians and Soldiers."

subsequent Truman Doctrine, Winston Churchill's infamous "Iron Curtain" speech in Missouri, and the disagreements between the allies over the fate of Germany all resulted in a postwar environment that was in no way conducive to cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States. As Elena Zubkova has shown in her work on post-war Russia, Stalin and other Soviet officials were genuinely concerned that war with the United States was eminent and thus the prospect of Soviet youth listening to American jazz music was particularly troublesome.[5] It was against this backdrop of increasing Cold War tensions that Andrei Zhdanov, whom Stalin had appointed to oversee cultural matters in the Soviet Union, launched his infamous campaign against Western or bourgeois influences in Soviet culture in 1946. While a government campaign against Western influences was certainly troublesome for anyone who was interested in playing or listening to jazz, once the campaign grew into an anti-Cosmopolitan affair aimed at Soviet Jews, to be associated with jazz became extremely dangerous and in some instances deadly. Many of the most prominent jazz musicians, band leaders, jazz proponents, and popular song composers in the Soviet Union were Jewish and found themselves under attack and often under arrest for their art. Eddie Rosner, the German-born Polish Jew, otherwise known as the "White Louis Armstrong," who found fame and fortune traveling throughout the Soviet Union during the war was arrested in 1946 on fabricated charges of treason and sent to Kolyma.[6] As will be discussed in the following chapters, the latent anti-Semitism in the post-war period made musicians and composers of Jewish backgrounds such as Leonid Utesov and Isaak Dunaevsky particularly susceptible to charges of Westernism, decadence, and anti-socialist art.[7]

5 Elena Zubkova, *Poslevoennoe Sovetskoe Obshchestvo: Politika ì Povsednevnost': 1945 – 1953* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2000); and Zubkova, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945 – 1957*, translated and edited by Hugh Ragsdale (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1998).

6 H.J.P. Bergmeier, *The Weintraub Story Incorporated: The Ady Rosner Story*, (Menden, Germany: der Jazzfreund, 1982), p. 50. See also Pierre-Henry Salfati's 1999 documentary, *The Jazzman from the Gulag*. Also of note is the musicologist Valentina Konen who wrote very favorable reviews and informative articles on jazz. Konen's history and musical training may help explain her favorable outlook on jazz. She emigrated with her family to the United States in 1921 after the Russian revolution and later attended the Juilliard School in New York where she studied piano. She also began working as a music critic while in the United States. After her family's return to the Soviet Union in 1931 she began the study of music theory at the Moscow Conservatory and completed her degree in 1938. Unfortunately as a result of her father's arrest in 1940 she was expelled from the Moscow faculty and was unable to return to the field of musicology until 1944. See her biographic entry at http://chtoby-pomnili.com/page.php?id=718.

7 As late as March 14, 1953 the Composers' Union was still scrutinized because of its ethnic or national composition and was still criticized because of the high proportion of Jewish composers, although the union was instructed to find ways

But despite the Cold War tensions the problem with jazz in the Soviet context was not just that it was American or Western music. After all, certain American musical artists such as Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson were revered for their music throughout the Soviet Union. Robeson was even awarded the Stalin prize in 1953 for his musical contributions. Unfortunately, Robeson was not a fan of jazz and his pronouncements that jazz was not truly the music of the American Negro were frequently cited in the Soviet press.[8] Rather the problem with jazz in the post-war period had more to do with the nature of the Russian cultural traditions and norms that were then dominant among the older members of Russian society. These norms were encapsulated in the idea of *kul'turnost',* or culturedness, a concept that was embraced not only by government officials but also in large part by the Soviet public as well. As *Stiliagi* hints at, within Soviet society jazz was tainted to a degree and associated with the more base elements of human nature that were most definitely not compatible with the concept of *kul'turnost'*. On the contrary, by the early 1950s in the United States jazz had begun to symbolize a degree of intellectualism and experimentalism thanks to the works of artists such as Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker to name but a few. But even in the United States where jazz was accepted and embraced there remained a certain shady underside, which was helped in no part by the repeated arrests of jazz musicians for the possession of narcotics.[9]

