

LA MOVIDA MADRILEÑA AND THE *ROCK RADICAL VASCO* AS POLITICAL AND
SOCIAL AGENTS IN POST-FRANCO SPAIN:
THEIR INFLUENCE ON POPULAR MUSICAL PRACTICES OF 21ST-CENTURY
SPAIN

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the

FRED FOX SCHOOL OF MUSIC

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2017

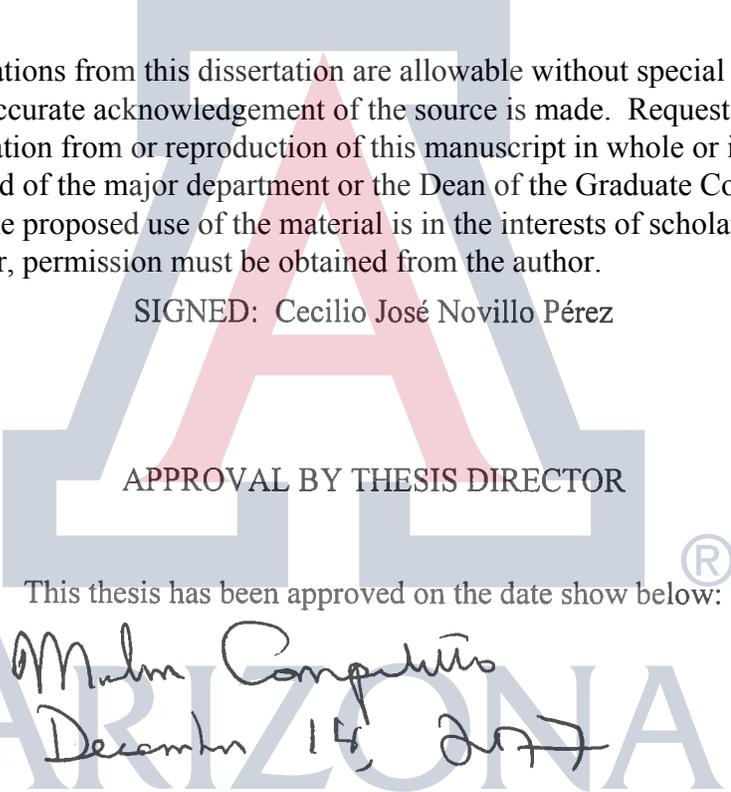
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family—in particular my mother, my father, and my brother—for their love, support, and for the sacrifices they have made to give me the opportunities that I am enjoying today.

I owe special gratitude to my professor and advisor, Dr. Janet Sturman, for her kindness, encouragement, and support. Because of her help, I am now a better scholar. I am deeply grateful to my professors Dr. Malcon Compitello and Dr. Dawn Corso for their guidance and help for making this thesis.

I am also grateful to my friends from Fred Fox School: Miguel Arango, Mariana Mevans, José Luis Puerta, and Juan Mejía, for their friendship and making my life in Tucson more agreeable. I am especially grateful to Olman Alfaro for his feedback on this work and to Faez Abdallah (The Wise Man) for his patience and assistance with the format of this document. To my dear partner Gilda for her kindness and support. To Leslie Dupont for helping with my English writing. To my dear teacher Juan Merino for his help with part of the bibliography. To my friends from Ordizia (Basque Country) for showing that the *Rock Radical Vasco* is still alive. To my friends, *Los Zerrilleros* (especially my brother), for showing me every day the authentic meaning of punk and friendship.

Finally, I am grateful to Casa Vicente Restaurant and to Club España Tucson for helping me pursue my master studies. I am particularly indebted to Vicente Sánchez and Marita Gómez.

DEDICATION

A mi madre, mi padre, mi hermano, y el pequeño Gorka

Sin su amor, su apoyo y su lucha nada de esto hubiera sido posible.

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ABSTRACT

In Spain, the era of political transition to democracy known as *La Transición* during the 1970s and 1980s led to changes in Spanish popular music (i.e., pop, rock, punk) which became the musical representation of the new democracy's social and political changes. Two different musical movements of that period, *La Movida Madrileña* and *Rock Radical Vasco*, established boundaries between official mainstream music and its musical counterculture counterpart, underground, and subversive musical practices within Spanish democracy. This thesis examines the nature of those musical practices, their song lyrics, and their social and political interpretations, including their influence on current musical practices.

CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION

- A. Historical Background: Franco's Dictatorship 1939-1975.
- B. Music and Censorship during Franco's Regime.
 - 1. From First Two Decades to the *Aperturismo*.
 - 2. *Los Cantautores* and the End of the Dictatorship.
- C. The Spanish Transition

“Politicians in countless times and places have clearly understood and have effectively harnessed the iconic and indexical power of music to further their own pragmatic ends.”

Thomas Turino¹

- A. Historical Background: Franco's Dictatorship 1939-1975

The two most important historical events in Spain during the twentieth century were the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and the restoration of democracy in 1975. Considered a prelude to WWII, the Spanish Civil War started in 1936 with a military coup d'état lead by the General Francisco Franco. In 1939, the war ended with the victory of Franco, who became the dictator of the country until his death in 1975. Inspired by the ideas of Italian fascism, this dictatorship was characterized by political oppression, religious conservatism, censorship, economic stagnation, and a general lack of freedom

¹ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life. The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008), 67.

which interrupted all political and cultural developments initiated by the Second Republic.² Professor Julio Arce explains about Francoist period as follows:

The Franco regime reaffirmed the strength of traditional oligarchies and established effective mechanisms for repressing ideas contrary to the regime. Franco's government aimed to build a cultural model based on the exaltation of traditional values, such as the family and Catholic religion, by constantly referring to a glorious past marked by heroic deeds and achievements, and the cultural unity and homogeneity of Spain. Means to this end included censorship and a tight control of the media.³

This political and social climate profoundly molded Spanish culture, and by extension music, for four decades. To understand how music was a decisive cultural element in configuring democracy in Spain, it is necessary to understand the oppressive role of the censorship and the extreme control of musical practices during Francoist period, and how it helped to shape the music after the dictatorship.

B. Music and Censorship during Franco's Regime

1. From the first two decades to the *aperturismo* (relaxation)

The first two decades of the regime were characterized by political isolation, economic autarchy, and ultra-nationalism due to the beginning of the WWII and to Franco's support of the Axis powers, among other factors. Héctor Fouce defines this period as follows:

² This statement is accepted by most of the authors since Second Spanish Republic was a democratic regime that lasted from 1931 to 1936 whose liberal regulations attempted to modernize the country. As explained above, this democratic period was interrupted by the Spanish Civil War and the victory of General Francisco Franco who imposed a fascist regime characterized by general lack of freedom.

³ Julio Arce, "Spain," in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World Volume 7: Europe*, ed. John Shepherd, David Horn and Dave Laing (London: Continuum, 2005), 288–315.

Thereby, the first half of the Franco dictatorship is constructed around a cultural autarchy that renounces all foreign influence, utilizing the very Spanish, ruralist, romanticized popular culture to defend a powerful national identity, as the backbone of a state capable of solving its problems. Francoism exercised particularly strict control over popular and mass forms of cultural expression, this was because Nationalist intellectuals were well aware of the importance of culture as a tool for national unification and political pacification (the instilling of politically acceptable values into the populace thus takes the form of apparent depoliticization). Indeed, they paid particular attention to promoting popular and mass forms of entertainment: folklore, song, sport and cinema.⁴

Consequently, the regime promoted the *Canción Española* (Spanish copla), a musical genre rooted in zarzuela and Andalusian music, it uses the Andalusian scale and cadence, fluctuations between major and minor modes, vocal trills, *melismata* at the ends of phrases, and so on.⁵ Singers usually represented Spanish archetypes--bullfighters, gypsies, and cigarette girls--mostly from Southern Spain, which became the model for traditional race values and national identity. Professor Isabel Marc maintains that, “during the autarkic years, popular music was a mixture of folklore and patriotism.”⁶ Important singers of this period included Conchita Piquer, Estrellita Castro, Antonio Molina, and so on.

In 1953 Spain and U.S. signed an agreement called the Pact of Madrid that “committed the Americans to provide an unspecified amount of aid in return for the right to establish four military bases in Spain.”⁷ As a consequence of this pact, Spain underwent significant social and political changes during the 1960s. This period is called

⁴ William J. Nichols and H. Rosie Song ed., *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida: Back to the Future* (New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013), 37–50.

⁵ Arce, “Spain,” 288–315.

⁶ Isabel Marc, “Submarinos Amarillos and Other Transcultural Objects in Spanish Popular Music during Late Francoism,” in *Made in Spain: Studies in Popular Music*, ed. Sílvia Martínez and Héctor Fouce (New York: Routledge, 2013), 116.

⁷ Oscar Calvo-Sotelo. “American Military Interests and Economic Confidence in Spain under the Franco Dictatorship,” *The Journal of Economic History*, 67, no. 3 (2007): 740.

“*aperturismo*” (relaxation), and it was characterized by the ease of the repressive policy, a rapid process of industrialization, and economic growth. As Marc claims:

After an isolationist period following the Civil War, in the late 1950s, and especially in the 1960s, Spain experienced a spectacular economic growth alongside social and cultural change and apparently more liberal politics. The focus of this work lies on that period, also known as the *desarrollista* (strong development) years or late Francoism, when both as a cause for and a consequence of economic development, Spain experienced a true revolution in mentality, implying new ideologies, new views, and new attitudes towards life which coexisted with conservative traditional values.⁸

This relaxation let multinational music companies, such as EMI, to be established to attend to the demand of new consumers (generally, bourgeois urban youth). These companies released foreign music, above all British and American pop and rock, which resulted in a decisive influence on Spanish music. According to Marc, “Despite the so-called Spanish cultural isolation, especially during the Franco dictatorship, foreign popular music did play a prominent role in national musical production.”⁹ Consequently, bands such as The Shadows, Cliff Richard or The Beatles became the models for these first Spanish pop rock musicians.

In the beginning, Spanish bands made versions of foreign hits in Spanish, which according to Marc “was crucial in order to attract audiences in the early 1960s.”¹⁰ Later, important bands such as El Dúo Dinámico, Los Brincos or Los Bravos emerged, composing their own songs.¹¹ As well, national recording companies, such as Hispavox,

⁸ Marc. “Submarinos Amarillos,” 116.

⁹ Ibid., 115.

¹⁰ Ibid., 118.

¹¹ For many authors, El Dúo Dinámico and Los Brincos were the first Spanish pop stars. See Isabel Marc, “Submarinos Amarillos and Other Transcultural Objects in Spanish Popular Music during Late Francoism,” in *Made in Spain: Studies in Popular Music*, ed. Silvia Martínez and Héctor Fouce (New York: Routledge, 2013), 119–121. Similarly, Los Bravos was the first Spanish band that acquired international success by reaching second position in the UK and 4th position on the Billboard’ Hot 100 list

Zafiro and Edigsa, were founded during this period, achieving important economic success. Simultaneously, a proliferation of concerts and festivals, such as Benidorm International Song Festival, created an important network for these new bands and their consumers.¹² These first bands appropriated pop and rock styles, imitating foreign tendencies.

The decade of the 1970s was the second blossoming of Spanish pop and rock bands with bands such as Fórmula V or Los Diablos, following the style of the bands of the first period. However, at the same time counterculture rock movements emerged following international tendencies such as blues-rock, psychedelic rock, or progressive rock. These movements (*rock andaluz*, *rock catalán*, *rock urbano*) were strongly linked to working-class neighborhoods. Bands such as Triana, Smash, and Asfalto, were part of this underground musical scene during those years.

Despite this relaxation, censorship often prohibited or modified some records. According to the author Xavier Valiño, censorship prohibited around 4,000 songs between 1960 and 1977. An illustrative example of this control is the song, “Good Vibrations” by the Beach Boys, which, according to the censor, was prohibited because “it was a hippie song that promulgated the free sex.” In the same way, around 100 album

in the US. See “Billboard Charts Archive,” last modified September 3, 2014, accessed May 15, 2016, <http://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100/1966-10-01>.

¹² In 1959, the first Benidorm International Song Festival was organized to promote Spanish music and tourism imitating the Italian San Remo Music Festival. Less important festivals were the Barcelona Mediterranean Festival, Mallorca Festival, Aranda de Duero Festival, and Canary Islands Atlantic Festival. See Julio Arce, “Spain,” in *Continuum Encyclopedia of popular Music of the World Volume 7: Europe*, ed. John Shepherd, David Horn, and Dave Laing (London: Continuum, 2005): 293.

covers were occasionally modified to hide nudity or sexual connotations.¹³ This extreme control demonstrated that Franco's regime considered some music as a danger to the morals of the young people and the policies of the regime.¹⁴

2. Los *cantautores* and the end of the dictatorship.

From the mid-1960s, the songwriters (*cantautores*) reached a high popularity in Spain. Inspired by French and North American protest songs and using traditional regional music, they put music to texts proclaiming the restoration of civil rights, and channeled through their music the society's political and social aspirations for freedom and democracy. These songwriters also promoted the use of regional languages such as Basque, Catalan and Galician, helping "the voiceless recover their cultural and linguistic identity."¹⁵ Because of these rebellious attitudes, Franco's regime censored many songwriters. For example, Lluís Llach¹⁶ and Joan Manuel Serrat¹⁷ were prosecuted for the

¹³ Xavier Valiño, *Veneno en Dosis Camufladas: La Censura en los Discos de Pop-Rock durante el Franquismo*, Lleida: Milenio Editorial, 2012.

¹⁴ Héctor Fouce and Fernán Del Val, "La Movida: Popular Music as the Discourse of Modernity in Democratic Spain" in *Made in Spain: Studies in Popular Music*, ed. Silvia Martínez and Héctor Fouce (New York: Routledge, 2013), 126.

¹⁵ Jaume Ayats and Salicru-Maltas, "Singing Against the Dictatorship (1959–1975): The Nova Cançó," in *Made in Spain* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 28.

¹⁶ Lluís Llach (1948) went into exile at different times between 1970 and 1976. This songwriter was systematically prosecuted by the State Security Forces and Agencies. See "Biografía," Fundación Lluís Llach, last modified November 4, 2010, accessed November 9, 2016, <http://www.lluisllach.cat/espanol/biografia.htm>

¹⁷ Joan Manuel Serrat (1943) was forced into the exile from 1975 to 1976 in the last months of Franco's regime when the songwriter criticized the execution of the five political prisoners per Franco's orders. This execution was the last one carried out during Franco's regime and the last one in Spain since the death penalty was abolished with the implementation of democracy in the country. There was an international response against this last execution by Franco, particularly in Western Europe, for many voices had long-awaited the end of the Spanish dictatorship. See Ulises Castañeda, "Joan Manuel Serrat

political inclinations they portrayed in their music, and were forced to go into exile. However, as Fouce claims, “although censorship silenced all alternative voice, oppressing the opposition and limiting press, the songwriter made his music heard, but not without difficulties.”¹⁸ With the restoration of the democracy in 1975, songwriters became less popular due to loss of interest in lyrics covering political/social issues, and at the same time, the style became old-fashioned.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the influence of these songwriters on later music is undeniable.

In conclusion, excessive government control influenced music making during the entire Francoist dictatorship. Spanish musicians suffered from a lack of artistic freedom, but, despite these limitations, the Francoist period was also musically creative and important. The music from this period influenced later musical creations and established part of the foundation that allowed music to develop further during the democratic era.

C. The Spanish Transition

With the death of Franco (November 20, 1975), Spain started a rapid process of democratization. This period is called “*la Transición Española*,” i.e., the Spanish

recuerda su exilio en México en 1975,” CRONICA, last modified March 15, 2014, accessed November 9, 2016, <http://www.cronica.com.mx/notas/2014/821799.html>

¹⁸ Héctor Fouce, “Emociones en Lugar de Soluciones. Música Popular, Intelectuales y Cambio Político en la España de la Transición,” *Revista Transcultural de Música* 12 (2008) <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/105/emociones-en-lugar-de-soluciones-musica-popular-intelectuales-y-cambio-politico-en-la-espana-de-la-transicion> (accessed March 15, 2016).

¹⁹ Arce, “Spain,” 288–315. This loss of interest in politics by music and musicians is very arguable. Like this thesis defends, RRV and *rock urbano* bands were highly interested in politics, addressing social and political issues in many of their songs. In other words, the interest in politics did not decrease, but the style and way of addressing these political and social concerns changed once democracy was restored. This statement will be discussed further in Chapter III.

Transition. It was marked by the restoration and consolidation of democracy, the approval by referendum of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, and the electoral victory of the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE). According to most scholars, this democratization process has been considered smooth, consensual, peaceful, and elite driven despite of various coup d'état attempts and the many terrorist acts.²⁰ However, some scholars do not agree with this position and point out the problems that the regime left. For example, Christian Lahusen explains as follows:

The death of General Francisco Franco on 20 November 1975 opened the doors to Spain's democratization but left the country with a number of problems inherited from the old regime. As an authoritarian ruler, Franco had not only been unable to solve most of the social problems generated by a rapidly, modernizing Spanish society (including strong urbanization, industrialization, crisis in traditional sectors, new inequalities), but his policies had resulted in a strengthening of the general call for genuine change, democracy and political participation. His ambition to challenge and eliminate the diverse nationalist and regionalist movements within Spain had not only accentuated their call for national self-determination but also consolidated their alliances and ideological bonds with oppositional groups and organizations within the workers and student movements.²¹

The period also involved many social and political issues inherited from the dictatorship and characterized by intense social unrest, especially in the Basque Country and in the working-class neighborhoods of the large cities.

This process of democratization also implied a rapid modernization and a cultural revitalization.²² In words of Hamilton M. Stapell, "a nationwide cultural renaissance

²⁰ Diego Muro and Gregorio Alonso, *Politics and Memory of Democratic Transition* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 159.

²¹ Christian Lahusen, "The Aesthetic of Radicalism: The Relationship between Punk and the Patriotic Nationalist Movement of the Basque Country," *Popular Music* 12, no. 3 (October 1993): 263.

