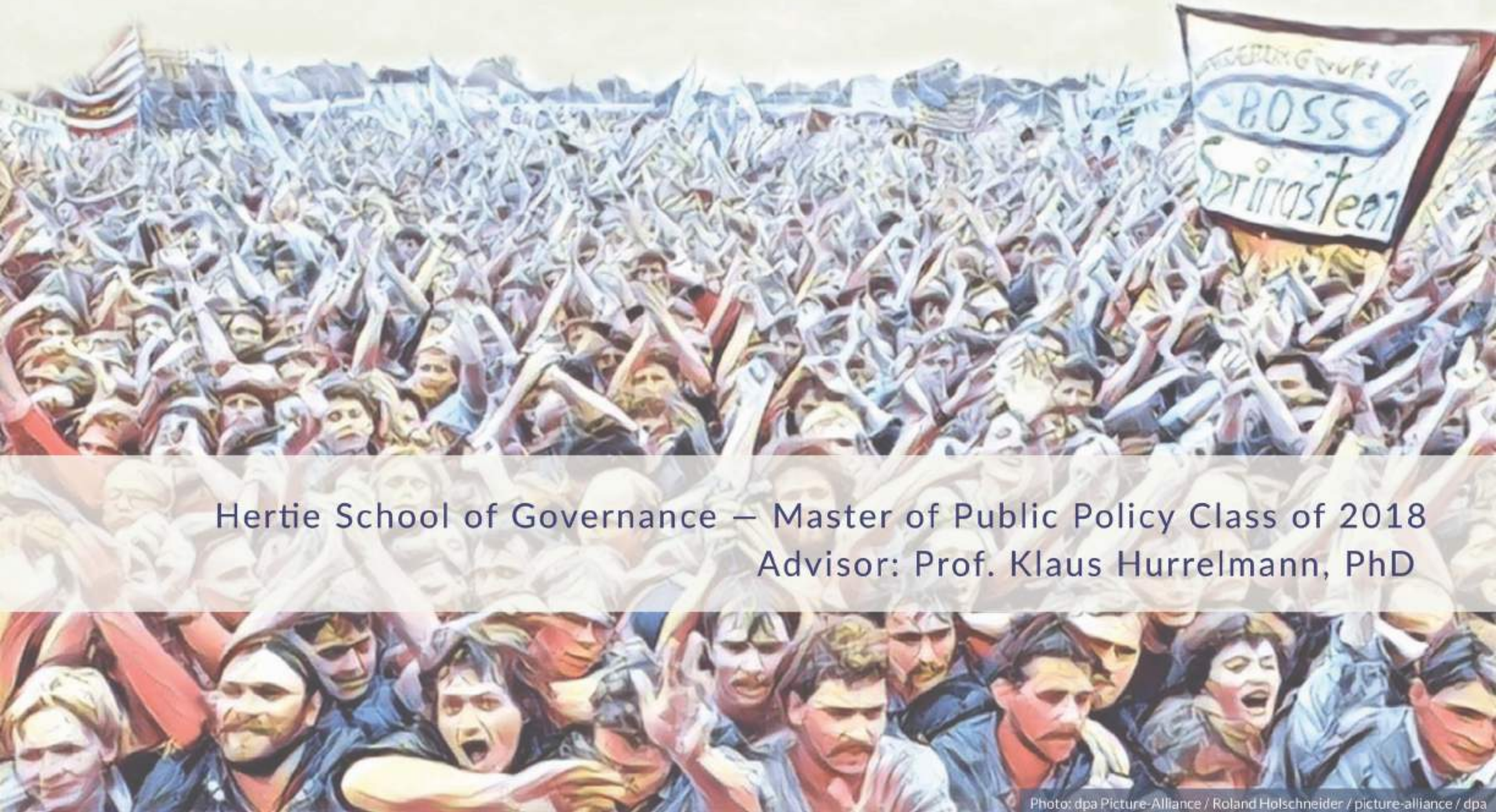
Hertie School
of Governance

HYMNS OF CHANGE

BY RICARDO M. SALAS

POPULAR MUSIC AS A CATALYST FOR POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN GERMANY AND MEXICO DURING 1988-2000



Hertie School of Governance — Master of Public Policy Class of 2018
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I think music still has the power to connect people, to bring people together, and make the world a better place. But… it may be also the naïve view of a musician, of an artist, or a writer, to hope that music would still have this impact in the young generations. But I do believe, music has the power.

–Klaus Meine

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my parents for their support and guidance, Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann for his mentorship and disposition, and Luis E. Mejía for being a critical guide in the elaboration of this thesis. I am sincerely grateful towards Andrés Portillo, Georges Delrieu, Nathalie Herberger, Imanol Belausteguigoitia, Diego Chávez and José Quintanilla for their sincere friendship and support, as well the Cordero Escalante family for their unconditional love.

I am greatly in debt with Klaus Meine for his generosity, Pascal Beltrán del Río for his nobility and mentorship, and with Prof. Josh Kun for his valuable contributions. I would like to thank Paco Ayala, Julio Pradera and the rest of my interviewees for their help and curiosity for this project.

A special thank you to Javier and Cristina for always being present. This work is dedicated to them and to all of those who taught me so much along the way.

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Executive Summary

Music is arguably one of the most universal means of human expression. It fulfills a wide array of functions at the induvial and collective level: from simple entertainment and mood regulator, to higher art and liturgical bond. Today, recording and mobile technology have made this sonic stimulus louder and more present than ever, inspiring a substantial amount of scientific research to understand its impact on almost every aspect of life. But despite this increasing presence of sound, very limited research has been done to understand how *popular music* affects the exercise of power in society, people's political perceptions or the implementation of policy. As musicians and artists take an increasingly influential role in society through the media and the stage, so do their political grievances (be it through songs or statements), for which "celebrity diplomats" are becoming relevant political actors in a post-institutional world.

This dissertation aims to understand the mechanisms that make music influential at a political level by compiling the available literature on political engagement and popular music, and by applying Street, Hague and Savigny's (2008) three-dimensional framework (organization, legitimation, and performance) to analyze a series of politically-motivated songs in Germany and Mexico during 1988-2000, as well as one of the largest western live performances behind the Iron Curtain during the Cold War.

My research suggests that popular music (live and recorded) is an effective catalyst for political engagement and social interaction—especially among the youth—as long as these three specific preconditions are met. It concludes that popular music is capable of shaping people's political perceptions as well as raising awareness about various social issues, for which it recommends the promotion of youth music groups and that music education be kept as an integral part of school curriculum. It also stresses that campaigns to engage the youth politically through music and celebrity diplomats are likely to work as tools for increasing political engagement and voter turnout, but these should be analyzed in terms of *organization, legitimation,* and *performance* for better results.

Introduction

Music has been a subject of endless fascination for people around the world. It is omnipresent, contagious, and has been around throughout all human history. Preferences aside, music has been found to fulfill basic social functions, regulate arousal and alter mood, among many other emotional effects (Byrne, 2013; Schulkin & Raglan, 2014). Most importantly, it is one of the most democratic means of human expression since it requires no special skills or training to dance to a beat, clap in unison, or whistle a tune for oneself.

Today, music is more present than ever through the increasing exposure to media and the use of mobile devices around the globe. In addition, recorded and live music are also some of the most popular products of the twenty-first century: As of 2018 the amount of on-demand music users on *YouTube* is estimated conservatively at more than 1,300 million, and the global music industry (more than $17.3 billion in worth) has seen its third year of consecutive growth after 15 years of declining revenues (IFPI, 2018), indicating that commercial music is making a comeback, and likely to be even more widespread in years to come.

Researchers have wondered for decades whether this seemingly innocuous form of entertainment can have a more profound influence among society, and if its transformative effects can go beyond affecting the individual's sentiments. The reason being: most modern sociopolitical movements seem to have come accompanied with a soundtrack of their own; music that talks about the times, joys and struggles of the general public. This begs the question whether popular music has an effect in the public sphere by shaping people's political attitudes, and whether this omnipresent form of expression can truly mobilize people in support of a political cause.

This thesis attempts to gain a deeper understanding of how music affects people's involvement in politics through the lenses of communication studies and political sociology. My ultimate aim is to answer the question: "How does pop music act as a catalyst for political participation among the youth?". For this, I provide the reader with a series of basic definitions, before proceeding with a review of previous literature on the interaction of popular music and politics. I then present the analysis of a series of songs and a live performance with a political component in the context of Mexico and Germany during 1988-2000, and finish by discussing my main findings, lessons for policy makers and opportunities for future research on music and political engagement.

(Turn to the next page for Chapter 1).

Chapter 1

In recent years there has been a growing interest among scholars for the implications of *popular culture* in society (Cloonan & Street, 1997; McCarthy et al, 1999; Murray, 2010; Nieguth, 2015). It is within this field of research that a handful of authors has sought to understand the effects of *popular music* on *political engagement/mobilization* (Courtney Brown, 2008; Franke & Schiltz, 2013; Frith & Street, 1992; Kutschke & Norton, 2013; Schoening & Kasper, 2012; Street, 2012; Street et al., 2008). Though the state of this field is still incipient, the existing literature suggests that under certain conditions, popular music can galvanize people into political action, influence topics on the public agenda and affect people's positions on government policy, candidates and elected officials.

In the following sections I describe the existing literature linking popular music and political/civic engagement, starting with classic works on the sociopolitical effects of music, and then looking at those who provide the most useful theoretical frameworks to understand this interaction. I then look at a number of authors who have seen *popular music* as a catalyst for political movements and proceed to review a series of studies on the use of popular music in recent elections in the United States, as well as those on the *Rock the Vote* campaigns to increase voter turnout among the youth in the country. I also review the studies on popular music as a means of establishing a sociopolitical identity and those on the behavioral purposes of music, to then finish by listing the basic frameworks for the interpretation of popular music and its sociopolitical context.

Relevant Terminology

Before proceeding, it is worth making a distinction of *popular music* and *pop music*, since these terms are by no means the same but are often used interchangeably in the commercial and academic literature (See Frith et al., 2001, p.94; Huq, 2006, p.54; Schütte, 2017, p.5).

For the sake of clarity, this thesis will consider Frith et al.'s definition of *popular music* as an umbrella term that can include any subgenre like: *rock, pop, folk, reggae, R&B, rap*, *hip-hop* and *electronic dance music* (among others), as long as it is capable of appealing to a broad audience and demands little or no training to be enjoyed or performed by the general public (Frith et al, 2001, p.94). *Pop* on the other hand will be used as a music *subgenre* with: "catchy hooks, memorable melodies, energetic backbeats and a structure of repetition through a verse and a chorus pattern (usually)" (Pruca, 2010, p.22). Finally, this thesis will also use Pontes, Henn & Griffith's definition of *political engagement* as: "having interest in, paying attention to, having knowledge or opinions about, being conscious of, proactive about and constantly informed about politics" (2018, p.13). For a much more detailed discussion of these definitions in the literature see Appendix 1.

Literature Review

Classic Works and First Approaches

Though not strictly related to political engagement, some earlier reflections and studies on music's political power should also be taken into account:

Twenty-five centuries ago Plato identified the political influence of music by claiming that "the fundamental laws of the state could be threatened by changes in musical modes" (Fox & Williams, 1974, p.02), but it was the Frankfurt School—with Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer—which first criticized *popular music* as part of a mass-produced culture capable of creating and sustaining social inequality (Franke & Schiltz, 2013, p.52; Storey, 2009, p.62). Roy (2010) on his part, pointed out to some complementary works by Bourdieu (1984), Bryson (1996), Levine (1990), McClary (2000) and Seeger (1957) on music as a form of social control and a means for creating cultural hierarchies.

Others attempted to develop specific theoretical frameworks to analyze this phenomenon (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Frith, et al., 1993; Street et al., 2008). Eyerman and Jamison (1991, 1998) pioneered the study of music and its political impact by linking social movement with cultural theory. They saw musical expression in social movements as a king of "cognitive praxis"—a way of articulating a collective memory—that allows for the production of new knowledge and new group identities, a process which they see as crucial for enabling social change (1998, p.168). Frith, on the other hand saw in it a form of reactionary youth culture with an impact on the state's cultural and social policy, claiming that political attitudes in music allow people to define their own identity and place within society (Frith, 1987, pp. 133–149). Frith and Bennett (paraphrased in Street et al., 2008) have also argued that music does more than simply reflect moral or political sympathies by claiming that it “actively engages them”. On her part, Bennett defied earlier authors like Adorno and Attali (2002; 1985) who believed that the repetitive character of popular music is what inhibits its power to “inspire political engagement or rebellion” (Street et al., 2008), thus suggesting that rhythmic patterns can actually do the opposite and energize people’s moral sentiments before mobilizing them for action.

Street, Hague and Savigny (2008), provide arguably the most useful theoretical framework to understand the role which musicians play in political engagement. By looking at two political music festivals (*Rock Against Racism* of 1976 and *Live 8* of 2005), they proposed that the link between music and politics should be understood through three specific dimensions: the organization of the link (i.e., “forms of organisation that allow musicians, political activists and non-governmental organisations [NGOs] to work together”), its legitimation (the extent to which the musician[s] are viewed as speaking on behalf of “the people”), and cultural performance (ways “through which the music not only conveys the message or sentiment of the movement or cause, but also motivates it.”). In their view, it is only when these three conditions are met that one can claim that musicians and celebrities play a significant role in politics, for which one must focus on these mechanisms rather than in the specific context in which music and politics interact.

On Music and Political Engagement

Other works have relied on the authors above by applying some of their frameworks to specific cases: Adebayo (2017) investigated music's "two-edged" effect on politics and found that popular music had a perceivable weight in fostering non-violent participation among students during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Charles (2006, p.161) suggested that popular songs are "useful tools for political communication, political marketing, and political learning" after analyzing the music that parties PNP and JLP used before the 2002 Jamaican general elections. Lambert (2016) on the other hand explored the youth's political engagement in Senegal from 1988 to 2012, finding that *hip-hop* was a galvanizing force in local politics, and that it encouraged young people to protest against President Abdoulaye Wade's search for re-election in 2012. He concluded that *hip-hop* did not ignite, but rather *extended* the youth political engagement in the country through a new musical language.

Peer-reviewed literature linking popular music and political engagement is practically inexistent in the case of Mexico, but others, like the 1990s in Serbia have been of particular interest for scholars (Collin, 2001; Mijatovic, 2008; Steinberg, 2004). These authors suggested that rock music, specifically, was instrumental in overthrowing Slobodan Milošević's regime in 2000. Others (Schumann, 2008; Vershbow, 2010) have looked at similar processes in countries like South Africa by suggesting that popular music was instrumental in dismantling the apartheid government between 1990 and 1994.

Beyond the Music: Other Social Movements

Unlike in Latin America, there is a sizeable amount of complementary literature in the United States[1] and Europe that suggests that popular music was an important catalyst for major historic events like the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kutschke & Norton, 2013; Wicke, 1992; Zhuk, 2010), as well as an influential cultural product that has shaped western politics in recent decades. Some have suggested that particular events—like Bruce Springsteen's 1988 concert in East Berlin—were a powerful catalyst for the movement that eventually brought down the Berlin Wall in 1989 (Kirschbaum, 2013). While others have argued that the popularity of bands like the Beatles had such a powerful cultural weight, that it "forced politicians in Britain to attend to popular music" and legitimized pop as a means of political expression (Collins, 2013, 2014). Consequently, Huq (2015) highlighted that in the last couple of decades, politicians have increasingly revealed their "pop fandom" to demonstrate that they are "just like us", in hopes of gaining credibility among the public. Huq, however, pointed out that the effect of such revealed tastes is changing drastically in an age of multi-media content and social networks since we are situated in "a demographic crossroads where fan bases do not easily equate with social constituencies", for which this behavior by politicians might actually be less effective than once thought in terms of political communication.

In addition to this, some have pointed out that the influence of music on society has been largely underestimated (Storr, 1993; paraphrased in Adebayo, 2017), considering it one of the "most powerful tools for social mobilization and sensitization". While others, conversely, warn that its very likely that the political effects of popular music have been greatly overestimated in the existing literature[2].

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[1] The United States of America and the "U.S." will be used interchangeably in this thesis.

[2] (John Street, personal communication, April, 2018).

Obama & Romney jump onto Spotify

Another type of research concerns campaign music. Schoenening and Kasper (2012) wrote about the history of presidential campaign music and describe the ways in which this phenomenon evolved into the age of social media. The authors also predict that politicians in the U.S. will resort to a broader use of popular songs in Spanish as the Latino population increases in the country (p.353). Deaville and Attali (2015) discussed the selection of artists and music played during the 2012 Democratic and Republican conventions in the U.S. as a means to reinforce partisan identity, while Gorzelany-mostak (2015) delved into the use of popular music during a number of presidential elections, highlighting the use of *Spotify* playlists by candidates Mitt Romney and Barack Obama as a "tool for political communication, mobilization and participation" in 2012.

Brown (2008) took a broader look at the exponential growth of political content in music over the last 200 years (ranging from classical music, to contemporary genres like *hip-hop*), while Franke and Schiltz (2013) examined political activism through music in recent decades by categorizing the lyrics in the U.S. and German top-ten hits from 1960 to 2009[3], pointing out that these had been marked by "the rejection of political institutions and actors in a mood of alienation and disenchantment", hence inviting the listener to act against social inequalities. They noted that pop singers and "celebrity diplomats" have increasingly made use of their status to interact with policymakers by circumventing the institutional paths of politics. And though they pointed to some positive aspects of these new political actors and their capacity to mobilize individuals, they raised Brown's (2009) previous concerns on their legitimacy as spokespersons of society, and on whether these can (or should) be held accountable as new agents of change in a time of post-institutional politics.

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[3] For this, the researchers divided the lyrical content in selected songs into seven categories: War and Peace, Political Conflict, Critique of Pollution, Solidarity with the Poor, Anti-Racism, Politics as a Wicked Game, and Diffuse Commitments to Cohesion, Love and Freedom/Autonomy.

