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**Jeffrey H. Jackson**, *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003. xi + 280pp. Photos, notes, bibliography, and index. \$59.95 U.S. (cl). ISBN 0-8223-3137-3; \$19.95 U.S. (pb). ISBN 0-8223-3124-1.

Review by Colin Nettelbeck, University of Melbourne.

Jeffrey Jackson's book is a welcome addition to the burgeoning field of studies of the impact of jazz in France. As Jackson notes in his appendix, the study of jazz in France has in recent years attracted considerable interest from historians and other scholars, not the least in France itself where Ludovic Tournès established himself as the author of reference with his *New Orleans sur Seine: histoire du jazz en France* (Paris: Fayard, 1999). Tournès is not alone: Jackson mentions the work of Denis-Constant Martin and Olivier Roueff; he could have added, among others, that of Gilles Mouëllic (*Jazz et cinéma*, Paris: Editions Cahiers du cinéma, coll. Essais, 2000, and *Le jazz: une esthétique du XXème siècle*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes), or Vincent Cotro (*Chants Libres, le free jazz en France*, Paris: Outre Mesure, 1999). In America, he rightly pays homage to Matthew Jordan, Tyler Stovall and Jody Blake. The forthcoming special number of *Nottingham French Studies* (Spring 2004), with contributions from four continents, demonstrates the extent to which this area of research has become a worldwide phenomenon. However, *Making Jazz French* does more than provide the English-reading public with a previously unavailable depth of detail about the spread of jazz in France after World War I. Based on careful archival investigation, as well as on very solid and wide-ranging knowledge of existing work, this account includes much new material and is informed by a considerable originality of approach.

Jackson's first two chapters recount the arrival and spread of jazz in France through the African-American military bands and the dance performers of vaudeville and music hall. His emphasis on the commercial and economic significance of this phenomenon is particularly interesting, and introduces one of the most original threads of the book as a whole. In this perspective, jazz and its reception appear as an enlightening indicator of social and economic change in France, as the war-affected nation entered its difficult process of modernisation. In subsequent chapters, Jackson analyses the geography of jazz in Paris and the ways in which it interacted with modernist and avant-garde ideas, including the French fascination with Africa and primitivism. Identified as connoting both the industrial energies of the New World and the mysterious sensuality of the dark continent, jazz simultaneously galvanised the modernists and the conservatives. The growth of an indigenous French jazz practice and culture is well covered, and, once again, familiar material—such as the rise to prominence of Django Reinhardt and the activities of Hugues Panassié and the Hot Club of France—is given a new edge through the inclusion of a very pertinent discussion of the problems of labour relations at the time.

Jackson is less convincing when attempting to deal with generalised images and concepts of French cultural identity. In a way, by couching his story of the reception of jazz in France in a context that portrays interwar French culture as dominated by resistance to external influence, he makes things unnecessarily difficult for himself. As he tends to conclude in the "coda" of his final chapter, the France of that period was really quite an open and dynamic society, notwithstanding the well-known

conservative and reactionary strands in political ideology, the nation's economic difficulties, and the degrading geopolitical situation. Nonetheless, his emphasis on French resistance to jazz does, paradoxically, help explain how French culture, in its experience of the jazz age, was able to assimilate and appropriate this powerful external influence, and use it as an instrument of self-renewal.

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