²² Arce, "Spain," 288–315.

swept Spain after the end of the dictatorship.”²³ The censorship that controlled and limited arts was abolished in 1976, increasing opportunities for artistic creation. In other words, “for the first time in thirty-five years, questions of history, politics and government, religion, ethnicity, regionalism, family, and sexuality could all be discussed openly and directly.”²⁴ In addition, the new democratic environment implied new formulas of culture and leisure, above all for the young. Spanish society wanted to be as modern as its European neighbors; however, the fledgling/newborn democracy did not have enough of an infrastructure to satisfy the people’s demands for modernization. Consequently, many spontaneous and, to some degree, underground cultural movements flourished around the country, above all in large cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, Vigo, Bilbao, Seville, or Valencia.

In this context, *La Movida Madrileña* and *Rock Radical Vasco* (RRV), i.e., Radical Basque Rock, arose in Madrid and the Basque Country, respectively, as a consequence of the social and political climate that Spain underwent during that period.²⁵ Their political utilization shaped the history and evolution of these bands coming to be the musical representation of the different social and political realities of both regions. Fouce and del Val explains these characteristics as follows:

“[...] the Spanish Transition was a unique moment due to the fact that the music that it produced gives visibility to and works as a metaphor for the cultural, social

²³ Hamilton M. Stapell, “Just a Teardrop in the Rain? The *Movida Madrileña* and Democratic Identity Formation in the Capital, 1979–1986,” *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 86, no. 3 (May 2009): 350.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 351.

²⁵ A deeper examination of these two musical movements will be presented in Chapter II and Chapter III. Several movements emerged in Spain during the 1980s. This thesis discusses how *La Movida Madrileña* dominated the attention of mass media and politics, silencing other musical movements in the process - an issue about which many scholars, including Kiko Mora and Eduardo Viñuela, agree. The scarcity of literature about movements other than *La Movida* is significant. One claim of this thesis is that only RRV was able to contest the hegemonic position of *La Movida Madrileña*, which was co-opted by the central government. This situation defines both movements as the most influential of that time period.

and political changes that the country experienced during those years. In particular, the various styles of popular music of these decades became a field of symbolic negotiation of the new Spanish identity, marked by democracy and cosmopolitanism, and the anxiety of modernity in tension with an ambivalent heritage.²⁶

My thesis argues that both movements were highly influential for later musical creations and have helped to set the boundaries between mainstream and counterculture music in Spain. In addition, this study will demonstrate that these musical boundaries are linked to the specific political and economic situations in newly democratic Spain.

²⁶ Fouce and Del Val, "*La Movida*: Popular Music as the Discourse," 126.

CHAPTER II

MUSIC IN MADRID: *LA MOVIDA*

- A. Context: Madrid's Makeover.
- B. Characteristics
 - 1. Origin
 - 2. Network: from Underground to the Mainstream
 - 3. Music Style: Experimenting with Punk
 - 4. *La Movida* Lyrics: Text and Meaning
 - 5. Musical and Cultural Impact of *La Movida*

With the success of La Movida, parallel to the democratic transition, an imaginary solution to a perpetual problem of the Spanish culture is reached: how to be modern and Spanish at the same time.

Héctor Fouce²⁷

A. Context: Madrid's Makeover

As the capital and largest metropolitan area of Spain--approximately 3.5 million people in the 1980s--Madrid had a special political role during the Spanish Transition. On the one hand, the capital had served as the home of centralism and repression for almost forty years, and in many ways, it was heir of the authoritarian past but in the gradual process of adapting to the new democratic environment and replacing authoritarian

²⁷ See Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 38.

structures with democratic institutions and practices.²⁸ On the other hand, from 1979 to 1986, the local government, led by the charismatic mayor Enrique Tierno Galván, encouraged the city's revitalization through liberal regulations as part of a democratic project for the capital, which included culture, and by extension, music.

Economically, Madrid--together with Catalonia and Basque Country--was (and still is) one of the drivers of the Spanish economy. Throughout its history, Madrid, as the capital of Spain, has had a privileged position, which resulted in many international companies choosing it as a central base for their economic operations. In the music industry, Madrid has been the place in Spain where the international recording companies, such as EMI, Warner, and Polygram, are still located. This centralism also applied to mass media; most of the national newspapers, magazines, national TV channels, and so on, are located there.

This hegemonic status has made Madrid the place where famous, international bands traditionally offered concerts in order to promote their music and be broadcast easily throughout the entire country. For example, the Beatles, the Animals, and Jimi Hendrix performed in the 1960s; and the Police, the Ramones, and Lou Reed did the same in the 1980s. These musicians performed in many of important concert halls that existed in the city. In this way, Madrid was directly exposed to international music tendencies. Additionally, national bands also had to migrate to the capital in order to gain recognition, appear on TV, or sign contracts with both national and international record labels. In fact, Eduardo García Salueña has claimed that during 1980s Madrid was the

²⁸ Hamilton M. Stapell, "Just a Teardrop in the Rain?," 347.

place where all national styles from the rest of regions were brought together.²⁹ In general, however, it can be said that both international and national musical tendencies converged in Madrid, which stimulated musical creation and the appearance of countless bands.

In this macro context, a cultural movement that would later be called *La Movida Madrileña* emerged in the late 1970s, which encompassed a wide variety of arts, including filming, painting, fashion, etc. It is considered by many scholars, musicians, and musical critics to be the most important musical movement at that time; in fact, it is often considered as the Golden Age of Spanish Pop.³⁰ Fouce explains that *La Movida*, whose upper-middle class members were more liberal as well as more educated than the majority of Spain, was the consequence of the social and political changes that Madrid underwent during the 1980s. In fact, he affirms “*La Movida* took place in Madrid’s city center, composed of educated youngsters who came from families that were well connected to the new cultural establishment.”³¹

As musical movement, *La Movida* was a response against the different musical movements (pop, songwriters, and virtuosic rock) that dominated both mainstream and underground scenes.³² In other words, “it was the reaction to the political commitment of both songwriters and hard rock musicians and the aspiration to virtuosic musical

²⁹ Kiko Mora and Eduardo Viñuela, *Rock around Spain* (Lleida, Spain: Universidad de Lleida, 2013), 28–34.

³⁰ Jorge Pérez, “Driving with *La Movida*: The Rock ‘n’ Road Aesthetics of Loquillo’s Rock Ibérico,” *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 2009): 189. Due to the support of media and politics, *La Movida* was able to (self) designate itself as the Golden Age of Spanish Pop. Undoubtedly, this movement was very influential and important at that time because of this hegemonic privilege position. However, critics of *La Movida*’s impact are becoming more and more common. Simultaneously, scholars are conducting research on other movements of that period to contrasting the importance of *La Movida*.

³¹ Héctor Fouce and Fernán Del Val, “*La Movida*: Popular Music as the Discourse,” 126.

³² Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí* (Madrid: Valecio Editores, 2006), 21–68.

techniques that characterized the predominant musical styles in Spain in the mid-1970s, namely *cantautores*, *rock sinfónico*, *rock andaluz*, and *rock catalán*.”³³

Generally, *La Movida* is considered a cultural success of the Spanish Transition and a consequence of the rapid process of democratization and modernization. Stapell describes Madrid’s situation as follows:

The early and mid-1980s in particular were years of elation, almost euphoria, for the citizens of Madrid. Simply put, things had changed. That change could be heard on the local airwaves, seen in exhibition halls, experienced in neighborhood bars, and felt, especially, on the street. The city was alive with art, music and a new-found sociability. The term *movida madrileña*, or Madrid’s happening, became the catch-all phrase to describe the apparently magical transformation of Spain’s capital city. Seemingly overnight, Madrid was transformed from a dull, provincial capital into a vibrant modern city.³⁴

After four decades of cultural isolation and backwardness with respect to the rest of modern Europe, Spain was able to show off in front of the world. Finally, Madrid (and by extension, Spain) was considered as fashionable and modern as New York or London. In fact, during 1980s, many articles describing the transformation of Madrid appeared in diverse news outlets such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *Le Monde*, and *National Geographic*. In fact, in 1985, *Rolling Stone* magazine published the article “The New Spain,” which described Madrid as follows, “Madrid has been transformed into a cultural oasis, where new music, crafts, intellectualism, drugs, free love, all-night clubs, and boundless idealism have all become part of the daily scene--much like San Francisco in the Sixties. A city reborn to run.”³⁵

³³ Jorge Pérez, “Driving with *La Movida*,” 189.

³⁴ Stapell, “Just a Teardrop in the Rain?,” 345.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 345.

This miraculous transformation into a cultural oasis and its international projection had to do with the general plan designed by some politicians to advance Madrid's transition from dictatorship to democracy:

[...] Tierno Galván and the other local political elite appropriated the movement in order to further distance Madrid from its authoritarian past and transform *madrileños* into active democratic citizens. The appropriation of the *movida* was seen, in this way, as another means of changing the underlying mentality, habits, and behavior of *madrileños* society. In short, the local and regional administrations specifically promoted the *movida*'s modern symbols to form an open and participatory cultural image of the capital which in turn reinforced the project to create a new democratic regional identity.³⁶

The mayor of Madrid, Enrique Tierno Galván, has always been considered “the intellectual father” of *La Movida*, promoting through the city council, many concerts for these bands and even supporting economically the publication of the monthly fanzine, *Madriz*, which belonged to *La Movida* movement.³⁷ This support would shape the development of the movement giving to it a privileged hegemonic position with respect to other movements.

B. General Characteristics

1. The Origin

The origins of the term *La Movida* are still unclear. Dr. Susan Larson states that the label appeared in Barcelona in 1980, where musicians used this name for referring

³⁶ Stapell, “Just a Teardrop in the Rain?” 348.

³⁷ Susan Larson, “La Luna de Madrid y La Movida Madrileña: un Experimento en la Creación de la Cultura Urbana Revolucionaria,” *Madrid de Fortunata a la M40: Un Siglo de Cultura Urbana*, Ed. Edward Baker and Malcolm A. Compitello (Madrid: Alianza Editorial. 2003), 309.

pejoratively to what (musically) was going in Madrid.³⁸ Alternatively, other scholars claim that the term initially was used to describe the many scenes (*movidas*) in Madrid during those years. Other authors associate the word “*movida*” with drug trafficking and consumption.³⁹ Nevertheless, regardless of the term’s origin, this label was both accepted and exploited from the early 1980s. Many authors consider that the first official act of this movement was a concert held on February 9, 1980, at the Polytechnic University of Madrid. Broadcast live on the national TV channel (TVE2) and on the national radio (Onda Dos), it was an homage concert to Canito, a member of the band Tos who died in a car accident. Some of the bands that performed that day included the following: Tos, Nacha Pop, Alaska y los Pegamoides, Mamá, Paraíso, and Mermelada.⁴⁰

2. Network: From Underground to the Mainstream

La Movida emerged in the late 1970s like a counterculture-underground movement inspired by British punk, and whose network consisted of some concerts halls, independent record labels, and underground fanzines:

Influenced by the spontaneity of the punk movement, the so-called *nueva ola* (new wave) of Spanish music boomed from the underground scene with a cutting edge, yet non-virtuosic, impulse. They aimed to adapt foreign musical subcultures to the time space context of early democratic Spain without falling into a mere imitation of patterns.⁴¹

³⁸ Susan Larson, “La Luna de Madrid y La Movida Madrileña,” 309.

³⁹ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 22.

⁴⁰ Jorge Pérez, “Driving with *La Movida*,” 204.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 189.

After its emergence during mid-1970s in England, punk spread quickly around the world, and in Madrid, it was highly accepted. The simplicity of punk was a perfect match to the ideologies of *La Movida*'s youth members who were tired of complex and solemn, political, rescindable musical styles. They just wanted to enjoy the freedom of the new democratic environment and punk came to represent this liberation. Within rock music, punk is probably the most anti-authoritarian and radical style, which contrasted perfectly to the conservative society that were still in existence during the Spanish Transition.

At the regime's end, Madrid was transforming into a different city, and the new democratic situation dramatically changed the nightlife. Around downtown Madrid, many new concert halls and bars--such as El Penta, El Via Láctea, El Sol--opened and became spaces where young people could have fun and listen to music freely. However, considered a "music temple" for many musicians, the most influential concert hall for *La Movida* movement was the Rock-Ola that put together international and local bands from different styles and genres. The majority of *La Movida*'s groups and international punk and new wave bands such as Iggy Pop, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Depeche Mode, or The Durruti Column played in this concert Hall.⁴² Hence, the Rock-Ola became a relevant connection between the Madrilenian musical movement and international ones.

In addition, it is important to point out how mass media contributed to *La Movida*'s diffusion. Fernán del Val describes it as follows, "Maybe one of the keys for understanding how important *La Movida* was is the mass media support from its beginning by the journalists Jesus Ordovás and Rafael Armero who were co-workers in

⁴² Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 71.

the national radios Onda 2 and Radio 3.”⁴³ Gradually, this mass media support was increasing until it reached national TV. *La Movida*’s bands constantly appeared on TV musical programs such as *La Caja de Ritmos*, *Aplauso*, *La Edad de Oro*, and so on. This support and the marginalization of other bands helped to consolidate *La Movida* as the main musical movement around Spain. At present, no studies examine the close relationship between *La Movida* and mass media. However, it should be pointed out that many members of this movement came from families who were well-connected to the cultural establishment.⁴⁴ For example: Carlos Berlanga, guitar of Alaska y los Pegamoides, is the son of the renowned director Luis García Berlanga, and David Summer, lead singer of Homgres G, is son the director Manuel Summers.

La Movida, also, coincided with the expansion of music industry in Spain. The democratization of the country also involved an economic revolution in many sectors. Music was one. Suddenly, after forty years of tight control, the musical market was expanding, and many independent labels emerged in Madrid. Motivated by this musical growth, uncountable independent labels--such as DRO, Zafiro, GASA, Tres Cipreses, Lolly Pop, and so on--becoming essential for the developing of *La Movida* movement. Curiously, some of these labels were created by some of *La Movida*’s bands in order to release their own songs: DRO was founded by Aviador Dro; and, Tres Cipreses was created by both bands Parálisis Permanente and Gabinete Caligari. However, these labels

⁴³ Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 47.

⁴⁴ In different studies, authors such as Fernán del Val and Héctor Fouce have pointed out how *La Movida*’s members had strong connections with cultural spheres, and consequently, held a privileged position. See Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí* (Madrid: Valecio Editores, 2006), 21–68; and, Héctor Fouce and Fernán Del Val, “*La Movida*: Popular Music as the Discourse of Modernity in Democratic Spain” in *Made in Spain: Studies in Popular Music*, ed. Silvia Martínez and Héctor Fouce (New York: Routledge, 2013), 125–134.

were gradually absorbed by international ones as a result of the process of reorganization of the music industry in Spain and international recognition of *La Movida*. For example: DRO, GASA, and Tres Cipreses was itself bought by the multinational Warner in the early 1990s.⁴⁵

La Movida was an underground movement that gradually became mainstream. Larson divides it in three periods: “First, the underground period, linked directly with punk culture, lasted until 1981; second, from 1981 to 1986 where the movement is gaining importance and creating its network. Third, it is the period where the movement consolidated and reached internationally fame and success.”⁴⁶ Fouce explains how Gabinete Caligari, Alaska y Dinamara, or Radio Futura were the bands playing on commercial radio, the only ones that were heard in most of the country. The bands that made up a new underground in the late seventies had turned into the mainstream.⁴⁷ In addition, Stapell explains how the movement was institutionalized by the city council through the following ways: financial support for publications and popular music directly related to *La Movida*, sponsorship of expositions, declarations of support by Tierno Galván, and the inclusion of *La Movida* bands and personalities into institutional celebrations such as the festivals of San Isidro (the Madrid’s local festival) and Christmas.⁴⁸ This process of institutionalization and the shift from underground to mainstream spheres are essential for explaining the influence and the relationship of *La*

⁴⁵ Jorge Pérez, “Driving with *La Movida*,” 191.

⁴⁶ Susan Larson, “La Luna de Madrid y La Movida Madrileña,” 309.

⁴⁷ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 46.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

Movida with other musical movements in terms of authenticity, political appropriation, and musical hegemony.

3. Music Style: Experimenting with Punk

La Movida embraced different genres and styles such as pop, new wave, and disco. However, as explained above, this musical movement was deeply influenced by punk in its beginning because this genre was perfectly suited to a country that was radically breaking with its past and embracing the most contemporary and groundbreaking practices.⁴⁹ The early bands of *La Movida*, such as Radio Futura, Alaska y Los Pegamoides, and Gabinete Caligari were directly influenced by bands such as The Velvet Underground, The Ramones, Siouxsie and the Banshees, or the Sex Pistols.⁵⁰ The leather spike jackets, the colored hair, the anti-authoritarian attitude, and the noise and simple punk music made an impression on Madrilenian youth who wanted to break with the past and be as modern as British or American youth.

Nevertheless, there were significant differences between bands from *La Movida* and British punk: While the Sex Pistols launched the motto “No future for you,” the Madrilenian movement celebrated the present and demanded its enjoyment.⁵¹ Moreover, in contrast to British punk bands such as The Clash, *La Movida* groups rejected any political content in their songs. In the last years of the regime, songwriters had been the

⁴⁹ Héctor Fouce and Fernán Del Val, “*La Movida: Popular Music as the Discourse*,” 125.

⁵⁰ Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 21–68.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 21–68.

musical voice for change and political aspirations. Similarly, the *rock urbano*⁵² bands linked to peripheral working-class neighborhoods also embedded a political discourse in their lyrics. Both songwriters and *rock urbano* movements--situated between mainstream and underground scenes--were tremendously popular in Spain. However, once democracy was restored, some youth lost interest in politics. *La Movida* was the musical expression of this carefree attitude and the demand for simplicity and fun.