“Rock the Vote”: Increasing Turnout through Music

As a consequence of the growing social influence of music, *Rock the Vote* was launched in 1990 as the world’s first initiative to engage the youth in politics through the use of popular musicians and celebrities in the United States. Tindell and Medhurst (1998) were some of the first to analyze the early *Rock the Vote-MTV* campaigns, they suggested that these had a significant impact among the youth, and were partly responsible for the increased voter turnout in the 1992 U.S. presidential election[4]. The study also discussed the appearances of popular musicians and celebrities of the time, such as Pearl Jam’s Eddie Vedder, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Madonna and actress Queen Latifah, as well as the imagery in TV spots that were aired during the campaign. Research by Vavreck and Green (2007), Kerby (2014) and Burgess et al. (2016) also supported the claim that *Rock the Vote* campaigns seem to have increased voter turnout by a few percentage points during the 1992, 1996 and 2004 U.S. presidential elections[5], arguing that this initiative was an attractive way to engage the youth inside colleges, and that these campaigns were just as competitive in cost when compared to other voter mobilization techniques. But not all agree on this, Knack (1997) argued that the effects of the these interventions have been greatly overestimated, and that the increase in voter turnout of the youth in the 1992 election cannot be attributed to these initiatives, for which further research is yet to be done in this respect.

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[4] They do, however, claim that establishing a cause-and-effect relationship “is beyond the powers of rhetorical criticism” (p.19).

[5] Shea and Green (2007) devoted an entire book to the unexpected increase in young voters (18-to-24-year-olds) in the 2004 U.S. presidential election, with a large focus on the impact of the *Rock the Vote* campaigns.

Popular Music & Political Identity

Another consideration is that the way in which music fans are organized is also a political act in its own right. In spite of much disagreement of what "politics" versus "the political" (i.e. political acts in society) mean, Chantal Mouffe defines *the political* as "the dimension of antagonism which [is taken] to be constitutive of human societies" (Mouffe, 2005, p,09)[6]. Under this light, it is certain that having an identity—or searching for one—and gathering with others of similar tastes (i.e. attending a concert or playing with others) constitutes in itself, a political act.

In this light, Littlejohn and Putnam (2010) wrote on the underlying social nostalgia for life in the GDR[7] in Rammstein's lyrics as a result of a feeling of abandonment and cultural isolation in the reunified Germany, while Putnam and Schicker (2014) did the same with lyrics in contemporary *hip-hop* in former East Berlin as a tool for establishing a sociopolitical identity among ethnic minorities. Similarly, a previous study (Bryson, 1996) found an interesting connection between people's musical and political tolerance with regards to democratic liberalism and levels of cultural exclusion. Bryson found that political tolerance is closely associated with musical tolerance, explaining that highly educated people are more *musically tolerant* (more open to other music genres) than those with less education. She also found, however, that this effect shows a pattern of exclusiveness, since highly educated people grow more open towards different music styles [and other political opinions], but also increasingly intolerant towards music styles whose fans have the least education (i.e. gospel, country, heavy metal), suggesting that cultural taste is used “to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and groups of people they dislike”. This tolerance is thus a form of “multicultural capital” that is unevenly distributed among society and serves as a thermometer for class-based exclusion.

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[6] On the other hand, Mouffe defines "politics" as "the set of practices and institutions through which an order is created, organizing human coexistence in the context of conflictuality provided by the political." (2005. p.09).

[7] The GDR (German Democratic Republic) was the official acronym for the East German state, a communist regime under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Union which lasted from 1949 to 1990.

On her part, Stewart (2011) examined the role of music groups and associations that were targeted specifically for the young across the U.S.. Not only did she find that their number was significantly higher than expected, but also that most of these music programs had a civic-engagement element to their work (74.5 percent of the surveyed groups), of which 45 percent hosted election-related activities that actively try to engage youth in voting, and 24 percent offered voter registration all the time.

Behavioral Aspects of Music: Preferences and Functions

An additional reflection on music and politics is *why* people listen to music in the first place, and which functions music fulfills at an individual and collective level. A series of studies (see Boer, 2009; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2007; Hays & Minichiello, 2005; Lonsdale & North, 2011; Schäfer & Sedlmeier, 2010; Schäfer et al., 2013) have tried to identify and categorize the main social and psychological functions of music through different theoretical approaches. Broadly speaking, most of these works have found that music serves as a vehicle for: regulating mood and expressing emotions, crafting and reaffirming a social or political identity (as a means for self-awareness), and bonding with others. They also suggested that music preferences are used as a means to establish an individual and collective identity, as well as a place within society (Boyle et al, 1981; Bryson, 1996; Littlejohn & Putnam, 2010; McCarthy et al., 1999; Packer & Ballantyne, 2011; Schäfer et al., 2013; Scruton, 2018).

Music also serves to foster social interaction—particularly among children and young adults, since these tend to engage more passionately with music than older cohorts, and are also more tolerant towards different music styles (Leblanc, Sims, Siivola, & Obert, 1996; Schäfer & Sedlmeier, 2010)[8]. This is consistent with Hays and Minichiello (2005), who believed that music serves a more subtle, personal, and introspective purpose among the elderly when compared to younger listeners (e.g. remembering life events, for therapeutic benefits, escapism, and the like).

It also stands out that open and intellectually engaged students (those with higher IQ scores) use music in a more cognitive way, while neurotic, introverted and non-conscientious peers are more likely to use music as a means for emotional regulation, which could help explain why certain groups of people identify themselves more with particular music styles than others (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2007). Similarly, a recent study (Nave et al., 2018) found that personality traits can predict music preferences, and vice-versa, by analyzing music *Facebook* likes through five main components of personality (openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism). It stands out that more open individuals had an appreciation of "sophisticated" music (defined as inspiring, complex and dynamic), while extraverts preferred “unpretentious” styles of music (uncomplicated, relaxing and acoustic).

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[8] Leblanc et al. (1996) sampled 2,262 middle-class volunteers (ages 6 to 91), finding that an individual's tolerance for different musical styles fluctuates in different age groups. They suggested that children are more musically tolerant, an effect that decreases significantly in adolescence, but spikes again in adulthood. As a result, they stress that music programs 'should not be sacrificed in the early elementary grades'.

The age factor also seems especially relevant for understanding music tastes. An online study with *Spotify* data (Kalia, 2015) found that, on average, people stop paying attention to new music trends at age 33—meaning that this is the threshold when music tastes “mature”. The study suggests that popular music is what dominates teens’ music preferences, but this effect drops steadily throughout people’s twenties. It also found that people with children listen to less mainstream music than their average peers. In this light, the phrase “music was better in my day” is thus though to be “a battle being fought between 35-year old fathers and teen girls—with single men and moms in their 20s being pulled in both directions” (Kalia, 2015).

In addition, a German study by Schäfer and Sedlmeier (2010)[9] found that people listened to music for an average of 3.8 hours per day, something in line with Lonsdale and North (2011), who showed that people spent significantly more time—3.82 hours per day—and money listening to music[10] compared to other activities (computer games, television, films, books, sport, radio, newspapers/magazines, and favorite hobby). Schäfer et al. (2013) later found that the political purpose of music does not seem to have a noticeable impact in people’s music preferences: The phrase “because it can be a means to show political engagement” scored a median of 1 (on a scale from 0 to 6; *SD* = 1.50) while “because it can express my political attitudes” scored a median of 1.48 (*SD* =1.77), which begs the question if music *listening* is widely used as a means for reaffirming or expressing political beliefs. The results also contradict previous studies in the field by claiming that regulating the mood and achieving self-awareness were considerably more important for people than other social functions of music (as a means for social cohesion and communication), suggesting that music is more important for self-identification than for bonding with others.

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[9] This online survey (Study 2) by was conducted with 210 participants aged 19 to 59 (133 women and 77 men). 145 of them had played an instrument for an average of 6.3 years, which raises the question whether similar results could be obtained with participants with little or no musical training.

[10] The only significant difference due to gender in the study was found in the amount of money that participants spent listening to music: Males reported spending significantly more on music (£10.73 per month) versus females (£6.87 per month) [all currency in 2011 British pounds (£)].

Finally, though Schäfer and colleagues (2010 , 2013) are at the forefront of the research on the motivations and functions of music listening, a previous dissertation by Boer (2009, p.22) contains one of the largest and most comprehensive surveys on music preferences up to date, in it she identified ten basic psychological functions for music listening: *emotions*, *social bond with friends*, *social bond in family*, *venting*, *background*, *dancing*, *focus*, *values*, *political attitudes*, and *cultural identity*. For which her research should also be acknowledged in this respect.

On Physiological functions and Interpretation of Popular Music

Studies on music's physiological effects are also worth considering for a better understanding of the relation of music and social mobilization. Levitin (2007, p.317) argued that people "lower" their emotional defenses when they immerse themselves in some types of music, but only if the performer or composer makes the listener feel somewhat "safe" before letting him or herself be immerged in a song. Other studies like Sack's (2007), give various accounts of music's effects on patients with different neurological conditions and disabilities. These are also worth highlighting to illustrate music's capacity to provoke drastic physical and emotional reactions.

As for the sociopolitical interpretation of music, lyrics and their sociopolitical context, some works have focused on analyzing the sociopolitical motives of popular songs by mainstream musicians of the likes of Lady Gaga, Rammstein and the Kings of Leon (Moore, Doehring, & Von Appn, 2015). Others have provided quantitative frameworks to interpret top hits in the U.S. and Germany—including Scorpions' "Wind of Change"—(Franke & Schiltz, 2013), while Schütte (2017) elaborated a chronological companion to German popular music, its sociopolitical context and historical impact.

There is also an extensive body of literature on the interpretation of popular music in music theory (aimed at musicians, critics and songwriters) and even on the philosophy of music (Scruton, 2009). These however, will be ignored for the most part since they go beyond the intended scope of the dissertation. In addition, though political songs and jingles have been used for decades in spots and campaign rallies (Prospero, 2018), my aim is to explore *political engagement* through *popular music*, for which I only consider campaign songs which have been adopted by the general public, and have therefore become *authentically* popular; a rather recent phenomenon which will only be touched upon briefly.

(Turn to the next page for Argument).

Argument

This research ultimately aims to improve the understanding of the drivers for political participation among the youth. Popular music, in this case, provides a unique opportunity to explore the political effects of a type of stimulus that is as ubiquitous as it is part of human nature, but has rarely been examined as a catalyst for political/civic engagement.

By looking at two country-cases through the lenses of Street, Hague and Savigny (2008)'s three-dimensional approach to music and politics, I hope to find similarities in the roles of popular music during a set of critical political changes between 1988 and 2000 in Mexico and Germany. And though it is virtually impossible to gauge this effect numerically, I suspect that popular music will prove to be a relevant catalyst for sociopolitical change by appealing to listeners' emotions, exposing them to values that can alter their awareness of diverse social issues and motivate them to act consequently.

Methodology

In theory, testing the influence of popular music in political engagement would only be possible under controlled, experimental conditions and following strict protocols of social psychology (John Street, personal communication, April 04, 2018). And since an experiment of this sort goes beyond the scope of this thesis, I relied on qualitative research through the collection of interviews and autobiographical accounts by artists, musicologists and experts, who shared their views on a series of popular songs, a live event, and other complementary musical movements that had a clear political component in their lyrics, music or reception during 1988-2000 in Germany and Mexico. The subjective criteria for the selection of these six songs (three for each country) was that these had to express a political sentiment or provoke an observable political reaction among their audiences; the same criterion was used to choose the live events that are mentioned in the empirical findings. With regards to the selection of artists, these also had to been sufficiently popular during their time to make the list.

There were, however, two main issues that deserved special attention before doing the selection of songs for this research: the first was how to determine which ones were *most popular* during the proposed time frame, in order to choose the ones with evident political messages or repercussions. This could have been done in quantitative terms by extracting the most politically-motivated songs among the top-charts in both countries, or simply by choosing those which were given most airplay and media coverage at the time. This however, would have left out songs which did not receive support due to censorship or commercial exclusion, but were nonetheless popular among secluded socioeconomic groups or those who lived in non-urban areas, which is a particular issue for the analysis of songs in Mexico given the highly uneven population density of the country (World Population Review, 2018).

The second issue concerns the selection of songs that represent the political sentiments of Germany given its division during the Cold War era, particularly because the cultural politics in the GDR left very few political acts uncensored. Furthermore, the musical exchange between both Germanys was, practically, a “one-way affair” (Schütte, 2017. p.05), because East German music went mostly unnoticed outside of the country during its time. For this reason, the three songs picked for Germany in this dissertation were all written by acts from former West Germany (FRG), while the songs in representation of Mexico were all written by Mexican artists. Consequently, the criteria for the selection of interviewees was that these had to: be either original authors of the songs, have firsthand experience of the music trends of the time and country in question, or be specialists in popular music. The questions asked during the interviews also varied during each conversation in order to extract the most information possible on each song and relevant musical movements.

I chose the examination of the period of 1988-2000 to consider musical movements around times of sociopolitical conflict, thus including events like the fall of the Berlin wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the German reunification and the xenophobic riots of the early nineties in East Germany; but also, the controversial presidential elections of 1988 in Mexico and the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the rise of the *Zapatista* indigenous movement and the Mexican peso crisis of 1994, as well as the democratic transition of 2000 with the first freely elected government in 72 years. It is also true that most research points to 1968 as one of the most political years for music in past decades (Kutschke & Norton, 2013), and it is for this reason that I proposed looking into a more recent and less observed time period where popular music played a relevant political role.

Lastly, apart from the six selected songs, I propose adding the examination of a historic live event to this analysis (Bruce Springsteen's 1988 concert in East Berlin) to better understand the interaction of music and politics during a live setting, which goes more in line with Street, Hague & Savigny's (2008) framework to evaluate the role of music and musicians in political participation.

In the next page I provide a list of the interviews which were carried out for this research. Each conversation was between 25 and 30 minutes in length. All translations of interviews, extracts and lyrics are my own unless otherwise noted.

Interviews

1. Klaus Meine (Germany): Singer in Scorpions and writer of “Wind of Change”.
2. Sven von Thülen (Germany): Musician, journalist and author of *Der Klang der Familie.*
3. Erik Kirschbaum (Germany): Journalist, Director of the RIAS Berlin commission.
4. Hans-Peter Bushoff (Germany): Product manager for Bruce Springsteen at Sony Music.
5. Ronald Born (Germany): Collector and witness of the first western concerts in the GDR.
6. Andreas Borcholte (Germany): Pop culture and film specialist for SPIEGEL ONLINE.
7. John Street (U.K.): Professor of politics at the University of East Anglia, musicologist.
8. Francisco “Paco” Ayala (Mexico): Singer and Bass player for the Molotov rock band.
9. Josh Kun (U.S.): Author, musicologist and lecturer at USC in Los Angeles.
10. Mariana Hernández (Mexico): Author, journalist, TV presenter, and music specialist.
11. Carlos Hauptvogel (Mexico): Drummer, co-founder of the 1968 protest rock movement.
12. Sergio Félix (Mexico): Singer-songwriter, presenter, and pioneer of the Mexican *trova.*
13. Moisés Palacios (Mexico): Author, musician, radio host, and professional dubbing artist.
14. Casimiro Zamudio (Mexico): Musician and pioneer of the popular *technocumbia* genre.
15. Julia E. Palacios (Mexico): Musicologist, author and lecturer at the UIA Mexico City.

A detailed description of the interviewees can be found in the Appendix 2.

Chapter 2

Behind the Music: Results & Analysis

In this section I provide a brief analysis of the proposed selection of songs at a sociopolitical level, linking their content, reception and significance for society upon release. The reason being was to see whether popular music can serve as a thermometer for political dissatisfaction and social conflict, particularly among the young, since these are more likely to engage with popular music and to use it as a means of expression and identity consolidation. For this, I display revealing segments in the lyrics of these songs, paired with relevant extracts of interviews that were carried out during the research phase. I do so through Street et al.'s (2008) three-dimensional approach to understand music's interaction with politics, these being *organization*, *legitimation*, and *performance*:

Organization refers the "infrastructural conditions or arrangements" that make the interaction between music and politics possible. In other words, the public interaction between musicians and social movements requires diverse forms of capital—financial, social and cultural—to occur (e.g., putting up a charity concert like *Live 8* demanded covering production costs, but also having sufficient political will and social acceptance for such an event to be held) (Street et al., 2008).

Legitimation refers to whether or not an artist or musician is seen as a valid authority to make a political statement through his/her music. Just as not all popular culture is transformative (McCarthy et al., 1999), not all performers' political opinions are equally relevant since popularity by itself is not a sufficient condition of political credibility (Street et al., 2008): Bruce Springsteen's music, for instance, is generally seen as a genuine representative of working-class *Americana* because he conveys the image of an authentic working-class musician who cares for liberal values (Hans-Peter Bushoff, personal communication, March, 2018). Conversely, Liam and Noel Gallagher (former members of the *Brit-Pop* band Oasis) are seldom taken seriously when they express any political opinions because they are not seen as legitimate political activists in the U.K.

Finally, *performance* refers to the intrinsic power of music that makes it political beyond the lyrics or political beliefs of the performer (i.e., the intensity of an instrument, the repetitions of a beat, or emotions conveyed through non-verbal elements). In their 1987 concert in Tempe, Arizona, for instance, the Irish rock band U2 played "Bullet the Blue Sky"—one of their most political compositions up to date—in opposition to the American military intervention in Nicaragua and el Salvador. The song starts with a heavy, steady drum beat, and a loud guitar riff reminiscent of a wailing siren, while Bono's voice and theatrics resemble those of a preacher condemning the spread of modern imperialism. Under this light, all of these aesthetic elements obtain a political connotation which goes beyond the lyrics and explicit political messages expressed by the artist. On his part, Dmitri Shostakovich also serves as a good example of the *performance* dimension since the Russian composer infuriated Joseph Stalin (and almost paid with his life for it) solely through the music he had written for his war symphonies between 1936 and 1945 (Weinstein, 1997).

