

*Reprinted from*

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY · 185

RED STRAINS  
Music and Communism outside  
the Communist Bloc

## New 'Old Leftist' Aesthetics in the West German Contemporary Music Scene: The Cantata *Streik bei Mannesmann* (1973)

BEATE KUTSCHKE

### The World Youth Festival of 1973 and the Cold War

IN LATE JULY 1973, the young music ensemble Hinz und Kunst<sup>1</sup> and guest performers, artists and actors travelled from various places in West Germany – Hamburg, Darmstadt, and Cologne – to the capital of the official class enemy, East Berlin. Their destination and purpose was the 10th World Festival of Youth and Students, for which, in this year, the GDR acted as host.<sup>2</sup> The World Festival aimed at stimulating the exchange and mutual understanding of the youth of diverse nations through the staging of various political and cultural events. By these means, the organizers hoped to contribute to world peace. Although the Festival claimed to offer a platform for *all* youth, its organizers were by no means politically and confessionally neutral, but favoured left, socialist-communist ideologies. This can be recognized from the places at which earlier Festivals had taken place: namely, the capitals of the Eastern Bloc states such as Prague, Budapest, Warsaw and Sofia. Correspondingly, the East German organizers of the 1973 Festival were institutionally affiliated with the Freie Deutsche Jugend (Free German Youth), the official socialist youth movement of the GDR.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Hinz und Kunz' is equivalent to 'Dick and Harry', i.e. it denotes 'everybody'.

<sup>2</sup> The Festival was founded in 1947 by the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

<sup>3</sup> See 'X. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten vom 28. Juli–5. Aug. 1973 in Berlin', Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen (SAPMO), Bundesarchiv, BArch DY 24/22770; Denise Wesenberg, *Unter 'operativer Kontrolle': Die X. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten 1973 in Ost-Berlin* (Erfurt: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2007), 10.

Hinz und Kunst's project, the premiere of the cantata *Streik bei Mannesmann* (Strike at Mannesmann), was only one among numerous other cultural items on the festival's agenda. On 2 August, after a week of rehearsals, it was premiered in the Berlin Ensemble at the Schiffbauerdamm – the renowned yet comparatively small theatre, offering limited seats, that Bertolt Brecht had directed from the foundation of the GDR in 1949 until his death in 1956.<sup>4</sup> As regards ideological orientation, *Streik bei Mannesmann* no doubt complied with the Festival's impetus. Its dramatic content was decisively left-oriented. As the title indicates, the composition's libretto narrates a wildcat strike by steelworkers at the Mannesmann factory in Duisburg (West Germany), which had taken place a few months before the composition's premiere. During the strike, 300 workers occupied the administration building and the plant grounds of the Mannesmann factory for nine days.<sup>5</sup>

The reason for the workers' stoppage was a serious imbalance between a considerable rise in production and profit, and the decrease in the real wage of the workers due to heavy inflation. A small wage increase negotiated by the industrial union IG Metall was regarded as insufficient. The strike at Mannesmann was preceded by months of disputes about the appropriate payment of the steelworkers at the factory, without movement from the employers.<sup>6</sup> Taking place during the obligatory peace period after the wage agreement, the strike was clearly illegal.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless it was eventually successful: the employers conceded a reclassification of their workers into higher wage groups, at an annual cost of 300,000 Deutschmarks.<sup>8</sup>

Choosing a workers' struggle, so typical of the socio-political culture of West Germany in the early 1970s, as subject matter of the cantata, *Streik bei Mannesmann* catered for the leftist orientation of the World Youth Festival – yet from a quite naive Western capitalist perspective. For the idea of protest, revolt and the competition of antagonistic ideological camps was clearly a characteristic of democracies. In authoritarian and tendentially dictatorial

<sup>4</sup> Horst Knietzsch, "'Streik bei Mannesmann" im Berliner Ensemble uraufgeführt', *Neues Deutschland*, 3 August 1973, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Anonymous, 'Dat is 'ne Situation', *Spiegel*, 27/11 (1973), 68–70: 68; <<http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-42645565.html>> (accessed 15 March 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous, 'Dat is 'ne Situation', 69; Wolfgang Schröder, 'Walzwerker erstreikten Erfolg', *Unsere Zeit*, 16 March 1973, 3; Gerd Höhne, *Wir gehn nach vorn* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1974), 3–4; Peter Birke, *Wilde Streiks im Wirtschaftswunder: Arbeitskämpfe, Gewerkschaften und soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik und Dänemark* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007), 288.

<sup>7</sup> Unlike the union IG Metall, the German Communist Party (DKP) and the Communist Party of Germany/Marxists-Leninists (KPD/ML) supported the strike (Höhne, *Wir gehn nach vorn*, 35 and 40ff.).

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous, 'Dat is 'ne Situation', 68.

states such as the socialist GDR at this time, strikes were considered not so much a manifestation of labour power, as an undermining of the authority of the state. This might be the reason why *Streik bei Mannesmann* was premiered in a rather small venue in East Berlin, not accessible for everyone participating in the Festival.

Seen in this way, *Streik bei Mannesmann* appears to reflect a specifically West German perspective, rather than simply reiterating ideas of the struggle for social justice and the redistribution of wealth that were central to communist-Marxist theories. What inspired the creators of the cantata to choose such a sober, seemingly anti-musical topic, situated in a social field that had little in common with their own socio-cultural artistic environment? In what follows I will illuminate the cantata as a product of the West German political mentality of the early 1970s. I will reconstruct the so-called proletarian turn – from the New Left to the 'new Old Left' – which was then prevalent among West German intellectuals and artists, and which determined the genesis of the cantata; and I will analyse the impact that this turn had on the musical aesthetics of the piece.

### From the New to the new Old Left

In West Germany at the turn of the 1970s, the New Left (i.e. the leftist protest and student movement of the 1960s) was marked by a crisis and decline. The assassination attempt upon the student leader Rudi Dutschke in April 1968, which nearly cost his life, left a significant void in the leading group of the Socialist German Student Association (SDS), the leading extra-parliamentary opposition organization at the end of the decade. Without a charismatic leader, the SDS lost influence and strength.