Bands of this movement did not have a unified style. For example, Radio Futura and Gabinete Caligari started as punk-new wave bands but soon transitioned to pop rock; Alaska y los Pegamoides and Mecano gravitated between new wave, glam rock, and disco; Los Secretos, Hombres G, Los Nikis, and Nacha Pop were pop rock from their beginning;⁵³ finally, there were bands such as Kaka de Luxe, McNamara y Almodóvar, Aviador Dro, and Parálisis Permanente, all of whom had a style that was hard to define. This style was similar to glam rock and punk, characterized by constant provocation and exaggeration through clothing, gender ambiguity, and provocative lyrics. In fact, Parálisis Permanente was a pioneer in Spain, introducing darkwave and gothic rock. Nevertheless, whichever style or styles these bands favored, their typical formation incorporated drums, bass, guitar, and a lead singer. Frequently, keyboards and synthesizers were also included by some bands such as Alaska y los Pegamoides, Aviador Dro, or Radio Futura.

4. *La Movida* Lyrics: Text and Meaning

⁵² *Rock Urbano* is a term used for describing Spanish hard rock. It was strongly linked to peripheral working-class neighborhoods. Bands such as Asfalto, Leño, Barón Rojo, and so on are good examples of this tendency.

⁵³ This thesis claims that Hombres G and Mecano were part of *La Movida*, even though some authors disagree. Both bands were never linked to the underground scene, but they shared the same characteristics of most *La Movida* bands: social status, genres, lyric topics, outward appearance, similar types of distribution, and so forth.

La Movida's songs address several issues. Héctor Fouce explains how the philosophy that inspired *La Movida*'s song topics is based on the abandonment of intellectualism and political commitment as a reaction against songwriters whose protest songs were popular--above all, in the last phase of the regime.⁵⁴ As a response to this political commitment and solemnity, *La Movida* spread a kind of a musical hedonism by emphasizing enjoyment of the present at the expense of all else.⁵⁵ From this perspective, four main themes can be distinguished in *La Movida*'s songs: celebration, love, parody-irony, and darkness (as fun). The present study does not pretend to do an exhaustive classification; instead, it intends to explain the central tendencies within *La Movida* songs. Some songs might not fit this classification; others might suit two or more groups. An example of this multiplicity is "Devuélveme a mi Chica" ("Give me back my Girl") by Hombres G, which is simultaneously celebratory and humorous while also being a sort of love song.

The arrival of democracy in Spain preceded a general explosion of freedom during the Spanish Transition, turning Madrid into a place of celebration. With *La Movida*, music transitioned from expressing protests to encouraging hedonism. The negativity of social and political problems went away, and music became an invitation to enjoy the present positively, and invitation to have fun and dance.⁵⁶ Good examples of celebration song are the following: "Dance Usted" ("Dance") by Radio Futura, "Hoy no me puedo levantar" ("Today I cannot wake up") by Mecano, and so on. The following lines of the last one exemplify perfectly this celebratory attitude:

⁵⁴ Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 52.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

Today I cannot wake up/
 this weekend was a mess for me/
 [I was] stayed up all night
 Smoking, drinking, laughing all the time

About the second group, love was a usual topic within *La Movida* movement, above all, for bands--such as Nacha Pop, Hombres G, Mecano or Los Secretos--which style was closer to pop music and which audience were mostly teenagers. For Fouce, *La Movida* love songs also had to do with hedonist and festive dimension. Love is also understood as way to enjoy the present, consequently love becomes as long as a song.⁵⁷ The use of acoustic guitars was frequent in these songs in order to getting a nostalgic soft musical ambience. Most of the time, the lyrics were related to the feelings of a male teenager to a girl. A good example of this tendency is “Ya no volverás” (“You never will come back”) by Mamá. Released in 1980, this song exemplifies perfectly this group: utilization of acoustic guitars, smooth melody, lyrics expressing some nostalgia, and so on. In fact, although the singer sings about an ex-girlfriend, the lyric is not especially tragic or sad:

Walking in the street
 I will see you far away
 I will compose some songs
 And my longings will pass

You never will go back to think on me.

The third group consists of those songs parodying or showing comic situations. Like in the case the celebratory songs, *La Movida* attempted to spread the ludic dimension of music and the abandon of any political content.⁵⁸ As previously mentioned,

⁵⁷ Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 131.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

it was a reaction against the solemnity and social conscience of songwriters and hard rock musicians, and comic songs were a direct response to the seriousness. Parody is a way of having fun, a way of complacency, a way of celebrating present and freedom. The song “Mari Pili” (“Mary Pillar”) by Ejecutivos Agresivos illustrates the trend. Released in 1980, the song is a cheerful reggae that ridicules the summer hit songs through the absurd situation described by the lyrics.⁵⁹

Mari Pili no, no, no!
 Please, don't arouse me anymore
 Because I have been out in the sun
 My entire body has gotten burned.

The last group consists of those songs representing dark situations. Concretely, the lyrics of this group talked about death, sexual abomination, murder, and grotesque situations in order to be provocative. This trend can be found, above all, in the beginning of the movement in the most experimental and underground phase by some bands close to gothic rock. Usually, these songs included sound effects to create an unsettling atmosphere. The song “Sombras Negras” (“Black Shadows”), by the band Gabinete Caligari, illustrates this tendency immediately in the first two verses. However, the following two verses are provocative because the band members warn their listeners,

Black shadows in the cathedral
 Swollen cadavers over the Rhine
 Caligari is released
 It is your end

5. Musical and Cultural Impact of *La Movida*

⁵⁹ Héctor Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 140.

La Movida has generated a passionate debate about many issues: the real impact on Spanish culture, the political appropriation, the hegemonic position, and so on. In different publications, important authors such as Héctor Fouce, Susan Larson and Hamilton Stapell have developed theories and opinions about this musical movement which has been far more debated than other musical movements in Spain.

This should be the proof how important *La Movida* has been in for the Spanish popular music history. The analysis of *La Movida* and its position respect to other musical movements is essential for understanding current popular movement in Spain.

Chapter V of this study will discuss the influence of *La Movida* on current bands. It also will show how *La Movida* designate (somehow itself) as the best Spanish pop era due to its hegemonic position in relation with mass media, record labels, and politicians. This privilege position silenced and marginalized other musical movements and has been criticized for different authors and musicians during the last years.

CHAPTER III
MUSIC IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY: RRV

- A. Context: The Cause of Radicalism?
 - B. Characteristics
 - 1. RRV Origin
 - 2. Network: Do It Yourself (DIY)
 - 3. Musical Style: Punk and More
 - 4. RRV Lyrics: Text and Meaning
 - 5. Musical and Cultural Impact of RRV
-

“Euskadi is the most punk place in the whole world.”

Josu Zabala⁶⁰

A. Context: Causes of Radicalism

With a population of around two million people. Basque Country (also known as *Euskadi* or *Euskal Herria* in Basque language) is a small territory on both sides of the Western Pyrenees ruled for centuries by the Spanish State in the South and by France in the North.⁶¹ Since its origins, this region has had a marked identity distinguished by the use of its own language--Basque is the only living pre-Indo-European language of

⁶⁰ Josu Zabala was a member of the RRV band, Hertzainak. This statement can be found in Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 275.

⁶¹ Karlos Sánchez Ekiza, “Radical Rock: Identities and Utopies in Basque Popular Music,” in *Made in Spain* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 43.

Western Europe--and the development of a distinctive culture and traditions. Thus, coinciding with the rise of nationalism in Europe, Basque nationalism arose during XIX century, reclaiming independence from Spain and France and reinforcing Basque traditions and customs. During the Spanish Civil War, the Basque Country was severely harmed by Franco's coup troops, which had the support of Hitler and Mussolini. For example, the infamous Condor Legion--an air force unit sent by Hitler--bombed Guernika, a small-town symbol of Basque Nationalism, which meant the first bombing of civilians by a military air force. Once Franco won the war, his regime persecuted Basque Nationalists and prohibited the use of the Basque language.⁶² This prohibition resulted in social and political unrest between Basque nationalists and Franco's Spain, and together with the negation of Basque culture, the terrorist group, ETA, emerged.⁶³

During the Spanish Transition, the Basque Country was a problematic region in many senses. Most of the problems that Spain inherited from Franco's regime were particularly pronounced in the Basque Country or specific to this region: economic crisis, social conflicts, drug consumption, rise of Basque nationalism, and terrorism.

Many authors, such as Pauli Dávila, agree that the international economic crisis that started in 1973 was particularly intense in the Basque Country, where the industrial restructuring and the dismantling of the industrial fabric had resulted in close to a 70% unemployment rate among people ages 15-29.⁶⁴ The Basque Country had had a strong industrial history started in XIX century, but during the 1980s, Basque youth witnessed

⁶² Sánchez Ekiza, "Radical Rock: Identities and Utopies in Basque Popular Music," 43.

⁶³ ETA or *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (transl. Basque Homeland and Liberty) was a terrorist group--close to revolutionary socialism--which main goal was the independence of Basque Country from Spain and France.

⁶⁴ Pauli Dávila Balsera and Josu Amezaga Albizu, "Juventud, Identidad y Cultura: el Rock Radical Vasco en la Década de los 80," *Historia de la Educación* 22-23 (October 2003): 216.

the closing of factories where their parents and grandparents had worked for decades. Therefore, social unrest increased in two ways: first, through innumerable demonstrations by workers who were losing their jobs and social benefits, and being violently, sometimes fatally, oppressed by the police;⁶⁵ second, by the dissolution of unemployed youth through hopelessness and addiction, particularly to heroin (which was always linked to punk).⁶⁶

Politically the situation was not better after the arrival of the democracy. As Professor Josu Amezaga claims, “the establishment of a new political system, which did not satisfy all of the social sectors that had opposed Francoism, left unresolved many of the social issues that had been raised.”⁶⁷ Additionally, the desire for a truly social and political break from dictatorship plus the aspiration to independence, above all by the left Nationalists, created an unresolvable instability. The incapacity of the central power to reconcile competing factions resulted in political violence at its worst: terrorism. The late 1970s and 1980s were tumultuous periods in Northern Spain: five terrorist groups-- Comandos Autónomos Anticapitalistas, Batallón Vasco Español, Triple A, GAL and ETA--were active in the region during the Spanish Transition.⁶⁸ The ETA and GAL

⁶⁵ See Roberto Herreros and Isidro López. *El Estado de la Cosas de Kortatu. Lucha, Fiesta y Guerra Sucia* (Madrid: Lengua de Trapo, 2013); and, *Los astilleros Euskalduna: Una guerra contra el Estado*, directed by Nuria Domínguez (ETB, 2010), accessed May 1, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txeCkWhQuNA>.

⁶⁶ An estimation says that in 1978 there were 6000 heroin addicts in Basque Country, reaching 10000 in 1984. This author also explains how criminal activities increased due to the heroin consumption and economic crisis. From 1977 to 1984, the number of bank robberies increased from 265 to 6239 in Spain. This information can be found in Elena López Aguirre, *Historia del Rock Vasco: Edozein Herriko Jaixetan* (Vitoria: Aianai, 2011), 152–164.

⁶⁷ Josu Amezaga, “Euskal Herria (The Basque Country),” in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World Volume 7: Europe*, ed. John Shepherd, David Horn and Dave Laing (London: Continuum, 2005), 160–161.

⁶⁸ On the one hand, Batallón Vasco Español (transl. Basque Spanish Battalion) was active from 1975 and 1981, Triple A (transl. Apostolic Anticomunist Alliance) was active from 1976 to 1983, and GAL (transl. Antiterrorist Liberation Groups) was active from 1983 to 1987. Considered far-right terrorist

caused the most damage during Spanish Transition. On the one hand, GAL was supposedly one of the biggest scandals in Spanish political history when it was verified that this terrorist group was supported by the central government as a part of strategy for eradicating the left Nationalism. In 1998, the ex-Home Office Minister, Jose Barrionuevo, was imprisoned after being accused of leading the GAL and the so-called “dirty war” against the ETA. On the other hand, the ETA caused 344 deaths and thousands of injuries during the first years of democracy. This terrorist group inflicted deep damage on Spanish society, above in the Basque region. Fortunately, ETA ceased its activities on 5 September 2010, and has been recently disarmed on 8 April 2017.

The complex situation, previously explained, made the central government develop and put into practice a security plan called Plan ZEN to fight against ETA, to prevent the radicalization of left nationalism and to stop the strong social divisiveness that was happening in Basque Country.⁶⁹ However, this plan involved more oppression, random arrests and frisks, and general loss of freedom which made it very unpopular. Years later, this plan was declared unconstitutional, and it was abolished.

The Basque Country enjoyed a rich musical climate during the 1970s. Besides the influence of bands from the rest of Spain, this region had its own local rock bands which frequently used Basque for singing--such as Itoiz. Basque songwriters--like Urko, Mikel Laboa, and so on--were also very popular during that time. These musicians reclaimed

groups, all of them were mostly formed by ex-police officers and ex-soldiers. All of them were in different ways logistically or economically supported by the central government as a part of a strategy of eradication of ETA, the so-called “dirty war.” On the other hand, Comandos Autónomos Anticapitalistas (transl. Autonomous Anticapitalist Commandos) and ETA (transl. Basque Homeland and Liberty) were considered far left terrorist groups. Defined as an anarchist group, the first one was active from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s. ETA, however, is defined as a left Basque nationalist group--close to revolutionary socialism--which main goal was the independence of Basque Country from Spain and France.

⁶⁹ Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 109.

the use of Basque language and political change through their music, and, in general, the songs were very profound and nostalgic. Also, the Basque Country had a direct contact with England through the port of Bilbao--the capital of this region. Because the volume of its activity, this port also worked as cultural exchange. In this way, Basque youth had access to the musical tendencies from England and US.

In this context, the *Rock Radical Vasco* or RRV (translated to English as Basque Radical Rock) emerged in the Basque Country starting in the late 1970s. Like *La Movida* in Madrid, this movement punk was also strongly influenced by punk, a genre widespread in this region. Bands, such as The Clash or the Sex Pistols were tremendously popular among Basque young. This preference for British punk was not a coincidence, it had to be with the similarities between both regions. Professor John Covach explains that “The rise of punk in UK can be linked to specific socioeconomic (and political) circumstances.” In fact, he points out:

Britain in the mid-1970s was suffering a crushing economic recession. For Britain youth, this meant jobs were hard to find, and those that were available offered no significant opportunity for advancement. Whether or not their feelings were justified by the country's economic troubles, many British teens were prone to despair. That despair soon turned into anger, and punk became the music that best represented this angry spirit.⁷⁰

The specific conditions in UK resembled those of Basque Country. The author and RRV musician, Roberto Moso, explains that “The stories that The Clash or Sex Pistols sang could have been represented in any city of Basque Country.”⁷¹ The motto “no future for you” that Sex Pistols popularized was widely adopted by young people of the Basque

⁷⁰ John Covach, *What's that Sound? An Introduction to Rock and its History* (New York: Norton, 2006), 286–290.

⁷¹ *Caja Negra. Los 80, Drogas, Sida y Punk en Euskal Herria*, directed by Nuria Dominguez (EITB, 2008), accessed May 20, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkQ1WyxV1X0>

Country. In this way, punk became the most influential style within RRV.⁷² With punk, young musicians can address the feelings that tense period may provoke. This is one of the reason why the most radical bands became the most popular:

At the mass level, those which have had the most impact until now have been those with more radical attitudes (Eskorbuto, for example). But we mustn't allow ourselves to overlook the broad, second line which continually pushes with great obstinacy, constituting the most brilliant moment of the music of the Basque Country (without equal in any other community of the country).⁷³

Though, at the same time, this radical attitude often caused problems to these bands. As example, two members of Eskorbuto were imprisoned for three days in Madrid when the police frisked them and found a demo cassette with the songs “ETA” (i.e. the armed Basque nationalist and separatist organization previously mentioned) and “Maldito País, España” (Damned Country, Spain). The band members were accused of insulting State Security Forces and Agencies, and were tried. Similarly, the Attorney General of the State took an action against Las Vulpess when they sang a version of “I wanna be Your Dog” by The Stooges in the famous TV program *La Caja de Ritmos*.⁷⁴

However, the title of *Las Vulpess*' version by was “Me Gusta Ser una Zorra” [I like being a slut], and it was a little bit more explicit and straightforward than the original one. The text and the performance on TV went too far for a country that eight years before was living under a fascist dictatorship, and which had traditionally been very conservative and traditionalist about women rights and feminism. During Francoist period, women could not be more than a housewife. Even in democracy, laws about gender equality progressed slowly. Women had to have a signed permission from their

⁷² Dávila Balsera and Amezaga Albizu, “Juventud, Identidad y Cultura,” 224.

⁷³ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 268.

⁷⁴ Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 105–122.

fathers or husbands for working, to open a bank account, or for getting a driving license. In addition, a husband's infidelity was not considered to be a legal reason for divorce. This situation changed in 1981 when new equality laws were approved.

Both bands, Eskorbuto and Las Vulpess, were declared not guilty, but in the case of the second one, the band dissolved in 1983 because of the problems that this scandal caused for the four young women (whose average age was 19 years): difficulties doing tours, boycotts by extreme right groups, harassment by the State Security Forces and Agencies, and problems with their families.⁷⁵

In general, scandals similar to Las Vulpess, radical attitudes, and other social and political factors caused the RRV movement to be ignored by mass media such as national TV shows and mainstream record labels. However, it is important to point out how the separatist left party *Herri Batasuna* (HB) used RRV for its political benefit. HB saw similarities between its own political discourse and the anti-authoritarian and anti-centralism messages of RRV's bands. Consequently, HB organized concerts for these bands in order of gaining popularity and votes. This relationship, however, was always complicated. Lahusen explains as follows:

Three positions can be distinguished within this debate. The first position, represented by groups like Eskorbuto and Barricada, is in opposition to all types of social order. They display anarchic disinterest to everything that collective organization means. The second, exemplified by groups like La Polla Records and RIP, distinguish themselves from this first position by emphasis on a combative attitude explicitly defined in political terms. The third position, represented by groups like Kortatu (later Negu Gorriak), Hertzainak (from Ertzaintza, the Basque police), MCD, Baldin Bada, and others, placed more stress both on the national question and on open alliance with sectors of the *abertzale* movement. Each group tried to represent punk radicalism with greater loyalty. Analysis of the different positions helps identify the ways in which the national conflict and

⁷⁵ Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 112.

solidarity with the *abertzale* movement became compatible with the internal discourse of punk.⁷⁶

A considerable part of the RRV movement was similar to anarchist ideologies and rejected any political organization. Therefore, many of these bands criticized HB's utilization; the most extreme case of this rejection was the band, Eskorbuto, whose members considered themselves as "anti-todo" (anti-everything). The band "declared war" against HB, dedicating to it the song "Haciendo Bobadas" (Doing stupid things).