It is thus, for these reasons that music cannot be reduced to a simple form of literal communication, which should be taken into account as part of the analysis (Kelly, 1997, cited in Street et al., 2008). I thus propose to look into the selected music in Mexico and Germany through the three-dimensional approach mentioned above.

Mexico (1988-2000)

1988 was a decisive year for Mexico in many aspects. It was the end of the first technocratic administration in the country and the aftermath of a devastating earthquake in the capital three years earlier still echoed ghastly. The government of President Miguel de la Madrid remained largely discredited due to its lethargic response during the disaster and the macroeconomic instability in which the country found itself after 60 years of undisputed rule by the PRI[11] (Krauze, 2013). Those year's presidential election caused a public outrage after de la Madrid's chosen successor (PRI militant Carlos Salinas) was declared the official victor even though initial results showed Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, a popular opposition candidate, surging ahead. During that evening the government announced that its electronic vote-counting system had unexplainably crashed, only to show Salinas as president-elect with more than 50% of votes when it was later restarted (Krauze, 1999a).

Salinas's controversial victory was somewhat forgotten in the following years as a result of a series of reforms and privatizations that attracted foreign investors as the government tried to consolidate Mexico as an attractive emerging market and even managed to greatly reduce the foreign debt by negotiating with international creditors (Riding, 1988). Corruption, however, was still rampant as a result of decades of corporativist practices, and a series of previous economic crisis, lack of work opportunities and an increasing demand for unskilled labor in the north continued to force millions of Mexicans to move to the U.S. despite the country's recent entry to the foreign market.

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[11] The PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) is a party founded in 1929 in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, it held power uninterruptedly until the year 2000.

Figure 1: Mexican immigration to the U.S. until 2011

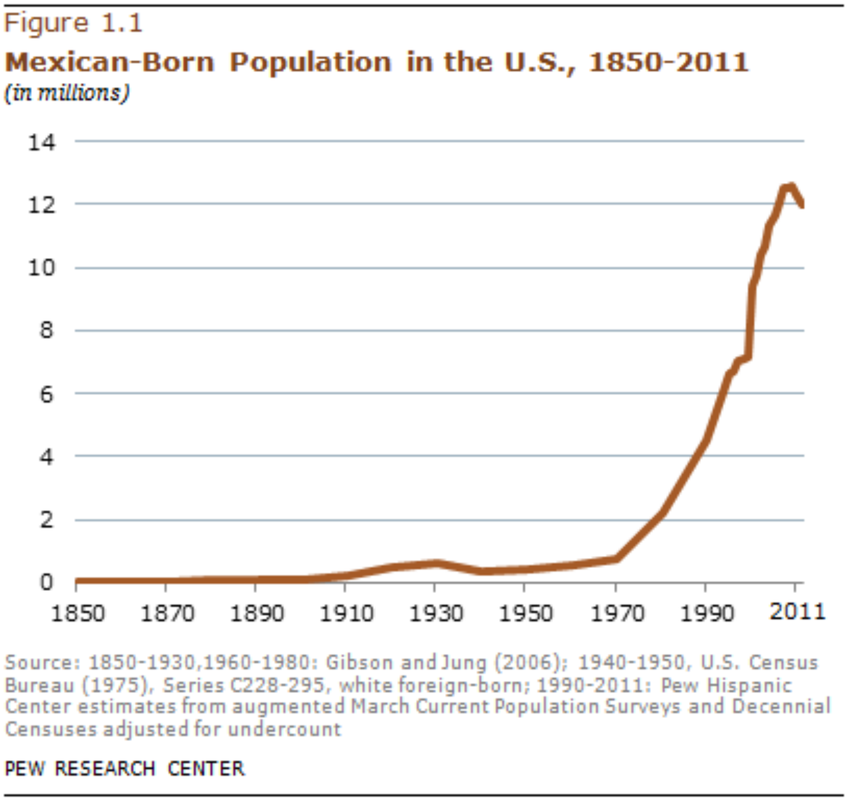


Figure 1.1

Mexican-Born Population in the U.S., 1850-2011

(in millions)

Source: 1850-1930,1960-1980: Gibson and Jung (2006); 1940-1950, U.S. Census Bureau (1975), Series C228-295, white foreign-born; 1990-2011: Pew Hispanic Center estimates from augmented March Current Population Surveys and Decennial Censuses adjusted for undercount

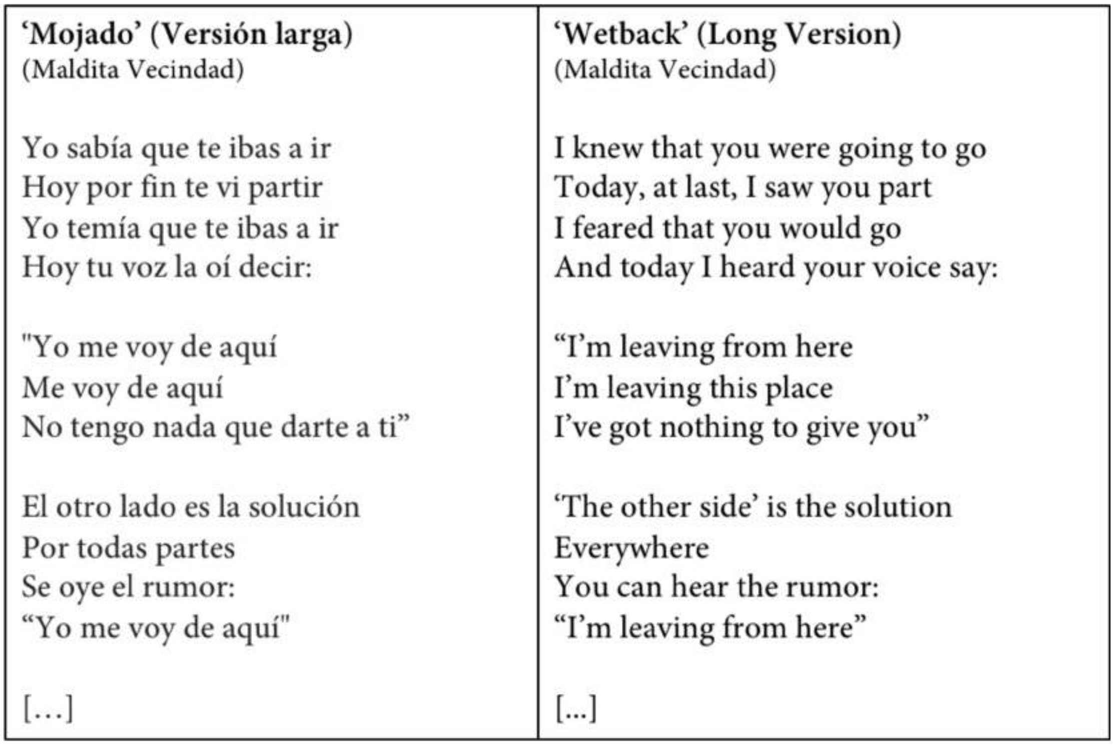
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: (Passel, Cohn, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2012)

i. “Mojado”: Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio (1989)

Such was the context when many groups started expressing themselves through pop and rock music by the mid-and-end of the eighties, largely inspired by a commercially successful countercultural movement known as the *Movida Madrileña*, which developed in Spain after General Francisco Franco’s death in 1975 and was quickly embraced in Latin America as many other countries were adopting democracy. It was in 1989 when Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio [The Damned Neighborhood and the Sons of the Fifth Block]—a band from Mexico City—made their first commercial breakthrough with an eponymous album, which included the single “Mojado” [“Wetback”]. The tune mixes elements of *ska*, *cumbia* and *reggae,* and tells the story about a woman whose husband leaves for the U.S. in search for work and a better life for his family but ends up killed during his attempt to cross the border.

Figure 2: Lyric extracts from “Mojado” by Maldita Vecindad



‘Mojado’ (Versión larga) (Maldita Vecindad)	**‘Wetback’ (Long Version)** (Maldita Vecindad)
Yo sabía que te ibas a ir	I knew that you were going to go
Hoy por fin te vi partir	Today, at last, I saw you part
Yo temía que te ibas a ir	I feared that you would go
Hoy tu voz la oí decir:	And today I heard your voice say:
"Yo me voy de aquí	“I’m leaving from here
Me voy de aquí	I’m leaving this place
No tengo nada que darte a ti”	I’ve got nothing to give you”
El otro lado es la solución	‘The other side’ is the solution
Por todas partes	Everywhere
Se oye el rumor:	You can hear the rumor:
“Yo me voy de aquí"	“I’m leaving from here”
[…]	[...]

Source: Genius Lyrics (La Maldita Vecindad y Los Hijos del Quinto Patio, 2018).

Echoes of 1968

A few decades before, after a severe crackdown of student protests and protest music by the Mexican government in 1968, and the bad press that the 1971 Avándaro rock festival[12] acquired through the state's influence, the few remaining counter-cultural music movements in the country were secluded to slums and outer areas of the major cities, where the low and mid-lower classes continued expressing themselves through politically-motivated music (Julia E. Palacios, personal communication, April, 2018).

> The government were very reluctant and afraid of rock n'roll. They panicked after *Avándaro*. They never thought that it would gather more than 360,000 people! [...] They wouldn't allow places for the youth to gather, they were scared to death that they would spark outbreaks of violence.
>
> (Carlos Hauptvogel, personal communication, March, 2018).

Official censorship and prevailing conservative ideas among the middle and upper-middle classes in Mexico left any socially-deviant music out of the top charts, something which continued well until the late-eighties. By then however, increasing globalization and the adoption of neoliberalism in the Americas encouraged the young to seek for the new music that their peers were creating after the democratic transitions in other countries. Popular European acts like The Cure, Depeche Mode, and The Smiths proved fundamental influences in the early works of many Latin American performers[13] who would later become massively successful among the so-called “MTV-generation” (Hanke, 2006), such as *Soda Stereo* in Argentina, and later on, bands like Caifanes, Café Tacvba and Fobia in Mexico[14].

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[12] For a better reference of the Avándaro Rock Music Festival, I recommend reading chapter six in Zolov (1999), which can be accessed through https://tinyurl.com/y97znnxj (Visited May 01, 2018).

[13] (Julia E. Palacios, personal communication, April, 2018)

> The youth had appropriated rock n’roll and made it something of their own. It was not an appropriation simply meant to translate lyrics, it was to take a genre and say: “I can write. I can create. And that’s what I’m doing!” That’s the great difference. And it happened from ’88 and on, but mostly due to the enthusiasm of being able to play than to be able to protest or to take rock as a flag.
>
> (Julia E. Palacios, personal communication, April, 2018)

Organization

Groups like Maldita Vecindad y los Hijos del Quinto Patio (better known as “La Maldita”) were particularly successful because of a great urge of the urban youths to shape a new musical landscape. Though their initial intentions were probably not strictly political, the motives in the songs of “La Maldita” still showcased very present topics of the time as illegal immigration of Mexicans to the U.S. continued to rise and society grew increasingly anxious to improve its economic status (Krauze, 1999b).

This growing demand for a local youth music was first capitalized by a German multinational record label, *BMG Ariola*, through campaigns like *Rock en tu Idioma* [Rock in Your Language], which produced a series of successful compilation albums that were commercialized in response to the Spanish *Movida Madrileña.* BMG Ariola was largely responsible for the popularization of the first music bands of the nineties, the subsequent albums of Maldita Vecindad and their expansion in the Hispanic market in the U.S. and Latin America (Josh, Kun, personal interview, March, 2018). In this way the mid-to-late eighties provided the cultural and economic conditions that made sorts of acts like "La Maldita" extremely popular among younger audiences due to their innovative sound and their perception as ambassadors of a trans-border cultural landscape.

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[14] The bands *Caifanes, Café Tacuba* (stylized as *Café Tacvba*) and *Fobia* were some of the most notorious representatives of the *Rock en tu Idioma* music movement in Mexico during the nineties.

Legitimation

Groups like Maldita Vecindad were quick to establish their own identity as working-class heroes by making references to the daily habits, excesses and traditions of the Mexican culture, and by using catchy excerpts of films from the *Golden Age of Mexican Cinema* (1933-1964). "La Maldita" also sung entirely in Spanish, used local slang, and dressed-up like the *Pachucos* of the 1940s and 1950s—a Chicano and Mexican-American subculture that was associated with the use of flashy suits (*zoot suits)* and a playboy-like behavior—an almost involuntary political statement that resonated with the Latino communities north and south of the U.S.-Mexican border:

> All of these bands start coming out of the ashes to the Earthquake, making connections back to '68, politicizing rock; and that rock was making its way into the US. *Rock en Español* [...] was connecting the politics of resistance and opposition in Mexico, to the politics of resistance and opposition among *Chicanos* and *Mexicanos* in California.

(Josh Kun, personal interview, March, 2018).

> The British, Argentine (and mostly) American influence that arrived in Mexico was seen as "cool", but it was just too far away from our markets, our schools, our violence and our media.
>
> (Mariana Hernández, personal communication, February, 2018).

Performance

Apart from the flashy suits and effortless humor, the songs of Maldita Vecindad expressed joy or grief through seemingly festive beats and contagious rhythms that people could easily dance to. In "Mojado", singer Rolando Ortega gives voice to the migrants who have died during their illegal crossing to the U.S., while the music keeps beating steadily in the background, a stark contrast which seems to give the song a strong political connotation.

ii. "Gimme tha Power": Molotov (1997)

The early nineties were marked by the consolidation of power by President Carlos Salinas, the privatization of telecoms and finance, along with a growing illusion that Mexico was on its way of becoming a regional economic power (Krauze, 1999a). By 1992, the administration's confidence was such that it managed to secure an alliance with the conservative National Action Party (PAN) in congress, to order the burning of the ballots of the 1988 presidential election, so no hard evidence of fraud could be ever revised. The ensuing years saw the signing of the NAFTA free-trade agreement with the U.S. and Canada, but its impact on the country's international outlook was largely undermined by the violent insurrection of the Zapatista Army of National

Liberation (EZLN) in the southernmost region of Chiapas in 1994. The guerilla declared war against the Mexican state and this resulted in a major blow to the Salinas administration and the government's credibility abroad. The armed uprising, along with two high profile kidnappings and the assassination of the PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, during the 1994 presidential election developed into a major political and financial crisis that left the economy in critical state.

By 1995, the newly inaugurated President, Ernesto Zedillo—last in a dynasty of PRI technocrats—was trying to tame the worst economic crisis in the country's history (Krauze, 1999b). And though Zedillo's policies eventually managed to stabilize the local currency and pulled the country out of the crisis (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018), two highly publicized massacres (*Acteal* and *Aguas Blancas*)[15] and a growing dissatisfaction with the government's authoritarian rule, led to the enactment of a number of reforms that ensured the autonomy and independence of the national electoral system in 1996-97. The following year, the PRI would lose its majority in congress for the first time in history.

It was in this context when Molotov released their debut album *¿Dónde Jugarán Las Niñas? [Where will the Girls Play?]*[16]*,* a polemic record filled with political critique, "toxic masculinity", and heavy rap-rock riffs (Hassan, 2017). The band impressed audiences as much as it disturbed them during its first live performances in Mexico, and they also knew no restraints when it came to expressing their angry anti-systemic views through black humor and recurring profanity in their lyrics (Rubio, 2012).

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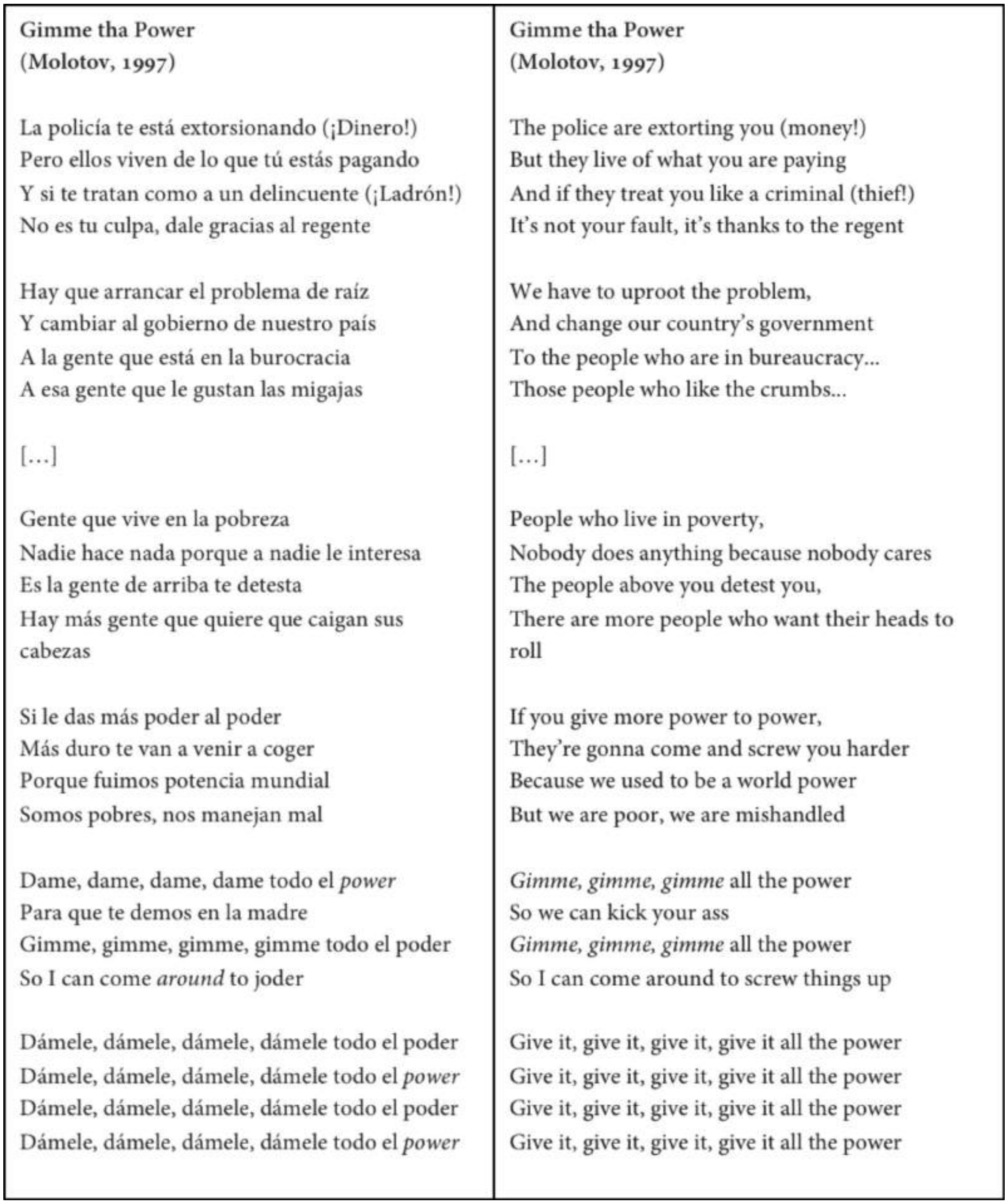
[15] For better reference of the Acteal and Aguas Blancas massacres, visit Moksnes (2004) and Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (1995).