Although *kul'turnost'* was a fluid concept whose meaning would fluctuate as the years passed, especially as the Soviet government increasingly expanded and embraced 'socialist' consumerism, there were certain traits or ideas that remained constant throughout the 1950s.[10] In particular ideas about what constituted appropriate art or music for socialist audiences, ideas about gender norms, and ideas

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to attract members from other Soviet nationalities. See "Zapiska otdela nauki i kul'tury TsK KPSS o nedostakakh v rabote s tvorchestkimi kadrami Soiuza sovetskikh kompozitorov SSSR," *Apparat TsK KPSS I Kul'tura 1953-1957 Dokumenty*, Moskva, ROSSPEN, 2001, No. 14, pg. 81.

8 Robeson quoted in M. Sokolsky, "Answer to Readers' Questions Regarding Jazz," *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*, Feb. 16, p. 3.

9 Among the most notable was Billie Holiday who was arrested for heroin possession in 1947 and again in 1959, one month prior to her death.

10 For a recent discussion of consumerism in socialist societies and the Soviet attempt to frame consumerism in terms of socialist ideology, see David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc,* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010). See in particular David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, "Introduction: Pleasures in Socialism?," pp. 3-51.

about youth culture all remained relatively stable throughout the early post-war years and through the Thaw. As will be shown in the following chapters these ideas would prove especially troublesome for the acceptance of jazz in the Soviet Union because it was exactly these ideas that jazz and jazz culture violated.

The post-war period was a time of significant change for the United States and Europe, and the Soviet Union was no different in this regard. But what was different for the Soviet Union was the resurgence and strength of traditional values embodied by the idea of *kul'turnost'*. These values could be found in articles in women's journals, youth journals and newspapers, satirical papers, government decrees, works of fiction, and memoirs alike. And what these various sources demonstrate is that by the 1950s Russian communism was definitely not what it had been in the 1920s. Whereas in the early 1920s Bolshevik revolutionaries sought to form new Soviet modes of behavior to replace the old bourgeois manners and ideals, Soviet officials in the 1950s actually sought to encourage politeness and refinement among the general population. Bolsheviks in black leather jackets who scoffed at traditional ideas and social hierarchies had in large part been replaced by Soviet officials in three piece suits who insisted on the importance of marriage and fidelity. Songs by Russian bards such as Aleksandr Galich even poked fun at the Communist insistence on fidelity and the Party's willingness to involve itself in the private lives of its members.[11]

Marguerite Higgins, soon to become the *Herald Tribune's* Moscow bureau chief, commented in 1954 that Russian leaders were "quite unabashed" in their insistence on encouraging values associated with bourgeois societies, albeit in the Soviet instance they were deemed "socialist politeness, socialist refinement, or socialist culture."[12] To possess such values meant that one was *kul'turnyi,* or cultured. Nor was Higgins the only visitor to comment upon the Soviet near obsession with being *kul'turnyi* or rather avoiding being *nye kul'turnyi*. In his account of the Porgy and Bess tour of the Soviet Union in 1959, Truman Capote too recounted a conversation that he had with a well-traveled Finnish man who

11 Aleksandr Galich, "Red Triangle," (*Krasnyi Treugol'nik)*
12 Marguerite Higgins, *Red Plush and Black Bread*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1955), 181.

advised him that the worst insult he could serve upon a Russian was to accuse him or her of being "*nye kul'turnyi."*[13] Penelope Sassoon, who lived in Moscow throughout 1949 with her husband, journalist Serge Sassoon, commented that women in the Soviet Union possessed manners that were "mid-Victorian rather than progressive" as a result of her conversation with a woman who insisted that it was "uncultured" for husbands to look at other women.[14]