B. General Characteristics

1. RRV Origin

Rock Radical Vasco (RRV) was an invented label intended to define the music environment in Basque Country, where countless rock bands had been emerging since the late 1970s. This label gathered bands with styles ranging from ska and hard rock to hardcore and punk; however, because the label had clear commercial and political intentions, many bands repudiated it. For example, members of Eskorbuto, like many other punks, refused to organize themselves as an actual movement. For them,

RRV (Radical Basque Rock) is a montage by those who invented the term. I think that it's unjust to use the words radical and rock with Basque. We believe that radical rock emerges from a lack of empathy with all types of society, including the Basque.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Lahusen, "The Aesthetic of Radicalism," 269.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 270.

Nevertheless, RRV was first mentioned on October 16, 1983, in an article published by the Left Nationalist newspaper *Egin*, and from then on, RRV has been an accepted term for describing this musical movement--with or without the approval of its main figures.

Lahusen explains as follows when the debate about the name started:

In 1983 the first punk 'macro-concert' was organized in Oñati (Guipúzcoa), involving all the most important groups. This concert marked the beginning of a debate concerning the name which should be used to designate punk music. Punk was re-defined as 'Basque Radical Rock'. This was, without doubt, an indispensable move which allowed the promotion of punk as a new product both outside and inside Euskadi. At the same time, this new definition was a way of stylizing and reformulating punk through re-categorization. This debate responded in particular to the attempts of the *abertzale* position to impose a conception of punk as a music which was simultaneously radical and Basque.⁷⁸

The article also contained an announcement of a concert being held in Tudela as a part of an anti-NATO, antinuclear, and anti-ZEN festival. The following bands were listed as participating: Barricada, La Polla Records, Herzainak, Zarama, Basura, Eskorbuto and RIP.⁷⁹ Since the publication of this article, the term was utilized systematically by media and press in order to distinguish it from *La Movida* and other musical movements.

2. Network: Do It Yourself (DIY)

As explained above, the main influence on RRV was British punk bands such as the Sex Pistols and The Clash. However, another idea that came from punk and had a strong impact on this movement was the “Do It Yourself” culture. Lahusen claims:

⁷⁸ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 268–269.

⁷⁹ Elena López Aguirre, *Historia del Rock Vasco: Edozein Herriko Jaixetan* (Vitoria: Aianai, 2011), 152–164.

Within this formation process particular 'organisms' emerged which promoted Basque punk. These included pirate and independent free radio stations, (independent) record labels (such as *Soñua*, in Pamplona) and magazines like *Muskaria* (the monthly Spanish speaking 'underground' press of Basque country, with a radical role throughout Spain).⁸⁰

Like in Madrid and the rest of the country, the infrastructure needed to support culture and youth leisure was missing--a legacy of Franco's regime. However, once democracy was restored, young people took the initiative: Free radios, independent labels, and fanzines were created to give voice to the new generation that demanded a new culture. This spontaneous and independent network supported RRV.

Without any official support, this network was also expanding by word of mouth. Basque youth created their own sub-cultural community as an alternative to established order.

From the beginning of the 1980s, punk formulated an aesthetic discourse of its own, paralleled by the creation of its own organized infrastructure through the whole of Euskadi. In various cities, a network of contacts emerged between groups and fans many of whom exchanged names and tapes. Gigs were organized in bars and dance halls, links were forged with anti-military and anti-nuclear groups, with squatters and others. The punk scene grew beyond the local level and achieved increasing visibility.⁸¹

However, another essential element--more than bars, dance halls, and word of mouth--for the RRV's network was the countless *gaztetxes* (i.e., youth centers in Basque language), which were opened around Basque Country. These centers took place in abandoned buildings where young people organized concerts, other cultural events, political debates and talks about youth issues such as sexuality and drugs. Here, RRV's bands were able to perform and develop their music. Additionally, these centers were the studios for many of

⁸⁰ Lahusen, "The Aesthetic of Radicalism," 268.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 268.

RRV's bands. The *gaztetxe* network together with some local festivals were determinant for the diffusion of this musical movement.

3. Musical Style: Punk and More

RRV included many musical genres: the bands Herzainak and Potato played ska and reggae music; MCD and Barricada were close to hard rock style; Kortatu had a particular style, a sort of mix between ska and punk very similar to The Clash; and, finally, bands like Eskorbuto, La Polla Records, Cicatriz, RIP, and so on were purely punk. The formation for most of these bands were: drummer, bass, guitar and lead singer. However, it was usual to find saxophone and keyboard in the ska formations principally.

The music of these punk groups was characterized by simplicity, aggressively, and radicalism. Punk was 'simple' because it moved at the minimal level of Western rock. The harmonic structures took the original 'blues' model, (I, IV and V scale), the melodic structure was reduced to a repetition of motifs, the formal structure had clear symmetry. Texts were composed through the juxtaposition of opinions. Songs were short and concise. [...] The radicalism of this punk style was most prominent in performance style and onstage details. Punk musicians favored a predominance of electric guitars with disfigured sound, playing simple rhythmic patterns with driving aggressiveness, with a rough and unpolished loud P.A. mix and amplification. There was common use of a 'shouting' voice and pronounced often aggressive interaction with the audience, to the extent that members of the audience might go onstage to participate in a band's performance, whether the band wanted this or not. In these ways punk music represented limited rejection of existing music culture. Its musical structure was in a sense a return to base in that it went no further than those structures commonly found in commercial pop and rock.⁸²

This explanation described well those bands with a radical extreme style such as La Polla Records, Cicatriz, RIP or Eskorbuto. However, other bands, such as Hertzainak, Potato, Tijuana in Blue, and even Kortatu were influenced more by ska and reggae than punk.

⁸² Lahusen, "The Aesthetic of Radicalism," 271–272.

These bands found a more sophisticated sound and included other instruments such as saxophone, *trikitixa* (Basque accordion), keyboards, and so on.

4. RRV Lyrics: Text and Meaning

The songs of RRV covered several topics but were focused primarily on political and social issues. Balsera and Amezaga found that RRV lyrics largely followed four central themes: frustration, RRV's clichés, rock & roll stereotypes, and international (extra-locales) political issues.⁸³

First, they explained how frustration was a widespread feeling among Basque youth due to the many problems surrounding Basque society. Consequently, it was a main theme for RRV bands. Secondly, for these authors, RRV's clichés are those songs which criticized politicians, the army, police and religion, all who were still strongly linked to Franco's period and represented traditional-old fashioned values, which no longer matched the reality of youth in the new democracy. Third, songs about rock & roll stereotypes are parodies about rock-star lifestyle. These songs criticize and ridicule the stereotype "sex, drugs, and rock & roll" and the necessity of many rock-star singers of being fashionable and modern. Most of the RRV's bands considered that these values had decayed, and in some ways, these represent the gentrification of authentic rock values--it means rebellion and counterculture. In addition, the rock-star lifestyle did not make sense in Basque Country where, as mentioned before, there was widespread social unrest and a deep economic crisis. Finally, songs about international issues were the least common.

⁸³ Dávila Balsera and Amezaga Albizu, "Juventud, Identidad y Cultura," 226–227.

Examples of this group include: “Desmond Tutu” by Kortatu, “Guerra en Colombia” (“War in Colombia”) by Cicatriz, “Jamaica” by La Polla Records, “Sudáfrica” (“South Africa”) by Tijuana in Blue and so on. Most of the times, the international problems were located in the conflicts in Latin America and the apartheid at South Africa.

This research, however, finds this classification vague, above all for the inclusion of international political issues and rock and rock & roll stereotypes as a main topics. Examining the repertoire of the most popular bands, this study has just found four songs that might be included in the international category and three for the rock & roll stereotypes.⁸⁴ In this way, this research classifies RRV topics on four main groups: frustration, realism, critical/acid parodies, and darkness. This classification attempts to define the central tendencies within RRV songs. It is not an exhaustive classification, some songs might not fit in this classification and others might in two or more groups. As example of this multiplicity is the song "Os engañan" (“They trick you”) by Eskorbuto, which might be included in both frustration and critical parodies categories. This classification is also a tool to be more precise and consistent in the analysis and comparison to the other movement studied here, *La Movida*.

The present study does not pretend to do an exhaustive classification; instead, it intends to explain the central tendencies within *La Movida* songs. Some songs might not fit this classification; others might suit two or more groups. An example of this multiplicity is “Devuélveme a mi Chica” (“Give me back my Girl”) by Hombres G, which is simultaneously celebratory and humorous while also being a sort of love song.

⁸⁴ For international issues, this thesis have found the next four examples: Desmond Tutu” by Kortatu, “Guerra en Colombia” by Cicatriz, “Jamaica” by La Polla Records, and “Sudáfrica” by Tijuana in Blue. For the rock & roll stereotypes, it has been found three examples: “Bilbao, Mierda y R&R” by MCD, “Herpes, talco y tecno-Pop” and "Estrella del Rock" by La Polla Records.

As Pauli and Amezaga state, frustration was one of the main topics of RRV movement. Both authors suggest that the majority of RRV bands talked about frustration on their songs adding that this feeling had to do with the “no future” idea and the hopelessness of an impossible true revolution that characterized the radical Basque young.⁸⁵ A good example of this tendency, “No Hay Futuro” (“There is not Future”) by the band RIP. The song is simple and short--less than two minutes--but concise. An explosion of frustration: “what a future? there is no future” repeats the singer over and over during the refrain.

RIP was strongly influenced by those punk bands with more aggressive and extreme style such as Sex Pistols and Sham 69. In fact, “There is no Future” is paraphrasing the song “God Save The Queen” by Sex Pistols, whose famous motto “there is not future for you” left an important mark in Basque young. As explained above, Basque young saw their aspirations for a better future cut short. RIP exemplifies this feeling through its song: “What a shitty time we are living in” recites the singer.

Realistic songs are those representing true everyday undesirable situations in the 1980s Basque society. It includes police oppression, terrorist attacks, drugs consumption, criminality, pollution, etc. “Botes de Humo” (“Smoke Grenade”) by Cicatriz en la Matriz is a good example of this group of songs. The text describes a police charge during a demonstration.

Smoke grenades have shot against you and your friend
With the nightstick starts the police charge
They [police] are hitting people

⁸⁵ Dávila Balsera and Amezaga Albizu, “Juventud, Identidad y Cultura,” 226.

[Where] is the freedom of speech?
 This is not a prison
 [There is] too much oppression.

There were uncountable demonstrations, protest and strikes in Basque Country during this period. Many of them were dissolved by police forces. This song, released in 1986, represents this reality not only with the text, also with the fast tempo and the aggressiveness of singer's timbre. In fact, in the refrain, the singer shouts instead of singing almost simulating being part of a demonstration and he warns a "smoke grenade is coming."

The third group consists of critical/acid parodic songs which ridiculed traditional strata of society such as the church, the army and politics. Some also criticized the rock industry, rock fashion, and modern music styles. The band that undoubtedly epitomized this tendency was La Polla Records. Most of its songs contain a mordant and comic parody that reflects the most negative aspects of society. The songs "Salve" and "Moriréis como Imbéciles" ("You will die stupidly") are illustrative examples of this parody tendency. The first is an acid critique about the Catholic Church and its relationship with money. The second parodies army and war: "you (soldiers) will die while them [the leaders] are watching you on TV in a refuge."

The last group is those songs talking about dark-macabre-sinister topics such as death, murder, or suicide. This topic has to do with two different issues: First, there was taste for prohibited and extreme situations typical in rock & roll and punk culture. The young wanted to live fast and without limitations. This extreme philosophy has been seen in many rock stars and rock consumers. Second, the generalized frustration among Basque young could address to negative thoughts such as murder and suicide. As a result

of this extreme life style, darkness was seen as a destiny. A demonstrative example of this tendency might be “La Sangre, los Polvos, los Muertos (“The Blood, the dust, the Corpses”) by Eskorbuto. The first verses are very clear about this feeling: “time rots everything, and only the good things die young.”

5. Musical and Cultural Impact of RRV

Around 1990s, *Rock Radical Vasco* was ending. Many of the bands had disappeared and some of the specific circumstances had changed: economy recovery, discredit of left nationalism, and marginalization-stigmatization of this movement. Simultaneously, the musical tendencies were changed during the 1990s. Hip-hop, grunge or electronic music were gradually gaining popularity.

It is probable that the relative success of RRV was due to the way these bands performed. Lahusen explains how these bands created an ambience where they reached a total communication with their public. In the same way, as a member of Barricada stressed:

We don't prepare anything beforehand. The more the public gets involved, the better. Sometimes we come out to play without knowing the order of the songs. We aren't rigid--50 per cent of the gig depends on the behavior of the audience [...] We try to reach a point of total communication with the public.⁸⁶

Another reason might be the severity and authenticity of their lyrics. Like American hip hop, whose authenticity is articulated through lyrics revealing personal truths linked to

⁸⁶ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 267.

lived experiences in predominantly Black urban neighborhoods,⁸⁷ RRV bands also revealed true hard experiences from the 1980s Basque Country reality.

Whatever the reasons of its relative success, RRV is an indispensable part of the music culture of Spain and, above all Basque Country. Nowadays, Spanish and Latin American punk bands looked to RRV movement as a model, and somehow, they try to imitate it. Many famous modern punk bands have made versions of RRV's songs, and have declared fans of some of these bands. Concretely, this point will be developed in chapter V.

⁸⁷ Lyndon C. S. Way and Simon McKerrell, *Music As Multimodal Discourse: Semiotics, Power and Protest* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 1.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARING BOTH MOVEMENTS

A. Introduction

1. Why Compare?
2. What to Compare?
3. How to Compare?

B. Comparing Songs:

1. Celebration Versus Frustration
2. Love Versus Realism
3. Comic Parody Versus Critical/Acid Parody
4. Darkness

Studying popular music is an interdisciplinary matter. Musicology still lags behind other disciplines in the field, especially sociology. Indeed, it should be stated at the outset that no analysis of musical discourse can be considered complete without consideration of social, psychological, visual, gestural, ritual, technical, historical, economic and linguistic aspects relevant to the genre, function, style, (re-)performance situation and listening attitude connected with the sound event being studied.

Philip Tagg⁸⁸

A. Introduction

⁸⁸ Philip Tagg, "Analyzing Popular Music: Theory, Method and Practice," *Popular Music* 2 (1982): 37–67

1. Why compare?

At present, there are no published studies comparing the different musical movements from the 1980s in Spain. *La Movida* silenced in many ways the importance and relevance of other movements such as the *Rock Radical Vasco*, *La Ruta Destroy*, *La Movida Viguera*, and so on. This statement is defended by many authors, such as Kiko Mora and Eduardo García Salueña.⁸⁹ These authors point out how *La Movida*'s hegemonic position marginalized other musical movements of that period in different ways. However, regardless these critics, there are not studies comparing the different musical movements of the 1980s.

The present study attempts to compare both *La Movida* and RRV in order to demonstrate that RRV has been as influential as *La Movida*, particularly for protest music, and that has been able to contest the hegemonic position of *La Movida*. This influence will be analyzed in this study in chapter V.

1. What to compare?

The comparison-analysis of *La Movida* and the *Rock Radical Vasco* will analyze and compare sixteen songs: 8 from each movement. The criteria for the song selection is explained in the following paragraphs.

⁸⁹ See Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 11.

For the song's topics, this study is going to follow the next selection: On the one hand, according to the classification of *La Movida*'s song topics exposed in chapter II, there are four main themes: celebration, love, comic parody, and darkness as fun. On the other hand, according to classification of explained on chapter III, RRV four main themes are the following: frustration, realism, acid parody, and darkness as destiny. Considering these classifications, the present study contemplates that the following pairing is the most optimal way to compare and contrast both movements: celebration vs. frustration, love vs. realism, comic parody vs critical/acid parody, and darkness as fun vs darkness as destiny. This pairing is a way of organization and just follows to compare and contrast both movements. In any case, it is not an exhaustive pairing or classification.

The bands considered for this study are relevant for both movements for the next reasons: 1) level of popularity; 2) some of these bands were foundational for each movement according to many authors; and 3) the bands selected represent the different tendencies within each movement. Simultaneously, the study case songs are a representative part of each band's repertoire, and are chosen according to the following criteria: year of release, importance within the band repertoire, and popularity--which is measured by the number of times these songs have been reproduced in YouTube. These views in YouTube reveal the level of popularity at the present time and also show the impact of these movements on modern Spanish music culture. During the 1980s, *La Movida* movement was more popular and sold more albums than any other movement by far in Spain because of the support of mass media and the political establishment. Contrary, RRV was relegated to the underground scene, and its sales were limited. In any case, many bands of both *La Movida* and RRV have become part of the Spanish popular

music culture, and even though these bands are from the 1980s, the number of views in YouTube is substantially high.⁹⁰ In general, the selection of the songs attempts to show some of the most relevant examples of both movements. Most of these songs were (and still are) very popular in Spanish culture, above all, those belonging to *La Movida*.

2. How to compare?

This study will consider the historical, political, and social frameworks already exposed for the analysis and comparison of these movements and songs. Besides these frameworks, different approaches will be used.

All of them will be analyzed to demonstrate how the musical and linguistic choices in these songs reveal broader ideological and social discourses and what kinds of social relations of power, inequalities and interests are perpetuated, generated or legitimated both explicitly and implicitly in their music and texts.⁹¹ For instance, different musical genres have different political and social repercussions and connotations, like some genres such as heavy metal and punk, which are strongly linked to working-class neighborhoods in Spain.

Accordingly, the analysis-comparison will mainly focus on the lyrics, but also on the style, context, sound, and means of promotion of each song, and the possible relations of these aspects to social-political meanings, because much of music's power lies in its use as multimodal communication. It is not just lyrics which lend songs their meaning,

⁹⁰ See list of number of YouTube views in Appendix 1.

⁹¹ Way and McKerrell, *Music As Multimodal Discourse*, 1.

but images and musical sound as well.⁹² It also will show differences (sometimes connections) between both movements and their relationship with their political, social, and economic circumstances.

In addition, this study will consider the works of Thomas Turino, who adapts the semiotic theories of Charles Sanders Peirce to music in order to facilitate the analysis of the different signs found in musical practices; these signs include not only sounds, but also voice tone, rhythm, tempo, physical gestures, lyrics, and so forth.⁹³ However, Peircean theories not only focus on the nature of certain signs, but also on the relationship of the perceiver to the sign and its possible meanings. Turino explains the basics of this process as follows:

Every musical sound, performance or dance movement, and contextual feature that affects an actual perceiver is a sign, and every perceiver is affected by signs in relation to his or her own personal history of experience, which is at once a partially unique but largely shared social experience.

[...]

For Peirce, semiotic processes have three basic elements: (1) the sign, something that stands for something else to someone in some way; (2) the object, which is the "something else," or entity, stood for by the sign, be it an abstract concept or a concrete object; and (3) the interpretant, which is the effect created by bringing the sign and object together in the mind of a perceiver.⁹⁴

In other words, the Peircean concept of sign is flexible “as something that stands for something else to someone in some way,”⁹⁵ which allows many different types of signs, perceivers, and interpretations. In this context, ethnography becomes crucial to social and musical semiotic analysis in order to identify

⁹² Way and McKerrell, *Music As Multimodal Discourse*, 8.

⁹³ Thomas Turino, “Peircean Thought as Core Theory for a Phenomenological Ethnomusicology,” *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 58, no.2 (2014):189.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 188

⁹⁵ Thomas Turino, “Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircean Semiotic Theory for Music,” *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 43, no. 2 (1999): 222.

what the signs are, in relation to what object, for whom, and in which ways.

Peircean approach developed three trichotomies of concepts for analyzing different aspects of a sign and distinct types of relationships between the three basic components: sign-object/meaning-interpretant.⁹⁶ One of the best example of this approach applied to music is the analysis of Hendrix's Woodstock performance of "The Star Spangled Banner," in which different types of signs with opposed meanings operate simultaneously: the distortion of the guitar, Hendrix clothes and manners vs the American Flag and the anthem. Turino explains as follows:

The performance and its various micro-components would be compounded in multileveled and conflicting ways ("snowballing" effect) if you had been at Woodstock, met a girl, and fallen in love; listened to the piece on records with her remembering Woodstock; and later lost her after being drafted and going to Vietnam. It might likewise be compounded in a starkly contrasting manner if you had lost your son in Vietnam and had thus developed a hatred of hippies.⁹⁷

In short, perceivers would identify and interpret the different signs (something that stands for someone) according to their personal and social experiences.

This study will consider this analytical tool in order to identify certain signs found on *La Movida* and RRV songs and relate them to part of their audiences and the general context of the 1980s in Madrid and the Basque Country respectively. However, this study will not apply exhaustively the terminology and the concepts developed in Peircean theories, but it will be used as tool and framework for this analysis/comparison.

B. Comparing songs

⁹⁶ See Turino, "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience," 221–255. In this article, Turino explains accurately the Peircean system (trichotomies of concepts). This author describes the different relationships and possibilities between signs, objects/meaning, and interpretants.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 242.

1. Celebration Vs Frustration

“Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil” (“In love with Young People’s Fashion”), is one of the most successful and well-known songs of the Madrilenian band, Radio Futura. In fact, it is considered one of the hymns of *La Movida*. Released in 1980, the band promoted this hit in various national TV shows. Two music videos were recorded for these programs in which it can be seen the members of the band wearing colorful and youthful clothes and dancing in a kind of exaggerated and extravagant way. In general, the video and the music transmit a positive image: six young guys having fun and enjoying life.

Radio Futura included guitar, bass, drummer, keyboard/synthesizer, and two singers singing in duet for this song. The song begins with a little more than the guitar playing the harmony (I-VI-IV-V) supported by a rhythmical line bass and the drums doing a simple pattern in a medium fast tempo--while the keyboard colors the ensemble with some lightly effects. There is nothing virtuosic or sophisticate, it is quite simple but effective, clear. The voice’s timbres of both lead singers sound juvenile, sometimes shrill, above all in the short responses in the end of each phrase. The melody is not complex, gravitating above the same pitch, it is repetitive and concise. Same than form: two verses (AA’) followed by the chorus (B) repeated over and over.

“Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil” is a call for celebration of youth, fashion, and the present moment. A sort of *carpe diem* song, which coincides with Fouce’s statement about the Madrilenian movement, “the (intellectual) proposal of *La Movida* was the

enjoyment of the present.”⁹⁸ In this song, Radio Futura embraces clearly this philosophy, and calls to young people to follow them:

Hey you! If you listen to me
And pay me attention
I would explain to you what happened
When I was walking through the Puerta del Sol

Besides the call, the first stanza also establishes where if the action is taking place. La Puerta del Sol operates here as an icon that connect the audience with a meaningful and concrete place; La Plaza del Sol is for Madrilenian people something similar than Time Square for New Yorkers. Radio Futura chose this place as “the space that crystallized the evanescent future in the present,”⁹⁹ where modernity, young, fashion, and freedom are all together.

I saw young people walking
With that air of security
Suddenly I understood
The future is already here

The first verse “I saw young people walk with confidence” is a direct reference to the Francoist period, when people were afraid and was not able to walk free. In “Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil,” these “new” young people are not afraid anymore; consequently, they can live without fear, even further without political concerns because they live in democracy. They can just enjoy their own youth through something as banal as fashion. *La Movida* [through Radio Futura] explicitly declares a temporal experience that is half-

⁹⁸ Héctor Fouce, “Emociones en Lugar de Soluciones” n.p.

⁹⁹ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 39.

way between the proposal of the anti-Francoist culture and the nihilism of the British punk that strongly influenced it.¹⁰⁰ In other words:

The political concerns in the 1980s will not be important anymore, they were replaced by an aesthetic attitude without any political content. Spain (Madrid) was transforming into a big party supported by the state; its most important characteristic was hedonism. Its philosophy was the banality of the new. The country was entering postmodernity.¹⁰¹ This behavior can be seen in the song, Radio Futura, *Enamorado de la moda juvenil* (1980). Contrary to the “No future” of the Sex Pistols (1976), Radio Futura reflected perfectly what *La Movida* was: interest in aesthetic and style, banality and total carelessness of seriousness.¹⁰²

Basically, the traumatic past had to be forgotten, and the arrival of democracy and freedom had to be celebrated. In this sense, “*Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil*” work as a metaphor of the political change.

Similarly, the song “*Bailando*” (“Dancing”) by Alaska y Los Pegamoides is another example of the celebratory tendency within *La Movida*. Released in 1982, it reached the first position in the most popular and important radio hits list, *Los 40 Principales*.¹⁰³ The song was commercialized internationally in Mexico, Peru, Canada or U.K--for the last two, Alaska y Los Pegamoides recorded an English version.

“*Bailando*” mixes different styles such as disco and electronic-pop. It is a very rhythmical song based on an energetic brass (trombone, trumpet and saxophone) and apercussion section played by drums and synthesizer. The slapping of the bass guitar together with the previous elements also contributes to this flow, creating a very

¹⁰⁰ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 38.

¹⁰¹ Subirats, Eduardo, “Postmoderna Modernidad: La España de los Felices Ochenta,” *Quimera Revista Literaria*, 145 (1996): 11–18.

¹⁰² Ana María Sánchez-Catena, *Pongamos que hablo de Madrid: Madrid a través de las Canciones de los Años 80 in Madrid en la Literatura y las Artes*, (2006); 277.

¹⁰³ *Los 40 Principales* is the list most popular list of this type in Spain, and also it is very important in Latin America. It mixes Spanish and English songs from the most important hits of Spanish, Latin American and other countries musicians.

danceable song. In this case, this instrumentation and the style operate as an index of youth and modernity.¹⁰⁴ With the arrival of democracy, Spain had to be as modern as the rest of Western European countries, and *La Movida* was the solution to that problem.¹⁰⁵ In general, “Bailando” is a song composed for dancing, something common for *La Movida* bands, which considered “music as an invitation for dancing, an excuse for doing social life, it is also a way to seduce.”¹⁰⁶

The lyrics also represent this idea. Showing a somewhat apathic and indifferent attitude during the performance, the singer--a deep mezzo soprano--sounds like she is complaining:

I am dancing
 The whole day I stay dancing
 And while, the neighbors don't stop bothering me

The new Madrilenian generation had forgotten the negative years of the regime, so their music had to be fun and positive, without concerns or intellectual aspirations. In “Bailando,” the singer does not care at all about problems--in this case, the neighbors’ complaints or her own physical integrity. In fact, she does not care at all because her only concern is dancing, having fun and an intense social life:

[...] My bones are dislocated
 The femur is very displaced
 My body feels bad
 But I have a great social life.

¹⁰⁴ Turino, “Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience,” 247.

¹⁰⁵ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 38.

¹⁰⁶ Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 129.

The Madrilenian movement focused on simple, daily topics that emphasized the esthetic dimension of art and music.¹⁰⁷ Alaska y los Pegamoides embodies perfectly this tendency through this song. The band was always characterized for its fashionable attire and haircuts as well as the inclusion of disco and techno sound in its songs showing always a modern fashionable image.

Both songs, “Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil” and “Bailando,” are obvious examples of the celebratory tendency within *La Movida*. However, this festive attitude contrasts to the frustration showed on many RRV’s songs. Two illustrative examples are “Cerebros Destruídos” (“Destroyed Brains”) and “Mierda de Ciudad” (“Shitty City”) by Eskorbuto and Kortatu, respectively.

From its beginning, Eskorbuto has always had a special consideration for many authors, musicians, and audiences in general. Nowadays, it is a reference for Spanish and Latin-American punk. Roberto Moso, a journalist and member of the RRV band, Zarama, claims that Eskorbuto has probably been the most influential band within the RRV movement.¹⁰⁸ Characterized by extreme and purely punk style, the band reached considerable fame in the underground scene, even overseas, particularly in Mexico. The truth is that although Eskorbuto had an extreme yet short-lived musical career, it is seen as a paradigm group within punk culture. In fact, Isidro Lopez claims, "If punk were understood as an explosion of nihilism and self-destruction, this band would be

¹⁰⁷ Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 129.

¹⁰⁸ Mora and Viñuela, *Rock around Spain*, 118.

undoubtedly the most authentic punk band from Spain, and probably from the whole Europe.”¹⁰⁹

This group released “Cerebros Destruídos” in 1980, which became one of its most famous hits. The song is a little more than the alternation of different stanzas and the same riff guitar over and over. The sound quality is raw, for there is no sophistication or virtuosity.

The music of these punk groups [Eskorbuto, RIP, Cicatriz] was characterized by simplicity, aggressiveness, and radicalism. Punk was 'simple' because it moved at the minimal level of Western rock. The harmonic structures took the original 'blues' model, (I, IV and V scale), the melodic structure was reduced to a repetition of motifs, and the formal structure had clear symmetry. Texts were composed through the juxtaposition of opinions. Songs were short and concise.¹¹⁰

However, this simplicity and conciseness is quite effective in terms of expressivity; the guitar riff is melodically and sonically harsh, the singer sounds hoarse, almost shouting with anger, and the text is full of pessimism and complete hopelessness. Here, the frustration is represented by juxtaposition of the voice's quality (hoarse and angry) and the negative images represented in the text:

Hope is lost
The dreams are lost
Problems are going on
Without any solution

Our lives are consumed
The brain is destroying
Our bodies fall exhausted
Like they were cursed.

“Cerebros Destruídos” clearly exemplifies the frustration tendency, which is completely understandable in the context of the 1980s Basque Country. As explained above, the

¹⁰⁹ Herreros and López. *El Estado de la Cosa*, 73.

¹¹⁰ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 271.

economic situation did not offer an inspiring future to youth, especially to those living in working-class neighborhoods like the one Eskorbuto belonged to. The members came from the left bank of the Nervión (the estuary of Bilbao), “where the problems of that period: the economic crisis, unemployment, drug use were particularly notorious.”¹¹¹ In fact, two members of the band died as a consequence of their heroin addiction in their early 30’s.

Eskorbuto was known for its “anti-everything” attitude that frequently caused many problems. “Punk [for Eskorbuto] is conscious of the constant robbery of our lives, and only pretends to recuperate what belongs to it: its time, its youth, its energy as long as it lasts.”¹¹² It is a sort of version of “live fast, die young” lifestyle but in a negative way and without any glamor.

Past is already past
 Present is a disaster
 Future cannot be seen
 You are already dead

This disenchantment resulted in extreme way of life and a lack of commitment to any political or social sector--because nothing really mattered for Eskorbuto. These direct quotations of one of the members clearly summarizes their attitude:

In the album *Anti Todo*, we demonstrate we do not have any political band because we have our own one. We think that political ideas are outdated and they are not useful for anything.¹¹³

We have nothing to do with nazis, with reds--we say what we think is bad about reds--and the same for the fascists. We have our own history. For example, there are police here in Santurce who belong to Herri Batasuna yet they are the most

¹¹¹ Sánchez Ekiza, “Radical Rock: Identities and Utopies in Basque Popular Music,” 44.

¹¹² Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 266.

¹¹³ Diego Cerdán, *Eskorbuto: Historia Triste* (Madrid: Ediciones Marcianas), 200.

repressive there are. We've encountered these police--they say they are *abertzale* but they're the most repressive--they're even worse than the Spanish police.¹¹⁴

Then, frustration in Eskorbuto is a consequence of its marginalization (self-marginalization in many ways) and its “anti-everything” approach. However, frustration was not specific for Eskorbuto; rather, it was common for all RRV’s bands although each one had its own perspective.

This pessimistic vision was the result of a belief that despite its fundamental errors and evident decadence, society would do everything possible to survive. In a day-to-day situation of state terror, violence and repression, punks chose anti-conformism and provocation, rebelling against the hated system, state and dominant order.¹¹⁵

For example, frustration is understood in political terms for other bands, such as Kortatu or Hertzainak. Frustration for these groups was a direct result of the political climate, particularly the oppression of the State Forces.

An illustrative example of this political frustration is the song “Mierda de Ciudad” (“Shitty City”) by Kortatu. Released in the band’s first album in 1985, it is a version of the song “Drinkin' and Drivin” by the British band, The Business. It is a song close to rockabilly style with a marked medium-fast tempo and harmony based in the blues model (I-IV-V) over and over. The singer together with the chorus sound like a little bit wild, like hooligans in a bar after a soccer game. In fact, the original version is a drinking song that celebrates the high consumption of alcohol in the bar. These types of themes were usual for the early Street punk and Oi! bands, subgenres of punk. “Drinking and driving is so much fun,” the text recites.

¹¹⁴ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 270.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 266.

However, Kortatu and its lead singer, Fermin Muguruza, have always focused on protest songs, and they have become symbols of resistance and political commitment. The Basque poet and writer Bernardo Atxaga wrote, “Fermin Muguruza has been one of the most important European political singers of XX century.”¹¹⁶

Consequently, Kortatu’s version of “Drinkin’ and Drivin’” is quite different. Although at the beginning it looks also like a drinking song with the same hooligan style, the last verse of the first stanza reveals something is not right; there is not too much fun for Kortatu:

I am going to spend the whole Saturday
 Drinking until being exhausted
 I do not want to go out anymore
 Always the same in this shitty city

Kortatu’s version is not celebrating anything, rather the contrary. The second stanza reveals a complaint about a real situation during those days in the Basque Country: the police oppression.

I have to greet fools [police officers] in the streets
 Police cars, frisk on the vestibule
 Fucking cocky [police officers]
 Always, I have to bear the same, shitty city.

Here, frustration is represented differently than in Eskorbuto case. The text is an iconic representation of police oppression in the Basque Country. The listener was familiar because young people were the main target of police activities, which resulted in high tension and hatred between both sides.

¹¹⁶ Herreros and López. *El Estado de la Cosa*, XIII.

2. Love vs. Realism

I selected four songs for this section. Two of them belong to *La Movida*: “Sobre un Vidrio Mojado” (“On a Wet Glass”) by Los Secretos, released in 1981; “La Chica de Ayer” (“Yesterday’s Girl”) by Nacha Pop, released in 1980. The other two represent Rock Radical Vasco: “Hotel Monbar” (“Monbar Hotel”) by Kortatu, released in 1986, and “Barrio Conflictivo” (“Conflicted Neighborhood”) by Barricada, released in 1985.

Los Secretos is one of the foundational bands of *La Movida* movement, and one of the few that continues to play currently. Its works are characterized by following pop and soft rock styles less groundbreaking and modern than other groups within the movement. The group has appeared countless times on national TV shows such as Popgrama and Aplauso.

“Sobre un Vidrio Mojado” is a love song originally composed by the Uruguayan band Kano y Los Bulldogs. In 1981, the Madrilenian band *Los Secretos* included a version of this song on its first studio album recorded by the international record label Polydor. Since then, the song has become part of this band’s repertoire.

The song follows pop standards. It has a soft, catchy melody, plays in a medium fast tempo, and follows verse-chorus pattern. To adorn the piece, the acoustic guitar plays some light and short guitar licks in the end of each stanza.

The lead singer’s voice sounds nostalgic and juvenile. He is remembering a girl, probably an ex-girlfriend, and he feels sad when thinking about her. The rest of the band sings in unison with the singer at the end of the refrain. Demonstrating empathy, they

understand how the singer (the lead role of the story) feels, and they show solidarity with him by supporting him.

On a wet glass
I wrote her name without realizing
And my eyes remained [wet] like the glass while thinking of her

The nostalgic feeling is supported by the next stanza. The last verse let see how the past was better—when the girl was with the singer (the relator).

The paintings do not have colors
The roses do not look like flowers
There are not birds in the morning
Nothing is the same

The next love song is “La Chica de Ayer” by Nacha Pop. Released in 1980 and included in first album of this band, it is considered the second-best song of Spanish popular music by *Rolling Stone* magazine in 2010 and the best one for the Spanish newspaper *El País*,¹¹⁷ in fact, it has been versioned by bands such as El Canto del Loco and the singer, Enrique Iglesias.

The song starts with a guitar solo that sets the nostalgic character of the whole piece, which follows the typical verse-chorus pattern. The instrumentation is not special, but the use of acoustic guitar that helps to shape the docile mood of the music is remarkable. Like Radio Futura, the singer has a juvenile and sort of shrill voice that is almost moaning about the situation that the text is describing.

The content of song is not political or controversial, talks about past love, a common problem that many young people wish to express. This matches the observation

¹¹⁷ See Rolling Stone and Ricardo Romero Laullón (Nega) and Arantxa Tirado Sánchez. *La Clase obrera no va al Paraíso: Crónica de una Desaparición Forzada*

of music critic Santi Carrillo, “Spanish pop turned away from any social political issue.”¹¹⁸ Concretely, *La Chica de Ayer* relates a nostalgic story about a girl and a boy portrayed by the singer:

I stick my head out of the window
You're the yesterday's girl
Playing with the flowers in my garden
It is too late to understand
Go home girl, we cannot play

It is enigmatic what happened to the couple, but for some inexplicable reason they cannot be together. The text reaches an intense nostalgic ambience: “Too later for understand,” “the yesterday's girl.” However, listening music at night in a bar can fix “everything.”

Later, at night, listening at *El Penta*
Songs that made me to love you

For *La Movida* movement, “music is the cause of love,”¹¹⁹ and music was listened in concrete places. Mentioned previously, many bars and concert halls emerged in Madrid during the Transition due to the political liberalization of the country. *El Penta* was one of the most popular during those days and a symbol for *La Movida* bands. With this reference, Nacha Pop established the action in a concrete place well known for most of its audience who can identify the place and somehow the nostalgic mood of the singer.

In contrast to these love hits, this study will analyze “Hotel Monbar” by Kortatu and “Barrio Conflictivo” as examples of those songs within RRV movement in which the bands express realistic situations and true facts as a way of denunciation.

¹¹⁸ “Crítico Español: Pop Chileno da La Espalda al Tema Sociopolítico,” *La Nación*, 11/24/2013, accessed October 6, 2016, <http://www.lanacion.cl/noticias/cultura-y-entretencion/musica/critico-espanol-pop-chileno-da-la-espalda-al-tema-sociopolitico/2013-11-24/180723.html>.

¹¹⁹ Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 130.

Released in 1986, “Hotel Monbar” was the first song that Fermin Muguruza, singer and leader of the band Kortatu, wrote for his second album, *El Estado de las Cosas*. The song relates the terrorist attack of Monbar Hotel, a real episode that occurred in Bayonne (France). As part of the dirty war against ETA and left-separatists, the Spanish government hired mercenaries to kill four ETA members that were exiled in France.

“Hotel Monbar” starts with a fast-sinuous bass line accompanied by drums. Soon, the guitar plays a peculiar riff, whose melody and harmony operate as indices of instability. After this introduction, the singer starts the song with the refrain by showing some anger and support by the chorus. He is going to make clear about what is being talked about from the beginning: a murder, a terrorist attack, and death.

Fermin Muguruza was in a nearby bar at the exactly moment of the attack, in fact, he was visiting two of the victims because (he was friend of them) they were friends of him. He witnessed the brutality firsthand;¹²⁰ this created a somewhat autobiographical song, which is revealed in the following verses:

Who has paid for this [attack]?
 A shiver goes over my body
 Four red carnations are in my memory
 And I have cold sweat whenever I narrate it [the attack]

However, there are not only personal references in the text: The whole refrain is paraphrasing another song, concretely, “Campanades a Morts” by the Catalanian

¹²⁰ Herreros and López. *El Estado de la Cosa*, 65–75.

songwriter Lluís Llach, which also relates to a brutal attack, in this case, by the police against a group of striking workers.¹²¹

It has rung again
Death knells
At the Monbar Hotel
Death knells

In this way, Fermin Muguruza establishes a powerful connection in two ways: he connects “Campanades a Morts,” a well-known song with a powerful iconic meaning, to his own song, “Hotel Monbar” and, puts together two events to describe the brutality and violence of the State Forces using both legal and illegal methods.

In general, “Hotel Monbar” is the musical description of a true episode that the singer saw in first person. It is also a description of the tense reality and the violence that the Basque Country experienced during those years: terrorism sponsored by the separatist left and the state.

Like “Hotel Monbar,” the song “Barrio Conflictivo” (“Conflicted Neighborhood”) shows a realistic situation. Composed by Barricada in 1985, it gives name to its second album. Barricada has been the most “mainstream” band of RRV movement. Some of its songs have been included in hit lists such as *Los 40 Principales*, and the band has recorded some music videos. In addition, it has appeared on national TV shows and has signed contracts with international record labels.

The band consists of two lead singers, two guitars, a bass guitar, and drums. Its style was influenced more by the *rock urbano* tendency than for punk. Previously described in chapter II, *rock urbano* is the Spanish term used for describing hard rock,

¹²¹ Herreros and López. *El Estado de la Cosa*, 65–75.

which has been very popular in Spain since the mid-1970s with bands like Leño, Asfalto, and Barón Rojo. It is characterized by rough guitar sounds, fast virtuosic riffs close to heavy metal, and lyrics about urban life, sometimes very critical about society or reflecting negative aspects of it. In fact, Barricada was directly influenced by Leño, with which had a good relationship.

In medium fast tempo, the song starts with the bass guitar and the second guitar playing the bass line and the harmony respectively but using the same simple rhythmical pattern. The soloist guitar plays some sustain chords, which sound rough and dirty. After a short introduction, a hoarse voice enters sounding harsh and a little bit angry. Formally, the song follows the verse-chorus pattern plus a coda created by the refrain repeated over and over and faster and faster. It reaches a climax when many voices are mixed together loudly and messily, probably as in a protest.

“Barrio Conflictivo” talks about *la Chantrea*, a marginal working-class neighborhood from where the members of the band came from. Characterized by a great activism and rebellious actions, this district had an intense and hard situation during 1980s due to excessive and aggressive control applied by the police and the state forces. For this reason, this suburb was considered as a problematic area by police forces. Barricada shows true fact in the first verse:

They [police and authorities] have named you “conflicted neighborhood”

This is an example of the reason why “punk songs often attacked the state institutions which represented the system to them and under which punks experienced state control

and repression. These included politicians, the military, the church, the rich, and above all, the police.”¹²² The text of “Barrio Conflictivo” is an “ode” against police:

We are not going to allow [the police]
This police state must to finish
Torture in the interrogations
Assaults, anxiety and pain

And, it is also a song for stand against that police oppression:

In the [neighborhood’s] streets, there is no place for them
They have to leave
We don’t want to see them
No! We don’t want [No!] this police state.

3. Comic Parody Vs Critical Parody

This section is going to compare the following songs: “Venezia” (“Venice”) by Hombres G and “Al Calor del Amor en un Bar” (“In the Heat of Love in a Bar”) by Gabinete Caligari within *La Movida* movement; and, “Ratas en Bizkaia” (“Rats in Bizkaia”) by Eskorbuto and “No Somos Nada” (“We are Nothing”) by La Polla Records belonging to RRV.

As part of its first studio album, Hombres G released “Venezia” in 1985, and since then, the song has become one of its most popular hits. Still active, this band is tremendously popular in Spain and Latin America. Initially, Hombres G was a punk band;¹²³ in fact, independent small record labels, such as Lollypop and Twins, recorded

¹²² Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 267.

¹²³ See the interview “David Summers nos cuenta sus mejores anécdotas de 30 años de Hombres G,” last modified April 6, 2015, accessed September 2, 2017, <http://revistaplacet.es/david-summers-mejores-anecdota-30-anos-hombres-g>

some of its first singles. However, within three years, Hombres G signed a contract with the international label Warner, which resulted in their promotion to mass media.

Consequently, Hombres G reached number one on *Los 40 Principales* twelve times, and recorded countless music videos for promotion on national TV programs.

Simultaneously, the band members had leading roles in two movies primarily because the father of lead singer David Summers was a famous Spanish filmmaker and producer.

In general, Hombres G is a paradigmatic example of a commercially successful pop-rock band in Spain. The band is comprised of a drummer, two guitarists, and a lead singer who also plays bass. Finally, on some of its albums, the band has also included a keyboardist.

Formally, the song “Venezia” follows a chorus-verse pattern but with an introduction by the piano and the singer. The harmony varies significantly between the chorus and verse, which creates a notable contrast. However, the melody is very catchy. In addition, the voice of the lead singer is very peculiar, it sounds high-pitched, juvenile, and little bit nasal.

The introduction of Venezia directly parodies an opera singer and art music, using only piano and voice at a slow tempo and performed in Italian instead of Spanish. The singer goes out of tune deliberately, singing to a bored young audience--as can be seen in the music video, which was filmed for the TV show *La Bola de Cristal*. Here, the opera singer, art music, the Italian language operate as indices of boredom and seriousness.

After this introduction, the song transitions into a medium-fast tempo. The theme is about having fun. While this piece might initially appear to be connected to the celebratory songs discussed above, the caricaturing of Italian opera (and the Italian

mafia) reflects instead a deliberate silliness. In the video, the mood changes with the faster tempo, and the audience starts to dance, having been incited to have fun. The elevated sound of the Italian lyrics clashes with their vulgarity, reinforcing the message that the performance is all a game--an invitation to total carelessness:

Io sono il capone della mafia [I am a mafia capo]
Io sono un figlio della mia mamma [I am the son of my mother]
Tu sei un stronzo di merda [You are a piece of shit]
E un figlio di Troia in Venezia. [And a son of Troy in Venezia]

This song epitomizes perfectly the intentions of the comic parody tendency of *La Movida*. The political and social problems did not matter anymore. Young people do not want to be boring, so they need constant fun and diversion. They need to scape of tedium and monotony. The imaginary trip to another country works as icon of fun, in which no serious business matter:

Let's go to Italy
 I want to buy a striped sweater
 We will let the mafia pass
 We will swing on the beach.

Another example of comic parody within *La Movida* is “Al Calor del Amor en un Bar” (“In the Heat of Love in a Bar”) by Gabinete Caligari. Curiously, its first album, *Obediencia* was characterized by a harsh and aggressive punk style. Like Hombres G, Gabinete Caligari was strongly influenced by British punk, and also, the band changed dramatically its style to pop-rock in order to be more commercial.

“Al Calor del Amor en un Bar” was released in 1986 as a part of the fifth band’s album, and became one of its most famous hits reaching the number one on *Los 40*

Principales.¹²⁴ In order to promote the song, Gabinete Caligari filmed a music video, which was broadcast by *La Bola de Cristal*.

This song is, in fact, a *pasodoble*, a Spanish genre and dance that has become an icon Spanish traditional music and bullfighting. Usually, *pasodobles* represent solemn characteristics: pure love, bravery, nobility, and so on. In this case, however, it narrates a burlesque situation: a guy--clearly drunk after being the whole night partying--is in a morning bar continuing drinking and having some food.¹²⁵ Here, the humorous nature of this song is the result of the juxtaposition of two opposite icons: the genre, *pasodoble*, which is perceived by audience as a traditional and solemn element and the bizarre situation described by the singer who has been the whole night with a girl in a night club, but finds the morning bar as the perfect place for declaring his love:

My love!
 The night has been long and full of emotion
 But, at the sunrise, I feel like both of us to be together
 [...]
 My love!
 Although, I am not very fresh at this point
 Finally, it is the moment for saying: I love you

To this bizarre situation, the text adds more elements that are ridiculous: A server reading a sport magazine, two women nosing around the drunk couple, and the singer (the role play) addressing the server with stilted words:

Two larks [women] look to us with curiosity
 The server is reading the AS.

¹²⁴ *Rolling Stone* magazine considered this song as 114th best Spanish song of history. See “Al Calor del Amor en un Bar–Gabinete Caligari, 1986,” *Rolling Stone Magazine*, last modified May 21, 2010, accessed September 29, Stone<https://web.archive.org/web/20140902014134/http://rollingstone.es/114-al-calor-del-amor-en-un-bar-gabinete-caligari-1986/>

¹²⁵ In Spain, it is usual for young people spend the whole night in bars and night clubs until the sunrise, when the morning bars-coffee shops open and it is possible to have breakfast or continue drinking alcohol.

[...]
Monseiur pay for the girl

The text is funny. The music is a parody of *pasodobles*. As Fouce explains, “The traditional genres identified with Spain and Spanish culture are only referenced in an ironic and detached way.”¹²⁶

Bars, what places!
 [They are] Too pleaseant for having a conversation
 There is nothing like the heat of love in a bar

These songs describing comic bizarre situations were quite popular within *La Movida*. Similarly, many RRV’s song were also parodies, but in a very different way. The following songs, “Ratas en Bizkaia” (“Rats in Bizkaia”) by Eskorbuto and No Somos Nada (“We are Nothing”) by La Polla Records, are illustrative examples of this tendency.

Released in 1984 by the band Eskorbuto, “Ratas en Bizkaia” is a surprise from the beginning: The members sing in unison the two first verses of the folkloric [and highly popular] song “Desde Santurce a Bilbao” (“From Santurce to Bilbao”), which represents an iconic positive image of Bilbao narrating a daily episode of a fishmonger girl. It is a musical quotation:

From Santurce to Bilbao
 I am coming across the seashore
 With my skirt hitched up
 Showing my calf

After this introduction, the instruments start playing: sharp drums and simple bass line, and a distorted dirty guitar playing the harmony. It sounds like garage music; it is a little bit more than noise. Formally, the song follows the verse-chorus pattern plus the

¹²⁶ Fouce and Fernán Del Val, “*La Movida: Popular Music as the Discourse*,” 130.

introduction. With a hoarse and hysteric voice, the singer blurts out the text. The music sound unclear and dirty. It is not strange due to the text talks about pollution and filth:

You will see the sky
 And you will see a huge polluted cloud
 Don't think about it, don't doubt about it
 The furnaces of our city

You will see the facades
 Full of trash
 From Santurce to Bilbao
 I am coming across the seashore

Using the quotation from the folkloric song, Eskorbuto is ironizing about the city in different levels. Folk tunes typically linked to rural areas, but contrarily, punk is symbol of urban life. In other words, Eskorbuto is ridiculing the folkloric song because they does not feel that there is nothing about being proud of Bilbao and nothing iconic about this city, further the contrary. In this sense, the refrain could not be more clarifying:

We are rats in Bizkaia
 We are contaminated rats
 And we live in a town
 Which is being shipwrecked

The reason for this parody is the following: Bilbao had a serious pollution problems during 1980s. The heavy industry settled in city from XIX century had developed without control, and, additionally, the city didn't have an efficient water treatment. These and other factors resulted in that Bilbao and its estuary were seriously contaminated, above all, in the left bank of the river where the blast furnace industry was installed.

“Ratas en Bizkaia” is describing this situation by the use of a dirty sound, a hoarse voice, but above, by the quotation of the folkloric song. In short, this song is an acid

parody that represent a different image than the original folk theme: a decadent polluted city.

“No somos nada” gives name to the third album studio of La Polla Records, one of most successful band of RRV movement. Released in 1989, this song became one of its most popular hits. Without any mass media support, La Polla Records became a well-known punk band in Spain and Latin America, continuing playing until today under different names. This band has been always linked to independent record labels such as Soñua, Oihuka, GOR or Maldito Records. As a consequence, this band was never promoted in national TV or national radio. Exceptionally, La Polla Records filmed a music video for *Los 40 Principales*, but it was a sort of masquerade that the band and the producer conceived in order to laugh at the own program.

From its beginning, La Polla Records has always been defined as an anarchic punk band. It is formed by two guitar players, one guitar bass, one drummer, and one singer, the charismatic Evaristo Páramos. Nevertheless, some of its records songs in different albums has exceptionally included other instruments such as keyboards, bagpipes, brass, and so on.

“We are nothing” is one of those exceptions because of the use of Asturian bagpipe that combines the Celtic sound with punk sonic aspects. La Polla Records is choosing the Celtic sound in opposition to the flamenco and the Andalusian music-- which have traditionally been as a paradigm of Spanish culture and identity.

The song opens with a recitative with an instrumental accompaniment. The singer, acting like a sort of storyteller, is narrating a story, a tale, in fact, he is paraphrasing the famous introduction of the French comic, Asterix--often used as symbol

of resistance and fight. But, against who is La Polla Records resisting? The text will give some clues.

After the recitative, a military folk-like tune starts played by the whole band and the bagpipe. Clearly, La Polla Records is playing a rapid military march that suggests a conflict, a tension between two sides, a rebellion. Formally, the song follows the pattern verse-chorus repeated three times, but ending with a sort of coda. The harmony is based in the cadence IV-I-V-I strongly linked with folkloric music. The singer blurts its first verses, which is just demolishing:

We are the grandsons of the workers
 Who you never could kill
 That is why we never vote
 For Alianza Popular,
 Either for PSOE, or for their traitors,
 Either the rest of them
 We are the grandsons of ones
 Who lost the Civil War

We are nothing

Due to the politic and social problems previously discussed, many people in Basque Country (and in Spain) felt marginalized by the central power. *La Polla Records* created a powerful and meaningful connection between its audience from 1980s--most of them without employment and without future and sick of politicians--with those that lost the Spanish Civil war in 1939. This audience felt that nothing has changed since the dictator won, and after the arrival of the democracy. Consequently, the conflict, the war, continued, and this explains the military character of the piece, the anger of the singer, and the violent expressed on the lyrics.

However, ironically, the tune is happy and very danceable. It looks they are celebrating their outsiders' status. In fact, they are celebrating that they are nothing.

Curiously, the singer, Evaristo Páramos, declares once:

You can't change society, but as it isn't going to change we're going to have a good time with it, and with the idea that we're doing something. We have a fucking good time, it's not worth crying because society in itself isn't worth the trouble.¹²⁷

4. Darkness As Fun Vs. Darkness As Destiny

This section will compare the similarities and differences of four songs.