[16] Molotov's *¿Dónde Jugarán las Niñas?* was also anti-establish statement in itself. The album's title was chosen to mock Maná's *¿Dónde Jugarán los Niños?* [Where will the Children play?] of 1992, a record by a local pop-rock band which was topping the charts with radio-friendly songs.

Although certainly not their most controversial song, “Gimme tha Power” became an anthem among the urban youths as the PRI-led government was starting to crumble by the late nineties.

Figure 3: Lyric extracts from “Gimme tha Power” by Molotov



Gimme tha Power **(Molotov, 1997)**	**Gimme tha Power** **(Molotov, 1997)**
La policía te está extorsionando (¡Dinero!)	The police are extorting you (money!)
Pero ellos viven de lo que tú estás pagando	But they live of what you are paying
Y si te tratan como a un delincuente (¡Ladrón!)	And if they treat you like a criminal (thief!)
No es tu culpa, dale gracias al regente	It’s not your fault, it’s thanks to the regent
Hay que arrancar el problema de raíz	We have to uproot the problem,
Y cambiar al gobierno de nuestro país	And change our country’s government
A la gente que está en la burocracia	To the people who are in bureaucracy...
A esa gente que le gustan las migajas	Those people who like the crumbs...
[…]	[…]
Gente que vive en la pobreza	People who live in poverty,
Nadie hace nada porque a nadie le interesa	Nobody does anything because nobody cares
Es la gente de arriba te detesta	The people above you detest you,
Hay más gente que quiere que caigan sus cabezas	There are more people who want their heads to roll
Si le das más poder al poder	If you give more power to power,
Más duro te van a venir a coger	They’re gonna come and screw you harder
Porque fuimos potencia mundial	Because we used to be a world power
Somos pobres, nos manejan mal	But we are poor, we are mishandled
Dame, dame, dame, dame todo el *power*	*Gimme, gimme, gimme* all the power
Para que te demos en la madre	So we can kick your ass
Gimme, gimme, gimme, gimme todo el poder	*Gimme, gimme, gimme* all the power
So I can come *around* to joder	So I can come around to screw things up
Dámele, dámele, dámele, dámele todo el poder	Give it, give it, give it, give it all the power
Dámele, dámele, dámele, dámele todo el *power*	Give it, give it, give it, give it all the power
Dámele, dámele, dámele, dámele todo el poder	Give it, give it, give it, give it all the power
Dámele, dámele, dámele, dámele todo el *power*	Give it, give it, give it, give it all the power

Source: AzLyrics (Molotov, 2018).

“Gimme tha Power” was released in a time of rapid social change. President Zedillo was well aware that a large majority of voters wanted free and fair elections, but the corporativist culture and corruption that his party had fostered during decades among unions and public institutions was still a major cause of widespread dissatisfaction. Violence and insecurity were also rising rapidly in the bigger cities and the Zapatista uprising was garnering international support (Krauze, 1999b).

The years prior to 2000 marked the beginning of the democratic transition in Mexico, but the mainstream media was still largely influenced by the government. Radio and TV stations were mostly bound by (auto)censorship, and the urban youths were reacting to the effects of economic and cultural globalization. In 1999-2000, a major student strike in the National Autonomous University, the largest public university in the country, left thousands of students without classes for months in response to a rise in tuition costs (Krauze, 1999c). By 2000, Zedillo would become the first civil president to relinquish power to an opposition candidate, Vicente Fox, from the right-wing National Action Party (PAN) (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018a).

Organization

According to music critics of the time (Julia E. Palacios; Moisés Palacios, personal communication, 2018) Molotov and other politically-motivated bands were more an exception than the norm in popular music, at least in Mexico City, where non-political pop culture received more media coverage. However, foreign musical acts with political associations like the Beastie Boys and Rage Against the Machine, as well as the angst-driven grunge bands of Seattle, were leaving their mark as part of a new countercultural sound identity in the country, particularly through outlets like MTV Latin America, youth radio stations, and record shops in major cities. This new countercultural youth movement proved to have a sectoral but profitable market in Mexico, which was given a boost by the debut of the first *Vive Latino* music festival in 1998—where Molotov participated along with Control Machete, a heavily politicized *hip-hop* trio from northern Mexico. The cultural and economic opening, along with the controversy which Molotov unleashed through their first record allowed singles like "Gimme tha Power" to spread rapidly across Hispanic America, even despite the high levels of censorship in mainstream media outlets:

> The principal thing it [music] brought, was a form of empathy that groups like Maldita Vecindad, El Tri, Café Tacvba, Molotov, and Jaime López, of course, provided. By denouncing, indeed, but more by creating bridges of identification between what the youth was living day to day and what those bands were signing.
>
> (Mariana Hernández, personal communication, February, 2018).

Legitimation

Molotov's intention with their first concerts and their debut album was not to create a political statement, but rather to express their members' frustrations in a creative way, mainly fueled by the decreasing living standards of the typical middle-class youngster. It was arguably this unintentional attitude that made Molotov appear as an authentic bottom-up music act which, in a way, gave a voice to many of the angry and disappointed youths who were entering an uncertain labor market:

> I remember that the word "crisis" was in all of my friends' houses, and in mine. Everybody was worried and asked "what is going to happen tomorrow? What is going to happen with our future? With people's properties?" It was like a generational bewilderment, and I think we started to transport that to music. There weren't a lot of means of communication to express one's ideas, and obviously rock n'roll has always been... a stage. It has always been the best way to let those kinds of frustrations out.

(Francisco "Paco" Ayala, personal communication, March, 2018).

Interestingly enough, Molotov has also developed a very loyal fan base in Russia despite the cultural barriers that the country imposed. According to Ayala, *Universal Music* chose them as artists of "global priority" during the late nineties given their success in Latin America and decided to release their records in Russia along with translations in local newspapers. This resulted in them having a particularly fierce following in the country during the last two decades, so much so that in 2012 the band released an album with live outtakes from their 2010 tour entitled *Desde Rusia con Amor* [From Russia with Love]:

> [...] Those dudes, just imagine, they connected with what we were saying in seconds! Russia, at least when we visited in 2000... wow! It was like being in *Tlatelolco*[17] in Mexico City. It had the dodgiest police force, the most corrupt one; street-level drug sales, people partying up and getting drunk to try... to forget a bit about the reality which was present in the country back then.
>
> (Francisco "Paco" Ayala, personal communication, March, 2018).

Performance

Molotov's performances were incendiary, irreverent and good—all at the same time. Their wardrobe was also unpretentious, but the band caught critics' attention because its four members sang indistinctively in English and Spanish (which made it popular among Mexican-Americans), had two bass players and its funky riffs were as danceable as they were cathartic.

Julia E. Palacios, was jury member in an early rock competition organized by *Coca-Cola* in 1996 (the former *Abierto Nacional Nacional de Rock* [National Rock Open]) and revealed how the band won the tournament despite the facts that the organizers were hesitant to award a group promoting explicit language:

---

[17] Tlatelolco is a district in Mexico City characterized by holding one of the largest apartment complexes in the city, but mostly for its tragic history since it was the site of the final conquest of the Aztecs by the Spanish, a student massacre of 1968, and the collapse on an entire housing block during the devastating 1985 earthquake. See Reed for more information (2015).

> The first place was given to a band that went out, and when they started to play the rest of the jury and I were absolutely star-struck. We said: "Bloody hell! Who are these *Molotov* guys?" They were simply against the system, against the government, against everything!
>
> (Julia E. Palacios, personal communication, April, 2018)

Arguably, there were a group of complementary elements besides the lyrics and the statements that the band expressed in interviews, which made the band political on so many levels. It is worth noting that when Vicente Fox won the Mexican presidency in 2000, he did so backed by a significant portion of voters aged 18-24 (Klesner, 2011). Whether these types of acts had influenced the democratic transition in Mexico by the end of the century, some experts suggest:

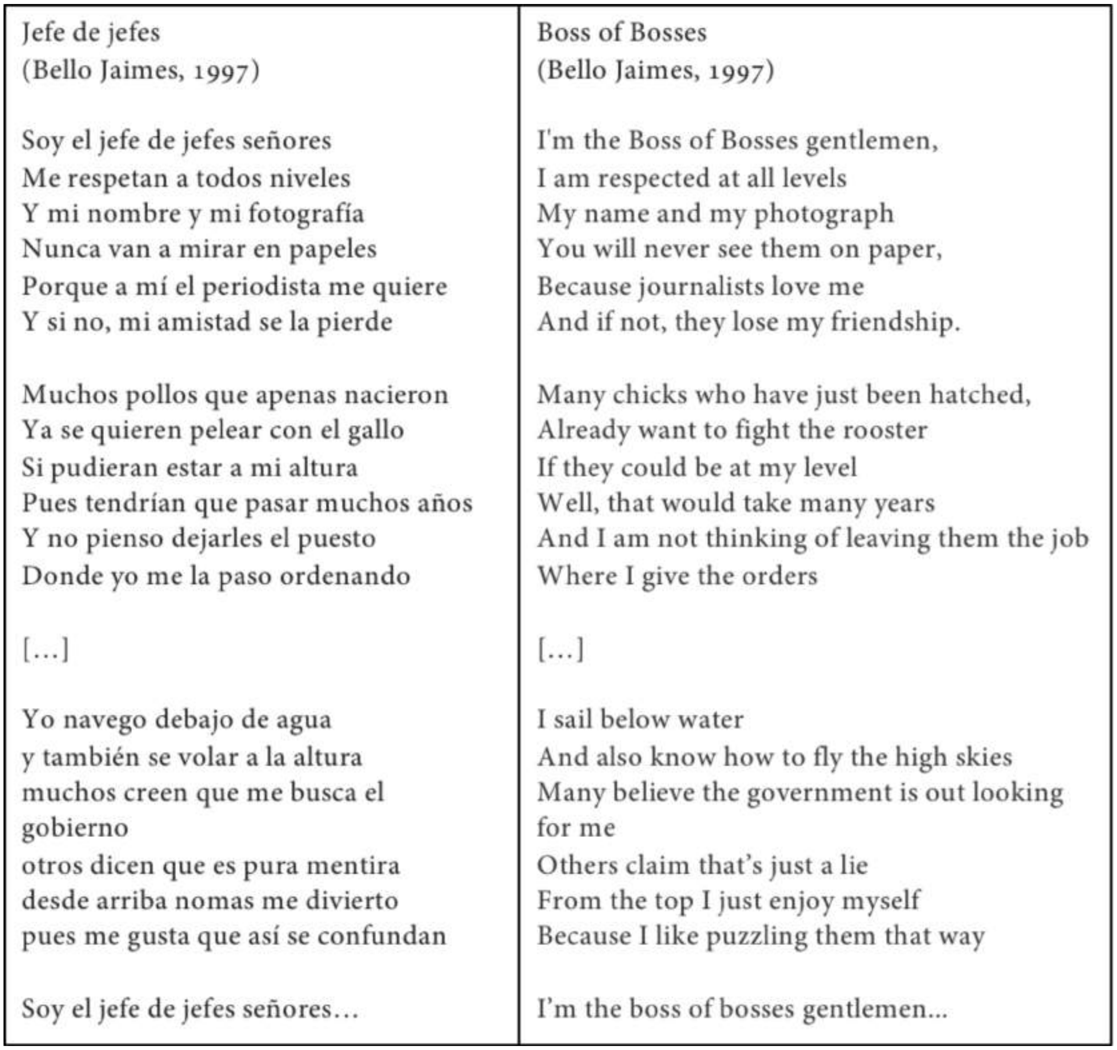
> [...] there was an artistic flowering that helped galvanize a larger current against a monopolized political culture. The problem is... this [was] happening right as neoliberalism starts taking over everything, and by the year 2000 it was harder to articulate what that was like, because U.S. and global media industries had saturated not just Mexico, but all of the Americas.
>
> (Josh Kun, personal interview, March, 2018).

> I personally think that the political change in people's minds started with the famous and *vulgar* crash of the system that gave the presidency, the most important position in a country, to Carlos Salinas [in 1988]. That was the watershed.
>
> (Sergio Félix, personal communication, March, 2018)

iii. "Jefe de Jefes": Los Tigres del Norte (1997)

Although drug-related violence wouldn't spike until the start of the Mexican Drug War in 2007 (Heinle, Rodríguez Ferreira, & Shirk, 2017), the increase in political rights in the country came alongside the popularization of the *Narcoculture* and drug ballads during the 1990s. Better known as *Narcocorrido,* the drug ballad appeared as early as the 1970s, but it has been often suggested that Los Tigres del Norte [The Tigers of the North]—a *Norteño* band from the northern state of Sinaloa—were the true pioneers of the genre by being the first popular act to glorify the lives and deeds of famous drug lords (Lara, 2004). This was done, albeit subtly, since no explicit reference to any particular kingpin is made in these songs, reason for which there is still an ongoing debate as to who exactly is the "Jefe de Jefes" [Boss of Bosses] who is mentioned in one of their most popular melodies:

Figure 4: Lyric extracts from "Jefe de Jefes" by Los Tigres del Norte



Jefe de jefes (Bello Jaimes, 1997)	Boss of Bosses (Bello Jaimes, 1997)
Soy el jefe de jefes señores	I'm the Boss of Bosses gentlemen,
Me respetan a todos niveles	I am respected at all levels
Y mi nombre y mi fotografía	My name and my photograph
Nunca van a mirar en papeles	You will never see them on paper,
Porque a mí el periodista me quiere	Because journalists love me
Y si no, mi amistad se la pierde	And if not, they lose my friendship.
Muchos pollos que apenas nacieron	Many chicks who have just been hatched,
Ya se quieren pelear con el gallo	Already want to fight the rooster
Si pudieran estar a mi altura	If they could be at my level
Pues tendrían que pasar muchos años	Well, that would take many years
Y no pienso dejarles el puesto	And I am not thinking of leaving them the job
Donde yo me la paso ordenando	Where I give the orders
[…]	[…]
Yo navego debajo de agua	I sail below water
y también se volar a la altura	And also know how to fly the high skies
muchos creen que me busca el gobierno	Many believe the government is out looking for me
otros dicen que es pura mentira	Others claim that's just a lie
desde arriba nomas me divierto	From the top I just enjoy myself
pues me gusta que así se confundan	Because I like puzzling them that way
Soy el jefe de jefes señores…	I'm the boss of bosses gentlemen...

Source: AzLyrics .(Bello, 2018)

Organization

Despite the stark increase in drug-related violence in the past decade (Angel, 2018), the so-called *narcoculture* has nonetheless become an increasingly popular subject in films, music and other types of media (Grillo, 2016; Miranda, 2014). Los Tigres del Norte are one of the most successful Spanish-speaking acts in both the United States and Mexico; and though their songs have touched on multiple subjects since their appearance in the late 1960s, the group has been able to capitalize a growing fascination for the extravagant and luxurious lifestyles of some of the most notorious drug lords. For this reason, songs like "Contrabando y Traición" [Contraband and Betrayal] (1972), "La Reina del Sur" [The Queen of the South] (2002), and "La Granja" [The Farm] (2010) have become best-selling singles. Groups like Los Tigres del Norte have become so popular, that by 1999 the demand for *banda* and *norteño* had made of these genres the most profitable types of music in Spanish-speaking Los Angeles (Josh Kun, personal interview, March, 2018). Los Tigres del Norte are also one of the most profitable acts in popular music in Spanish at the time of writing.

Legitimation

The influence of *norteño* bands has been such in promoting the drug ballad, that several states in northern Mexico have adopted policies to ban the *narcocorrido*, along with strict penalties to musicians who perform songs exalting drug-related violence out of fear that these songs desensitize fans and undermine the fight against organized crime (BBC News, 2017). It is arguably for this, their longevity and commercial success, that Los Tigres del Norte could be considered to have a noticeably legitimacy as politically-influential figures:

> In the state of Sinaloa, the *narcocorrido* has been censored. As a matter of fact, I recently played in a [public] event, and had to sign a contract where I claimed that I would not play any drug ballads.
>
> (Casimiro Zamudio, personal communication, March, 2018)

Performance

The *norteño* music of Los Tigres del Norte falls into a genre that found its roots in the European *polka* after these sounds migrated to the Americas (Erichsen, 2017; Reyna, 1988). Lyrics aside, the band's songs (and titles like "Jefe de Jefes" particularly) are festive and cathartic, but they also allow the listener to feel a sense of empowerment by making the person dance while feeling like he or she is, indeed, the *boss of bosses*—at least for a few moments. The song's upbeat nature, accordion harmonies and high-pitched vocals make it seemingly easy for the audience to identify themselves with a powerful figure—a drug kingpin in this case—who celebrates its position as a ruthless anti-hero.