While the New Left was weakened, numerous unauthorized strikes in various European countries, including West Germany – notably, the so-called 'September strikes' of 1969 – drew the media's attention to the workers and their political activities.<sup>9</sup> Observing the strikes, the '68ers' developed the idea that the workers had regained 'class consciousness', and came to believe again that the workers could operate as true revolutionary subjects, the leaders of the revolution.<sup>10</sup> Expecting the old-leftist organizations to be better equipped to

<sup>9</sup> See Birke, *Wilde Streiks*, 275.

<sup>10</sup> Kristian Kossack, 'Fabrikarbeit als Preis für mehr Freiheit', 2005, <[http://www.zg-minden.de/body\\_autobiographische\\_notizen.html](http://www.zg-minden.de/body_autobiographische_notizen.html)> (accessed 18 March 2011); Gerd Langguth, *Die Entwicklung der Protestbewegung in der Bundesrepublik 1968–1975* (Bonn: no publisher, 1975), 498–99.

enforce changes to the West German society and state – the New Left having appeared to have failed in this respect – many New Leftists (including former members of the SDS) turned to the orthodox Old Left, the traditional workers' movement that had had its heyday in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. They joined the German Communist Party (DKP) and the Marxist Student Association Spartakus (MSB Spartakus) – which were closely connected with each other, both ideologically and organizationally<sup>11</sup> – as well as various splinter parties and other so-called 'K-groups' ('K' standing for 'Communist') such as the Communist Party of Germany/Marxist-Leninist (KPD/ML) and the Communist Party of Germany/Organization in the Stage of Development (KPD/AO). Not surprisingly, the 'proletarian turn' of New Leftists necessitated a change of identity.<sup>12</sup> Numerous former New Leftists left the academic environment and went into the factories.<sup>13</sup> In doing so, they heeded the advice propagated by the leftist singer-songwriter Franz Josef Degenhardt in a song of 1969. Accompanied by martial strokes of a guitar, the song's refrain (and title) commanded: 'Join the new front, in the companies. Transform the business from the inside, destroy the gears.' ('Reiht Euch ein in die neue Front, in die Betriebe. Rollt den Laden von innen her auf, brecht das Getriebe.')

Significantly for the history of music in West Germany in the early 1970s, contemporary composers and musicians such as Gerhard Stäbler, Nicolaus A. Huber, and Hans Werner Henze, and also the group of young composers and performers who created and premiered the Mannesmann cantata, followed the general political trend among leftist students and intellectuals and performed the proletarian turn.<sup>14</sup> In this light, the choice of the cantata's subject matter is easily understandable. The strike at Mannesmann exemplified the numerous wildcat strikes that had taken place since 1969,<sup>15</sup> and the story's moral – the resolute, eventually victorious struggle of the workers against exploitative and

<sup>11</sup> MSB Spartakus also retained close contacts with the GDR (Langguth, *Die Entwicklung*, 447–48).

<sup>12</sup> The term 'proletarian turn' is used for instance by Jens Benicke, *Von Adorno zu Mao: Über die schlechte Aufhebung der antiautoritären Bewegung* (Freiburg: ça ira, 2010). It does not appear to have been coined in the early 1970s, but was developed later.

<sup>13</sup> Kossack, 'Fabrikarbeit als Preis für mehr Freiheit'. Karuscheit calls this change a 'breach with their own class'; Heiner Karuscheit, *Zur Geschichte der westdeutschen ML-Bewegung* (Frankfurt am Main: VTK, 1983), 137.

<sup>14</sup> On Henze's proletarian turn, see Beate Kutschke, 'Le tournant prolétarien de Hans Werner Henze – l'improvisation à la manière Cubaine', in *À l'avant-garde! Art et politique dans les années 1960-1970*, ed. Malika Combes, Igor Contreras Zubillaga and Perin Emel Yavuz (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Birke, *Wilde Streiks*, 275.

profiteering employers – mirrored the belief system of many former New Leftist, now 'new Old Leftist' West German intellectuals and artists. *Streik bei Mannesmann* treated the central narrative of Marxism-Leninism on a regional micro-level, placing the workers – the heroic subject of the world revolution – centre stage. But how did the turn from the New to the new Old Left manifest itself among composers and musicians? In what ways were the New Left and the new Old Left climates to be distinguished in the musical field?

### The turn from the New to the new Old Left in the contemporary music scene

As in West Germany in general, the musicians' turn to the new Old Left cannot be fully understood without relating it to what had shaped their political mentality up to that point: the New Left and the student and protest movements around '1968'. The earliest public manifestation of the New Leftist spirit within the contemporary music scene was the intervention of a group of students in the world premiere of Hans Werner Henze's oratorio *Das Floß der Medusa* (The Raft of Medusa) in Hamburg in December 1968. Since the mid-1960s, Henze had directly supported the student movement. For instance, in February 1968 he helped to organize a Vietnam congress;<sup>16</sup> and after the assassination attempt on Dutschke he provided shelter for the student leader in his villa in Marino, Italy.<sup>17</sup> Whereas these activities had been of almost no interest to the press, the dedication of Henze's oratorio to Che Guevara, who had been killed in 1967, aroused media attention. The cause and starting point for the students' involvement was the press allegation that, in his statements, the well-established, upper-bourgeois, moderately progressive composer Henze had appropriated a New Leftist image while, judged by his actions, he remained a capitalist-oriented upper-bourgeois. In other words, he was simulating, rather than actually being a New Leftist.<sup>18</sup>

This press coverage led a group of radical students – amongst them, the future initiators of *Streik bei Mannesmann* Wolfgang Florey, who was studying violoncello at Hamburg's conservatory for music and visual arts, and Niels Frederic

<sup>16</sup> Hans Werner Henze, *Reiselieder mit böhmischen Quinten* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1996), 291.

<sup>17</sup> Henze, *Reiselieder*, 294. At this time, Dutschke feared that any known place of residence would encourage further attempts to kill him; Gretchen Dutschke, *Wir hatten ein barbarisches, schönes Leben* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1996).

<sup>18</sup> Anonymus, 'Kindliches Entzücken', *Der Spiegel*, 22/49 (1968), 182.