Belonging to *La Movida*: “Quiero ser Santa” (“I wanna be a Female Saint”) and “Mi Novio es un Zombie” (“My Boyfriend is a Zombie”) by Parálisis Permanente and Alaska y Dinarama respectively. Belonging to RRV: “Enamorado de la Muerte” (“In Love with the Death”) and “Suicida” (“Suicide”) by RIP and MCD.

Considered a pioneer of dark rock in Spain, Parálisis Permanente was undoubtedly the band that best represented this tendency within *La Movida* movement. Sadly, this band was not able to develop a long career because its lead singer, Eduardo Benavente, died in a car accident when he was in his early 20s.

“Quiero ser Santa” (“I wanna be a Female Saint”) was a single released in 1982 by the band Parálisis Permanente. Curiously, this song emerged as a collaboration with another band, Alaska y Los Pegamoides because the bands shared some musicians during those years. However, it was Parálisis Permanente who first popularized this song.

¹²⁷ Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 268.

Through the use of sound effects, chromatic melodies, and harmony based on diminished fourths, Parálisis Permanente created a disturbing musical atmosphere in “Quiero ser Santa.” The text of song is also intensely perturbing, full of morbidity, religious symbolism, and supernatural mysticism.¹²⁸

I want to be carbonized
 Flogged and castigated
 [I want to] levitate during mornings
 And have my body full of stigmata [...]

I want to be a (female) Saint
 I want to be blessed

La Movida bands enjoyed the use provocative texts in order to confront the conservative society and its traditional values. Spain was not anymore the boring country of Franco’s regime. With the arrival of democracy and liberty, the codes of conduct had changed which implied that every theme could be covered, including those in bad taste or considered prohibited in the past. Fouce explains that these types of songs emerged when the censorship disappeared and liberty was an established right.¹²⁹ In general, “Quiero ser Santa” is a song that mixed Catholic imagery with punk and sadomasochistic aesthetic,¹³⁰ a dark satire of Catholic Church only could be composed in the context of the political changes in Spain.

The band Alaska y Dinarama is another example of darkness within the Madrilenian movement. According to Fouce, the public constantly compared Alaska to Parálisis Permanente in the sense that the latter was considered as an authentic

¹²⁸ Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 56.

¹²⁹ Fouce, *El Futuro ya está aquí*, 145.

¹³⁰ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 40.

underground band, while Alaska was seen as a purely commercial. The truth is that Alaska y Dinarama was always linked to two big record labels: Hispavox and EMI.

The hit “Mi Novio es un Zombie” (“My boyfriend is a Zombie”) was released 1989, reaching the number one on *Los 40 Principales* on June 3 of the same year. From that time on, the singer used to performance the song while a man dressed up as Freddy Kruegger appeared in the stage simulating that he was the zombie boyfriend the song talks about.

Following the chorus-verse pattern, “Mi Novio es un Zombie” is a dance hit belonging to the musical genre house music. It is characterized by the utilization of synthesizers, sound effects, and simple harmony based on the sequence I-VI-IV-V.

The reality is that, although the text presents a morbid situation: a girl who has fallen in love with a zombie, the song is comic and burlesque. In fact, Alberto Mira explains “the singer [Alaska] liked to change her look in increasingly outrageous ways, and her take on witches and other horror characters in her 1980s TV show *La Bola de Cristal* always had an element of parody.”¹³¹ The text is clearly funny:

His teeth are not white
 He has only three
 His skin is transparent and green at the same time
 His yellow eyes make me crazy

This song was released when *La Movida* had reached tremendous success, and was established as an official mainstream musical movement. Even though the text is a little bit provocative and the ambience of the song is gloomy, *Mi Novio es un Zombie* is disco song composed for having fun and dance.

¹³¹ Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 92.

This guy has something
 We are inseparable, [and] he already met my parents
 He is happy
 And I am happy

Both songs, and *Mi Novio es un Zombie* belongs to the “darkness” tendency of *La Movida*. Nevertheless, there are considerable differences between them. The first one is a provocation against conservatism, a sort of calling for sadomasochism. It belongs to a period when *La Movida* was more experimental and strongly influenced by punk. *Mi Novio es un Zombie* is, however, a disco song emerged in a period when the Madrilenian movement was nationally and internationally established. It even included in the performances a Hollywood character as Freddy Krueger for obvious commercial reasons.

The darkness in *La Movida* contrast strongly to darkness in the Rock Radical Vasco. These differences can be appreciated in the following songs: “Suicida” (“Suicide”) by MCD and “Enamorado de la Muerte” (In Love with Death) by RIP.

“Suicida” (“Suicide”) was released in 1987, as part of third studio album of the band MCD-- acronym for *Me Cago en Dios* (in English I Shit on God). Like other famous RRV bands such as *Eskorbuto*, *Parabellum* and *Zarama*, this band came from the left bank of the Nervión, the estuary of Bilbao--as previously mentioned, a strongly marginalized area of the city.

“Suicida” follows a hard-rock style characterized by harsh rapid guitar riffs, distorted sound, and an aggressive temperament. Formally, the song structure is two sections A and B played repeatedly but alternating with guitar solos--a sort of variation of verse-chorus pattern. The text is as short as concise: same six lines repeated over and over narrating how a young person has recurrent thoughts about suicide:

I have never learnt the lesson
 Every day is the same
 I hang my legs over the Nervión
 Just below me I have a vision

As discussed above, the Sex Pistols motto “there is no future for you” left an important mark on Basque youth, who saw their aspirations for a better future cut short: the unemployment among young people in Basque Country was one of the highest in Spain. However, the ‘no future’ philosophy did not come only from joblessness. It also came from the social and political environment. As previously discussed, terrorism, oppression, and a general unrest were common during those days. In addition, the new generation did not suit to the old-fashion values of the Spanish and Basque society.

Basque punk confronted cultural and political traditionalism, while at the same time expressing strong disbelief in such terms as progress, modernization and development. The absolute pessimism of punk ('there is no future') and the omnipresence of death in song texts find their roots in this philosophy.¹³²

The song “Suicida” exemplifies perfectly this ‘no future’ philosophy that caused the deep frustration and pessimism between Basque youth. Obviously, these elements created a very negative atmosphere. MCD represents this negativity presenting suicide as the only solution to this horrible scenario:

Suicide
 I have the solution

The chorus reinforces the idea of that suicide is the solution singing the last verse of the verse. It looks like they (the chorus) support the intention of the relator (the singer). In these case, darkness is expressed in a rough and aggressive way as a response to the exasperating reality.

¹³² Lahusen, “The Aesthetic of Radicalism,” 266.

Another example of darkness in the RRV movement is the song “Enamorado de la Muerte” (“In Love with Death”) by RIP. Strongly influenced by those punk bands with more aggressive and extreme style such as Sex Pistols and Sham 69, it emerged in 1980 as a punk band focused on hardcore and d-beat styles. Formed by singer, drummer, guitar bass and guitar, this band always was characterized by aggressive harsh compositions, violent lyrics and performances.

Linked to small independent records labels, the band only recorded two albums and never appeared in any TV show and never was included in any hit list. Like Eskorbuto, RIP followed an extreme punk life style: problems with justice and police, intense performances, drug consumption, and early death of some of its members.

The song “Enamorado de la Muerte” was released in 1987 as a part of its second album, *No Te Muevas*. Recorded by the independent label Basati Diskak, this song reached a high popularity and became one of the most famous RIP’s hits.

This song is characterized by rough sound of the distorted guitar playing a simple chords patterns in fast tempo. The form follows the alternation between verse and chorus. However, the song starts with a long introduction in a slower tempo. It looks like a tough rock ballad accompanied with long chords by the distorted guitar. The text narrates how the narrator (a man) has fallen in love with a girl, but it does not reveal who is the mysterious “girl” until the last verse.

I already have girlfriend
 I found love
 Last night, I kissed her in the alley
 She is tall and brunette
 She is always in my mind
 Her name made me crazy
 Her name is Death

This text is not only the result of the deep pessimism and frustration it is also the consequence of the high heroin consumption. Basque Country had one of highest percentage of heroin addicts of Spain. In fact, members of RIP were heroin addict reason why some of them died prematurely. Death was the consequence of its extreme style life, “a life of full intensity,” as the journalist Pablo Cabeza defines it.¹³³ RIP was conscious of its own destiny and embraces it as its possible end.

In love with Death
 From the day I saw her
 At day and at night she is my mind
 It is the end

The singers voice is hoarse and full of angry. They understood that society and their own lives were a disaster and the only way to finish it is through death. That is because there is not any fear toward death, rather the contrary, they are falling in love with it. Then, darkness here is a result of the heroin consumption and self-marginalization.

¹³³ See “La Generación Maldita del Punk Euskaldun,” El Correo, last modified November 17, 2014, accessed May 5, 2017, <http://www.elcorreo.com/bizkaia/culturas/musica/201411/17/generacion-maldita-punk-euskaldun-20141117182225.html>

CHAPTER V
THE ECHOES OF THE 1980S

- A. Models for Mainstream and Underground
 - B. *La Movida*'s Influence
 - C. RRV's Influence
-

A. Models for Mainstream and Underground

This study determines that both musical movements from the 1980s, *La Movida Madrileña* and the *Rock Radical Vasco*, became models for mainstream and underground musical practices, respectively, in democratic Spain, establishing clear boundaries around each sphere. In other words, most of the practices that these movements had are still being recreated somehow by modern bands today. In support of this theory, chapter V will analyze the relationship between current bands and those from both 1980s movements.

B. *La Movida* Influence

The influence of *La Movida* in Spain has been extensively debated not only by musicologists, musicians, and music critics, but also by politicians and hispanists.¹³⁴ Numerous studies have been published on the cultural impact of this musical movement,

¹³⁴ See Nichols and Song, *Toward a Cultural Archive of La Movida*, 19–36.

its political appropriation or rejection by different politicians, and its social and political consequences.¹³⁵ However, one area has been neglected in the literature: the influences of *La Movida* on modern bands' musical practices. Therefore, this study attempts to connect this movement to current music trends.

It can be claimed that *La Movida* declined in the early 1990s once the movement was completely established. The Spanish Transition was over, democracy was consolidated, and Spain was showing itself off to the world as a modern European country through international events such as the Olympic Games in Barcelona and the Seville EXPO, both which took place in 1992. Simultaneously, large urban projects were developing, above all in Spain's most important cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, and Bilbao. This growth was the result of the accession of Spain into the European Union (1985) and the country's political stability. In other words, the government was busy with big projects, and the febrile years of *La Movida* as a spontaneous, countercultural movement were over. The celebration of the first years of democracy had also come to an end.

During the early 1990s, *La Movida* was already established, having reached international success in all its facets. In film, Pedro Almodóvar had been nominated for the Academy Award, which he would win twice, once in 1999 and again in 2002.¹³⁶ In

¹³⁵ Throughout this study, numerous studies, books, and articles about *La Movida* have been mentioned which discuss in different ways these issues. See Bibliography.

¹³⁶ Pedro Almodóvar is the most internationally acclaimed Spanish filmmaker in present time. He has won countless awards during his career including two Academy Awards, six European Film Awards, two Golden Globe, and nine Goya Awards. Although Pedro Almodóvar had a musical group within *La Movida*, his main activity is film.

fashion, Agatha Ruiz de la Prada was expanding her brand around the world.¹³⁷ Finally, in music, the bands that were still playing were completely established; Alaska, Hombres G, Mecano, and Loquillo had all reached international fame and become pop-rock stars.

In general, *La Movida* became the canonic musical movement in democratic Spain. In fact, author Fernán Del Val published a study which analyzed the pop rock canon in Spain. Considering data from the most prestigious hit lists made by different publications such as *Rolling Stone* magazine, *El País* Newspaper, *Rockdelux* magazine, and *Efeeme* magazine, this author elaborated a meta-list in which he points out the prevalence of *La Movida*:¹³⁸

Throughout the list and especially within the first ten places, what stands out is the great presence of bands from the 1980s from what has been called *La Movida*. Music from this movement occupies 5 of the first 10 places: Radio Futura (1st), Gabinete Caligari (4th), Nacha Pop (7th), Alaska & Dinarama (8th), and Loquillo (10th).¹³⁹

This author explains the reasons of this majority of *La Movida* arguing that “the importance of *La Movida* lies on this movement modernized the cultural and social life of a part of the Spanish youth.” He also adds that the critics that elaborated these different lists “were the young who supported, or were socialized in, this movement. *La Movida* has promoted *La Movida*.”¹⁴⁰ Whichever are the reasons, the meta-list elaborated by Del Val shows the hegemonic position of *La Movida* respect to other movements. This hegemony is even more evident after analyzing modern mainstream bands.

¹³⁷ Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada is a Spanish international famous clothing designer who promoted the cultural movement of *La Movida*.

¹³⁸ These journals have released different hit list of the best songs and best albums of popular music history in Spain. See appendix for see the different lists.

¹³⁹ Fernán Del Val, Javier Noya, and C. Martín Pérez-Colman, “Autonomy, Submission, or Sound Hybridization? The Construction of the Aesthetic Canon of the Spanish Pop-Rock,” *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (145): 155.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 162.

When the 21st-century Spanish band, El Canto del Loco, released its compilation album *Arriba el Telón* on November 20, 2007, it had been almost 30 years since *La Movida* had “officially” begun. However, by that time, some of *La Movida*’s more significant groups had disbanded: Nacha Pop in the late 1980s, Radio Futura in 1992, and most of the Madrilenian musical movement. Nevertheless, El Canto del Loco included a version of “La Chica de Ayer” (“Yesterday’s Girl”)—originally composed by Nacha Pop in 1980—in their compilation album. Curiously, at the time the album was released, eight other songs by El Canto del Loco had already reached number one on *Los 40 Principales*, clearly achieving a milestone. This song choice raises an important question: Why did a commercial and successful band from the 2000s release a version of a song from the 1980s?

The name of the band might provide some clarification: it is a tribute to the song “El Canto del Gallo” by Radio Futura. Lead singer and founder of El Canto del Loco, Dani Martín, was a fan of Spanish bands from the 1980s, particularly from *La Movida*. In fact, in 2004, El Canto del Loco participated in a Radio Futura tribute album, recording a version of “Escuela de Calor” (“Heat School”).¹⁴¹ Furthermore, in 2005, the band released a live album together with Hombres G, another band from *La Movida* with whom El Canto del Loco had a good relationship. This flashback to the 1980s might have been just an isolated example of an already successful band from the 2000s whose

¹⁴¹ See “Artistas Españoles Y Latinos Rinden Pleitesía A Radio Futura En El Álbum Arde La Calle,” *Los 40 Principales Actualidad*, last modified August 13, 2004, accessed October 4, 2017 http://los40.com/los40/2004/08/13/actualidad/1092348000_277230.html

members were fans of *La Movida* and recorded some versions of its favorite hits.¹⁴² However, this is not the case.

In 2004, the band Amaral released a version of its own single “Como Hablar” (“How to Speak”) with the collaboration of Antonio Vega, the lead singer of Nacha Pop. Similarly, Jarabe de Palo recorded “Completo, Incompleto” (“Complete, Incomplete”) also with Vega. Both Amaral and Jarabe de Palo had already often reached number one on *Los 40 Principales*, had won different music awards, and had even been nominated for Latin Grammy awards. Similarly, international pop star Enrique Iglesias released a version of “La Chica de Ayer” on his fourth album, *Quizás*, which won the Latin Grammy Award for Best Male Pop Vocal Album in 2003.

Furthermore, in 2016, the band La Oreja de Van Gogh released its seventh album, which reached the top 10 Billboard’s best Latin album hit list.¹⁴³ It includes the song “Verano” (“Summer”), which simultaneously reached number one on many hit lists of different countries. This song has a reference to “La Chica de Ayer” in the text, the same hit that El Canto del Loco versioned in 2007. Concretely, the text of “Verano” directly names the song of the 1980s.

Lost in the Yesterday’s Girl song
So I feel without you
It is late, I already know
But I want to see you again

Curiously, La Oreja de Van Gogh is one of the most successful bands from Spanish popular music history that has reached the number one on *Los 40 Principales* fifteen

¹⁴² See El Canto del Loco’s biography in “El Canto del Loco, MTV, last modified in April 30, 2008, accessed September 2, 2017, <http://www.mtv.es/musica/artista/el-canto-del-loco/iuwgac>

¹⁴³ See “Billboard Top Latin Albums,” last modified November 26, 2016,” accessed October 3, 2017, <http://www.billboard.com/charts/latin-albums/2016-11-26>

times. By the time they released this song, the band had won many awards, including the Latin Grammy in 2006, and they had sold millions and millions of copies of albums.

This association between modern commercial bands with music from *La Movida* might be interpreted exclusively to the song “La Chica de Ayer” and the band Nacha Pop, but it is much more than that. Amaia Montero,¹⁴⁴ the ex-lead singer of La Oreja de Van Gogh, interpreted different songs by Mecano, another band from *La Movida*, and even wrote the prologue of Mecano’s tribute album, *La Fuerza del Destino*. Similarly, Amaral and Jarabe de Palo (both previously mentioned) collaborated with another *La Movida* band, Los Secretos: On the one hand, in 2008, Amaral participated in Los Secretos’ live album *Gracias por Elegirme* in the song “Buena Chica” (“Good Girl”); on the other hand, in 2004, Jarabe de Palo released its album *I m2*, which contained the song “Volver a Ser un Niño” (“Come back to be a Kid”), a collaboration with same band.

In 2005, La Quinta Estación (another band from the 2000s) released its second album, which included a version of the song “Voy a Pasármelo bien” (“I am going to have Fun”), a tribute to Hombres G, the original composer. This album also reached the top 10 in Billboard’s best Latin album list.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, in 2017, Nena Daconte, a 2000s singer who reached number one twice on *Los 40 Principales* (2006 and 2008), participated in a tribute concert to *La Movida* in El Penta, a famous bar-concert hall symbolic of the 1980s Madrilenian movement. She was not the only modern musician that participated in this tribute concert; it also included the following: Lori Meyers,

¹⁴⁴ Amaia Montero is actually the ex-lead singer of La Oreja de Van Gogh. She left the band in 2007.

¹⁴⁵ See “Billboard Latin Pop Albums,” last modified July 2, 2005,” accessed October 10, 2017, <http://www.billboard.com/charts/latin-pop-albums/2005-07-02>

Zahara, Rubén Pozo, La Habitación Roja, and Miss Caféina.¹⁴⁶ In 2006, *Los 40 Principales* organized a macro-concert for 50,000 people in Madrid to celebrate its 40th anniversary. Fourteen of the 46 bands were *La Movida* bands, and several others had a history of recording their own versions of *La Movida* songs.¹⁴⁷

These choices raise a question similar to the previous one: Why are these modern, successful commercial bands playing with bands from *La Movida*? These collaborations suggest four trends:

1) *La Movida* has a hegemonic position with respect to other musical movements of the 1980s, and because of this, the movement is seen as canonical. This statement is defended by many authors such as Héctor Fouce, Susan Larson, Kiko Mora, and Eduardo García Salueña. In addition, in his article, “Autonomy, Submission, or Sound Hybridization? The Construction of the Aesthetic Canon of the Spanish Pop-Rock,” Fernán Del Val analyzes the greatest hits lists from the most influential music periodicals and demonstrates that *La Movida* has maintained a hegemonic dominance in Spanish popular music.¹⁴⁸

2) The modern bands somehow want to be linked to *La Movida*. As this study demonstrates, modern commercial bands tend to perform and/or adapt songs from *La Movida* or collaborate with *La Movida* bands.

¹⁴⁶ See “Cuatro Horas de Pop-rock Español en Recuerdo de El Penta,” Agencia EFE, last modified March 30, 2017, <https://www.efe.com/efe/espana/cultura/cuatro-horas-de-pop-rock-espanol-en-recuerdo-el-penta/10005-3223071>

¹⁴⁷ See: “Los 40 Principales celebra su 40 Aniversario con el Espectacular Concierto de los Número 1,” Los 40 Principales Web, 06/16/2006, accessed September 14, 2017, http://los40.com/los40/2006/06/16/actualidad/1150408800_285520.html

¹⁴⁸ Del Val, Noya, and Martín Pérez-Colman, “Autonomy, Submission, or Sound Hybridization?,” 147–178.

3) Contemporary pop rock bands have rarely adapted songs from movements other than *La Movida*, even though some of those bands are from regions outside Madrid. An example of this trend is La Oreja de Van Gogh, from the Basque Country. This band has not included on their albums any song versions from “classic” bands of the Basque region; neither have they included any song in Basque language. One exception is the singer, Amaia Montero, who created a version of “Lau Teilatu” (originally composed by Itoiz) for a compilation album of Basque classic rock, which had an imperceptible commercial impact outside of this region.

4) Finally, record labels and sponsors promote such unions. As this section explains, these modern commercial bands have included versions of *La Movida*’s bands in their albums or have collaborated with some of their members. In other words, international record labels such as Universal, Sony, and Virgin allow or promote the inclusion or collaboration of modern bands with *La Movida*.

In general, modern commercial bands follow the musical practices of the 1980s. Like *La Movida*, most modern bands are aligned in some way with the Establishment; however, simultaneously, they demonstrate a certain ambiguity with respect to their political ideologies. Curiously, these bands generally present a kind of rebel image in order to appeal to youth, but their lyrics rarely address political and social issues. Like *La Movida*, most members of modern bands belong to the middle-upper class from large cities. In addition, these modern bands favor pop-rock over other genres.

In conclusion, because it aligned with the political and economic establishment, shifted from underground to mainstream, and became the canonical musical movement of democratic Spain, *La Movida* established the boundaries for mainstream music. Several

conditions demonstrate that there has not been a movement more commercial and established within popular music in Spain than *La Movida*: dominance in greatest hits lists, widespread media support, political support, and influence on modern bands.

C. RRV Influence

The Rock Radical Vasco is currently seen as a reference for Spanish punk in Spain and Latin America. Many of the RRV bands have become “classic” within the punk movement, and many hits have been versioned by modern bands. However, none of the RRV bands appear on any of the hit list previously mentioned. In fact, Del Val point out this situation:

What is immediately noticeable is the total absence of heavy rock or heavy metal bands, such as Barón Rojo or Obús, which in the 1980s had a very important impact on Spanish youth. Something similar happened with rumba bands, such as Los Chichos and Los Chunguitos, and punk or Basque radical rock bands, such as La Polla Records and Eskorbuto. The absence of these groups could be related to the homogeneity of the social class of the critics, as mentioned at the beginning of the paper. These three scenes (heavy metal, rumba and radical punk) have based their authenticity on certain aspects of social class or ethnicity (the working class, in the case of heavy metal and punk, gypsies in the case of rumba), on hard sounds (again punk and heavy metal), or crude sounds (rumba), although they had great commercial success.¹⁴⁹

This author argues that these lists have a greater presence of pop and rock genres of the middle class, and marginalized other genres more associated to working classes.¹⁵⁰ This marginalization results on the little literature about the impact of RRV, and there are not studies analyzing its influence in modern Spanish and Latin-American punk or other

¹⁴⁹ Del Val, Noya, and Martín Pérez-Colman, “Autonomy, Submission, or Sound Hybridization?,” 158.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 162.

genres. Nevertheless, it is obvious the impact of RRV in modern bands. In a 2003 interview, Fermin Muguruza affirmed that RRV was one of the most stimulating musical movements in history. Its influence in the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America has been more important than the British punk.¹⁵¹ This section is going to analyze this influence in modern bands.

In the early 1990s, Bilbao--the capital of Basque Country--was transforming into a different city through the initiation of important urban projects: the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, the Metro Bilbao, the Comprehensive River Clean-up Plan that decontaminated the highly polluted estuary of Bilbao, and the Euskalduna Conference Centre and Concert Hall building. The economic and political stability of Spain also applied to the Basque Country, and Bilbao and its metropolitan area benefitted most from this new reality. Nevertheless, the political tension continued with leftist separatism. The terrorist group ETA was actively killing, kidnapping, and bombing, which gradually damaged the left-separatist political aspirations.

The Rock Radical Vasco was progressively vanishing in various ways. Many bands were disbanded for different reasons: most did not make enough money to continue; some decided to stop for personal reasons (Herzainak, Baldin Bad, etc.); and, some of these bands such as Eskorbuto, RIP, and Cicatriz stopped because some of their members tragically died as a consequence of the extreme lifestyle. Other factors for the disappearance of the movement were some independent record labels were concluding their activities, squat houses were closing, musical tastes were changing (grunge, hip hop,

¹⁵¹ Elena López. Aguirre. *Historia del Rock Vasco: Edozein Herriko Jaixetan* (Vitoria: Aianai, 2011), 177.

techno were becoming popular), and young people were seeing the consequences of the punk extreme life such as heroin addiction, illness, and marginalization.

At the same time, however, a few bands were gaining national and international recognition in the underground scene. Before the death of two of its members, Eskorbuto offered a concert in Mexico City for 10,000 people. La Polla Records did various tours throughout Latin America during the 1990s. Kortatu, which changed its name to Negu Gorriak, did the same but also including Europe. Precisely, La Polla Records, Negu Gorriak, and Barricada were the only bands that reached a continued success, recognition, and a musical stability as musicians. Barricada was the only RRV's band to get a contract with an international record label (Polygram) and gain some mainstream recognition. Nevertheless, in general, RRV finished in the early 1990s, but its musical influence would be noticed from the late 1990s to through the XXI century.

In 1997, the Madrilenian punk band Boikot released its fifth album, which contained a version of "Zu Atrapartu Arte," a Basque song originally composed in 1985 by the RRV's band Kortatu (or later Negu Gorriak). In 2001, the Italian ska-punk band Banda Bassotti released its first live album, which contained a version of the same song. In fact, Banda Bassotti became popular in Spain precisely because of the relationship with Negu Gorriak with who made concerts around Spain. In the Boikot's version, the band changed the text into Spanish, curiously, the Italian one kept it like the original, it means in Basque. In 2016, the Madrilenian hardcore-punk band Non Servium offered concerts in Colombia and Mexico as part of a Latin-American tour, surprisingly, the band played "Zu Atrapartu Arte" together with Fermín Muguruza (lead singer of Kortatu-Negu Gorriak). Even, the international musician Manu Chao has recognized the influence of

Kortatu-Negu Gorriak, and this musician has appeared in many concerts with Muguruza. This interest of modern bands toward RRV might be interpreted that it is only associated to Kortatu and its singer, but there are more examples of RRV bands influence.

In 2012, Non Servium released its fifth studio album, whose 24 hits were versions of “classic” punk songs by other bands. From the 24 versions, 10 belonged to Rock Radical Vasco bands: RIP, Barricada, La Polla Records, Kortatu, MCD and Eskorbuto were among them. The list also included Cicatriz, Zer Bizio, and Potrotaino, all from RRV movement too. When Non Servium released this album, the band had already reached success in the underground scene including international tours. As an example of this success, the song ACAB from its fourth album has nearly 5,000,000 YouTube views. Interestingly, it is a collaboration with Evaristo Páramos, lead singer of La Polla Records, a RRV band. This is a substantial number of views considering that Non Servium has been just promoted by the independent record label Potencial Hardcore and has not been supported by mass media. In 2005, the trash metal band Habeas Corpus released a whole album of versions of RRV songs. It included songs from the RRV bands such as Vómito, RIP, Cicatriz, Barricada, and La Polla Records. Similarly, in 2014, the punk band Ratzinger released its third album, *Rock'n'Roll para Hijos de Perra*, which contains two collaboration songs with Evaristo Páramos (La Polla Records) and El Drogas (Barricada).

The label Potencial Hardcore has also promoted the Madrilenian punk band Ignotus. Less popular than Non Servium but relatively famous in Spain, Ignotus has reached more than 100,000 views on YouTube for its second album *Rock'n'Terapia* (2012). In fact, the band is going to initiate its first Latin-American tour in 2018. Curiously, this album contains the song “Mi Generación” (“My Generation”), whose text

is full of double meanings which refer to the old bands that influenced them as musicians. Ignotus names 17 bands, seven of them RRV's bands: Barricada, Cicatriz, RIP, Eskorbuto, Parabellum, La Polla Records, and MCD.

This RRV influence is not only for bands from Madrid, obviously the 1980s movement also influenced bands from its own territory. In 2016, the Basque band Lehendakaris Muertos (Death Lehendakaris), which name was inspired by the American punk band Death Kennedys,¹⁵² released its seventh album, *Cicatriz en la Matrix*. The name is tribute to the RRV band Cicatriz, whose original name was *Cicatriz en la Matriz* (i.e. Scar on the Uterus). Similarly, famous Basque bands such as *Soziedad Alkohólica* and *Piperrak* have versioned different RRV' songs during their concerts.

However, this influence is not exclusive to punk bands. The hip hop band *Los Chikos del Maíz* has done references to RRV in different ways and times. In their first album, *Miedo y Asco en Valencia* (2005), the singers sing, "I wanted to change the world listening to Kortatu (RRV band)" in the song "Estilo Faluya" ("Faluya Style"). In 2007, they released the song "Spain is Different," where one verse says, "I listened to Fermín Muguruza" (leader of both bands Kortatu and Negu Gorriak). In 2014, they also had a very significant collaboration with Evaristo Páramos (leader of the RRV band La Polla Records, as previously mentioned) in the song, "Putas y Maricones" ("Whores and Faggots"). Finally, in the first collaboration with BOA records (2011), LCDM made a direct quotation of one Eskorbuto's song "Ya no Quedan mas Cojones" ("There are no People with Balls anymore") in the last hit of its album *Pasión de Talibanes*.

¹⁵² *Lehendakari* is a Basque term that means "who rules." This Basque word is used to refer to the head of the government of the Basque Country autonomous community.

Eskorbuto song 1983	LCDM 2012 version
There are no people	There are no People
With balls anymore	With balls anymore
Eskorbuto to the election	Against the crisis
	Los Chikos del Maíz to the election

Nevertheless, this relationship is not only through the lyrics, versions, or collaborations. Modern punk and hip hop bands have coincided with RRV bands, in fact, usually all these bands share stage in different festivals, such as *Viña Rock*, *Marea Rock*, *Juergas Rock*, *Festardor* and so on.¹⁵³

The relationship between RRV movement and modern-countercultural bands raises the same question than the relationship of *La Movida* to modern commercial bands: Why are these modern punk and hip hop bands playing with RRV groups? These collaborations suggest different trends: first, the modern bands somehow want to be linked to RRV; second, RRV has a prestigious position within punk movement, protest music, and counterculture scene; third, independent record labels promote such union.

RRV established the model for countercultural popular music in democratic Spain (critics to towards politics, rebel image, lyrics about social and political issues, and promotion by small record labels) and modern bands clearly follow this model. Like RRV movement, most of members of modern bands belong to the working-class neighborhoods from large cities. Punk, ska, and hard rock are still the prevalent styles in the counterculture scene. However, Spanish hip hop is somehow linked to punk, although it is a genre that should be analyzed separately. Both genres are connected to the same festivals, and collaborations between punk and hip hop musicians are usual.

¹⁵³ See festival porters in Appendix 2.

It is also important to point out how the legal and political persecution by the central government against modern countercultural bands resembles the persecution during the 1980s of bands in the RRV movement. Bands such as Sociedad Alcohólica, Los Chikos del Maíz, Pablo Hasel, and César Strawberry have experienced accusations of terrorism, concert cancellations, and various forms of negative pressure by politicians. However, rather than a coincidence, these struggles most likely relate to the political content of the bands' lyrics, which in many cases resemble the lyrics of RRV bands: criticisms of conservative parties, the Catholic Church, state forces, and justice.

Finally, due to fact that RRV aligned to anti-establishment political and social movements, it became itself a symbol of fight and counterculture. In short, it was the most important countercultural underground musical movement on democratic Spain, in other words, a musical movement that established the boundaries of this scene and became a canonical for other anti-establishment groups in modern Spain.

CONCLUSIONS

The history of popular music in Spain has been conditioned by Franco's dictatorship. The tight control and the oppression by the censorship shaped the music during that period, and was determinant to understand the popular music during the democratic period.

The musical movements of *La Movida* and the *Rock Radical Vasco* were the consequence of the arrival of democracy in Spain, and became both the musical image not only of the social and political contexts of Madrid and the Basque Country, respectively, but also of conflicting political forces.

La Movida emerged as an underground movement, but it quickly shifted to the mainstream scene. Although their audience belonged to all social strata, *La Movida's* members were youth from middle-upper classes, whose families were well connected to the cultural spheres. Somehow, the lyrics, the sound, the appearance of their members symbolized this reality.

At the same time, this movement was gradually aligning to the political and economic Establishment, which resulted in a hegemonic position within popular music in Spain. The dominance of this musical movement over the greatest hits lists shows this alignment, which also includes the support of mass media.

RRV, however, was automatically marginalized by mass media, and never left the underground scene. Most of the members belonged to working-class families, sometimes with some degree of marginalization. The lyrics, the sound, and the radical style of these

bands represented its marginal status and a combative attitude against the Establishment. This musical movement was strongly linked to left-wing social and political movements. The left nationalism tried to appropriate the discourse of RRV, some bands aligned with this political current, but most of the bands resisted to this utilization.

La Movida and RRV became the most representative movements of the early 1980s in Spain. This study has analyzed and compared both movements showing that they represented the social and political realities of Madrid and the Basque Country. This study has also determined how *La Movida* and RRV became models for mainstream and counterculture bands.

The influence of the movement of the 1980s in modern bands is notorious in many ways. Chapter V has pointed out how these modern bands want to be linked to *La Movida* or RRV, depending if they are in the mainstream or underground scenes.

In conclusion, to understand the modern practices in popular music in Spain, it is necessary to understand the musical practices of the 1980s. The arrival of democracy and modernity configured the musical practices and established the models that are still followed by modern bands.

APPENDIX 1

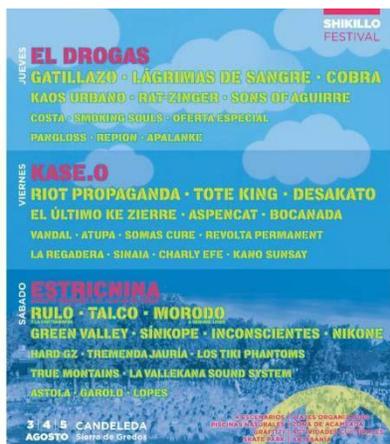
Number of YouTube Views for Songs in Chapter IV.¹⁵⁴

Song and Band	Number of YouTube Views
1. “Enamorado de la Moda Juvenil” by Radio Futura	3,9M
2. “Bailando” by Alaska y Los Pegamoides (Two videos)	988K + 509K
3. “Cerebros Destruídos” by Eskorbuto (Two videos)	3.2M + 1.1M
4. “Mierda de Ciudad” by Kortatu (Two videos)	2.9M + 726K
5. “Sobre un Vidrio Mojado” by Los Secretos (Three videos)	1.6K + 140K + 244K
6. “La Chica de Ayer” by Nacha Pop (Three videos)	1.5M + 7.4M + 1M
7. “Hotel Monbar” by Kortatu (Three videos)	92K + 74K + 60K
8. “Barrio Conflictivo” by Barricada (Three videos)	90K + 163K + 118K
9. “Venezia” by Hombres G (Two videos)	26M + 4.2M
10. “Al Calor del Amor en un Bar” by Gabinete Caligari	820K
11. “Ratas en Bizkaia” by Eskorbuto	503K
12. “No Somos Nada” by La Polla Records (Two videos)	3M + 726K
13. “Quiero ser Santa” by Parálisis Permanente	125K + 89K
14. “Mi Novio es un Zombie” by Alaska y Dinarama	1.4M
15. “Enamorado de la Muerte” by RIP (Two videos)	1.2M + 484K
16. “Suicida” by MCD (Two videos)	2.2K + 2.9K

¹⁵⁴ These numbers have been taken from YouTube website on December 2, 2017.

APPENDIX 2

Festival Posters



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