Germany (1988-2000)

Despite the reformist vision that was adopted by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, the inefficiencies of a command economy, stagnant growth and internal political opposition started to shake the foundations of the Soviet Union and undermined the Kremlin's influence over East Germany and other communist states behind the Iron Curtain by the mid-eighties (Johnston, 2016; Marples, 2004; Strayer, 1998). Glasnost and Perestroika were implemented to revitalize the Soviet political and economic apparatus, while at the same time allowing for greater transparency freedom of expression (McMahon & Zeiler, 2012). Though Gorbachev sought to cut the union's defense budget and reduce its overseas commitments (Keller, 1989), these measures would prove incapable of preventing the eventual demise of the USSR as Moscow started to lose its grip in the region.

West Germany on the other hand was reaping the benefits of its *Wirtschaftswunder,* the "economic miracle" which the country had achieved after decades of steady growth during the post-war era (bpb, 2018). Helmut Kohl, a veteran from the Christian-democratic CDU party, had become West Germany's new head of state only a few years earlier (1982), and in the next years of his mandate he would foster his country's transatlantic relations, the rapprochement with France through a series of subtle diplomatic measures (Wentker, 2017), and the continuation of the policy of détente towards the states of the Eastern bloc (Bundesregierung, 2017).

By 1988-89 however, social unrest was building up behind the Iron Curtain. A number of Baltic states started a series of peaceful demonstrations which quickly spread to other communist countries in the region, including East Germany. It is worth noting that the three Baltic countries where mass dissent was first produced during this time (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) all pursued their own political independence through a series of non-violent mobilizations that were galvanized by mass-singing demonstrations. This suggests that the popular folk music that was sung at the time played a significant role as a catalyst for these revolutions, a phenomenon worthy of analysis in its own right (Smidchens, 2014).

By June, 1989, a reformist government in Hungary opened a hole in the Iron Curtain by removing its border fence with Austria, allowing thousands of East Germans to flee to the West (Brautlecht, 2009). This would be the beginning of the end for the Soviet project, and the first step towards the German reunification, something which was unfathomable for most Germans at the time, and even more so for the international community (DW, 2017).

(Analysis continued on the next page).

iv. “Freiheit”: (1987)

The context above broadly describes the stark sociopolitical tensions when Marius Müller-Westernhagen (better known as “Westernhagen”) released the song “Freiheit” as one of the singles in *Westernhagen*, an eponymous album, in September of 1987. Although the record eventually received the gold certification (Müller-Westernhagen, 2018a), it wasn’t until the fall of the Berlin wall and the reunification that the song gained momentum and people started to think of the tune as the hymn for a new, united Germany.

Organization

Müller-Westernhagen (1948) was quick to start an acting and singing career during his youth in West Germany. He made his first commercial breakthrough by the end 1970s through his first studio albums and eventually became one of Germany’s most beloved musicians with more than 11.2 million records sold (Eventim, 2018). Artists like him, however, could only have thrived commercially because of a consolidated music industry that had developed greatly in the post-war era, under the principles of the capitalist free enterprise in the west (C.A.A.M.A., 2014). On the other hand, popular and easy-listening music was only distributed in East Germany through the state-owned label *Amiga*, which exercised a tight control in the records that were allowed to be sold and didn’t hesitate to remove tracks which criticized or opposed the principles of the GDR (Ronald Born, personal communication, March, 2018).

Westernhagen’s music became popular because of this existing infrastructure for the distribution and consumption of pop and rock music in West Germany. Songs like

"Freiheit" would later be adopted by the general German public after the fall of the Berlin Wall as the free market entered the former GDR.

Figure 5: Lyric extracts from "Freiheit" by Westernhagen

Freiheit (Müller-Westernhagen)	**Freedom** (Müller-Westernhagen)
Die Verträge sind gemacht	The contracts have been made
Und es wurde viel gelacht	Lots of Laughter in the streets
Und was Süßes zum Dessert	And for dessert something sweet
Freiheit, Freiheit	Freedom, freedom
Die Kapelle, rum-ta-ta	The band played rum-ta-ta
Und der Papst war auch schon da	And even the Pope was there
Und mein Nachbar vorneweg	And my neighbor ahead of everybody
Freiheit, Freiheit	Freedom, freedom
Ist die einzige, die fehlt	Is the only missing thing
Freiheit, Freiheit	Freedom, freedom
Ist die einzige, die fehlt	Is the only missing thing
[…]	[...]
Alle, die von Freiheit träumen	All of those who dream of freedom
Sollen's Feiern nicht versäumen	Should not fail to celebrate
Sollen tanzen, auch auf Gräbern	Should dance, even over graves
Freiheit, Freiheit	Freedom, freedom
Ist das einzige, was zählt	Is all that counts
Freiheit, Freiheit	Freedom, freedom
Ist das einzige, was zählt...	Is all that counts ...

Source: Songtexte.com (Müller-Westernhagen, 2018b)

Legitimation

Müller-Westernhagen didn't mean to do a song about reunification when he wrote the lyrics for "Freiheit". The singer has revealed on several occasions that the song—mostly unnoticed upon its release in 1987—was actually inspired by the French Revolution during a sightseeing trip to Paris (Borcholte, 2016). But it was the German people who later appropriated it and used it as a hymn for reunification:

> I didn't think about the meaning of the song at the time. I didn't have the fall of the wall or the reunification in mind. "Freiheit" shows that artistic products can take a life of their own. And in this case, the song empowered and gave hope to people. That is a happy circumstance that gives me great pleasure.

(Müller-Westernhagen, 2016)

But in spite of the accidental impact of "Freiheit", one could attribute the legitimacy of Müller-Westernhagen to his longevity on stage, particularly because he had sung in German since the start of his career, when a fair amount of West German acts were trying to achieve international recognition by singing in English (Schütte, 2017). In addition, the singer stopped performing "Freiheit" altogether, since he felt that a song which had a special meaning for so many people shouldn't be brought into a commercial loop. It wasn't until 2016 that he decided to revive the song as part of an acoustic live album since he felt that it was up-to-date with the current political world situation: "You just have to look at the news today and see: It fits again" (Müller-Westernhagen cited in Kuschel, 2017).

All of the above could also explain why "Freiheit" is generally regarded as a more authentic and legitimate call for unity than "Looking for Freedom", David Hasselhoff's hit-single, which topped the German charts during the spring of 1989, and is oftentimes associated—albeit controversially—with the Fall of the Berlin wall (NPR, 2014).

> The Hasselhoff tune is the most cartoonish of them in a *Schlager*[18] sense. The singer, in addition to that, a second-rate TV actor… just about everything about that song screams hilariousness and awkwardness. Westernhagen on the other hand, was an established and respected figurehead of German rock music at that time, same goes for the Scorpions.

(Andreas Borcholte, personal communication, May, 2018).

Performance

Lastly, "Freiheit" is a short piano-ballad with simple elements and a straight-forward chord progression. But this, along with Westernhagen's cautious treatment use of the song, seems to be what has made it so resistant to time and so memorable for the thousands of people who, as of 2018, still associate the song with the idea of a reunified Germany.

---

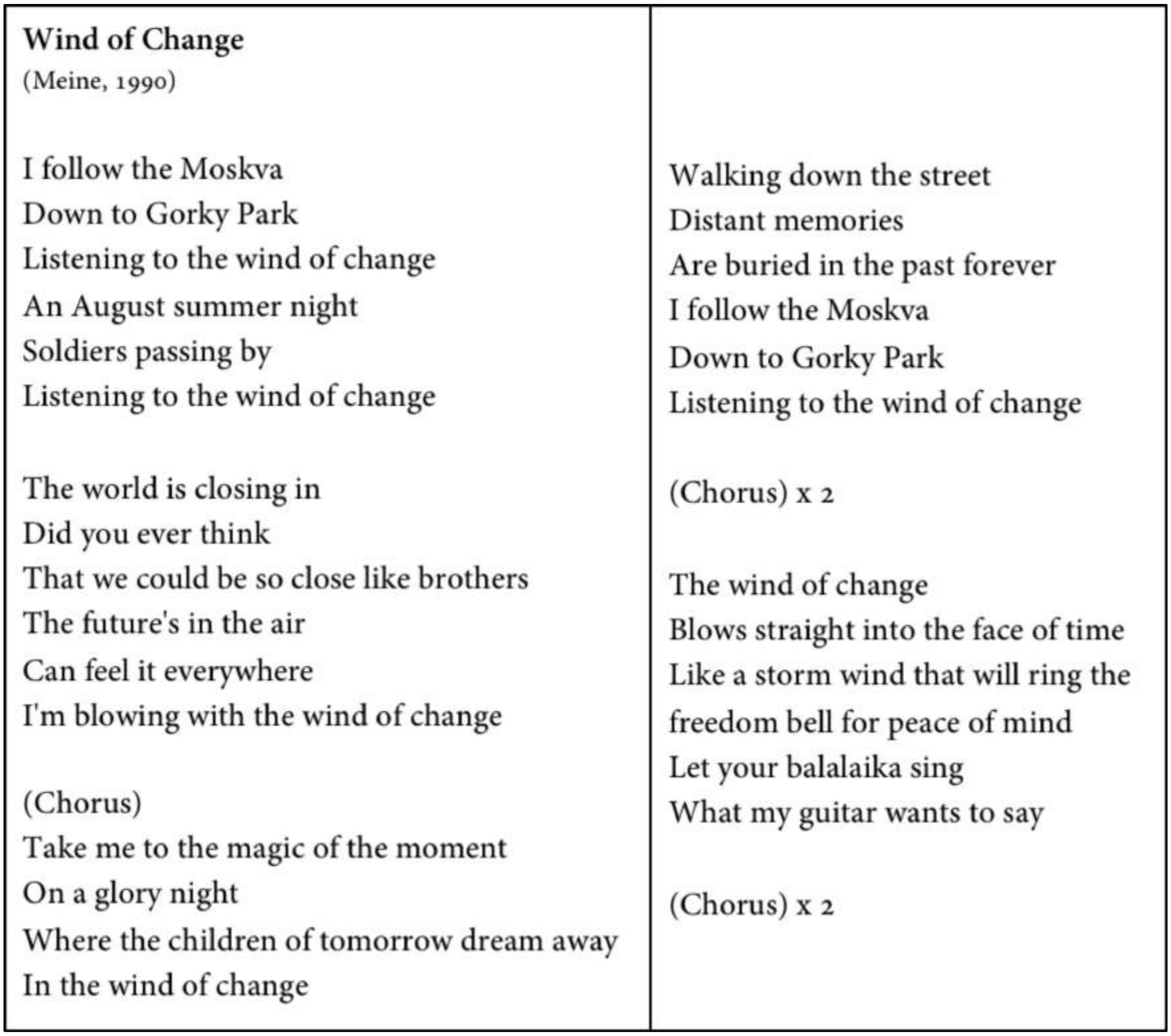
[18] The term "Schlager" refers to a popular music style in Central and Northern Europe, which involves catchy melodies, a danceable 4/4 beat and simple pop vocals that tend to be commercially-oriented and often deal with romantic love or enthusiastic feelings (Raykoff & Deam Tobin, 2007; Schütte, 2017). German female singers like the Helene Fischer and Andrea Berg are perfect examples of the *Schlager* genre and their songs are commonly heard in party settings and other celebrations.

v. “Wind of Change”: Scorpions (1990)

Though the reforms brought by Glasnost and Perestroika were driving drastic change within the Soviet Union, by 1988 western popular music was still tightly controlled and any other acts that promoted political dissent were simply forbidden by the state, particularly in Russia, were those who wanted to listen to music from outside of the Soviet Bloc had to purchase black-market copies or make their own home-made tapes when possible (some bootlegs in earlier on had even been recorded in materials as varied as discarded X-ray copies from hospitals [Rauth, 1982]).

Klaus Meine, singer in the German hard rock band Scorpions, recalled in an interview how western rock music seemed to have been a critical influence among the Soviet youths, through two visits to the Russian Federation during their 1988-1989 tour. Meine remembered “opening the door” for other western acts in the Soviet Union after playing ten sold-out shows in April of 1988 in Leningrad, still under strict surveillance by Moscow’s KGB. He claimed that the government was initially very reluctant to let the band play in Moscow that year, fearing that it could spark an uprising among the large fan-base that they had in the USSR and who attended the concerts (Klaus Meine, personal communication, February 2018).

Figure 6: Lyric extracts from "Wind of Change" by Scorpions



Wind of Change
(Meine, 1990)

I follow the Moskva
Down to Gorky Park
Listening to the wind of change
An August summer night
Soldiers passing by
Listening to the wind of change

The world is closing in
Did you ever think
That we could be so close like brothers
The future's in the air
Can feel it everywhere
I'm blowing with the wind of change

(Chorus)
Take me to the magic of the moment
On a glory night
Where the children of tomorrow dream away
In the wind of change

Walking down the street
Distant memories
Are buried in the past forever
I follow the Moskva
Down to Gorky Park
Listening to the wind of change

(Chorus) x 2

The wind of change
Blows straight into the face of time
Like a storm wind that will ring the
freedom bell for peace of mind
Let your balalaika sing
What my guitar wants to say

(Chorus) x 2

Source: AzLyrics (Meine, 2018)

> I think never before we felt so much like being a band from Germany, simply because of the fact that our parents' generation, they were in war with Russia and the whole world. And to go there and play shows… and to be welcomed with open arms and treated so nicely… they really welcomed us with open arms.

(Klaus Meine, personal communication, February 2018)

According to Meine, there was such a thirst for rock and heavy music in Russia at the time, that Scorpions were invited once more, along with other major western bands, to play at the *Moscow Music Peace Festival* in August of 1989. The response of the 200,000 listeners and the change in the authorities' attitude allegedly reflected the inevitable opening of the Soviet Union:

> The moment we all went on a boat from the *Ukraina* hotel to Gorky park for another press conference in Moscow, before the concert... All of those musicians from all over the world, Americans, Russians, Germans... MTV, journalists, music journalists, Red Army soldiers. Everybody in this boat, it was like a vision. The whole world in a boat and everybody talks the same language, music. I think this was the moment that inspired me to write "Wind of Change" when I came back home a week or two later.

(Klaus Meine, personal communication, February 2018)

Organization

"Wind of Change" was certainly successful in conveying the feeling of transformation and unity that Meine and the rest of the crowd felt during the two nights of the *Moscow Music Peace Festival* in 1989. The song would become a massive hit briefly afterwards, selling more than 15 million copies (Bienstock, 2015) and would be voted the "song of the century" by the viewers of the German television network ZDF in 2005 (MusikWoche, 2005). The band also released a version of the song in Russian under the name "Ветер перемен" [The Wind of Change] in Russian, and another one in Spanish as "Vientos de Cambio" [Winds of Change] to make sure their message reached a worldwide audience. The song, however, would have probably not have had such a profound impact among its listeners in the former Eastern Bloc had it not been for the massive liking for western rock music—along with the entry of new distributions channels and new types of media that came along with the demise of the Soviet Union.

Legitimation

The Scorpions were seemingly regarded across the former Eastern Bloc as true representatives of a new generation of Germans who were trying to reconnect with the youth at a global level and promote new means of understanding through rock music. Surely, the band was not trying to motivate people to support a specific government policy, but songs like "Wind of Change" arguably fostered the idea of a new world order, in which people could be "so close, like brothers" (Meine, 2018).

Performance

This dimension in the Scorpions is perhaps best understood through energy that they transmitted through the rest of their hard-rock repertoire, with most of their songs including fast guitar-riffs and high-pitched vocals. Genres like *hard rock* promote a sense of youthful liberation and empower millions of young listeners throughout the world (Dunn & Madyen, 2007). The power-ballad "Wind of Change" was likely no exception. Live performances of the song, like the one which the band played in 2011 to commemorate Mikhail Gorbachev's 80th birthday at the Royal Albert Hall of London, seem to express a unifying sentiment even if no attention is paid to the song's lyrics.

> I believe that music still has the power to be part… to motivate change. I'm not saying that a song can change the world—No, no, no. But to be part of a vibe… music will always or can always have the power for [shaping] a more positive or a more peaceful world because of what it is: it's free, creative spirit. It's behind every piece of music.