Hoffmann, who was studying music theory and music education – to ask, or rather to demand, a discussion with Henze in the lobby of his hotel, a few days before the new work's premiere. The subject matter of the discussion was the question of whether the leftist political orientation of a composer (such as Henze), on the one hand, and a rather moderate musical style suiting the taste of the mostly bourgeois audiences of classical music, on the other, were compatible with each other. Henze succeeded in convincing the students of his honest intentions and his commitment to the leftist revolt,<sup>19</sup> and in this way unintentionally stimulated the Hamburg students to employ the oratorio's premiere as a platform for presenting their personal, New Leftist and critical concerns to the public. As members of the more or less spontaneously founded working group Socialist Music Students, Florey, Hoffmann and their fellow-students argued for the reform of the music education system at conservatories.<sup>20</sup> This critique corresponded with the general socio-political critique of the 68ers. Just as the protest movements revealed authoritarian structures and modes of behaviour in West Germany, and demanded their abolition, so the music students criticized music education as repressive and ruthlessly profit-oriented. Music education was, they stated, the preparation for exploitation by the so-called culture industry.<sup>21</sup>

The premiere itself turned into a scandal because many of the performing musicians could not accept the students' intervention, which turned the event – a musical performance – into a political demonstration with clear leftist orientation and symbols. Students erected a red flag and a poster of Che Guevara on the conductor's podium, which was to be occupied by Henze himself on this occasion. The dispute caused by the ideological clash between New Leftists and non-leftist or apolitical musicians was brought to an end by the local police, who marched up and randomly arrested the demonstrating students and artists. What remained after the scandal and the cancellation of the premiere was the friendship between the Hamburg students and the then established, internationally renowned Henze. It became the basis for various collaborations between Henze and the Hamburg musicians, including the Mannesmann cantata.

<sup>19</sup> For more details on the events surrounding the premiere of the oratorio and Henze's engagement with the New Left, see: Henze, *Reiselieder*, 300ff.; Peter Petersen, *Hans Werner Henze* (Hamburg: Argument, 1988), 102ff.; Habakuk Traber, 'Musik ergreift die Fahnen: Die Skandale um Henzes Floß der Medusa und Nonos Intolleranza 1960', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 161/3 (2000), 34–41; and Kutschke, 'Le tournant prolétarien de Hans Werner Henze'.

<sup>20</sup> Arbeitskreis sozialistischer Musikstudenten (Hamburg), no title (flyer), 1968, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky, Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Dme: 1.

<sup>21</sup> See, for instance, Wolfgang Hamm, 'Zur politischen Arbeit an Musikhochschulen', *Sozialistische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Gesellschaft*, 4 (1970), 61–67: 66.

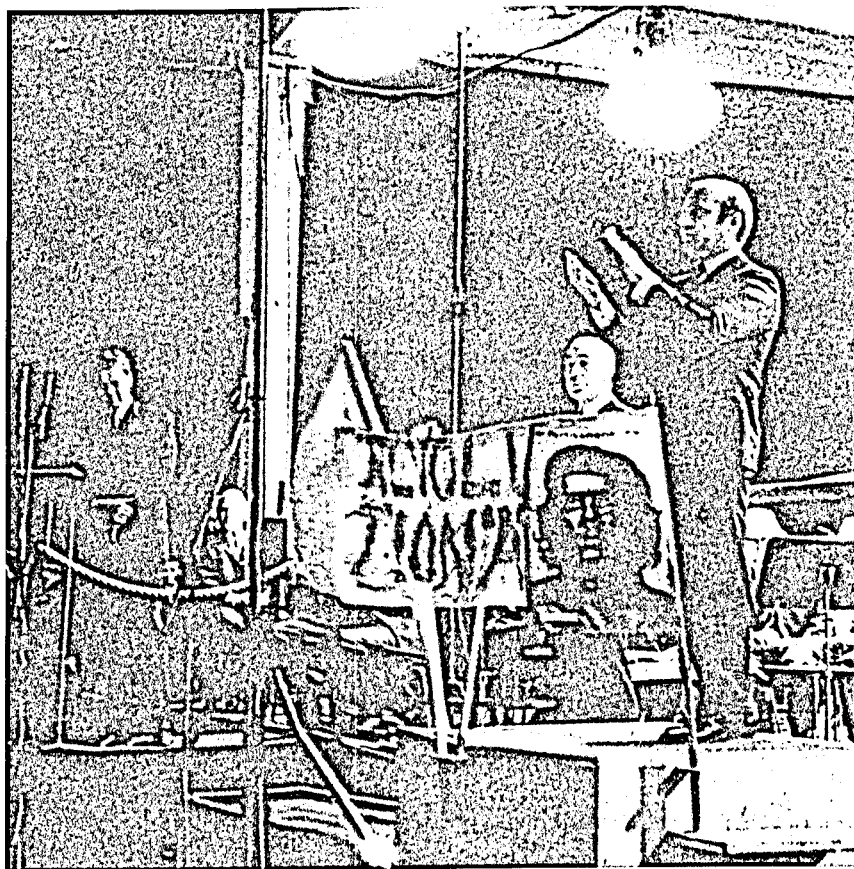


Figure 17.1. Henze on the conductor's podium before the performance of *The Raft of Medusa* (© Jürgen Corleis).

These projects were to be influenced by the political climate *after* the turn from the New to the new Old Left. At the end of the 1960s, however, the majority of the composers who later contributed to the Mannesmann cantata still participated in the New Leftist spirit. In 1968 Florey and Hoffmann founded the ensemble Hinz und Kunst, which was dedicated to free improvisation. Thomas Jahn, a student in trombone and conducting, became a member of the ensemble soon after, as did Dietrich Boekle, a freelance composer in his early thirties, and temporarily also a member of the SDS. Hinz und Kunst articulated the New Leftist spirit and value system by musical means. Because music-making on the basis of a score and led by a conductor was considered to be hierarchical and authoritarian – both the score and the conductor limited the autonomy of



the performing musicians – the only alternative form of music-making fully consistent with the ideas of the anti-authoritarian movement was free improvisation, in whose framework each musician responded, entirely independent of scores, to the impulses of his or her fellow-performers. Because performing without a conductor required every musician to exercise spontaneity and sensitive communicative skills in their mutual interactions, leftist music pedagogues soon considered free improvisation as particularly suited to the stimulation of creativity and social competence within an artistic frame. Consequently, free improvisation was widely implemented in schools' music lessons from 1970.<sup>22</sup>

As a result of the general political turn in the leftist camp at the end of the 1960s, however, the individual political orientation of the future composers of the Mannesmann cantata also changed. In 1972, Florey, Boekle and Hoffmann became members of the DKP and the Marxist Student Union Spartakus. The latter claimed to be the successor organization of the SDS; ideologically, however, it was close to the DKP.<sup>23</sup> Like Florey, Boekle and Hoffmann, Henze also increasingly turned to the Old Left. His semi-staged composition *Der langwierige Weg in die Wohnung der Natascha Ungeheuer* (The Tedious Way to Natascha Ungeheuer's Apartment), first performed in May 1971, ironized the New Leftist intellectual students and artists, including the composer himself.<sup>24</sup> In 1972, Henze supported the DKP by signing a public appeal for electoral support.<sup>25</sup> Thomas Jahn likewise sympathized with the DKP.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the Italian Luca Lombardi, who had moved to West Germany in 1968, expressed his solidarity with the working class by operating as principal conductor of the IG Metall union choir in Cologne in 1971–72.<sup>27</sup> During these

<sup>22</sup> On the significance of improvisation pedagogy, see Fred Ritzel, "Dieser freche Blödsinn wird seit Jahren in den Schulen geduldet" – Über Improvisation in der Musikpädagogik', in *Improvisation und Neue Musik*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann (Mainz: Schott, 1979), 66–95: 85–86.

<sup>23</sup> Both the DKP and MSB Spartakus were financially supported by the SED (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland), the governing party of the GDR, to the tune of between 60 and 90 million Deutschmarks every year; see Michael Roik, *Die DKP und die demokratischen Parteien 1968–1984* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), 107; Hartmut Weyer, *MSB Spartakus* (Stuttgart: Seewald, 1973); Helmut Bilstein, *Organisierter Kommunismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1975), 48–49, 128–31; Gerd Langguth, *Protestbewegung* (Köln: Wissenschaft und Politik, 1984), 162–82.

<sup>24</sup> Hans Werner Henze, "Natascha Ungeheuer" – Ein Versuch über den Realismus' (1971), in Hans Werner Henze, *Musik und Politik* (München: dtv, 1984), 155–64: 158–59.

<sup>25</sup> Hans Werner Henze, 'Die DKP – Die Hauptaufgaben fortschrittlicher Musiker (1973): Ein Interview', in Henze, *Musik und Politik*, 205.

<sup>26</sup> Email of Thomas Jahn to the author, 14 November 2011.

<sup>27</sup> Hanns-Werner Heister, 'Luca Lombardi', in *Komponisten der Gegenwart*, ed. Hanns-Werner Heister and Walter-Wolfgang Sparrer (München: edition text + kritik, 1992ff.). The curriculum vitae that Lombardi wrote in 1973 clearly aimed at demonstrating a communist political attitude

years, he composed various pieces revolving around workers' problems, including a radio play on workers' migration; and, in 1973, he became a special student (Meisterschüler) of the East German composer Paul Dessau, who at that time enjoyed the unofficial status of a state composer in the GDR.

### The Mannesmann cantata: submission to a new party line?

This ideological change articulated itself also in the music. In the new Old Leftist political climate, as in the New Leftist one, musicians believed that music should contribute to socio-political change. However, the means considered to suit this purpose were quite different, reflecting the ideological shift that had taken place since the late 1960s. Although both the New and new Old Left aimed at a fundamental change of West Germany's society and political system, their aims were almost diametrically opposed. The New Left's concern was a new lifestyle marked by grassroots politics and exemplified by life in communes, free love and sexuality, as well as relaxed behaviour modes. This trend manifested itself in communes, which sought to practise democratic behaviour modes in everyday life. Musicians' communes, such as the Free Music Group in Frankfurt and Amon Düül in Munich, extended these alternative practices in communal life to music-making, through the means of free improvisation. Likewise, though perhaps less radical, numerous young musicians and composers campaigned for anti-authoritarian reform of West German musical culture and music education.<sup>28</sup> Against this background, the specificity of the new Old Left becomes visible. In contrast to the New Left, it focused on improving the basic needs of the worker's life: wages, work conditions, housing. The musical styles and performance techniques chosen to express these goals consequently also differed. The musical language that the musicians believed to be suited to convey or comply with the new Old Leftist spirit was Hanns Eisler's compositional style, which he had developed in order to support the workers' struggle of the 1930s.

In the view of the editors of issue 20/21 of *Sozialistische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Gesellschaft* 1973, which was dedicated to Eisler, this style offered the solution for an artistic dilemma that caused a minor crisis of contemporary

(see Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Ossietzky, Nachlaß von Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Bre: 2).

<sup>28</sup> See Beate Kutschke, 'Anti-authoritarian Revolt by Musical Means on Both Sides of the Berlin Wall', in *Music and Protest in 1968*, ed. Beate Kutschke and Barley Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

music in the early 1970s.<sup>29</sup> Since the late 1960s contemporary composers who considered themselves progressive, politically engaged individuals, aimed at contributing to the reshaping of West German society by means of artistic productions. At the same time, however, they employed musical means – progressive, avant-garde and extremely complex musical languages – that large parts of the population, the so-called ‘masses’, rejected. Since it was the masses that needed to be mobilized to realize Old Leftist concerns, their dislike of avant-garde music could no longer be neglected. However, the use of simpler, more popular musical means was not possible either, because this would have classified their artworks as trivial music which, not least because of Adorno’s authoritative arguments, was considered aesthetically and ethically unacceptable. Regarding this aporia, Hanns Eisler offered a way out. Not only did he explicitly conceive of his compositions as a contribution to the workers’ struggle of the Weimar Republic – that is to say, their musical style was legitimized as music of the Old Left – but he also developed a musical language that successfully managed the tightrope walk between an accessibility that suited the expectations of the masses, on the one hand, and avant-gardist compositional nuances, on the other.

Exemplary of Eisler’s Weimar workers’ music is the strophic ‘Solidarity Song’ for vocal solo and choir, which Eisler composed for the film *Kuhle Wampe* in 1930 (see Example 17.1). The march is not only marked by the dashing expression, created by strongly marked first and second beats of the bars that are preceded (and contrasted) by an anacrusis with dotted rhythm, but also by a specific disparity of melody and accompanying chords. The melody of the strophe (second page of the Example) is modal (in A Phrygian), sounding rather ancient and archaic, with a combatant and martial character to modern ears.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See the editorial to *Sozialistische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Gesellschaft* 1973. The editors and authors of this issue were Konrad Boehmer, Wolfgang Hamm, Wolfgang Kolneder, Klaus Kuhnke, Hartmut Lück, Frieder Reininghaus, and Friedrich Rothe (authors of individual articles are not indicated). On the crisis of avant-garde music around 1970, see Ursula Stürzbecher, ‘Das große Fragezeichen hinter einer gesellschaftspolitischen Funktion der Musik’, *Melos*, 39/3 (1972), 142–49; Anonymous, ‘Braucht die Neue Musik noch Festivals?’, *Melos*, 39/1 (1972), 2–10; Carla Henius, ‘Das undankbare Geschäft mit neuer Musik’, *Melos*, 41/2 (1974), 77–83; Beate Kutschke, ‘Musicology and the Force of Political Fiction: The Debate on Politically Engaged Music at the Beginning of the 1970s’, in *Music’s Intellectual History: Founders, Followers & Fads*, ed. Zdravko Blazekovic and Barbara Mackenzie (New York: Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale, 2009), 583–92.

<sup>30</sup> The alternative interpretation of D Aeolian is less plausible because the central tone D does not occur in the first bars of the strophe’s melody. Because of their modern connotations of harshness and gloominess, modal melodies have been popular in twentieth-century protest music. See for instance Pete Seeger’s ‘Which side are you on?’ and the German version by Walter Mossman, ‘Auf welcher Seite stehst Du?’.

Although the pitches of the accompanying chords are identical to that of the melody (i.e. A Phrygian), the choice of chords asks to be heard as D minor. This is essentially achieved by the refrain that frames the strophe: the cadence that ends the refrain – comprising G minor and A major chords, interpreted as iv and V of D minor – provides the leading note (C#) that is absent from the entirety of the strophe, thus determining a D minor interpretation (as opposed to D Aeolian or even an initial A Phrygian, for instance). The chord progression of the refrain, in turn, basically consists of a sequence of Phrygian cadences

Marschtempo

Gesang

1-7. Vor-wärts! und nicht ver-ges-sen, wo-rin uns-re Stür-ke be-

Klavier

steht. Beim Hun-gern und beim Es-sen,

vor-wärts, nicht ver-ges-sen die So-li-du-ri-tät!

Example 17.1. Hanns Eisler, 'Solidarity Song' (© Copyright Deutscher Verlag Leipzig, and C. F. Peters Ltd & Co. KG, Frankfurt/Main; reproduced by permission of the publishers).

*p*

1. Er-stens sind wir hier nicht al-le, zwei-tens ist es nur ein Tag,  
 2. Er-stens sind es nicht wir al-le, zwei-tens ist es nur ein Tag,  
 3. Sa-hen wir die Son-ne schei-nen auf die Stra-ße, auf das Feld,  
 4. Denn wir sind nur auf-ge-bro-chen aus dem Dreck, der bis zum Hals uns saß  
 5. Kommt her-aus aus eu-rem Lo-che, das man ei-ne Woh-nung nennt  
 6. Denn wir wis-sen, das ist nur ein Trop-fen auf den hei-ßen Stein,  
 7. A-ber ei-nes Tag's wird man uns se-hen, auf die Stra-ße zie-hen mit Ge-sang

1. wo die Ar-beit ei-ner Wo-che uns noch in den Kno-chen lag.  
 2. und zwar liegt nur auf der Wie-ss, was son-st auf der Stra-ße lag.  
 3. konn-ten wir doch nie-mals mei-nen, dies sei uns-re wah-re Welt.  
 4. und wir ha-ben nur ge-ro-chen an der Blu-me und am Gras.  
 5. und nach ei-ner grau-en Wo-che, folgt ein fro-hes Wo-chen-end.  
 6. u-ber da-mit kann die Sa-che nicht für uns be-rel-nigt sein.  
 7. und an ei-ne and-re Arbeit ge-hen: er-stens al-le, zweitens dann für lang!

*ff*

Vor-wärts und nicht ver-ges-sen uns-re Stra-ße, und un-ser Feld.

*fff*

Vor-wärts und nicht ver-ges-sen, wes-sen Stra-ße ist die Stra-ße, wes-sen Welt ist die Welt?

\*) Sopran und Tenor die kleingedruckten Noten

U. E. 10073

4 Min.  
Waldheim-Eberle, Wien VII

(or related chord progressions), with  $iv^6$  in the odd-numbered bars and  $V$  in the even-numbered bars. These cadences variously interpret the melody as  $D$  minor (in bars 9–10), but also as  $A$  minor (in bars 5–8);<sup>31</sup> the repeated chord progression in bars 1–4 ( $iv\ ii^7\ v$  in  $D$  minor) can be considered as varying the Phrygian cadences of the succeeding bars, even though the chord on scale degree 5 is minor, i.e. does not operate as a dominant of  $D$  minor. In brief, Eisler generated a complex piece from two, partially heterogeneous elements: a simple tune revolving around  $A$  Phrygian, projecting the idea(l) of a strong and combatant proletarian; and a refined accompanying harmonic structure, marked by a level of complexity and uniqueness, that, although less radical and indigestible than avant-garde sound agglomerates and clusters, could not be criticized as trivial by advocates of modernist aesthetics.<sup>32</sup>

Not surprisingly, Hanns Eisler's compositional style, promoted by new Old Leftists as the new aesthetic model, also influenced the musical language of the Mannesmann cantata. To give an example: the cantata's seventh number – 'Besetzung des Rollgangs' (Occupation of the Roller Conveyors), composed by Jahn – employs similar compositional means (see Example 17.2). As the title of the song indicates, the text describes the occupation or blockade of one of the strategically decisive production sections of the Mannesmann plant, the roller conveyors, indispensable for transporting steel components that weighed several tons. Like Eisler, Jahn composed a firm, brisk march based on the oscillation between short, energetic and longer, stable durations. (The syncopation at the beginning of the tutti interjection 'Rauf auf den Rollgang' (Up on the roller conveyor) creates additional momentum.) Like Eisler's 'Solidarity Song', there is a discrepancy between melody and chords. The simple, easily memorizable melody in  $F$  minor (a Dorian hexachord) is accompanied by pounding, driving chords (played by piano, vibraphone, and cello) whose multi-layering of thirds, as well as the chord-indifferent bass notes in bars 2, 4, 5 and 7, hide the expected harmonies ( $i$  – diminished  $ii/iv$  – diminished  $V_7^{b9}$ ) that the listener automatically imagines while listening to the music. Regarding the tonic chords, the thirds are piled up not only *on top of*, but also *beneath* the fundamental of the imagined 'actual' chord.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> That is,  $G$  minor and  $A$  major as  $iv$  and  $V$  of  $D$  minor (bb. 9–10);  $D$  minor and  $E$  major as  $iv$  and  $V$  of  $A$  minor (bb. 5–8).

<sup>32</sup> On the promotion of Eisler, see Konrad Boehmer, Wolfgang Hamm, Wolfgang Kolneder, Klaus Kuhnke, Hartmut Lück, Frieder Reininghaus, and Friedrich Rothe (editorial), *Sozialistische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Gesellschaft*, 20/21 (1973), 3.

<sup>33</sup> The bass  $D$ -flat in bars 2, 4 and 5 can be considered as scale degree 13 (or -3) of  $F$  minor natural. The  $E$  natural in the bass at bar 7 can similarly be considered a -3, if the right hand chord is regarded as an altered inversion of the chord in the preceding bar, with  $G$  as fundamental.



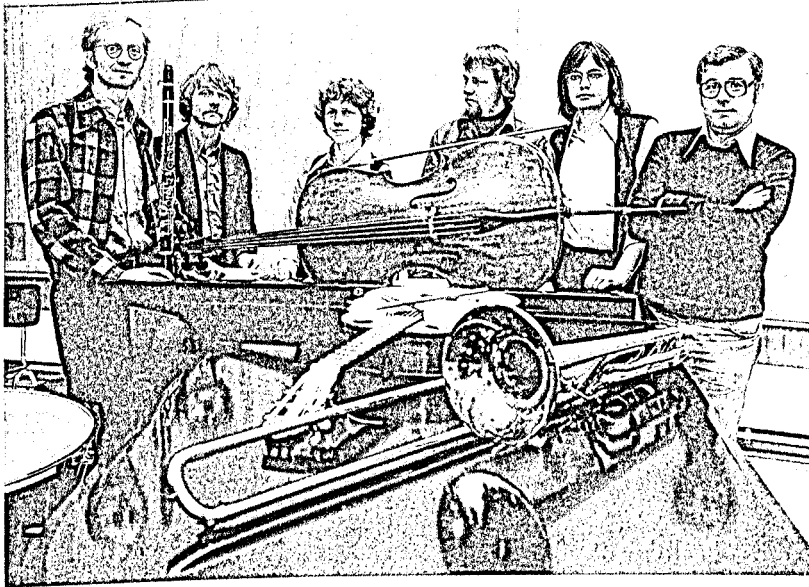


Figure 17.2. The core group of *Hin und Kunst* (© Gert von Bassewitz). From left to right: Bernhard Asche (clarinet, saxophone), Wolfgang Florey (cello), Hedwig Florey (piano), Peter Wulfert (percussion), Günter Jaacks (guitar, banjo), Thomas Jahn (trombone).



Figure 17.3. The composer collective for *Der Ofen* (1976), including composers who contributed to the Mannesmann cantata (© Wolfgang Florey). From left to right, top to bottom: Hans Werner Henze, Thomas Jahn, Peter Maxwell Davies, Wilhelm Zobl, Fabio Vacchi, Luca Lombardy, Richard Blackford, Niels Frederic Hoffmann.



These procedures are complemented by secondary parameters that support the agitational, energetic message. The strident timbres of the brass and piano chords, performed *martellato*, as well as the dashing articulation of the vocalists, create a sharp, breezy soundscape. Like Eisler's 'Solidarity Song', Jahn's march emulates the typical texture of mass music: a choir, representing the masses or people, responds to and affirms the statements of a solo vocalist acting as lead singer and representing the individual.

The turn from the New Leftist to the new Old Leftist aesthetic spirit also manifested itself in the production modes of the cantata. At the time of its founding in the late 1960s the ensemble Hinz und Kunst had dedicated itself to free improvisation. But in the early 1970s the musicians of Hinz und Kunst favoured collective composition. In this vein, the Mannesmann cantata was composed by six people: Thomas Jahn, Hans Werner Henze, Niels Frederic Hoffmann, Luca Lombardi, Dietrich Boekle, and Wilfried Steinbrenner.<sup>34</sup> As I will show at the end of the next section, this shift in attitude to musical practice, intended to reflect new Old Left priorities, was carried through only ambivalently.

### Aesthetic inconsistency and the ideological split

The adaptation to traditional workers' culture, however, represents only one side of the cantata's musical aesthetics. Even though the composers' musical choices were clearly informed by the new orthodox-communist spirit, they did not completely reject their New Leftist playful past. Hoffmann's song 'Die Sprache des Streiks' (The language of strike) employs standardized elements of rock music: a lamento bass, part-asynchronously complemented by the same chromatic downwards line in the top voice (see sax and trombone, starting in bar 5); a boogie walking bass line (cello, starting in bar 12); and upbeat interjections from the wind section (sax, trumpet, trombone, starting in bar 12) (see Example 17.3). In the piano score the song's equivocal subtitle (or performance instruction) is 'FAST ROCK', meaning 'almost rock' (if read in German) or literally 'fast rock' (if read in English). (Today, Hoffmann cannot remember for sure whether he intended the pun.)<sup>35</sup> Taking into account the fact that, in the early 1970s, rock already had the image of representing the

<sup>34</sup> Jahn (Nos. 3, 4, 5, 7) and Henze (Nos. 9, 12, 13, 14) composed four numbers each, Hoffmann (Nos. 2 and 6) and Lombardi (ouverture and No. 11) two each and Boekle (No. 8) and Steinbrenner (No. 10) one each.

<sup>35</sup> Phone interview with Niels Frederic Hoffmann, 13 April 2011.

2/4 Tempo I

Sax. b  
 Tr. b  
 V. C.  
 Pos.  
 Voc. (1. Str.)  
 Voc. (2. Str.)  
 P.  
 dr.

*ff*  
*mf*

1. Str.  
 2. Str.  
 1. Str.  
 2. Str.

Wer wei, wann wir die Arbeit stehen die Ra-der  
 Die Unter-nach-mehr können Es sich nicht  
 still in dem Wandel ruht die Produk-tion  
 lei-sten Daß das Pro-fil wä-re Werk fuht

Example 17.3. Niels Frederic Hoffmann, 'Die Sprache des Streiks', no. 2 of *Streik bei Mannesmann* (© Niels Frederic Hoffmann).

Sax. b  
 Tr. b  
 Pos.  
 V.C.  
 Voc.  
 p.  
 dr.

*ab sempre*  
*più f*  
*f* Oh- ne uns kein Stabl oh- ne uns - kein Pro-  
*f* fil Die Sprache der Strika ver- stehn sie.  
*f* Übliches Schlag-Carnais ab) *f*  
*f* Filzschläger

Example 17.3. *continued.*

sound of the 1968 revolt,<sup>36</sup> 'Die Sprache des Streiks' seems to evoke Hoffmann's New Leftist ideological roots – at least regarding the compositional means, rather than the soundscape. Since the instrumental means were limited – electric guitars were missing, and instead of a conventional percussion set typical for the sound of rock music, the rhythm section was performed by a piano, bongos, congas and a cello – Hoffmann's rock song sounds more like mambo jazz than rock.

In addition to this reference, the New Left is evoked especially by the use of modern compositional techniques that deviate from Eislerian aesthetics. Henze's mostly instrumental 'No. 12' is a free atonal waltz of 47 bars that accompanies a film projection of the donation list supporting the strikers. The waltz in the upper voices is counterpointed by rhythmically irrational, modal-chromatic scale segments in the bass (cello pizzicato). Boekle and Steinbrenner, like Henze, employed free atonal music in their contributions to the score (Nos. 8 and 10). As I have demonstrated elsewhere, because of the national socialists' discrimination against it, atonal music came to be closely connected with anti-fascist resistance, revolt and non-conformism – precisely the values that also drove the New Left in the 1960s.<sup>37</sup> In the context of the Mannesmann cantata, this image effectively merged with the cantata's subject – the workers' resistance against capitalist employers and managers – whilst also covering the associations with the New Leftist upheaval. But it clearly clashed with the composers' general purpose to compose music acceptable to the masses. From this arises the question: why did the composers of the Mannesmann cantata employ musical styles that obviously contradicted the new Old Leftist spirit, even though they were drawn to the Old Leftist spirit and wanted to contribute to the world revolution? As I will demonstrate, the proletarian turn was marked by a subliminal, but nonetheless significant problem that, although it concerned not just the musicians but all former New Leftists, has been overlooked by political historians thus far – probably because it manifested itself more clearly in music than in political discourse.

Despite the considerable vacuum of leadership and steering organizations in the New Left at the end of the 1960s, and the new visibility of the worker as political agent, the New Leftists' turn to the proletariat, instead of establishing another substitute value system and group, was quite implausible. For the

<sup>36</sup> See Wilfried Mausbach, "Burn, ware-house, burn!" Modernity, Counterculture, and the Vietnam War in West Germany', in *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*, ed. Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 175–202, esp. 193; Detlef Siegfried, *Sound der Revolte* (Weinheim and München: Juventa, 2008), esp. 58.

<sup>37</sup> Kutschke, 'Musicology and the Force of Political Fiction'.

interests of the Old Left and its clientele (workers) and those of the New Left (formed principally of students, intellectuals and artists) differed remarkably. Even though both the New and the Old Left shared the same social enemy – the bourgeoisie – the reasons for its rejection were quite different. From the perspective of the Old Leftist workers, the bourgeoisie represented the comparatively affluent classes. Thus, the workers' resentment was directed against all social classes above their own: not only the privileged upper-middle class, but also intellectuals and well-educated groups, including the students. The countermodel against which the New Leftists shaped their new lifestyles and behaviour modes, however, was the narrow-minded and self-restricted *petit-bourgeoisie* (even though, in their theories, they also explicitly criticized the educated middle classes).<sup>38</sup> In brief, their idea of the paradigmatic bourgeois was the *petit-bourgeois*, in relation to which the new lifestyles they promoted came across as pure provocation. By criticizing narrow mental horizons and *petit-bourgeois* modes of behaviour, however, the New Leftists' critique implicitly targeted all those social layers, including the working class, that did not possess the broad, progressive, unconventional, creative spirit of the (New Leftist) intellectuals. Even though the fundamental antagonism between the two groups was usually well repressed, it manifested itself most clearly in the assassination attempt upon Rudi Dutschke. Not coincidentally, the assailant Josef Bachmann was a worker, that is to say, an individual belonging to the clientele of the Old Left.<sup>39</sup> Although the New Leftists downplayed this aspect by conceptualizing the assailant as a marionette of the right-wing Springer press, the hostility (real or imagined) between the former New Leftist students and intellectuals on the one side, and the orthodox Old Leftist workers on the other, subliminally influenced the attitude of the newcomers. This manifests itself most clearly in a reader's letter published in *Unsere Zeit*, the official mass organ of the DKP, in 1970. In a psychologically rather twisted manner, the author of this letter, a former New Leftist and now new Old Leftist, adopted the perspective of the workers she wanted to belong to and harshly criticized the social group she actually belonged to:

They [former New Leftists, now members of the so-called 'red cells' or Marxist-Leninist groups] do not want to understand that their perverted elitist

<sup>38</sup> In the course of the establishment of the new Old Left, '*petit-bourgeois*' increasingly became a pejorative term denoting the 'lack of the proper visionary or resistant spirit and ideological attitude'; see *Frankfurter Schule und Studentenbewegung: von der Flaschenpost zum Molotowcocktail 1946–1995* (3 vols), ed. Wolfgang Kraushaar (Hamburg: Rogner & Bernhard bei Zweitausendeins, 1998), vol. 1: 318, 468; vol. 2: 695, 788.

<sup>39</sup> Bachmann was additionally drawn to National Socialism, whose long list of resentments notably included intellectuals.

consciousness, their intellectualized vocabulary and tirades will never achieve the consent of the working class, but rather provoke rejection by the majority of people and damage the communists.<sup>40</sup>

In this light, even though the ideological orientation of the cantata's subject and the organizational context appear at first glance to be clear and one-dimensional, the cantata is marked by an ideological rift that manifests itself in the piece's aesthetics, and indicates that the cantata's producers themselves – more unconsciously than consciously – were also split as regards their political worldview and the political agents with whom they were collaborating. This can also be seen with regard to the cantata's mode of production. Unlike the collective production of artworks today, which usually aims at profiting from the synergy between individuals, the collective production mode chosen for the Mannesmann cantata was rather motivated by the desire to create an artistic 'we', equivalent to the masses they aimed at serving. By choosing a collective production mode, the former New Leftists also implicitly aligned themselves with the anti-elitist attitude that manifested itself in the reader's letter quoted above. For the creation of the 'we' necessarily brought about the exclusion of the idea of the singular creative genius. In other words, the ideal of collective composition in the spirit of the new Old Left shared with the free improvisation of the New Left an anti-hierarchical poetics, aiming at music production without functional differences, yet the former emphasized less equality and grassroots democracy than the turn away from the formation of elites and social distinction. In the same vein, in writing the libretto, Erika Runge drew on Brecht's procedures of alienation, developed for epic theatre.<sup>41</sup> She designed the dramatis personae of the strike at Mannesmann not as individual characters, but as types whose impersonal appearance was additionally intensified by the exchange of roles among them. Again, the tendency to de-individualization reflects the primacy of the mass, i.e. the working class.

At the same time – and here I return to my thesis of an ideological rift – the creators of the Mannesmann cantata definitely attached weight to being recognized as creative subjects in a very traditional sense. The programme book and cover of the LP released in 1975 gives a list of the names of the composers and the librettist, just as the score indicates the composer of every individual number. Thus, as regards the mode of production, the cantata is a tightrope walk between traditional genius aesthetics originating in the nineteenth century on

<sup>40</sup> Ursula Preinhelter (Munich), 'Destruktionsarbeit an der Uni' (reader's letter), *Unsere Zeit*, 2/49 (5 December 1970), 8.

<sup>41</sup> Runge had originally designed the drama as a screenplay for a television documentary, but could not find a television station that accepted it for production.

the one hand – the artwork is considered as being the unique creation of artistic individuals and thus marked by their names – and the communist-collectivist production aesthetics on the other hand. In light of the described subliminal ambiguities between enlightenment values of autonomy and individuality which culminated in the New Left, and communist-pragmatist preferences for the anti-individual collective, the difficulties Hinz und Kunst suffered in the 1970s appeared to be ‘pre-programmed’ – regardless of the perfect integration of the Mannesmann cantata’s producers into new Old Leftists’ organizational structures.

### New Old Leftist artists working in Old Leftist structures

Since the members of the West German organization committee of the World Youth Festival, the Arbeitskreis Festival (AKF), were drawn from various youth associations of Marxist and socialist orientation, primary amongst them the Association of German Students (Verband Deutscher Studenten) (VDS),<sup>42</sup> the producers of the Mannesmann cantata – themselves mostly members of the DKP and/or Spartakus – possessed a strong lobby for their project. Despite the strong network, however, the ideological rift that divided the Old Leftists from the former New Leftists appears to have subliminally operated as a handicap, if not during the preparation of the premiere in East Berlin, then certainly after it. Because Hinz und Kunst rejected conventional financial sources supporting artistic production (i.e. state subsidies), the ensemble relied on financial support from institutions complying with their ideology. In light of the musicians’ engagement with the struggle of the working class by means of their musical projects, it is surprising that the DKP did not supply any funds for the projects of Hinz und Kunst, even though in 1977 (for instance) the party’s budget was 100 million Deutschmarks (of which it is estimated that 90 per cent originated with the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland (SED), the governing party of the GDR). The production of the LP recording of the Mannesmann cantata almost failed in 1975 because the Pläne publishing house – effectively the DKP’s official press – did not possess (or did not want to possess) the necessary financial means to produce a record that, unlike the political songs of Franz Josef Degenhardt und Dieter Süverkrüp, was expected

<sup>42</sup> Arbeitskreis Festival, ‘Pressemitteilung’, 21 December 1972, SAPMO, Bundesarchiv, BArch, DY 24/22770; Arbeitskreis Festival, ‘Resolution’, 28 April 1973, SAPMO, Bundesarchiv, BArch, DY 24/18435; Dieter Lasse, ‘Betr.: Presseinformation zu den X. Weltfestspielen und ihrer Vorbereitung in der BRD’, 21 December 1972, SAPMO, Bundesarchiv, BArch, DY 24/22770.

to have little popularity and thus promised only minimal sales.<sup>43</sup> Not surprisingly, negotiations before the production were merciless and dogged. Pläne slashed Hinz und Kunst's remuneration, until the musicians received no more than their expenses.<sup>44</sup> In order to receive their percentage of the sold records, Hinz und Kunst had to push Pläne several times for their rather paltry payment.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, Pläne did not hesitate to claim a margin of 15 per cent of the musicians' remuneration for making the contacts that led to a guest performance by the group.<sup>46</sup> Other performances of the cantata, such as those at the DKP conventions on 4 November 1973 in Hamburg and 25 January 1974 in Duisburg, did not generate income either, and neither did the tour of Hinz and Kunst to various West German universities in spring 1975 which was organized by the VDS.<sup>47</sup>

The reasons for the lack of financial support by the DKP remain unclear, though the members of Hinz und Kunst have reflected about the situation. For instance, in a letter to his musical 'friends' in 1974, Florey claimed that the reason for the DKP's reluctance was 'the lack of the appropriate artistic understanding still to be developed in the West German workers' movement'.<sup>48</sup> In light of the subliminal ideological discrepancies described above, however, one has to ask whether it suffices to point to purely aesthetic reasons, or whether the specific musical aesthetics of the former New Leftist composers pointed to the ambivalences of the uneasy alliance between the former New Leftists and the Old Leftists and, on this basis, motivated the DKP functionaries to refrain from financial support. Regarding these questions, the sources remain silent.

<sup>43</sup> Wolfgang Florey and Thomas Jahn, letter to Christel König (Pläne), 28 February 1974, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Osietzky, Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Brf: 1.

<sup>44</sup> Florey and Jahn, letter to Christel König.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Wippermann, several letters to Pläne of 1977, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Osietzky, Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Brf: 2.

<sup>46</sup> Florey and Jahn, letter to Christel König.

<sup>47</sup> Wolfgang Florey, letter to Wilfried Steinbrenner, Dietrich Boekle, Luca Lombardi *et al.*, 12 October 1973, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Osietzky, Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Brf: 2; Wolfgang Florey, letter to Wilfried Steinbrenner, Dietrich Boekle, Luca Lombardi *et al.*, 7 January 1974, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg Carl von Osietzky, Hinz und Kunst, NHK: Brf: 3.

<sup>48</sup> Florey, letter to Wilfried Steinbrenner.