But what exactly did *kul'turnyi* mean in post-war Soviet society, and since when did a society supposedly founded on revolutionary ideals become concerned with whether or not one was cultured? Or as Vera Dunham posed it in her study of post-war Soviet fiction, since when did Soviet citizens trade "leather jackets, black tobacco, straight bobbed hair, bisexual boots, and barren dormitories for pink lampshades, telltale brooches, geraniums, and canaries?"[15] In other words, how and why did Soviet society abandon the revolutionary values associated with Bolshevism in favor of values and behaviors that have often been described as a form of Soviet Victorianism? The debate over the transformation of Soviet society and what was perceived as the abandonment of revolutionary values can be traced back to Nicholas Timasheff's 1946 study *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Retreat of Communism*, in which he argued that the Soviet government was forced to abandon revolutionary values in the 1930s as socialism had not taken hold in Russian society. Instead the government turned to traditional Russian values as a means to gain support among the population.[16] However, more recently historians such as David Hoffman have argued that it was in fact the acceptance of socialism among the population that allowed the Soviet government to return to traditional Russian values. According to Hoffman, cultural leaders moved away from such things as avant-garde art forms because Soviet society was no longer an "iconoclastic culture," but instead the regime was now concerned with

13 Truman Capote, *The Muses Are Heard*
14 Penelope Sassoon, *Penelope in Moscow*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953), p. 80.
15 Vera Dunham, *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction*, Enlarged and Updated Edition, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. xix.
16 Nicholas S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1946).

"perpetuation and legitimation rather than destruction."[17]

Timasheff and Hoffman however agree that a major change, namely Stalin's supposed revolution from above, did occur in the 1930s. Likewise, Vera Dunham's work agrees that the roots of the cultural change can be found in the 1930s when Stalin decimated the old Bolsheviks in the purges of the 1930s. However, Stuart Finkel has made a very compelling case for placing the roots of this supposed great change as early as 1923 when the Bolsheviks began to "circumscribe the public sphere." He argues that on the contrary Bolshevik revolutionaries such as Vladimir Lenin never intended for the whole of Soviet society to participate in the continuation of the revolution but sought immediately to consolidate their gains and establish a stable state.[18]

But regardless of when this transformation took place, memoirists, visitors, and journalists alike agree that by the early 1950s, Soviet society was permeated by the idea of *kul'turnost'* and the importance of being *kul'turnyi*. In general terms to be a person who possessed *kul'turnost'*, or culturedness, implied that one was educated, had an appreciation for the so-called 'high' arts such as opera or symphonic music, and believed in the greatness of the Soviet Union and the correctness of socialism. Such an individual would know how to handle him or herself in public and would behave modestly and in general would serve as an examplar of Soviet, socialist values. For men *kul'turnost'* required that they act in a properly masculine manner, work hard, focus on their family, and be ready to defend the motherland whenever necessary. Drinking alcohol to excess or focusing too much on one's appearance, such as wearing outlandish clothing or overly long hair, were strongly discouraged in the Soviet press.

What did the happy, post-war ideal Soviet man look like and how did he present himself? And more importantly, how did this image conform to the ideal of *kul'turnost'*? Although post-war Soviet literature and magazines offer some clues as to the preferred behavior and dress of citizens, it should be

17 David L. Hoffman, "Was there a 'Great Retreat' from Soviet Socialism? Stalinist Culture Reconsidered," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 5, 4 (Fall, 2004), pp. 653, 662.
18 Stuart Finkel, *On the Ideological Front*

noted that such images represented the ideal and not necessarily the reality. In *Ogonek*, the men and women presented in the large, high quality photographs were all modestly and neatly dressed. The men mostly appear in neutral-colored suits and plain ties or simple working clothes – the obligatory factory overalls for instance. There is never anything flashy or flamboyant about the masculine styles and the hairstyles are all very short. In general, the men appear healthy and clean-cut, similar to images that one might have seen of American men from the same time period. They are certainly not the revolutionary figures clad in leather jackets from the early 1920s. The images of the post-war period represent, as Hoffman suggested, stable and established socialism rather than its revolutionary version.

For a woman being *kul'turnyi* also implied the same sense of hard work and love of country, but additionally that she should also be supportive of the male members of her family, particularly in the immediate post-war period. Anna Krylova's study of post-war literature has revealed the importance of women as healers in a society stricken by the psychological and physical trauma of war. In this regard, the values of *kul'turnost'* helped to ease the trauma of war and to reintegrate returning veterans into society. But she noted that even though women were accorded such an important position, their role as caretakers required that they return to a more submissive role so that the returning soldiers could once again "take their familiar place at the head of the table."[19] Furthermore, women were expected to behave modestly in public and to avoid any suggestions of promiscuity.

Soviet women, like their male counterparts, were portrayed and idealized in magazines and journals in a modest manner and *Ogonyek* even carried dress patterns at the end of each issue for several years.[20] Typically the patterns included high-necked blouses and long, loose-fitting full skirts made from a solid-colored material.[21] Patterns similar to these could also been seen in the daily fashion shows at G.U.M., Moscow's high-end department store. The shows began in 1954 and occurred daily

19Anna Krylova, "'Healers of Wounded Souls': The Crisis of Private Life in Soviet Literature, 1944-1946," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 73, No. 2, (Jun., 2001), p. 325.

20 For a brief history of Soviet dressmaking, the tradition of sewing clothes at home, and the Soviet government's attempt to deal with changing fashions, see Larissa Zakharova, "Dior in Moscow: A Taste for Luxury in Soviet Fashion Under Khrushchev," in Crowley and Reid, *Pleasures in Socialism*, pp. 95-119.

21 *Ognonek*, 1953-1956

at 3:00 pm. According to reports, the shows included "stout" models and as if to publicly demonstrate the importance of the Soviet proletariat, they even featured overalls for female factory workers.[22] As the clothing at GUM was too expensive for the average Soviet woman and most shops throughout Moscow and Leningrad carried very little in the way of fashionable clothing, women used the dress patterns in *Ogonek* and the styles they witnessed at the fashion shows as models for their own hand-sewn dresses.

Although foreign visitors often commented on the clothing of Soviet women and their "hideous patterns," women in the post-war period were encouraged to be pretty and feminine as part of the post-war ideal of *kul'turnost'*.[23] Women were to pay attention to their looks and to enhance their beauty, but not too much or too aggressively. The ideal Soviet heroine was "meticulously dressed, clean, with delicate lipstick on her lips and a bit of mascara on her eyelashes."[24] If the reports of foreign visitors and reporters are any indication, women certainly were not to emphasize their sexuality as a way of drawing male attention. For instance, after spending nine years in Moscow, Thomas Whitney argued that Russian men were not accustomed to seeing "sexy" women in public as Russian women were typically clad in shapeless garments. He attributed their discomfort at seeing women in a night-club floor show to their "puritanism."[25] And as late as 1958 Russian women were being advised that "it is not very attractive to pose as some women do with the express purpose of displaying quite unnecessarily the mobility of their hips while walking."[26]

As previously mentioned *kul'turnost'* was a fluid concept whose meaning would change over time. For instance, with the advent of television Soviet officials and society would have to decide whether watching a television program represented a *kul'turnyi* activity or if it merely meant that one

22 See for instance, Clifton Daniels, "Fashion is of Interest to Russian Women, Too," *New York Times*, Sept. 29, 1954, p. 26.
23 See for instance, Penelope Sassoon, *Penelope in Moscow*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953), 22.
24 Passage quoted from the novel *Nastya*, in Dunham, *In Stalin's Time*, 56
25 Thomas P. Whitney, "S-x in the Soviet Union: The public exploitation of feminine attractiveness is encountered only rarely and at such times is apt to make the men uncomfortable," *New York Times*, Jan. 1, 1956, SM6.
26 "Russ Rule Out Hip-Swinging Skirts," *Daily Defender*, Mar. 11, 1958, 2.

was a socialist couch potato.[27] Yet despite this fluidity, it would take some time for jazz to find acceptance as a legitimate art form. I will argue that the resistance to jazz was in large part a result of the strength of traditional Russian ideas of culture that were prevalent in the post-war period. The first chapters will discuss jazz from a musical perspective, highlighting the musicological, racial, and cultural issues that Soviet composers and musicians confronted in their discussions of jazz. Musically, *kul'turnost'* implied a certain set of musical values and tastes that are vividly apparent from even a cursory survey of the primary Soviet musical journals *Sovetskaia Muzyka* and *Muzykal'naia Zhizn'*. The music that Soviet composers and cultural officials sought to promote, and thus considered appropriate for Soviet audiences, by and large consisted of symphonic pieces, opera, and folk music from the other socialist republics. However, as will be discussed in greater detail, the resistance to jazz expressed by composers, musicians, band leaders, cultural officials, and citizens alike revealed a certain paradox in Soviet thinking that could only be resolved by denying the importance of the African American contribution to the development of jazz. As the Soviet Union presented itself as an opponent of racial discrimination and as a friend of oppressed minorities throughout the world, it is somewhat surprising that Soviet officials were so resistant to jazz given its African American origins.[28] Conversely, Soviet jazz musicians and fans continuously emphasized the importance of African Americans in jazz music and often sought to emulate only black performers not only as a means to gain acceptance for their beloved music, but also as a way to develop their own Soviet or Russian jazz.[29]

Soviet composers and music critics who were opposed to jazz or jazz elements in Soviet music

27 For an enlightening discussion of the Soviet encounter with television and the development of Soviet programming, see Kristin Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cultural Cold War*, (Cornell University Press, 2011).

28 The Soviet public was bombarded with images of racial oppression in the United States, both real and imagined. See for instance the 1963 Soyuzmultfilm production *Mister Twister* about an American millionaire who will not stay in a Leningrad hotel because of the plethora of African and Asian guests. For an earlier film dealing with American racism, see Grigori Aleksandr's 1936 film *Tsirk* (Circus) about an American woman who has an inter-racial child and is driven from the United States for her indescretion. She naturally finds refuge in the Soviet Union and in the finale of the film the child is passed around an entire circus audience in which all members of the audience, represented by a wide array of ethnic "types," sing a loving lullaby in Russian and even Yiddish to him. Ironically the actor in the scene who sings in Yiddish is Solomon Mikhoels, later director of the Yiddish Theater in Moscow, who was murdered on Stalin's orders in 1948 as part of the anti-Cosmopolitan campaign.

29 See for instance Yurii Vikharev, "Waitin' for Benny," *Downbeat*, 1962.

however demonstrated no appreciable interest in the origins of jazz but instead insisted on its current, capitalistic, and bourgeois nature. From their perspective the problem with jazz was that it was a barbaric or uncivilized music that could not be properly notated and they thus considered it unworthy of further study.[30] Furthermore composers and enthusiasts of classical music could not understand or appreciate the new dances that were associated with jazz, dances that *stiliaigi* or hipsters invented believing them to be similar to the dances of the United States and Western Europe. For Soviet critics the socialist music that Soviet composers created was "lucid, beautiful, realistic music," whereas jazz was a "rejection of music itself" which ultimately turned its listeners into "savages" and represented a "process of degeneration."[31]

The adjectives that Soviet critics used to prove their arguments regarding the inappropriateness of jazz in a socialist context, such as degenerate, uncivilized, and barbaric, are reminiscent of those used in earlier American and European discourses concerning the intersection of race and culture. As Gail Bederman has shown in her work on discussions of race in the United States, many different groups have used the concept of civilization, or the supposed lack thereof, "to legitimize different sorts of claims to power."[32] When American and European music critics began to turn their attention to jazz in the 1920s and 1930s, such language was not lacking and jazz was often discussed in terms of what historian Ted Gioia has described as the "primitivist myth," whereby jazz was considered a more primitive form of music because of its African origins.[33] While for some jazz enthusiasts, such as the

30 In this regard Soviet critics resembled earlier American and European critics from the 1920s and 1930s. For instance see Paul Fritz Laubenstein who argued that jazz was only readily accepted by the "musically unprivileged." Paul Fritz Laubenstein, "Jazz - Debit and Credit," *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Oct., 1929), p. 609. In particular jazz was compared to classical compositions and most often found wanting, see for instance Cecil Austin who went so far as to say that "no jazz wonder-piece has ever contained even in its whole length the least inkling of that far sweeping philosophy that Beethoven often condensed in a few bars." Cecil Austin, "Jazz," *Music & Letters*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Jul., 1925), p. 268. Theodor Adorno was also very harsh in his assessments of jazz, although the particular target of his derision was jazz produced during the Weimar period. However, like certain Soviet critics and Robeson himself, Adorno denied the influence of African Americans on jazz during his lifetime and often referred to the "*Negerfabel"* of jazz. See J. Bradford Robinson, "The Jazz Essays of Theodor Adorno: Some Thoughts on Jazz Reception in Weimar Germany," *Popular Music*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan, 1994), p. 13.

31 M. Sokolosky, "Otchety o dzhaze," *Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*, (Feb. 16, 1952), p. 3.

32 Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 23.

33 Ted Gioia, *The Imperfect Art: Reflections on Jazz and Modern Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 88.

Frenchman Hugues Panassie, this association rendered jazz a more legitimate expression of human feeling as it was unfettered by too much civilization, for other critics this association meant that it was not equal to, nor could it ever be, European achievements in music.[34] But in either case race, and the supposed greater civilization of one race over the other, was at the center of the discussion. As I will argue, the presence of such phrasing in the Soviet discourse surrounding jazz provides a clue regarding the paradox in Soviet thinking about jazz and suggests that like their earlier American and European counterparts, Soviet critics too were affected by such racial theorizing.

After a musicological discussion of jazz and *kul'turnost'* I will focus on youth culture in particular and the ways in which youth challenged the dominant social and cultural ideals of the post-war period and the manner in which they used jazz for this challenge. Much to the chagrin of Soviet officials and adults alike not everyone in the post-war period possessed the same understanding of *kul'turnost'* and for those youth who disagreed with the dominant, conservative values, jazz offered a willing refuge. Government officials expended a great deal of effort in an attempt to spread ideas of *kul'turnost'* to Soviet youth and in some aspects they were successful. Nevertheless, in the midst of Zhdanov's anti-Western and anti-Cosmopolitan campaign young people in urban areas began sauntering about in bright colored clothing, speaking a strange mix of English and Russian, and in general disregarding all the rules of polite Soviet society.

Young men and women created a culture around jazz, complete with their own slang words and a dress code that was very visibly different from the average Soviet wardrobe. The young men fashioned their hair in pompadours, while the young women applied more lipstick than was considered proper and decent. Broad-shouldered jackets with wide lapels, loud ties, fitted skirts, checked patterns, and high heels were their weapons of choice in what one young man termed "the battle against dullness."[35] As will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters, such clothing choices and

34 Hugues Panassie, *The Real Jazz*, translated by Anne Sorelle Williams, (New York: Smith and Durrell, Inc., 1942)
35 Valerii Safonov quoted in Georgii Litvinov, *Stiliagi, Kak Eto Bylo dokumental'nyi roman* (Sankt-Peterburg: Amfora, 2009), p. 34.

extracurricular activities directly opposed the prevailing gender norms, especially for women. Many Soviet youth loved jazz and found every opportunity to dance, inventing new styles along the way that made the dreaded foxtrot appear tame. The press quickly commented on this phenomenon and in a March 1949 satirical article in *Krokodil,* D. Beliaev coined the term *stiliaga* to describe these outlandish youths.[36] Literally the term meant style hunter, but it was derogatory in nature and the youths at whom it was directed related it to other derogatory names, such as *bedniaga* and *bedolaga* which implied that they were somehow social outcasts. Nevertheless the term proved resilient and soon some of the youth even embraced it.

As the following chapters will demonstrate, jazz and the culture that youth created around it violated nearly every aspect of *kul'turnost'* that government officials, the press, and more traditional elements of society sought to encourage and promote. Furthermore, a study of jazz in the Soviet context reveals that the dividing line between society and the government was not a sharp, clear line. The officials who inhabited key administrative and cultural positions were as much products of Soviet society as was the engineer or plant manager and were thus influenced by the same societal pressures and values. Additionally, such officials could use their positions to encourage adherence to their particular values and worldview. In a society undergoing significant change, and that took both culture and Culture seriously, it is not surprising then that jazz would come under attack. While officials and those in favor of traditional culture tried to maintain stability in Soviet society, and indeed given the tremendous losses of WWII stability was vital, Soviet youth and jazz appeared to threaten their hard-won victory. Jazz fans and musicians would have to prove, in a very Soviet manner, that there was a place for jazz within the constraints of *kul'turnost'* before it would be openly tolerated.

36 D. Beliaev, *Stiliaga*, *Krokodil*, March 10, 1949, p. 10.