(Klaus Meine, personal communication, February 2018)

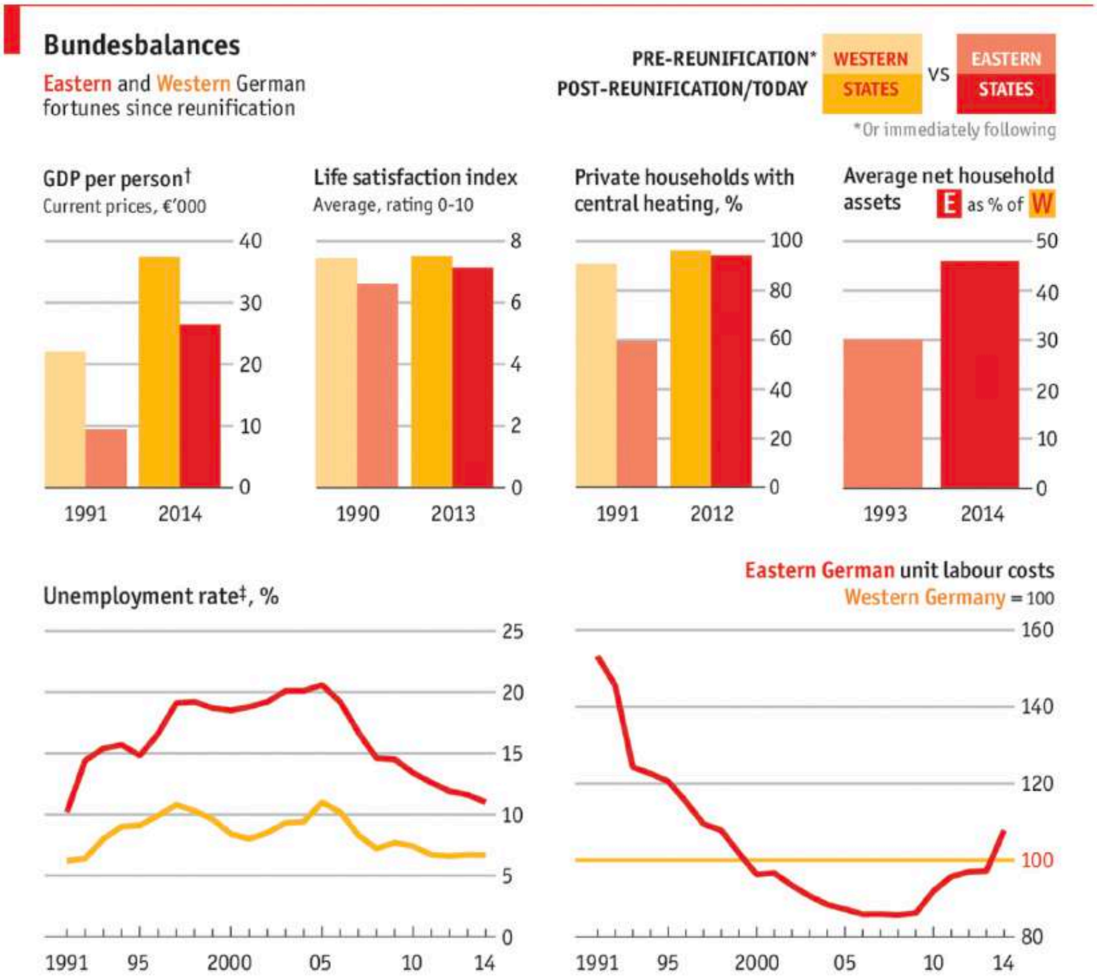
(Analysis continued on the next page).

vi. “Schrei Nach Liebe”: Die Ärzte (1993)

Despite the positive outlook that the German reunification and the downfall of the Soviet Union brought in 1990-91, many people in the former GDR felt like the economic integration of the two Germanys had failed to deliver its promise (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018b; Kinzer, 1991). The transition from socialist to market economy imposed significant hardship on East Germany, where job losses and unemployment remained significantly higher than in the west. In consequence, the 1990s saw a rise in right-wing extremist crimes (RECs) throughout the country, but particularly in the former socialist regions of the east (Falk, Kuhn, & Zweimüller, 2011). In September 1991, a group of asylum seekers was attacked inside their homes in Hoyerswerda, a town in the state of Saxony, and other violent xenophobic riots ensued in 1992-93 in Rostock-Lichtenhagen and Solingen, respectively; the latter leaving a death toll of five people.

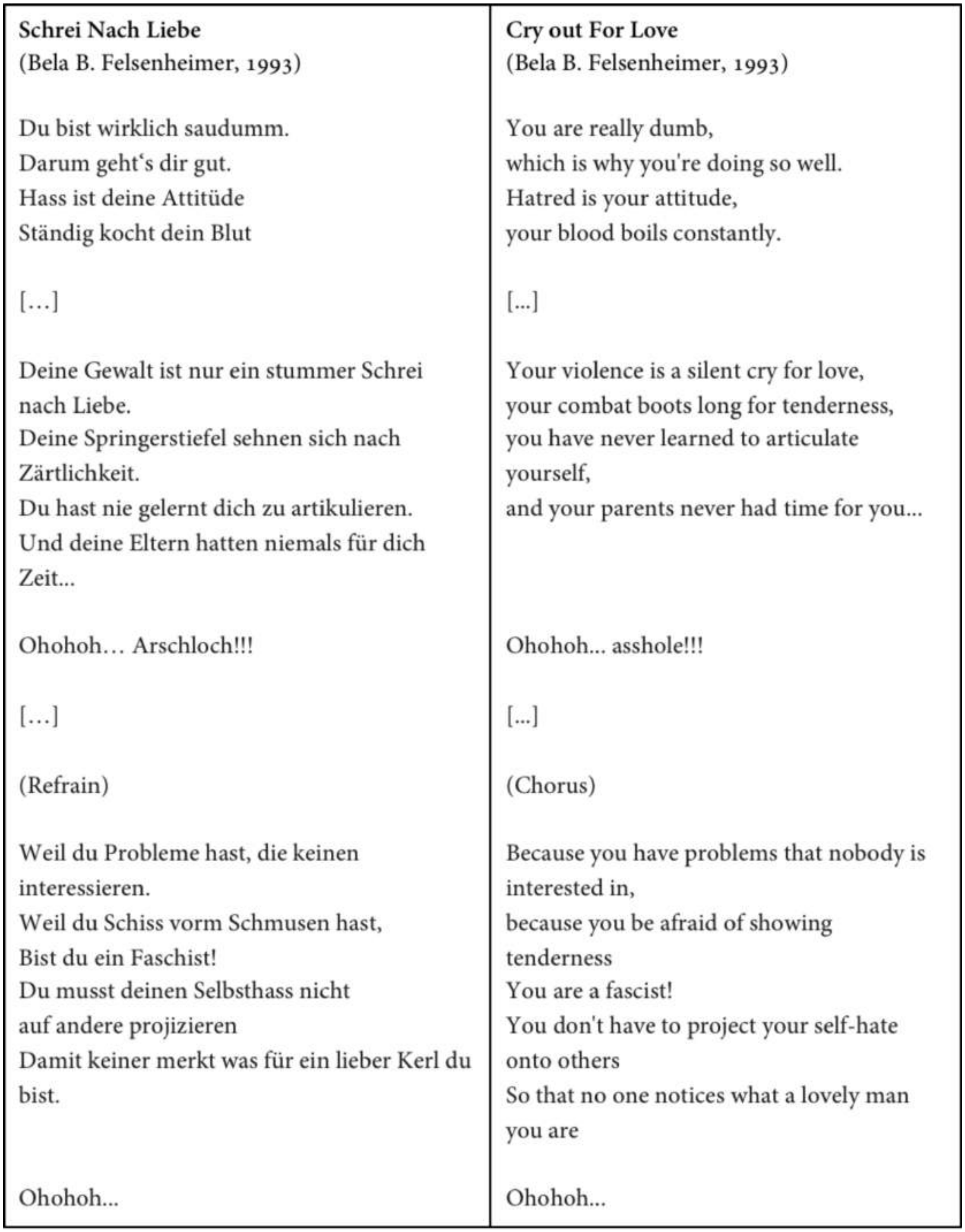
These violent episodes would only increase throughout the decade: More than 10,000 RECs were officially registered in Germany between 1996-1999, with 65 per cent of cases being committed against foreigners (Falk et al., 2011). Additionally, the incidence of these hate crimes was 50 percent higher in eastern than western states, mainly in response to rising unemployment and bad labor market conditions. And although this phenomenon was not solely limited to Germany, it quickly brought new social tensions in the reunified country. This was the context in which the German punk band Die Ärzte [The Doctors] released their 1993 single “Schrei nach Liebe” [Scream for Love], an anti-fascist song which became the band’s first top-10 hit (Frohner, 2015).

Figure 7: Economic Outlook in East and West Germany 1990-2015



Source: The Economist | The Data Team (2015)

Figure 8: Lyric extracts from “Schrei Nach Liebe” by Die Ärzte



Schrei Nach Liebe (Bela B. Felsenheimer, 1993)	**Cry out For Love** (Bela B. Felsenheimer, 1993)
Du bist wirklich saudumm. Darum geht‘s dir gut. Hass ist deine Attitüde Ständig kocht dein Blut	You are really dumb, which is why you're doing so well. Hatred is your attitude, your blood boils constantly.
[…]	[...]
Deine Gewalt ist nur ein stummer Schrei nach Liebe. Deine Springerstiefel sehnen sich nach Zärtlichkeit. Du hast nie gelernt dich zu artikulieren. Und deine Eltern hatten niemals für dich Zeit...	Your violence is a silent cry for love, your combat boots long for tenderness, you have never learned to articulate yourself, and your parents never had time for you...
Ohohoh… Arschloch!!!	Ohohoh... asshole!!!
[…]	[...]
(Refrain)	(Chorus)
Weil du Probleme hast, die keinen interessieren. Weil du Schiss vorm Schmusen hast, Bist du ein Faschist! Du musst deinen Selbsthass nicht auf andere projizieren Damit keiner merkt was für ein lieber Kerl du bist.	Because you have problems that nobody is interested in, because you be afraid of showing tenderness You are a fascist! You don't have to project your self-hate onto others So that no one notices what a lovely man you are
Ohohoh...	Ohohoh...

Source: Genius Lyrics (Die Ärzte, 2018)

Organization

“Schrei Nach Liebe” caused widespread controversy because of its mention of the word *Arschloch* [“Asshole”], but eventually managed to get sufficient airplay in the media after Lidia Antonini, an editor at German broadcaster *Hessischer Rundfunk*, made an open plea in favor of the song in consideration its message against xenophobic violence (Frohner, 2015). This, along with Germany’s taste for rock-derived music and the general disapproval of neo-Nazi movements among the population, likely created the proper conditions for such a bold composition to thrive for so many years since its initial release.

Legitimation

The band’s working-class origins and earlier studio albums likely gave them the credibility to send a counteractive message from to the white-power music movement that had developed since the early eighties in Germany (Taler, 2012). “Schrei Nach Liebe” almost seems to suggest that a punk can be both anti-systemic and equally tolerant towards social-minorities, a message reinforced by the band’s mocking of *Störkraft* and the *Böhse Onkelz*, two well-known German white-power bands, mid-song.

In 2015 this song topped the charts once more after the music teacher Gerhard Torges decided to use the song as part of the *Aktion Arschloch* [“Operation Asshole”] campaign, through which he sought to raise awareness against the rising xenophobia in Germany as a result of the European migrant crisis of that year (Torges, 2015).

> It’s liberating to just shout out “Arschloch” in the faces of the *baddies* and denounce them as the crybabies that they really are. But those leftist-liberal Germans listening to Die Ärzte have always been aware of racism and white power tendencies in the Neo-Nazi scene. The shocking element for all Germans was the realization that there was so much hatred against minorities and foreigners in the eastern German areas.
>
> (Andreas Borcholte, personal communication, May, 2018).

Performance

An important component that further emphasized die Ärzte’s message was the appearance of a group of skinheads, who are disarmed and embraced by two children, one white and the other dark-skinned. Along with the anti-Nazi messages with which the band often introduces the song during its live performances, the aggressive nature of is refrain and the built-up tension in the chorus seems to function like a cathartic exercise which seems to appeal to liberal audiences, particularly the young and liberal.

Born in the GDR: Springsteen in Berlin-Weißensee

An additional event I considered analyzing was Bruce Springsteen's concert of 1988 in East Berlin, which seems to have been a relevant political catalyst among youth of the youth of the GDR before the fall of the Berlin wall—even despite not being the first western rock concert in East Germany.

By 1987-88, a limited number of western artist of the likes of Bob Dylan, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers, Joe Cocker and Depeche mode (Kirschbaum, 2013) were starting to play in East Berlin as the result of a new cultural agenda with which the state was trying to reconnect with an increasingly disenchanted youth that was finding identification through rock, pop and dance music from the west after decades of selective censorship (Spiegel Online, 2008):

> There was an official regulation for DJs in GDR nightclubs, which said that only 40% of the music played could come from the west, while 60% had to come from the GDR, Poland, and the Soviet Union. That was official policy. But nobody could really abide by it, one would have never danced in the discos if there would have been 60% eastern music!

(Ronald Born, personal communication, March, 2018).

After several failed attempts, Springsteen's manager Jon Landau was finally allowed in 1988 to bring the singer and his E-Street Band to play a concert for more than 160,000 people (the largest in the history of the GDR) in the borough of Berlin-Weißensee. Springsteen, who had wanted to play in the east since his visit to Western Europe in 1981 was not informed that the local authorities had branded the event

"Concert for Nicaragua", erroneously believing that the singer was a supporter of the Sandinista movement during the Nicaraguan Revolution (Kirschbaum, 2013). After hours of disagreement, Springsteen decided to carry on with the concert under the condition that the phrase be removed from the billboards of the venue (Hans-Peter Bushoff, personal communication, March, 2018). This, despite constant surveillance by the STASI[19], encouraged the singer to give a small anti-wall speech in German after playing "Born in the U.S.A.", a track which had been massively successful after its release in the GDR by the state-owned AMIGA record label:

> It's great to be in East Berlin. I'm not for or against any government. I came here to play rock 'n' roll for you, in the hope that one day all *barriers* will be torn down.
>
> (Bruce Springsteen, cited in Kirschbaum, 2013)

> It's in pretty bad German but the people close to the stage understood it. And then right after he read the little speech he played "Chimes of Freedom" from Bob Dylan to really ram the point home. [...] I think, historically, that's a remarkable moment because here's this American guy, on the stage, in East Berlin, in 1988, at the end of the Cold War, giving a speech against the wall. If you ask me, that's a lot more powerful and courageous than what Ronald Reagan did on the west side of the Berlin Wall, or what John F. Kennedy did in West Berlin.

(Erik Kirschbaum, personal communication, March, 2018)

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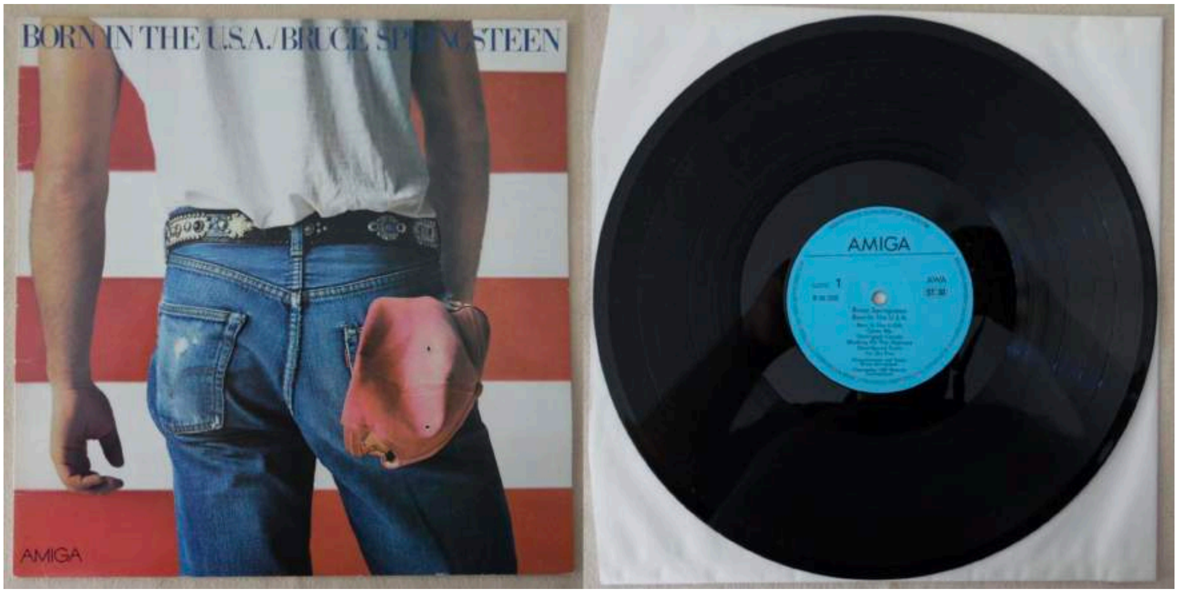
[19] The STASI [Ministry for State Security] was the secret police agency of the GDR and was characterized by being one of the most repressive and effective secret police agencies in history (Cameron, 2018).

Figure 9: Pressing of Born in the U.S.A. [1986]: released through AMIGA



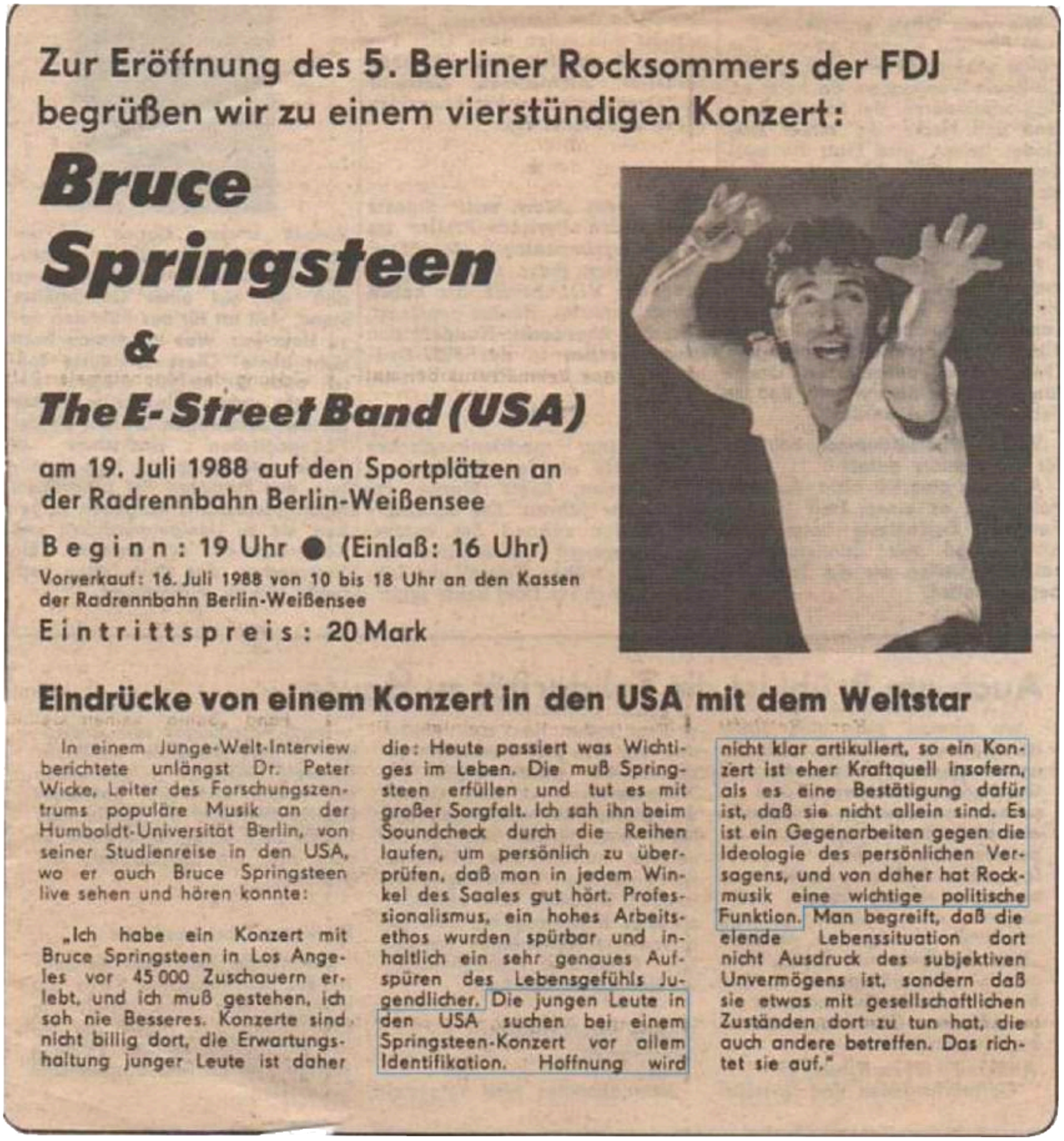
Source: Hoeskstra & Hamelink (2018)

Springsteen's concert was, allegedly, one of the most memorable cultural acts in the history of East Germany because it reached hundreds of thousands of young people who found in Springsteen a figure that reinforced their detachment from the old GDR values, but also because the singer's charismatic performance conveyed an enduring sense of liberation (Hans-Peter Bushoff, personal communication, March, 2018); so much so that it was later known that the local authorities were initially wary of the concert inspiring a revolution (Spiegel Online, 2009).

Days before the event, Dr. Peter Wicke, a renowned German researcher on popular music from the former GDR and current lecturer at the Humboldt University of Berlin, publicly shared his experience after seeing one of Bruce Springsteen's concerts in the U.S., feeling that the singer's performance was having a visible political effect among the youth:

> Young people in the USA look for identification, above all, during Bruce Springsteen's concerts. In them, hope is not explicitly articulated, but they are rather a source of power by showing them [the youth] that they are not alone. It is a counterforce against the ideology of personal failure, and therefore rock music has an important political function.
>
> (Wicke, 1988, cited in Junge Welt, 1988)

Figure 10: A GDR Review of Bruce Springsteen's 1988 World Tour



Zur Eröffnung des 5. Berliner Rocksommers der FDJ begrüßen wir zu einem vierstündigen Konzert:

Bruce Springsteen

&

The E-Street Band (USA)

am 19. Juli 1988 auf den Sportplätzen an der Radrennbahn Berlin-Weißensee

Beginn: 19 Uhr ● (Einlaß: 16 Uhr)

Vorverkauf: 16. Juli 1988 von 10 bis 18 Uhr an den Kassen der Radrennbahn Berlin-Weißensee

Eintrittspreis: 20 Mark

Eindrücke von einem Konzert in den USA mit dem Weltstar

In einem Junge-Welt-Interview berichtete unlängst Dr. Peter Wicke, Leiter des Forschungszentrums populäre Musik an der Humboldt-Universität Berlin, von seiner Studienreise in den USA, wo er auch Bruce Springsteen live sehen und hören konnte:

„Ich habe ein Konzert mit Bruce Springsteen in Los Angeles vor 45 000 Zuschauern erlebt, und ich muß gestehen, ich sah nie Besseres. Konzerte sind nicht billig dort, die Erwartungshaltung junger Leute ist daher die: Heute passiert was Wichtiges im Leben. Die muß Springsteen erfüllen und tut es mit großer Sorgfalt. Ich sah ihn beim Soundcheck durch die Reihen laufen, um persönlich zu überprüfen, daß man in jedem Winkel des Saales gut hört. Professionalismus, ein hohes Arbeitsethos wurden spürbar und inhaltlich ein sehr genaues Aufspüren des Lebensgefühls Jugendlicher. Die jungen Leute in den USA suchen bei einem Springsteen-Konzert vor allem Identifikation. Hoffnung wird nicht klar artikuliert, so ein Konzert ist eher Kraftquell insofern, als es eine Bestätigung dafür ist, daß sie nicht allein sind. Es ist ein Gegenarbeiten gegen die Ideologie des persönlichen Versagens, und von daher hat Rockmusik eine wichtige politische Funktion. Man begreift, daß die elende Lebenssituation dort nicht Ausdruck des subjektiven Unvermögens ist, sondern daß sie etwas mit gesellschaftlichen Zuständen dort zu tun hat, die auch andere betreffen. Das richtet sie auf."

Source: Junge Welt (1988). Courtesy: Ronald Born.

Highlighted paragraphs are my own addition to mark relevant quotes in original.

Though it is impossible to know in what measure Springsteen's appearance had an impact on the GDR youth, experts who have studied that particular performance believe it was a cultural watershed that contributed to the series of changes that would eventually bring down the Berlin wall:

> What is beyond doubt is that Springsteen's 1988 concert in East Berlin is a glorious example of the influence that rock 'n' roll can have on people who are hungry and ready for change[20]. [...] I think that people in East Berlin in 1988 were so open and ready for his message, that I think it did had a powerful impact.
>
> (Erik Kirschbaum, personal communication, March, 2018)

Ronald Born (1965), a GDR citizen from Jena who was part of the crowd that night, believes that Springsteen did not transform the youth's political opinions, partly due to the language barriers of the time, but also because a large part of them had already turned their backs on the state's foundational beliefs, and because the youngest ones were keener on listening to dance music that had no political references:

> People who grew up with western music from 1965 and on weren't youngsters by 1980, they had already grown up and were adults. The youth at the time of the Bruce Springsteen didn't find that music as significant, they were listening to Depeche Mode, whatever was in at the time, electro, techno... music that was no longer in the political realm. The

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[20] Quote edited to match Kirschbaum's original idea in "Rocking the Wall" (Kirschbaum, 2013, p.11). German media coverage and first-hand accounts of Springsteen's tour in of 1988 can be found via https://tinyurl.com/y7b7edjs (Kieler24143, 2018) and https://tinyurl.com/y8bnm47o (Connect-ed, 2018).

> young people of 1980 and 1990 were more interested in dance music, whereas my generation had interpreted music a lot more and tried to lead a life through it. That wasn't the case in the later generations.
>
> (Ronald Born, personal communication, March, 2018).

Springsteen's massive concert, however, did seem to reaffirm the youth's support for a more liberal and open GDR, which would cease to exist briefly afterwards. Born also stated that the entry of this of western music and these first live events were an important component for the promotion of social integration after the fall of the Berlin wall:

> After the reunification, when one was interested in a particular sort of music and encountered someone from the other side, it formed a basis to reach out and come closer: "Oh, you are also a Bob Dylan fan! Let's go to a concert together then, let's drink a beer". Through music one could connect with people from the other side, with which one would have never gotten in touch, no doubt about it. It was people who had the same interest in music, who found about each other rather quickly, that was definitely an effect.
>
> (Ronald Born, personal communication, March, 2018).

Analyzing Springsteen's 1988 concert in the GDR under Street et al.'s three-dimensional approach, one can suggest that the event had a visible political effect among the audience and many others who got to watch live transmissions because it delivered in terms of organization, legitimation and performance. The concert couldn't have happened if it hadn't been for the GDRs increasing willingness and funding to bring western music acts, as well as the decision to commercialize uncensored versions of albums like *Born to Run* (1984) by the state-owned AMIGA label. Secondly, Bruce Springsteen was arguably seen as a legitimate representative of a neutral, working-class U.S. because of his low-key attire, accessible lyrics and vocal opposition to the USA's involvement in the Vietnam war. Furthermore, his charismatic and lengthy performance in East Berlin, along with the anti-wall speech and general emotiveness arguably conveyed a message which was far more powerful than the lyrics of his songs by themselves. In this sense, Springsteen's 1988 concert seems to have been, indeed, politically influential, although to what degree, remains a matter of controversy:

> It's very hard to pin down and to analyze to what degree music changed attitudes of the people. But from my gut feeling, I would say yes, definitely. Music had a large part in that [...]
>
> It was a magical night, and I think it had a bigger impact on East German youth and music lovers than it had in West Germany, where they already had Bruce Springsteen play in '84. That was the first time Bruce Springsteen played in the capital of East Germany, in East Berlin, and obviously Springsteen made a big impression on the people.

(Hans-Peter Bushoff, personal communication, March, 2018)

Chapter 3

Discussion

According to the description of the chosen songs and the evidence gathered through their respective interviews, I argue that it music is indeed, an effective catalyst for political engagement, provided that certain preconditions are met. This effect is particularly strong among young adults—who are more willing to engage politically through music than their older peers (Hays & Minichiello, 2005). For this reason, I find that the three-dimensional approach proposed by Street et. al (2008) is, so far, the most useful framework to understand this interaction in a structured manner. One thing worth noting though, is that the authors proposed this approach to analyze music and politics through *live* benefit events (*Live 8* and *Rock Against Racism*) and not recorded music. Nonetheless, I find no reason to believe that this approach could not be applied to analyze how this type of music influences politics as well.

Though music in all its formats seems to have the potential to galvanize social movements and shape people's perceptions of politics and their own selves, this effect seems to be exacerbated during live performances with massive audiences, something which could be better explained through Émile Durkheim's idea of *Collective Effervescence* (Jennings, 2010), which proposes that individuals create and release a great excitement when they gather as a crowd, and that this "collective delirium" can excite the individual and encourage him or her to act in an irrational way, particularly because crowds promote a certain sense of anonymity and protection (Lindholm, 1990).

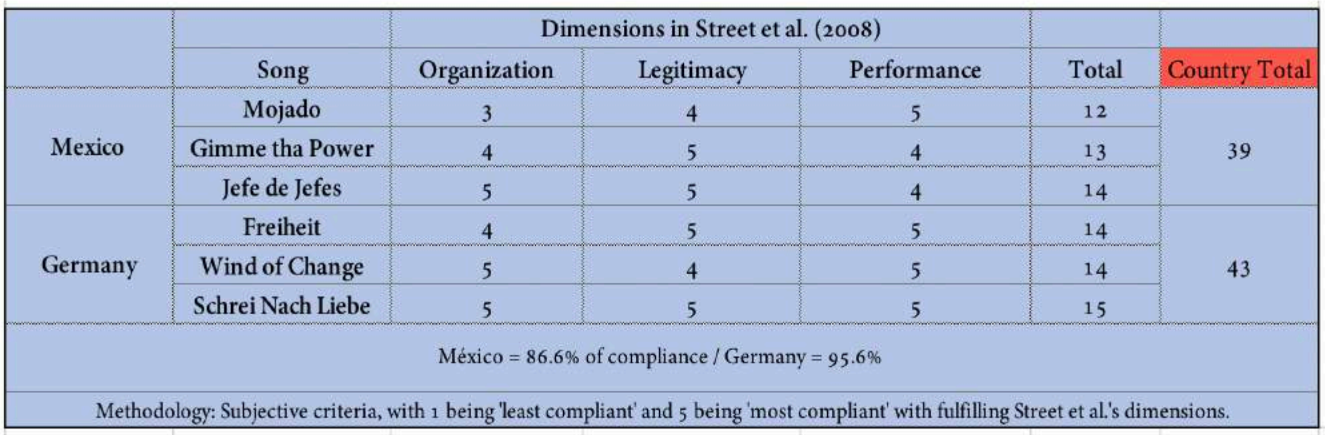
Regarding the observed results from Germany and Mexico during 1988-2000, I propose that popular music certainly fulfilled a political purpose in both countries, especially when taking into account that the chosen time frame was one of shared, radical sociopolitical change. Thus, it is only natural that some artists would try to transport the existing social tensions into music.

By doing a simplified overview of all songs, I have noticed that Germany (both East and West) generally complied with Street, Hague and Savigny's three dimensions (*organization, legitimation* and *performance)* to a higher degree than Mexico, for which the selected works performed a more visible political role during that time, influencing people's political identity, preferences and opinions, and motivating them to engage in sociopolitical activities like demonstrations, charity concerts, community services, and the like. The use of Die Ärzte's "Schrei Nach Liebe" in anti-hate demonstrations in Germany 23 years after the release of the song is a perfect example of how popular music can galvanize political action at various levels.

Street et al.'s framework (2008) also seems fit to explain the recent viralization and popularity of campaign spots with upbeat music and seemingly anonymous performers, an unprecedented phenomenon in political communication that is worthy of attention. The 2007 YouTube video "Crush on Obama" (The Key of Awesome, 2007) has reached 27 million views as of May 2018, but its success pales in comparison to Yuawi López's "Movimiento Naranja" (Yuawi & Moy Barba, 2017), a song released to promote the leftist political party *Movimiento Ciudadano* of Mexico, which at the time of writing has reached more than 53 million views on *YouTube* (Yuawi & Moy Barba, 2017) and became—not without controversy for featuring a singing indigenous boy (Kahn, 2018)—one of the most streamed songs in countries like Spain by early 2018 (Spotify, 2018).

Table 1. (below) was elaborated through a selective evaluation of how each of the six selected songs fared using Street et al.'s three-dimensional framework (2008) for the analysis of popular music and politics. For this, I designed a simple scale of one to five (1 being a minimum and 5 a maximum in compliance with each dimension); in order to do a simple assessment of the level of political influence of this musical selection in each country:

Table 1: Cross-country analysis under Street et al. (2008)



		Dimensions in Street et al. (2008)				
	Song	Organization	Legitimacy	Performance	Total	Country Total
Mexico	Mojado	3	4	5	12	39
	Gimme tha Power	4	5	4	13	
	Jefe de Jefes	5	5	4	14	
Germany	Freiheit	4	5	5	14	43
	Wind of Change	5	4	5	14	
	Schrei Nach Liebe	5	5	5	15	
México = 86.6% of compliance / Germany = 95.6%						
Methodology: Subjective criteria, with 1 being 'least compliant' and 5 being 'most compliant' with fulfilling Street et al.'s dimensions.						

Source: Own estimation based on interview results and research.

As seen above, the influence of politically-motivated music was arguably higher in Germany than in Mexico. The reason behind this might lie in the fact that (West) Germany had a less monopolized and more diverse music industry than Mexico (Hernández, 2017), a higher population density (World Population Review, 2018) and a more active civil society. Furthermore, the rising levels of inequality in the former GDR (Biewen, 2000) might also seem to have produced a notable number of music acts with explicit political messages, especially in genres like the so-called *Neue*

Deutsche Härte[21] and German *hip-hop* (Littlejohn & Putnam, 2010; Putnam & Schicker, 2014). I would like to stress nonetheless, that these results are a general interpretation of the political role of music in both countries, but that a different selection of songs or interviewees might provide significantly different insights. In this analysis, I tried to choose six songs with a proportionately similar impact among listeners in order to do the most objective comparison possible, although future research on this interaction should also take this caveat under consideration.

All interviewees seemed to agree that popular music is a powerful stimulus for the promotion of social integration and the reinforcement of new (or old) social values, as well as the formation of the individual and collective identity—activities which are by themselves political in nature. In the city of Berlin, for instance, it has been argued that electronic music concerts during the nineties served to promote a number of civil rights:

> [...] everybody would share the same experience. And during the course of the experience you would be getting along really, really great and you would share stories. And slowly but surely, these things would make you more tolerant, and you would see, the human and not the political stance necessarily, or the sexual orientation, you know? So yeah, I think... music is a great catalyst for political sayings, or to influence it at least.

(Sven von Thülen, personal communication, April, 2018).

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[21] The *Neue Deutsche Härte* [New German Hardness] refers to a subgenre of rock music coined by the German press after the release of Rammstein's debut album *Herzeleid* in 1995 (Neumann-Braun & Schmidt, 2008) It is characterized by the combination of elements of alternative metal with electro-industrial, and techno music.

Another finding is that the belief that music around 1968 was significantly more political than that of subsequent decades seems to be rather inaccurate. Music with political motives certainly thrives in times of sociopolitical conflict (John Street, personal communication, April 04, 2018), but it seems like the overemphasis by scholars on the period of 1967-68 has more to do with a slight sense of *nostalgia* than real evidence-based comparisons. The apparent reduction in politically-motivated music in subsequent decades seems to be the result of a selection bias, and not of the reduction of political music per se:

> It's just a limit of where you are looking [...] There were probably more white kids revolting in the nineteen sixties than there were in the nineteen nineties. So, what?! [...] In L.A. in the nineties you had Rage [Against the Machine] who, before they were signed to Sony, were building a community-based opposition outside of Highland Park, they were playing at a community center where they were doing *Zapatista* benefits.

(Josh Kun, personal interview, March, 2018).

Music matters, but how much exactly?

It is worth noting is that music does seem to have an observable political effect when certain preconditions are met, especially when an audience is "hungry and ready for change" (Kirschbaum, 2013). However, music's influence on political engagement is very likely to have been overestimated by the existing literature, probably due to the fact that researchers who have a deep understanding of popular music might see this interaction in a rather idealistic manner. Future research on the topic and policy recommendations should be wary of establishing direct conclusions or claiming that popular music is an equally effective catalyst for political/civic engagement in every context.

> [...] People who write about music and politics—and I include myself—are invested in the idea that there is a connection. And those claims about Springsteen/Bowie, etc. bringing down the Berlin Wall are classic examples of the overstated claim—as is the link between *Grime*[22] and Jeremy Corbyn now in the UK.

(John Street, personal communication, April 04, 2018).

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[22] Street referred to *Grime* as a popular music genre that emerged in London in the early 2000s and is characterized by the mixture of intense beats with elements of *dancehall, raga,* and *Hip-Hop.* For further reference see Vox (2017).

Popular music should be seen more as a catalyst of than a direct driver of political/civic participation. Music can, nonetheless, have a significant impact in people's perceptions of their political context in which they live and galvanize them into action. One question which remains is whether art—popular music in this case—has really been capable of transforming society, or whether it should be rather seen merely as a mirror of the conflicts and tensions that are produced in society.

Whether music can shape the course of politics, some popular musicians argue:

> I think it can because it has. Maybe not on a specific cause-effect way. If some musician writes a song about some policy initiative they want to see moved through congress, I don't know if necessarily Rahm Emanuel[23] is gonna hear this song and be inspired to move policy through congress. But music and politics have been intertwined for such a long time, sometimes in very explicit ways... You have Václav Havel[24], who was very involved in the Czech music scene and was very inspired by the Velvet Underground, and a lot of rock music in the States in the sixties. And strangely enough, music has always been more political than politics have been musical.
>
> [...]
>
> (Moby, shown in Big Think, 2012)

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[23] Rahm Emanuel is a democrat politician from the United States, who at the time of writing is the incumbent mayor of Chicago.

[24] Václav Havel was a Czech statesman, writer and former dissident who served as the last president of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic from 1989 to 2003. Havel was inspired by Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground to lead a series of opposition acts that would eventually topple down the communist regime in Czechoslovakia during the so-called *Velvet Revolution* of 1989 (E.L., 2013).

Catharsis or Hate Speech?

Throughout this research I also found that music is a very relevant means of identification, the development of personality and the release of tension for the youth. Many musicians and sociologists have revealed that music is an important escape valve for people who are dealing with frustration and angst, particularly among disadvantaged youths (Byrne, 2013). Venezuela's controversial youth music program (popularly known as "El Sistema") has allegedly achieved positive results in this way by teaching thousands of poor children to read and play music in the country (Wakin, Johnson, & Kohut, 2012). The same applies for other styles of popular music like *hip-hop* and *Heavy Metal* which are effective in neutralizing young people's anger and other negative emotions (Dunn & Madyen, 2007; McCarthy et al., 1999; Sharman & Dingle, 2015).

A matter of debate though, is how to determine the extent to which aggressive or explicit contents in songs provide psychological relief or actually backfire by promoting or legitimizing violence and aggression, which seems to be the case with the drug-ballad in Mexico and white-power music in Germany. This also begs the question whether some genres or contents should be regulated more strictly by the music industry (Daugherty, 2015; Flock, 2017), something which has become an increasing concern in recent years and would benefit from further research since drawing the line between freedom of speech and hate propaganda is not a straightforward matter.

Another point worth acknowledging is the level of influence that these musicians and celebrities can have during a live setting, especially when performing in front of massive crowds and audiences. Bruce Springsteen was certainly cautious during his brief speech in East Berlin by saying that he wished all *barriers*—instead of 'walls'—

to be torn down one day[25]. But not all celebrities are guaranteed to be as prudent when they go political: the prolific singer and pianist Nina Simone was known to be one of the fiercest activists during the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. of the sixties. On August 17 of 1969, Simone was performing in front of a crowd of (mostly) African Americans at the Harlem Cultural Festival in New York, when she read David Nelson's poem "Are you ready":

> Are you ready black people? Are you really ready? Are you ready to call the wrath of black gods? Black Magic? To do your bidding? Are you ready to smash white things? To burn buildings? Are you ready? Are you ready to kill if necessary? Is your mind ready? Is your body ready? Are you really, really, really, ready?!
>
> (Simone appearing in Garbuz, 2015).

Simone, who would later be diagnosed with manic depression, did not spark off a riot, but her words are still a powerful warning of how people's lives can be put at risk when crowds are agitated by an influential figure.

According to the different interviews and accounts obtained through this investigation, I suggest that popular musicians do have a significant power to influence political perceptions, shape the collective memory and promote new sets of values, an effect that is very likely to have increased dramatically in the age of social media and mass-information. This democratizing process, however, comes as a double-edged sword since it provides non-institutional ways of expressing artists' political dissatisfaction (especially when music popularizes in a bottom-up way) and circumvents the traditional paths of politics. This, however, comes with the risk of an artist using his or her influence in a harmful way for society—which certainly raises Brown's concerns (2009) on how to make popular musicians and celebrity diplomats accountable for their actions or messages conveyed through music and live events, and whether these new actors of post-institutional politics can ever be "voted out" if they do bad use of their celebrity status (Franke & Schiltz, 2013).

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[25] The word used by Springsteen in his speech was *Barrieren,* which means 'barriers' in German.

> [...Music] is a tool of communication that can be used for good or bad purposes, without a doubt. One has to be responsible for what is said in every song and in every concert as well. But certainly, it has a great potency.
>
> (Francisco "Paco" Ayala, personal communication, March, 2018).

(Discussion section is continued on the next page).

Opportunities for Research

My aim through this dissertation was to add to the understanding of how popular music can influence politics, especially during times of social conflict, and to better asses to what extent it can affect people's willingness to engage at a political and civic level. This is not to say that all popular music is transformative and that popular musicians are better suited to represent people's opinions than elected officials; nor do I wish to endorse that the political process should take place outside of the institutional realm as it now often occurs between celebrity diplomats and policymakers.

One last consideration is that so far it has been impossible to know to what degree popular music influences politics, but this connection exists, and I recommend future research to go in this direction. Although the current investigations on of the political effects of popular music is still at an early stage, the ever-increasing use of streaming platforms like *Spotify, YouTube* and other mobile technologies provides new and valuable opportunities to explore the influence of popular music and voter enhancement campaigns like *Rock the Vote* at a quantitative level. For this reason, I recommend that upcoming studies, particularly data-driven investigations, be based on Street, Hague, and Savigny's three-dimensional framework (2008) to enhance our understanding of music as a tool for political engagement in the digital era.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

My research reinforces the idea that popular music is, indeed, an effective catalyst of political participation and civic engagement among young adults, as long as three main preconditions for this interaction are met, these being: organization, legitimation, and performance (Street et al., 2008). While this appears to be the case for recorded music as well, the perceived effect is likely to be stronger during live performances, especially in the context of benefit concerts and politically-motivated events with some kind of institutional mediator (and NGO for instance). Popular music also seems to be capable of shaping people's perceptions and attitudes towards their socio-political reality, as well as raising awareness about various social issues.

Research suggests that adolescents who engage in music (as opposed to sports) "spend less time watching TV or playing computer games, but more reading books" (Cabane, Hille, & Lechner, 2015), for which it is also likely that supporting youth music programs and reinforcing music as an integral part of school curriculum could produce better informed and more politically-engaged citizens in the medium to long-term, particularly in developing countries with disadvantaged youths. Voter enhancement campaigns are also likely to work as tools to get young voters to go to the polls and increase their interest in politics, for which they should be considered as a tool for appealing to this sector during election years. Their effectiveness, nonetheless, is likely to depend on the level of credibility and popularity of the celebrity diplomats who appear in these types of initiatives, for which new research is yet to be done in this direction before recommending spending public funds on this type of communication. Finally, this work by no means tries to put freedom of speech or that of the artist into question, but it does seek to shed light on how popular music can have a considerable impact on people's political engagement, and how this effect is likely to be stronger in a multimedia era.

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Appendix 1.

Pop, Popular and Political Engagement: Full Terminology

The boundaries of *popular music* are unclear and contested (Hamm et al., 2014; Middleton & Manuel, 2001), but most scholars view it as a broad musical category that is easily distributed and is commercialized among the general public. In this sense, *popular music* is understood as an umbrella term that can include any subgenre like: *rock, pop, folk, reggae, ska, Punk, Blues, banda, afro beat, world music, jazz, R&B, Rap* and *hip-hop, heavy metal, industrial,* and *electronic dance music* (among others)—as long as it is capable of reaching and appealing to a broad audience. The most important feature of *popular music* is, however, that it demands little or no training to be enjoyed or performed by the general public (Frith et al, 2001, p.94).

The *New Grove Dictionary of Popular Music and Musicians* defines *popular music* from a historically as: "the music since industrialization in the 1800s that is most in line with the tastes and interests of the urban middle class" (Abjorensen, 2017, p.01; Burnett, 1996, para. 9). Others adopt a more economic view by stating that: "[S]ufficient purchases by the youth audience, the main consumers, define what constitute [*sic*] popular music at any given time" (Burnett, 1996, cited in Huq, 2006 p.54). Popular music is therefore, in its simplest terms—music that becomes popular.

But not all types of music are equally popular in every market, for which it is important to highlight that *popular music* is always directed at a "self-selected audience" (Burnett, 1996, para. 11), meaning that it is its very same listeners who give music its popularity by investing their time and money to consume it. Additionally, some other scholars have shown interest in exploring *popular music culture* as a social phenomenon (McCarthy et al, 1999, p.07) by expanding its definition from a musical subgenre, to that of a complex product that can foster a group's sense of identity: "Popular music is related to styles of clothes and the expression of sexuality, class and racial and ethnic affiliation", which further complicates making a precise definition of this concept.

Pop Music

Although the term *Pop* is derived from "popular", *Pop music* refers, in a strict sense, to a style/subgenre of popular music that is produced for commercial purposes (Frith et al, 2001, p.94), and is commonly targeted toward young audiences (although it can also appeal to adults) who are frequently "tied to progressive, leftist, non-conformist, emancipative notions" (Schütte, 2017, p.5). A compilation of definitions in books, articles and online resources (Pruca, 2010, p.22) sums that *pop* is often characterized by having "catchy hooks, memorable melodies, energetic backbeats and a structure of repetition through a verse and a chorus pattern (usually)". Given its breadth, *pop* music is oftentimes eclectic and borrows elements from other styles of music. However most of these songs tend to be radio-friendly, have short to medium-length durations and deal with themes like romantic love, enjoyment, escapism and grief (among others).

Under this light, it is no surprise that *Pop* remains one of the dominant subgenres in contemporary music. Songs like The Beatles' "She Loves You" (1963), Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" (1978), Michael Jackson's "Billy Jean" (1983), Los del Río's "Macarena" (1995), Coldplay's "Viva La Vida" (2008), Adele's "Rolling in the Deep" (2010), Pharrell Williams's "Happy" (2014) and Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You" (2017) are thus, perfect examples of the pop subgenre, which is also a form of *popular music.* Some, nonetheless, view *pop* not only as a musical style, but more as a broad package of images and concepts that accompanies the songs of a particular act: "Pop music is actually a complex of images, performances, (mostly popular) music, lyrics and myths tied to real persons" (Diederichsen, 2014, cited in Schütte, 2017, p.5).

With these differences in mind, *popular music* and *pop music* should be used as distinct terms. Viewing the former as an umbrella term for mass-produced music, and the latter as a specific musical style with a series of byproducts and *paraphernalia* (cover art, stage outfits, haircuts, interview statements, lyrics, and promotional material, among others).

Political Engagement

One last challenge in linking *pop, popular music* and *political engagement/participation* is defining what being "politically engaged" actually means. A recent study (see Pontes, Henn, & Griffiths, 2018) ran a series of focus groups and compiled several academic definitions to illustrate what young people (18-24 years) understand for political engagement and participation. The study proposed that *political engagement* is defined as "having interest in, paying attention to, having knowledge or opinions about, being conscious of, proactive about and constantly informed about politics". It also stressed that this type of engagement can happen online and offline: "since young people do not distinguish between these two realities" (Pontes et al., 2018, p.13). Furthermore, it found that *political engagement* is a psychological process that involves both a cognitive and an emotional dimension. The former being people's willingness to understand what is happening at a political level (e.g. searching for political news, signing a petition or watching political debates), and the latter being the reflection of positive and negative reactions to politicians' actions, other people's political opinions and perceptions (e.g. posting/expressing one's political thoughts, comments on social media or wearing symbols associated with political causes). This thesis thus relies on Pontes et al.'s definition of *political engagement* among the youth.

Appendix 2.

Interviews

1. Klaus Meine (born 1948) is a renowned German singer, mostly known as the front man of the hard rock band *Scorpions*. His song “Wind of Change” (released in 1990) went down in history as one of the best-selling singles of all time, with over fourteen million copies sold.

2. Sven Von Thülen (born 1976) is a German author, DJ and music journalist from Bremen. He has lived in Berlin since the mid-nineties attracted by the developing electronic music scene. In his book *Der Klang der Familie* [The Sound of the Family] documented how techno became the central part of the cultural and political landscape in Berlin

3. Eric Kirschbaum (born 1960) is a German journalist and Executive Director of the RIAS Berlin commission. He has worked for Reuters, the Los Angeles Times and other European newspapers since 1989 and is the author of *Rocking the Wall*: Bruce Springsteen: The Berlin Concert that Changed the World.

4. Dr. Hans Peter Bushoff (born 1951) is a German music specialist who worked as head of press for BMG Rights Management GmbH. He is currently product manager for Bruce Springsteen at Sony Music Germany and a music specialist in Springsteen’s career and discography.

5. Ronald Born (born, 1965) is a German citizen from Jena (former GDR). He has been a Bob Dylan fanatic for more than four decades and is one of the largest collectors of Dylan-paraphernalia in Germany. He attended the first Bob Dylan concert in East Berlin in 1987, as well as Bruce Springsteen's in 1988.

6. Andreas Borcholte (born 1970) is a German author and critic on pop culture, film and Zeitgeist with SPIEGEL ONLINE, the country's biggest news website. He has written for various newspapers and magazines such as Gala, Prinz, Musikexpress and the Hamburger Morgenpost.

7. Dr. John Street (age undisclosed) is professor of politics in the School of Political, Social and International Studies at the University of East Anglia. His research focuses on the politics of media and culture and has written a large number of works and studies on the impact of popular music in politics and mobilization.

8. Francisco "Paco" Ayala (born 1972) is a Mexican musician, mainly known as bassist and singer in the popular rock group Molotov. He and the band have sold more than four million records around the world and has a strong fan base in countries like in Russia, Spain and Argentina among others.

9. Dr. Josh Kun (born 1971) is an American award-winning author, academic and music critic. He is a 2016 MacArthur Fellow, professor of communication at the University of Southern California, and winner of the American Book Award for his book "*Audiotopia: Music, Race and America*" (UC Press) in 2006.

10. Mariana “H” Hernández (born 1974) is a Mexican author, journalist, TV and radio host. She has written for *Rolling Stone* and the *Excélsior* daily newspaper and hosts the weekly TV show *Caldo de Cultivo* [Breeding Ground], where she interviews leading personalities of popular culture in Mexico.

11. Carlos Hauptvogel (born 1951) is a Mexican drummer who co-founded the iconic band Three Souls in My Mind in 1968 with renowned musician Álex Lora. The group was the leading act in protest music for decades until disbanding in 1984 and played in the historic *Avándaro* Music Festival of 1971.

12. Sergio Félix (born 1959) is a Mexican singer-songwriter and television host who is most known for his work since 1985 with the folk duet *Mexicanto.* Along with long-time colleague David Filio, Félix is one of the precursors of the Mexican *trova* [folk] movement in the country.

13. Moisés Palacios (born 1959) is a Mexican author, musician, radio host and dubbing artist. His career spans more than 35 years in the entertainment industry and he has dubbed some of the highest-grossing films in the country. Palacios is also an accomplished jazz bassist and music specialist.

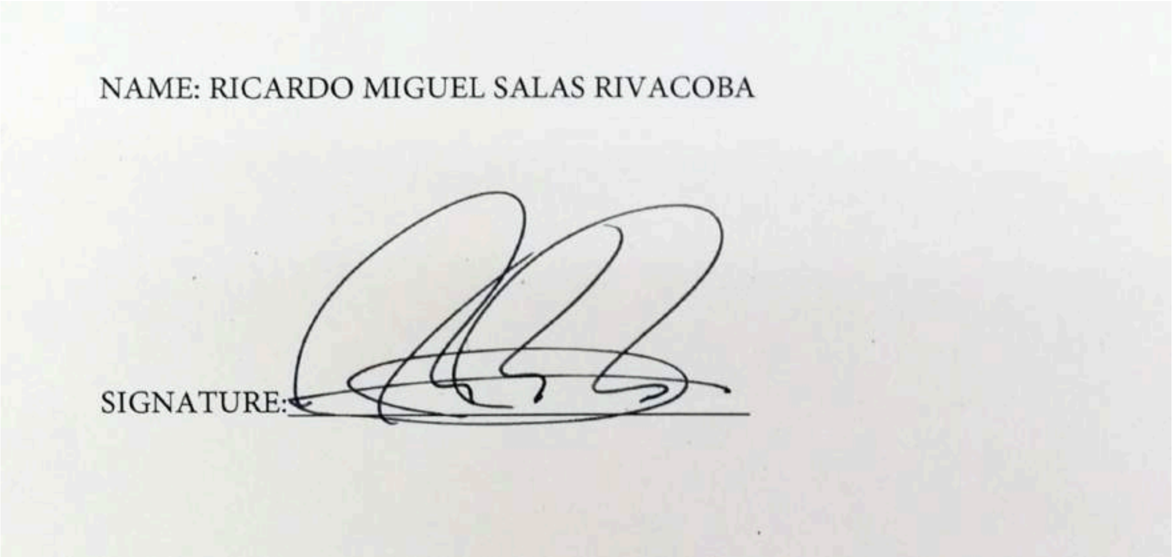
14. Casimiro Zamudio (born 1953) is a Mexican musician and singer. He rose to fame as front man of the band *Mi Banda el Mexicano* [My band “The Mexican”]. He, along with late American artist *Selena*, are known for popularizing the *technocumbia* genre, a catchy dance style which mixed electronic beats with elements of *banda* and *cumbia.*

15. Dr. Julia Emilia Palacios Franco (born 1950) Is a Mexican academic, radio host and author. She is a lecturer at the Universidad Iberoamericana of Mexico City, and an expert on popular music and history of the media. She hosts the weekly radio show *Obladi Oblada* on *Ibero 90.9,* a public radio station, on rock and roll classics and popular culture.

Statement of Authorship

I hereby confirm and certify that this master thesis is my own work. All ideas and language of others are acknowledged in the text. All references and verbatim extracts are properly quoted, and all other sources of information are specifically and clearly designated. I confirm that the digital copy of the master thesis that I submitted on May 06, 2018 is identical to the printed version I submitted to the Examination Office on May 07, 2018.

DATE: May 12, 2018.



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SIGNATURE: