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Alternative Notions of Dissent: Punk Rock's Significance in the Soviet Union and East Germany

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Alternative Notions of Dissent: Punk Rock's Significance in the Soviet Union and East Germany

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in German from
The College of William and Mary

by

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Accepted for _____
(Honors, High Honors, Highest Honors)

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ABSTRACT

The punk movement arrived in the late 1970s in the United States and United Kingdom, creating non-traditional and experimental ways in which to produce music. As the movement grew it developed a foundational ideology geared towards a more inclusive civil society. With globalization, some scholars viewed the international movements as derivative from the founding American and British movements. However, its arrival in the Soviet Union and East Germany, two regions that faced mass social and political oppression, serve as two counter models to the idea of the derivational international punk movement.

Taking on the foundational ideology of the American and British punk movements, the Soviet Union and East Germany created the Soviet Punk and Ostrock movements. Both movements incorporated aspects of their unique political environment and cultural mythologies. Within these two movements emerged two foundational bands Grazhdanskaya Oborona (Omsk, Siberia) and Zwitschermaschine (East Berlin and Dresden). Grazhdanskaya Oborona and Zwitschermaschine served as examples of a revolutionary civil society, non-derivational punk movement, and the beginning of a societal perestroika in the Soviet region.

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents who exposed me to my first Nirvana song at 14 and my friends who I call family. Without them I would not have been nearly as radical as I am today.

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INTRODUCTION: PUNK'S ORIGINS

The punk movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s represented a historically expansive period mired in social, sexual, and individual freedom masqueraded by a harsh and outlandish artifice. The movement catalyzed a birth of alternative identities and subcultures through its socio-political revolution. Punk rock continues its legacy as a prominent mass cultural icon. During its heyday, bands such as the Sex Pistols, represented the paragon of punk; the image of frontman Johnny Rotten emulating within the generation's youth. Although popular bands such as Johnny Rotten's Sex Pistols reigned supreme, the socio-political progressions of the movement mostly fell on the American and British movements.

Globalization led the movement to the shores of the Soviet Union and East Germany, crafting the *Soviet Punk* and *Ostroek* movements. Scholars focusing on the developing socio-political presence within the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc mostly point to East Germany's peaceful protests of 1988 and Boris Yeltsin's putsch on Red Square as exemplars of socio-political revolution. While these events command historical significance, the Soviet Punk and Ostroek scenes represent foundational first steps to the bottom-up socio-political revolution catalyzed by the youth generation and were not simply derivative of Western trends. Beyond the political these movements showcase a non-derivational and inventive scene that functions as representational cultural memory. The Soviet Punk and Ostroek movements exposed and echoed the sentiment of the people.

Although this thesis focuses on the development of the movement in East Germany and the Soviet Union, the movement started in the United States and United

Kingdom. To fully grasp the tenets of the movement, its socio-political goals, and the bands that made it popular an explanation of its historical trajectory is necessary. The definition of the word punk and the question of its predominant occupation within the United States and United Kingdom will also be shortly analyzed.

Unlike other movements with a changing foundational ideology, the punk movement held onto a core ideology, despite its musical variability. In general, the punk ideology strives to break free from commercialization, commoditization of music, and monopolized status quo powers¹. Essentially, bands began to control the production and circulation of their music. Due to this emphasis many ethnomusicologists describe aspects of punk ideology and the movement as Marxist². Stacy Thompson notes,

“The entire field of punk can be understood as a set of problems that unfold from a single contradiction between aesthetics and economies, between punk, understood as a set of cultural productions and practices that comprise an aesthetic field, and capitalism and the commodity, an economic field and an economic form in which punks discover that they must operate. Throughout punk’s various moments and textualities, this central contradiction spins on a variety of interrelated problems that punk mediates, demonstrating, as it does so, the utility of certain approaches to the task that Marx lays out in the Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach...consequently, punk both raises and attempts to work through two related problematics, one economic and one aesthetic”³

In contrast to the predominant narrative of Marxism I will use my own set of criteria in analyzing the Soviet Punk and Ostrock scenes. At its most basic the punk movement is (1) a musical, cultural, and social phenomenon which strives to subvert and replace the status quo by (2) challenging the traditional conceptions of music, art,

¹ "Status quo powers" can loosely be defined as institutions within monopolized power structures such as the government, or major recording labels.

² Refer to appendix entry 1 for note on Marxist ideology.

³ Stacy Thompson, *Punk Productions: Unfinished Business* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 3.

and society while (3) developing socio-political movements through “living within the truth.”⁴

PROTO-PUNK OF THE LATE 1960s

The proto-punk and garage-rock scene of the late 1960s provided a framework for the 1970s punk scenes⁵. Eric Abbey contends, “the culture of contemporary Garage Rock draws heavily on nostalgic representations of the British Invasion and Hard Mod cultures of the 1960s and 1970s.”⁶ The movement further encapsulated the psychedelia of the late 60s and early 70s, while simultaneously incorporating more explicit lyrics, taboo social themes, and radically different tonal compositions.

The Patti Smith Group showcased one of the first punk songs of the changing music era. Lenny Kaye before spawning The Stooges describes the beginning of the proto-punk movement in his and Smith’s breakout song, “Rock and Roll Nigger” (1978). Kaye proclaims, “that’s our punk rock song. It’s a hardcore song, and we meant for it to wave a flag and to make a point that art must be redefined. That’s what the song is about. And perhaps placing it in a racial context is somewhat insensitive and somewhat daring and somewhat shocking in the way that punk rock is supposed to be.”⁷

Even in its early stages, the punk movement strove for shock value as a method to provoke the mundane. Subversion and the use of shock manifested through wearing tangible forms of social taboo such as swastikas, safety pins, and mohawks. The use of

⁴ Refer to appendix entry 2 for reference on Vaclav Havel's essay "The Power of the Powerless."

⁵ The word "proto-punk" refers to the communities and bands that formed just before the full blown punk movement. These groups therefore provided the basis for the later movement, but did not have all of the characteristics associated with the formal movement.

⁶ Eric James Abbey, *Garage Rock and Its Roots: Musical Rebels and the Drive for Individuality* (Jefferson: MacFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010), 5.

⁷ David Todd. *Feeding Back: Conversations with Alternative Guitarists From Proto-Punk to Post-Rock*. (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2012), 30.

blatant social taboo emphasizes the aesthetic value on self-identification as a progressive societal pariah.

Similar music movements that subverted tradition such as jazz and rock and roll redefined art, music, and societal expectations. Scholars such as David Todd note that the basic tenets of formulating a rock song were inverted and replaced with an amalgamation of 'sins' from traditional rock. Todd explains, "thou shalt not indulge in lyrical poesy; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's chops; thou shalt hold no chord progression higher than I-IV-V"⁸. This tongue in cheek critique stands as a crucial example of how the movement continually challenges the status quo.

THE SEVEN WAVES: PUNK'S VARIANCE

The progression of the punk movement brought about seven different waves, each with varying socio-political motivations, themes, and influences. Thompson further states, "each of the major scenes emerges in a specific geographic site as a determinant constellation of commodities/desires."⁹ Within the United States and United Kingdom seven main waves emerged constituting: the New York, English, California Hardcore, Washington D.C. (Straight-Edge, Black Punk), the First Wave Straight-Edge, the New York Second Wave Straight-Edge, the Riot Grrrl (Washington and Oregon), and the Berkley/Lookout! Pop-Punk scenes.

Although each scene contributed heavily to the development of the international punk movement, the English and Washington D.C. hardcore/straight-edge scenes

⁸ David Todd. *Feeding Back: Conversations with Alternative Guitarists From Proto-Punk to Post-Rock*. (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2012), 18.

⁹ Stacy Thompson, *Punk Productions: Unfinished Business* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 9.

provided the foundational basis for the movements in East Germany and Soviet Union respectively. East Germany's punk movement incurred lasting influence from the English scene due to East Germany's proximity to the United Kingdom, communications between East German punks and British punks, and the influence of British radio program BBC Radio One.

Although the nascent Soviet Punk movement took on the ideals of the English scene, it moved toward the harsh intensity of the Washington D.C. hardcore/straight-edge scene. The movement of Soviet Punk toward hardcore came as a reflection of the physical and political environment, incorporation of distinct instrumentation, and adoption of distinct hardcore values (such as abstention from alcohol).

THE ENGLISH SCENE

Starting in London and spanning from 1976 to 1978, the English scene's ephemeral time span refutes its everlasting influence. Illustrious bands such as the Sex Pistols (1975), The Clash (1976), The Damned (1976), The Stranglers (1974), X-Ray Spex (1976), The Buzzcocks (1976), The Vibrators (1976), The Adverts (1976), and Chelsea (1976), developed and gained further acclaim even after the official end of the movement.

The movement occurred in one of the worst economic crises to hit the United Kingdom. Thompson articulates, "in 1975, there was a "mood of economic crisis [and] depression prevalent in a UK torn by one million plus unemployed and legions of school-leavers swelling their ranks every day, the three-day week, teeming assembly-

line education and the Tory mis-rule” that culminated in “miners’ strike black-outs.”¹⁰ The youth generation dealt with the socioeconomic crises through forming music and art collectives.

Although the two factors of economic and social unrest played a major role in the development of the movement, they do not seamlessly transition into illustrious punk bands. Sociologists such as Nick Crossley try to elucidate the catalyst of the phenomenon, pointing at the D.I.Y zine¹¹ as the transitory piece between music and art collectives and band formation. In a famous D.I.Y. zine dedicated to The Stranglers, called *SNIFFIN' GLUE*, the editors wrote, "This is a chord. This is another. This is a third. Now form a band."¹² The quote appearing under a diagram of three guitar chords (A,E,G) symbolized and motivated the creation of the first punk bands.

Figure 1.1 "Sniffin' Glue"

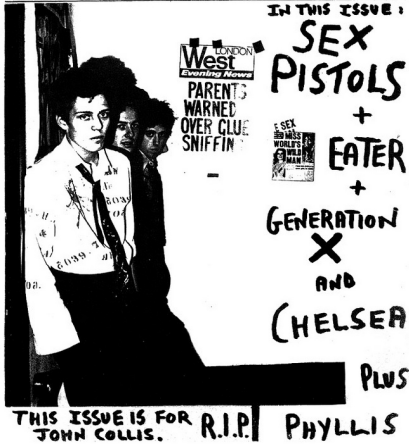
¹⁰ Stacy Thompson, *Punk Productions: Unfinished Business* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 19.

¹¹ The “DIY Zine” or “Zine” is a publication similar to a magazine that is self designed and self published, resembling a short pamphlet produced by bandmembers themselves or their devoted fans. Zines were (and still are) effective modes of communication between a band and their listenership as they announced tours, lyrical analyses, and social justice issues the bands were concerned with.

¹² Sheila Rock. "SNIFFIN' GLUE...AND OTHER ROCK'N'ROLL HABITS, FOR ANYBODY WHO CARES ABOUT," *SNIFFIN' GLUE*, January 1977.

SNIFFIN' GLUE.. AND OTHER ROCK'N'ROLL HABITS, FOR ANYBODY WHO CARES ABOUT ⑥ JAN '77 1977!

THE CLASH PHOTO (BELOW) BY SHEILA HOCK. THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT 'EM IN THIS ISSUE BUT...WHO CARES!



Relationships among budding bands and in-group recognition quickly formed with the spread of D.I.Y. zine's such as *SNIFFIN' GLUE*. Nick Crossley explains, "members of each of the four bands cited above (the Sex Pistols, the Clash, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and the Damned), and more besides, belonged to other bands prior to their first punk band. And each of the four was linked by the previous band memberships of their members."¹³ The intersectionality of band membership formed an incestuous yet recognizable web of in-group relationships, adding to the complexity and homogeneity of the movement.

The off-base instructions for band formation mentioned in *SNIFFIN' GLUE* represent one of the foundational motives behind the punk movement. Supported by this notion, traditional music training was no longer required, leaving music enthusiasts and amateur musicians space for band formation. This pioneering idea spread among

¹³ Nick Crossley, "Pretty Connected: The Social Network of the Early UK Punk Movement," *Theory, Culture, & Society* 25, no. 6 (2008): 97.

the movement and established itself as the norm. Before the rough untrained style gained popularity many bands could not break outside their local bar circuit. However, once this sophomoric style gained popularity major record labels such as EMI, Decca, and RCA clamored to sign these bands.

Bands that formed in suburban and rural towns moved to London for the opportunity of being signed to a major record label. Signage by major record labels, while at first fought and contested against by the New York scene was welcomed by the English scene. With the flow of cash and eventual professionalization and commercialization of the British scene, some view its end in 1978 as a consequence of further commercialization. However, the commercialization of the British scene catapulted the movement's sound and ideology internationally.

THE WASHINGTON D.C. HARDCORE/STRAIGHT-EDGE SCENE

In 1979, Washington D.C. formed a punk scene focusing on the inclusion of people of color alongside a harder and faster style. This movement spawned a new ideology referring to both its aesthetic and music called hardcore/straight-edge. In the United States the hardcore/straight-edge scene emerged during the height of the drug epidemic and Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No Campaign." The scene served as a reactionary statement to the negative stereotypes surrounding the punk movement, age restricted music venues, and the growing far-right (Neo-Nazi, National Homefront, and Fascist) enclaves.

Bands of the scene included Bad Brains (1977), Minor Threat (1980), and Government Issue (1980). These bands pioneered a harsher, faster paced sub-genre

that also advocated for political consciousness and social justice¹⁴. These bands, while also unprofessional, incorporated newer stylistic devices to their music such as Bad Brains' incorporation of reggae and Minor Threat and Government Issue's use of a hard-edged thrash sound.

The straight-edge movement defined a group of people, who do not drink, smoke, engage in sexual activities, or do drugs. Their mentality and lifestyle also accompanies a specific aesthetic and symbol. The drawn 'x' given to minors by bar and club bouncers became a co-opted symbol of the younger generation of punks, further pointing to the growing youth base of the movement. This 'x' became an early symbol of the movement, which later evolved into two intersecting hammers.

The asceticism of the straight-edge movement transferred to other branches of the punk movement. Ross Haenfler notes, "Straight-edge is a philosophy of being in control of your mind. Not giving in, making a promise to yourself. It's a personal commitment. It's no one else's. Not to a crew, not to a band, not a group of friends. It's all about *you* and making a commitment to yourself...not giving up, not giving in to social acceptance."¹⁵ As a whole this movement wanted to fight the downward mobility that began to denigrate some of the social progressions initiated by the movement. As the movement progressed some sections adopted a militaristic ideology and aesthetic that associated heavily with white supremacy and other far-right ideologies.

DEFINING PUNK GLOBALLY

¹⁴ *Bad Brains* (1977), tackled racism within the movement and fought for equality within the wider community. *Minor Threat* (1980) fronted by Henry Rollins, this band tackled the hallmark tenet of the straight-edge movement, "positivity," while also confronting issues of masculinity, rape, and sexual assault.

¹⁵ Ross Haenfler, *Straight Edge: Hardcore Punk, Clean-Living Youth, and Social Change* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006), 63.

Punk expanded to Africa, the Caribbean, Asia, Latin America, and East Central Europe. Each region adhered to the founding ideologies while simultaneously transfixing their unique historical and cultural components; confirming the movement's fluidity and variability. While the punk movement expanded internationally, the "sound" and etymology¹⁶ of the punk movement changed according to the region. The word "punk" itself does not always seamlessly transfer between countries. Additionally, many international punk bands did not assign themselves the label of "punk rock" due to the etymology of the word. For example, the Latin American movement, *Tropicalia*¹⁷ denoted their punk movement.

Self-identification as punk will serve as an indicator of the movements in East Germany and the Soviet Union. Here the argument could be made for the idea that these bands created a new offshoot of the movement, refuting the idea that the international movements were mere appropriations of the British and American scenes. Some international movements refuted the descriptive connotation of "punk," and alternatively used "alternative" or "underground," further strengthening the collective idea of social progression through the social pariah. By western standards the underground or alternative scenes delineate as broad swathes of categories that can

¹⁶ In English, punk has two etymological meanings: one sexual and one sociological. The first definition of 'punk' denotes a homosexual relationship between an older man and younger boy, who is often employed to work for the older man. The second encompasses a whole range of nomenclature for an individual that commits petty crime. Both of these definitions bring up the idea of deviance and subversion.

¹⁷ Christopher Dunn in: *Brutality Garden: Tropicalia and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture* notes, "Tropicalia was born a mournful critique of these defeats as well as an exuberant, if often ironic, celebration of Brazilian culture and its continuous permutations. As its name suggests, the movement referenced Brazil's tropical climate, which throughout history has been exalted for generating lush abundance or lamented for impending economic development along the lines of societies located in temperate climates" Christopher, Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicalia and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 31.

include the social, political, or economic. Herein lies one of the main problems of association. Regions that did not have or use the word are often overlooked and moreover highlight an undercurrent of problematic eurocentricity and cultural erasure.

The eurocentricity that often accompanies analyses of the American and English movements fail to understand and acknowledge the contribution of minority groups. David Ensminger articulates, “the discussion and assertion of a rich, complex, and nuanced black presence in punk rock frays the assumptions about punk rock being centered in a fixed, natural and normalized white presence, assumptions cemented through a popular discourse that in effect undervalues or negates all other cultures present in punk.”¹⁸

Although both movements in the Soviet Union and East Germany occurred in Eurocentric regions, the Soviet Union and East Germany are still subject to biases and shifting nomenclature associated with defining the movement. The Soviet Union used the term Soviet Punk to demarcate their movement, while East Germany used the term Ostrock (East Rock). The nomenclature used to describe the movement developed overtime and incorporated specific aspects of the Soviet political environment as well as the con-current definition of "punk."

CHAPTER 1

¹⁸ David Ensminger, “Coloring Between the Lines of Punk and Hardcore: From Absence to Black Punk Power.” *Postmodern Culture* 20, no. 2 (2010), doi: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/421904>

POLITICAL TRADITIONS AND ART POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST GERMANY

The impact of East German and Soviet political history and implementation of the art and music policy socialist realism, influenced the development and definition of Soviet Punk and Ostrock. Although the Soviet Union and East Germany are two representative Soviet governments their approaches to Soviet policy varied widely and their variation elicited different socio-political environments.

THE HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL TRADITIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION

The political history most relevant to the punk movement in the Soviet Union began with the Stalinist era, continuing through to the stagnation era of Leonid Brezhnev. Throughout this period, the political and societal structure crafted by Iosif Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, and Leonid Brezhnev provided the framework on which the punk movement revolted. It furthermore contributed to the development of the proto-punk subculture of the late 1970s era called the "unclassifiabes"¹⁹.

Stalin's lasting legacy functioned as the basis for state repression which was channeled throughout the subsequent leaders of the Soviet Union. Stalin controlled the Soviet Union through a broad range of tactics referred to as Stalinism²⁰. Specifically, the mass state terror and cult of personality surrounding Stalin and the Soviet regime served as the model for the Soviet regime to repress future non-conformist subcultures.

¹⁹ The Soviet government called these groups the "unclassifiabes" or *neformal'nye gruppy*.

²⁰ Stalinism can be broadly defined as Stalin's method of achieving communism through the implementation of state terror, rapid industrialization, centralization of the state, and collectivization of agriculture

The emancipation from strict Stalinism came with the election of Nikita Khrushchev as General Secretary²¹. His election brought the thaw, or *otpepel* to Soviet society, followed by the stagnation and recurring repression of Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko. The pivotal opening of the socio-political sphere under Khrushchev, followed by renewed repression by his successors, provided the necessary space for the nascent underground punk movement to be born. During the stagnation era, the Soviet Union experienced a rapid economic decline catalyzing the reinstatement of "absenteeism" or the refusal to go to work as a crime in 1982²². David Brand writes, "The economy was suffering: In 1982 industrial production grew only by 2.8% compared with a planned rise of 4.7%. It was only in the final months of Mr. Brezhnev's life that a campaign against inefficiency and corruption in society started."²³

The movement toward re-criminalizing absenteeism led to a crackdown on some underground subcultures that started to form during this era. With this crackdown came a retreat to private spaces. Alexis Berelowitch states, "it was no accident that the 1970s saw the emergence of subcultures (rock culture, "the system," etc.)...the "people of the 1970s" themselves chose and praised extreme forms of escapism"²⁴. The worsening economic landscape coupled with escapism serves as familiar markers for the

²¹ Nikita Khrushchev (1953-64), famously spoke out against Stalinism during the 20th Party Congress of 1956, in his famous speech entitled, "On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences".

²² All jobs were provided by the Soviet government and a refusal to go to work becomes a sign of an individual's political confrontation with the Soviet state.

²³ David Brand, "Andropov Agenda: Soviet Boss Takes Aim At Lax Work Habits To Rouse the Economy: The Drunk, Corrupt and Idle Are Targets as He Seeks Image as Tough Leader: Power Struggle Not Over Yet," *Wall Street Journal* (New York, NY), Jan 31, 1983.

²⁴ Alexis Berelowitch, "The 1970s: Reply to a Discussion," *Russian Politics and Law* 42, no. 3 (2004) : 29, accessed November 23, 2016, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=9f82458e-5aa1-4cd9-abf5-d062353823ab%40sessionmgr101>.

development of the punk subculture; two similar developments that launched the English scene²⁵.

SOCIALIST REALISM, GLAVLIT, AND THE ROCK CLUBS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Repression of art and music culture in the Soviet Union functioned through the Communist Party, Ministry of Culture, and Glavlit promoted the official method of socialist realism and tried to adapt it to the new cultural forms and trends. These auxiliary bodies of the Soviet government concentrated their efforts on the underground subcultures of the 1970s and 80s. The first implementations of state censorship within the art and music realm began with socialist-realism and foundation of Glavlit in the late 1920s and early 1930s respectively.

The preeminent artistic and political minds of the Soviet Union during the early 1930s created socialist realism as the artistic template and representational guide for socialist values and goals. David R. Tompkins states,

“Stalin and leading cultural figures like Maxim Gorky formulated the term in the spring of 1932...in his speech tsar Andrei Zhdanov offered a broad definition of the “method socialist realism” as a way to “depict reality in its revolutionary development...combined with the ideological remodeling and education of the toiling people in the spirit of socialist...artists initially viewed the promulgation of socialist realism as a sign of liberalization”²⁶

Socialist realism became common practice among classical musicians, actors, and other creative individuals. As the popularity of classical music waned, socialist

²⁵ Refer back to Stacy Thompson in: *Punk Productions: Unfinished Business*, Thompson states, "in 1975, there was a "mood of economic crisis [and] depression prevalent in a UK torn by one million plus unemployed and legions of school-leavers swelling their ranks every day, the three-day week, teeming assembly-line education and the Tory mis-rule" that culminated in "miners' strike black-outs" 19.

²⁶ David G. Tompkins, *Music and Politics in Early Cold War Poland East Germany* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2013), 17.

realism turned to a denouncement of "decadent"²⁷ western influenced music styles and culture such as jazz and rock and roll. While socialist realism functioned as a tactic of repression, Glavlit functioned as the reigning hegemonic government bureau for censorship. Richard Pipes states, "In Russia all independent newspapers and periodicals were liquidated by August 1918. With the establishment of the central censorship bureau, Glavlit, control of the printed word by the Communist Party became complete. Similar controls were established over the theater, cinema, and every other form of expression, including even the circus."²⁸

Glavlit enacted further control of artistic and cultural media through its monopolization of art and music. Censorship by Glavlit affected media that did not support the party doctrine or advance socialist ideology. Despite Khrushchev's political and cultural thaw, Glavlit continued to practice heavy censorship. Bill Keller in an interview with a Glavlit employee writes,

"Still, there is much room for discretion in Glavlit's current standard of what is prohibited, which Mr. Boldyev recently elaborated to the newspaper *Izvestia* as follows: "the use of the press for purposes of undermining or eliminating the established socialist system in the U.S.S.R., to propagandize war, to preach racial or national exclusivity or hatred and violence on a national, religious or other basis, to damage the country's security interests or defense capability or public order, or to publish materials incompatible with the requirements of public morality and protecting the population's health"²⁹

The censorship by Glavlit and the founding of socialist realism anchored the post-Stalin regime in the solidification of censorship and repression as a tool for control of social and cultural spaces. However, the emergence of censorship did not stop with

²⁷ In Soviet propaganda western culture is often referred to as "decadent" due to the perceived emphasis on bourgeois values and emphasized value on commodities.

²⁸ Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime: 1919-1924* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 274.

²⁹ Bill Keller, "The Life of a Soviet Censor: Anything Goes? Not Just Yet," *New York Times* (New York, New York), July 18, 1989.

the department of Glavlit, but continued with the creation of the Ministry of Culture sponsored pop music groups called V.I.A. groups (vokal'no instrumental'nyi ansambl') during the 1970s. Nicholas Glossop contends,

“As an alternative to overt repression, the Ministry of Culture unveiled the V.I.A.-the term “rock group” being out of bands, and in the case of most V.I.A.'s inaccurate- as a means of supplying young people with the popular music they clearly desired. These ensembles (or “rock surrogates,” as Troitsky contemptuously dubs them) were more reliable and controllable than amateur bands and more ideologically acceptable than recordings of Anglo-American bands. The V.I.A. typically consisted of eight to ten members plus one “artistic director,” who was responsible for the content of the repertoire”³⁰.

The two largest rock clubs were the *Leningrad Rock Club* and the *Moscow Rock Laboratory*, which produced government approved rock as a stopgap to Western rock influence. However, the underground rock scenes of Leningrad and Moscow soon eclipsed the V.I.A. groups and KGB's ability to contain the unofficial rock scene. Despite censorship by Glavlit, and the creation of state sponsored pop and rock, the culture of the underground rose to prominence.

In addition to Glavlit censoring music and KGB using their methods to supervise culture, all official music production was channeled through the only state record company Melodia. Melodia produced all approved music material, leaving various genres such as Rock and Jazz, as well as artists who championed an anti-Soviet stance to use unofficial channels, such as magnitizdat³¹. The art and music policies of the Soviet Union will evidence themselves in East Germany, after its solidification as

³⁰ Nicholas Glossop, "On the Peculiarities of Soviet Rock and Roll," *Intersections and Transpositions: Russian Music, Culture and Society* (1998) : 277.

³¹ Magnitizdat were the illegal tapes and recorded material that circulated throughout the black markets of the Soviet Union. Magnitizdat will play a major role in circulating punk albums during the late 1970s and 80s.

satellite state to the Soviet Union. However, like the Soviet Union, the adoption of restrictive art and music policy provided the East German proto-punk communities with a foundational basis for revolt.

WALTER ULBRICHT, ERICH HONECKER, AND THE FORMATION OF EAST GERMANY'S STATE POLICY

The German Democratic Republic formed on October 7, 1949 six months after the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany on May 23, 1949. After World War II, the Allied powers occupied and quartered Germany into the American, French, Soviet, and English zones. On August 13, 1961 the formal outlines of West and East Germany formed with the construction of the Berlin Wall. East Germany functioned as a proxy Soviet state led by East Germany's most prominent leaders, General Secretaries Walter Ulbricht and Erich Honecker, who championed a form of Soviet German culture referred to as German socialism.

During the period of Soviet occupation before the creation of the East German state Stalin choose advisors and political appointees to channel³² the Soviet Union's marxist-leninist ideology³³. During the interregnum the *Sozialistische Partei*

³² Archie Brown in: *The Rise and Fall of Communism* states, "Wolfgang Leonhard, Wilhelm Pieck, Anton Ackermann were some of the German communists that forged the "German road to socialism"...some of the German Communists...argued in 1945-46 for a 'German road to socialism' which would be distinct from the experience of the Soviet Union." Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 175.

³³ Evan B Alfred Jr in: *Soviet Marxism-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology* states, "From the 1920s until the early 1990s and the disintegration of the USSR, Soviet sources' use of the term "Marxism-Leninism" was meant to suggest direct continuity between Marx and Lenin. In the official Soviet view, Marxism-Leninism included the theoretical legacy of the Soviet Communist parties closely allied with the Soviet regime." Evans, B. Alfred Jr. *Soviet Marxism-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology* (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1993), 9.

Deutschlands (SPD) “Socialist Party of Germany” and *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (KPD) “Communist Party of Germany” merged to form the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED) in 1949. With the SED in place, government officials such as Ulbricht led the charge for the adoption of Soviet values. Archie Brown states,

“In charge of the gradual transition to a Communist regime was a group of German Communists who had survived both the purges and the war in the Soviet Union. A dominant figure from the outset as Ulbricht, who went to lead the party until 1971...his years in the Soviet Union had left him will fitted to behave in a highly authoritative manner in Germany, which he combined with obsequiousness in his relations with Stalin”³⁴

In counteracting the specter of Nazism, Ulbricht and Honecker incorporated German culture in the East German state with Socialism through the adoption of “The Ten Commandments of Socialist Morality”³⁵.

"The Ten Commandments of Socialist Morality"	
1	Art must be formed through personal experience, personality, and individual ideas, thoughts and feelings, and with content that is meant for working people
2	Prepared to combat decadent imperialism and fight for the new socialist society and a better, more positive life
3	Engaged in creating themes that concretely and actively address working people and their lives, and not vague or abstract
4	Willing to fight for peace
5	Reflecting reality without simply copying it, that creatively addresses the future
6	Not engaged in abstract experimentation, but provides strength for people to solve today’s problems

³⁴ Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 174.

³⁵ David G. Tompkins, *Music and Politics in Early Cold War Poland East Germany* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2013), 21.

7	Reflecting the rich and diverse reality of our people through equally rich and diverse themes, genres, and artistic invention
8	Helping to shape the typical conflicts of our time and not focusing on unimportant issues
9	National in form-containing and expressing the national character
10	Truly popular and closely linked to folk music without being primitive
11	Building on the classics without copying them but rather creatively developing them further
12	Perfect in form without making form the absolute priority but rather containing socially relevant content
13	Humane, full of life, and life affirming
14	Filled with consciousness that composers have a powerful societal responsibility in this time of world-historical confrontation and social, material and spiritual change

These rules were designed to make all works of art similar and to reinforce the Socialist values sought by the regime. Moreover, as Eric D. Weitz states, “The SED propagated in particular a social conservatism defined by such key terms as “Sauberkeit” (cleanliness, moral virtue), “Anständigkeit” (propriety, moral rectitude), and that holy trinity, “Ordnung, Fleiß und Sparsamkeit” (order, diligence, and thrift).”³⁶

These commandments served to give a sense of order to the chaotic psyche of post-war Germany. Although the punk movement formed under Honecker’s tenure, the restrictive approaches to art and music spaces were already formed under Ulbricht. Ulbricht functioned as the unilateral connection between the Soviet Union and East Germany and as the exemplar of East German socialism.³⁷ After the solidification of

³⁶ Eric D. Weitz in *Creating German Communism 1890-1990: from Popular Protests to Socialist State* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 372.

³⁷ Eric D. Weitz in *Creating German Communism 1890-1990: from Popular Protests to Socialist State* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 327

socialist values, Erich Honecker's appointment to General Secretary ushered in an era of intense state repression fronted by his heavy use of the Ministry for State Security (MfS. the *Stasi*) and through policies such as *Operative Personnel Kontrollen* (OPKS)³⁸.

Mark Dennis articulates,

“...the MfS was deployed as an integral element in what Hubertus Knabe has dubbed the system of ‘silent repression’ (*lautlose Unterdrückung*). This in turn was embedded in a broader societal system which has attracted various labels, such as post-totalitarianism, modern dictatorship, a thoroughly dominated society and consultative authoritarianism. This form of rule emerged out of the Stalinist period and, although the methods of control were less brutal and repressive than in Stalin's Russia, the GDR of the Honecker years was nevertheless a dictatorship of the party elites in which coercion and injustice were endemic”³⁹

Honecker's exercise of control through the *Stasi* touched upon all major parts of society ranging from government officials to punks⁴⁰.

SOCIALIST REALISM AND THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Central Cultural Committee of East Germany controlled art, literature, and music organizations echoing the template of the Soviet Union's Ministry of Culture. Although these structures operated parallel to one another, the Central Cultural Committee functioned on a different level. In contrast to the Soviet Union, a strict policy that all artists hold party membership was not crucial, however party membership did

³⁸ Operative Personnel Kontrollen (OPKS) or Operative Personnel Controls was one of the initiatives undertaken by the *Stasi* that allowed them to monitor individuals.

³⁹ Mike Dennis, *German Writers and the Politics of Culture Dealing with the Stasi*, ed. Paul Cooke and Andrew Plowman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 5

⁴⁰ Mark Dennis in: *German Writers and the Politics of Culture Dealing with the Stasi* states, “An examination of the files which the MfS kept on writers, peace activists, environmentalist, athletes, academics, skinheads and punks, as well as on its own spies, testifies to the ministry's paranoiac hunt for suspected ‘hostile-negative forces’ and to its bureaucratic zeal for the gathering of data.” Mike Dennis, *German Writers and the Politics of Culture Dealing with the Stasi*, ed. Paul Cooke and Andrew Plowman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 3.

confer status. Laura Silverberg adds, "Whereas SED membership was not required to join the VDK [Sozialverband Deutschland "Social Association of Germany], party members enjoyed a privileged position within the Union's ranks and dominated the editorial board of the Union's official organ, *Musik und Gesellschaft*."⁴¹ As Silverberg mentions, *Musik und Gesellschaft* was the main thoroughfare through for music production. These structures continued to hold a powerful force in music production and dissemination.

Taking into account the parallel growth between the Soviet Union and East Germany, the East German state marketed their brand of socialist realism as socialist modernism. "Socialist modernism" in East Germany comprised 14 specific ideals outlined in a 1954 Composers' Union Congress. Each of these ideals spoke to the tenets of the "Ten Commandments of Socialist Morality." Nevertheless, and much like the Soviet Union, these structures and state institutions could not quell the rising prevalence of underground subcultures.

DEFINING CULTURES OF DISSENT IN SOVIET REGIONS

"It makes no difference whether we are in prison or the prison's within us...We have to cut the camp out of ourselves...Do you think it was the Cheka, the NKVD, or the KGB that had imprisoned us? No we did it ourselves."⁴²

⁴¹ Laura Silverberg, "Between Dissonance and Dissidence: Socialist Modernism in the German Democratic Republic," *The Journal of Musicology* 26, no. 1 (2009): 49, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.1525/jm.2009.26.1.44.pdf>.

⁴² Philip Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (United Kingdom, Routledge, 2005), 94.

Dissent culture differs significantly depending on the political environment. The words 'dissenter,' 'dissident,' and 'dissent' assume different connotations in their Soviet context than in East Germany. Additionally, individuals and collective groups define and use these terms differently. Due to the ambiguous and fluid definition of these terms I will base much of my definition from Vaclav Havel's definition of "Soviet dissent."

Vaclav Havel, one of the premiere dissenting leaders within former Czechoslovakia penned an essay on dissent and its various forms. In Havel's crusade against the Soviet system, he outlined a guideline for individuals on how to perform acts of dissent in an essay entitled, "The Power of the Powerless." Havel describes individuals who are tethered to the system as those that perpetuate the status quo. Havel writes, "For this reason, however, they must *live within a lie*. They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, are the system."⁴³

Havel states that those who assume silence and act within the system confirm the status quo and are labeled as "living within a lie." Individuals who unfetter themselves from the status quo have the agency to develop communities of dissent. These individuals are referred to as "living within the truth." Havel notes, "The singular, explosive, incalculable political power of living within the truth resides in the fact that living openly within the truth has an ally, invisible to be sure, but omnipresent: this

⁴³ Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," in *The Power of the Powerless* 1985, edited by John Keane, (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1985), 31.

hidden sphere. It is from this sphere that life lived openly in the truth grows; it is to this sphere that it speaks, and in it that it finds understanding.”⁴⁴

Under these conditions dissenters are individuals who (1) reform from within the party, but do not identify as hardline communists, but rather liberal socialists and (2) individuals outside the party who reject the dissent label⁴⁵. A dissident describes individuals who, through the eyes of the government, are seen as anti-government or anti-Soviet. Dissent defines as the activities that could be attributed to anti-government or anti-Soviet processes. These definitions are further grounded in sociological data pulled from phenomena and individual experiences from those within Soviet regions. Jan Wielgohs and Detlef Pollack state,

“There were without a doubt many-faceted causes for the variance in the pattern of development of dissidence and opposition: The degree of political independence from Moscow, the economic and ideological capacity of the national regime for securing loyalty and acceptance, the social anchoring of and the endogenous potential for resistance by the church, the degrees of cultural proximity to the West and the degree of openness towards Western influences
...⁴⁶ .

Wielgohs and Pollack articulate three crucial points: political independence from Moscow, the capacity to retain and secure loyalty within the state, and the degrees of cultural proximity and factors of openness to the West. Physical distance from Moscow

⁴⁴ Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," in *The Power of the Powerless* 1985, edited by John Keane, (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1985), 41

⁴⁵ Kerry Kathleen Kiley in: *Everyday subversion: from joking to revolting in the German Democratic Republic* states, "Havel rejects the labels "dissident" and "opposition" that outsiders apply to people such as he, because the words carry the negative connotations of one being a 'renegade' or 'backslider.'" Also, the word "dissident" typically "implies a profession." "Dissidence" - if one must use the word - belongs to "the everyday human world, the world of daily tension between the aims of life and the aims of the system." Kerry Kathleen Kiley, *Everyday subversion: from joking to revolting in the German Democratic Republic* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008), 12.

⁴⁶ Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs, *Comparative Perspectives on Dissent and Opposition to Communist Rule Dissent and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe: Origins of Civil Society and Democratic Transition*, ed Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 19.

is one key factor. Regions of the Soviet Union such as Novosibirsk experienced their independence through tangible distance⁴⁷. Vladimir Kozlov states, “Islands” of relative freedom and free thought, such as Akademgorodok, a research compound just outside Novosibirsk, could also have been instrumental in shaping the scene.”⁴⁸ Although Wielgohs and Pollack’s second factor points to retention and loyalty to the state ‘in-group’ retention and loyalty overshadow retention and loyalty to the state due to the underground nature of the punk movement.

The Soviet Union and East Germany both expressed moderate degrees of openness to the West. The Soviet Union and East Germany experienced the *International Festivals of Youth and Students*, which imported elements of Western culture such as blue jeans and music⁴⁹. These festivals strove to counteract the restrictive Stalinist era approaches to global politics. Margaret Peacock noted, “They argued that it would stand as a symbol for the nation’s apparent rejection of the social and cultural domestic insularism that had characterized the early Cold War years. They conceived of it as a vehicle for projecting a vision of the Soviet citizen as an activist for peace and a vibrant and creative contributor to world culture.”⁵⁰ This may be, but the invitation of many young foreigners also had the effect of importing Western youth culture.

Similarly in East Germany, policy functioned as a gateway to Western culture. Paul Jackson notes, “*Ostpolitik*, the *Grundlagenvertrag* and the Helsinki Agreements

⁴⁷ This is not to say that larger cities such as Leningrad and Moscow did not have these communities, but that the actual physical distance afforded the communities in Siberia the space to be more subversive.

⁴⁸ Vladimir Kozlov, “Siberian Punk: How a rock movement changed Soviet culture,” *Russian Life* (2015): 43.

⁴⁹ The first International Festival of Youth and Students was held in Moscow in 1957

⁵⁰ Margaret Peacock, “The perils of building Cold War consensus at the 1957 Moscow World Festival of Youth and Students,” *Cold War History* 12, no. 3 (2012): 515-516.

were to open up East German society to western influences and oppositional social pressures which in the end proved subversive and impossible to control."⁵¹ There also existed festivals which opened the GDR to other cultures, which can be seen in the iteration of *International Festival of Youth and Students*. With these three factors, the punk movement began to flourish, creating proto-punk communities and bands that later created the fully fledged Soviet Punk and Ostrock movements.

The soviet policies of socialist realism and socialist modernism propagated by the Soviet Union and East Germany functioned as a means to build a cohesive Socialist culture. It also served as a means to quell the influence of the "decadent West." However, that did not mean that the Soviet Union and East Germany were devoid of Western culture. Through carefully planned events such as the *International Festival of Youth and Students*, the youth generations within the Soviet Union and East Germany were exposed to aspects of western culture. Along with this exposure of western culture came a culture of dissent.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUNK COMMUNITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION AND EAST GERMANY

The foundation of Soviet and East German proto-punk communities occurred through three fundamental criteria. These three fundamental criteria are the creation

⁵¹ Paul Jackson, *DDR - Das Ende eines Staates*, ed. Paul Jackson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994) 13.

and retention of set group structures, recruitment through underground publications including zines and other music media, and the continued engagement with other (either other Soviet or Western) punk communities. Through these underlying factors, the "unclassifiable groups" of the Soviet Union and the "anti-social rowdies" of East Germany started the Soviet punk and Ostrock scenes.

THE "UNCLASSIFIABLE" GROUPS OF THE SOVIET UNION

The formation of proto-punk communities in the Soviet Union began during Brezhnev's stagnation era where a combination of dropouts and low job employment lent little incentive to work for the Soviet everyman⁵². The steady infiltration of rock and roll into the Soviet Union by student syndicated radio programming, in combination with the proliferation of rock and punk music themed publications such as *UKHO (The Ear)* and *Roksi* showcased the first tangible acts of punk aggression against the state. The cohesivity of the movement further solidified as individuals wore the outlandish and garish clothes consistent with the aesthetic of the movement. Ivan Golobov and Yngvar B. Steinholt state,

"They could not be categorised as the by-now familiar bitniki, stylagi or Soviet hippies, and did not share their admiration for Western culture. They wore their hair short and preferred Soviet-brand clothes, which they wore proudly, in often unusual ways: a stained old jacket with a tie on a bare chest; a naval shirt with smart trousers a few sizes too small; a long coat with white pumps and a ladies' fancy scarf...the common denominator around such absurd variety was that, in

⁵² Nicholas Glossup in: "On the Peculiarities of Soviet Rock and Roll" states, "The late Brezhnev period, with its combination of low fixed costs and low social mobility, proved the perfect environment for the growth of this community of dropouts" Nicholas Glossop, "On the peculiarities of Soviet Rock and Roll". Nicholas Glossup, "One the Peculiarities of Soviet Rock and Roll," *Intersections and Transpositions: Russian Music, Culture and Society*, ed. Andrew Baruch Wachtel (1998): 278.

the eyes of the average citizen, they looked like idiots and their behaviour to match their clown-like dress style”⁵³

The "unclassifiable groups“ of the Soviet Union adopted the rock music of the West with the early bard and Soviet music traditions, creating a formative stylistic outline for later punk songs. Moreover, the incorporation of Western and Soviet modes of dress represent the amalgamation of the two punk cultures. However, Western punk culture served only as the basis for the Soviet Punk movement, as the Soviet Punk communities incorporated elements of Soviet and Russian iconography and mythologized traditions into their movement. Additionally, the transmission of music came not only through student radio programming but also through American and Western European sponsored radio programming⁵⁴.

An underground market for publications called samizdat functioned as the modus for communication between underground groups. Samizdat publications stood as explicit subversions of state run media due to its D.I.Y. ethos. Samizdat publications such as *UKHO (The Ear)* and *Roksi*⁵⁵ detailed the development of the movement and its rising stars.

⁵³ Ivan Gololobov, "Punk in Russia: Cultural Mutation from the "Useless" to the "Moronic," (2014): 22-48, doi: http://www.academia.edu/3455928/Punk_in_Russia_Cultural_Mutation_from_the_Useless_to_the_Moron ic. 23.

⁵⁴ G.R. Urban in "American Broadcasting: Radio Freeing Europe" states, "60 percent of radio broadcasting in the years leading up to World War II were devoted to music. As the Soviet Union grew so too did the number of official and unofficial radio programs. G.R. Urban, "American Broadcasting: Radio Freeing Europe," *National Review*, June (1990): 42.

⁵⁵ *Roksi* appeared in 1977 on the heel of the punk movement in Leningrad (St. Petersburg), privileging it to first hand access to the budding movement. *Roksi* spanned two decades ending in 1990 after 15 issues. During publication *Roksi* circulated 15-20 publications each issue. *Ukho* appeared in Moscow in 1982 ending abruptly one year later. Compared to *Roksi*, *Ukho* published 40-60 pages issuing 4-10 copies each cycle.

Figure 2 UKHO (*The Ear*)⁵⁶

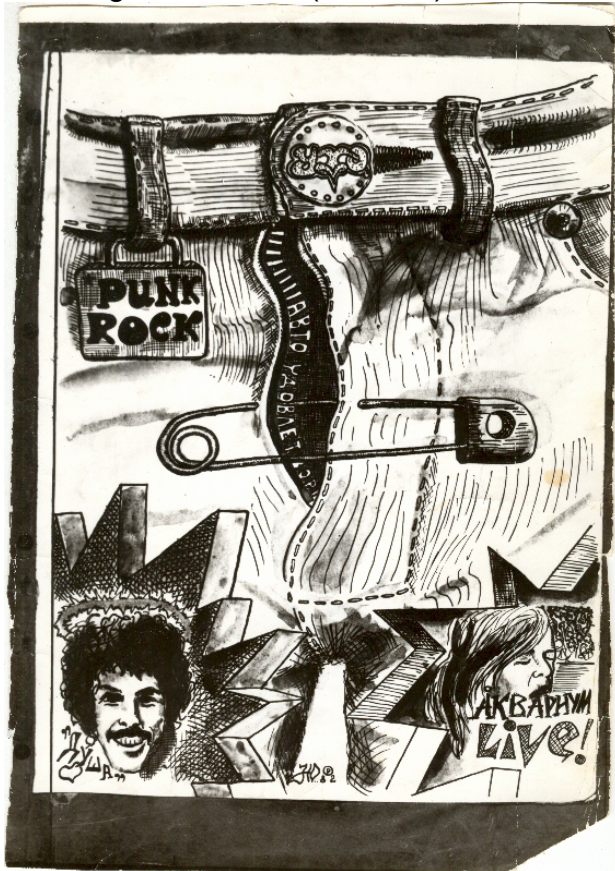
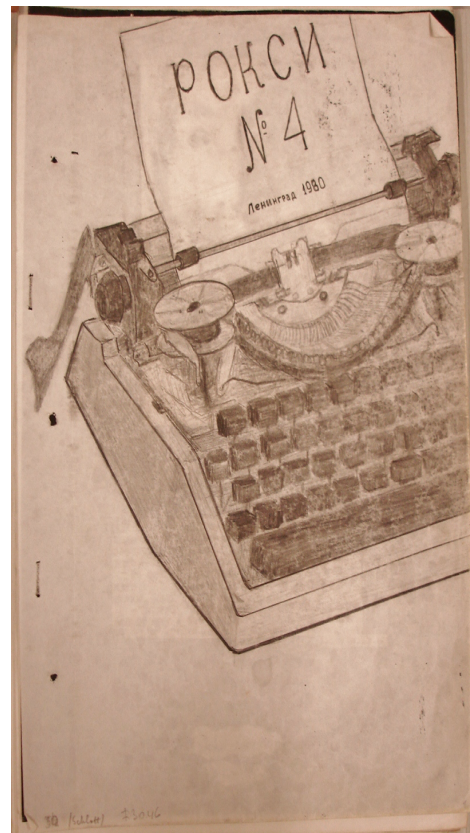


Figure 3 *Roksi*⁵⁷



Golobov and Steinholt state,

“The Leningrad samizdat fanzine *Roksi* first subjected the punk phenomenon to thorough discussion in 1981 (No.4), while in Moscow, the subject was addressed in *Ukho* only in September 1982 (No. 2[6]). For a general audience unfamiliar with the aesthetics of live rock performance, at this point, the word ‘punk’ could signify almost anything outrageous”⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ Anna Komaromi, "Ukho," *Soviet Samizdat Periodicals: Uncensored Texts of the Late Soviet Era*, accessed December 8, 2016, <https://samizdat.library.utoronto.ca/content/ukho>.

⁵⁷ Anna Komaromi, "Roksi," *Soviet Samizdat Periodicals: Uncensored Texts of the Late Soviet Era*, accessed December 8, 2016, <https://samizdat.library.utoronto.ca/content/roksi>.

⁵⁸ Ivan Golobov, "Punk in Russia: Cultural Mutation from the "Useless" to the "Moronic," (2014): 22-48, doi: http://www.academia.edu/3455928/Punk_in_Russia_Cultural_Mutation_from_the_Useless_to_the_Moronic. 25.

Samizdat publications were not the only means music traveled through the Soviet Union. Magnitizdat, a form of samizdat, included the tapes and recorded material that also traveled through underground markets. Magnitizdat was not exclusive to Western rock songs as it included rock and punk from within the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union's first punk band Avtomaticheskie Udovletvoriteli (AU), the Automatic Satisfiers, led by Andrey "Swine" Panov, the father of Soviet punk, spearheaded and exemplified anti-Soviet behavior. With songs titles ranging from *Nadristat' (shit)* (1984) to *Reigan Provokator* (Reagan Provocateur) (1987), their themes ranged from problems with urbanization to problems within the working class and mocking official Soviet propaganda. One of the only recordings of the band, a 1981 magnitizdat tape entitled, *Pervyi proezd v Moskvu* ('First time in Moscow'), speaks to the power and effect of magnitizdat.

The spread of the liberating punk scene soon reached Siberia. The Siberian punk scene, unlike the formative rock and punk scenes of Leningrad and Moscow, elicited a raw energy and overtly subversive quality that both critiqued and emulated the Soviet Union's forgotten revolutionary past. The Siberian scene due to its relative isolation from Moscow, brought a harsh energy to the punk scene that combined the severe physical environment of Siberia with the creative freedom and D.I.Y. necessity of living far from the highly controlled political centers.

EAST GERMAN'S PROTO-PUNK DEVELOPMENT

The proto-punk communities of East Germany grew from exposure to Western radio broadcasts such as BBC Radio One, the creation of Western German music

genre Krautrock (Kosmische Musik), and the dissemination of samizdat. The East German proto-punk communities also benefitted from their physical proximity to West Germany and transmission of British and American punk bands. Similar to the "unclassifiables" in the Soviet Union, the East German government called the non-conforming, dissenting East German youth, "antisocial rowdies." The anti-social rowdies straddled the line between deviance, western decadence, and "Soviet criminality" by exercising individuality, playing Western music, and adopting outlandish and brash western rock styles.

In 1981, the word "punk" appeared in East German government discourse, eventually transferring the characteristics of the anti-social rowdies to the "new" punk demographic. Juliane Brauer notes, "Stasi files described Punk youths as being "of weak character," "disoriented," easily influenced and shaped by the "Western enemy," and as "antisocial" and degenerate," with a "lack of belief in socialist ideals."⁵⁹

Radio programs such as the BBC, Radio Free Europe, and Voice of America occupied West and East German airwaves. "The Peel Sessions" on BBC's Radio One functioned as the main thoroughfare into the British and American punk scenes. Michael Boehlke in an interview with the frontman of East German punk band, Planlos mentions, "John Peel (1939-2004) was the unequivocal popular Radio-DJ, in his program (from BBC and BFBS) he played unreleased Demos, later he thankfully also smuggled in music produced by DDR punk bands."⁶⁰ Radio programs such as John Peel's played a transformative role in the proto-punk and punk communities.

⁵⁹ Juliane Brauer, "Clashes of Emotions: Punk Music, Youth Subculture, and Authority in the GDR (1978-1983) *Juvenile Delinquency, Modernity, and the State* 38, no. 4 (2012): 59.

⁶⁰ Michael "Pankow" Boehlke states, "John Peel (1939-2004) war der wohl bekannteste Radio-DJ in seiner nach ihm benannten Sendung (auf BBC und BFBS) spielte er viele unveröffentlichte Demo-

The circulation of zines in East Germany were hard to come by due to Stasi surveillance. Christian Schmidt states, "having all this in mind, it is not astonishing that there had been no fanzines in the GDR between 1979-1983."⁶¹ This is not to say that East Germany was devoid of punk fanzines. The fanzines *Alösa* (Erlöser, East Berlin), *Trash* (Rostock), and *Rattenpress* (Freiburg) briefly emerged in the years leading to the reunification of Germany in 1989. Due to the Stasi's destruction of a majority of these fanzines, magnetized tapes proved a better transferable medium for music.

Much of the outlandish and ironic musical and physical aesthetic of East Germany's punk movement stemmed from West Germany's first proto-punk band The Torquays (later known as The Monks)⁶². During West Germany's occupation five stationed American G.I.s and a local German citizen formed The Torquays. Unlike the punk movement to come, the band members were professionally trained musicians, who during their four year tenure used stylistic elements from the jazz and rockabilly genres. After changing their name, The Monks began experimenting in minimizing melody, emphasizing sound alteration, and increasing hypnotic rhythms. The Monks used a 6-stringed banjo, shrill vocalization, and the addition of a Maestro fuzz box (wah-wah pedal) to build their new sound. To complete their commitment to the avant-garde the quintet wore black habits, cinctures, and tonsures⁶³.

Aufnahmen, später gelegentlich auch aus der DDR hinausgeschmuggelte Bänder von Punkbands". Michael "Pankow" Boehlke, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 51.

⁶¹ Christian Schmidt, "Meanings of fanzines in the beginning of Punk in the GDR and FRG: An approach towards a medium between staging, communication and the construction of collective identities" *La Presse musicale alternative* (2006): lines 44-46. doi: <https://volume.revues.org/636>.

⁶² The band comprised of Gary Burger (lead guitar, lead vocalist), Larry Clark (keyboards), Eddie Shaw (bass guitar), and Dave Day (rhythm guitar), and Hans (drums).

⁶³ The Monk's relevance can be seen in the West German punk band, *Die Ärzte* in their song "Eva Braun" where the lead singer, Jan Vetter, wears a black habit and cincture in their video for "Eva Braun"

Additionally, their lyrics often featured divisive topics such as the Vietnam War and the continual dehumanization of society. Their pioneering style influenced the Krautrock genre of West Germany, which stemmed from the psychedelia of 1970s rock⁶⁴. Its popularity quickly grew outside of West Germany, launching bands such as Can, Neu!, and Kraftwerk into East German and international audiences.

With these contributing factors punk collectives emerged in East Germany; each with their respective leader, style, and ethos. As the movement grew bands separated into those that "sold out" to the government, called *Die Anderen Bands*, and those that remained underground. Erik Christopher states, "As the State attempted to infiltrate various punk bands to break them up, the State also attempted to have state sponsored punk. There were state approved bands called "die anderen Bands" and the most famous of these bands were Die Skeptiker"⁶⁵ The legitimacy of underground bands is often heavily debated among scholars and those that participated in the movement as the lines between who belonged to which camp blurred.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE OSTROCK SCENE

The East German punk scene, commonly referred to as *Ostrock (East rock)*, formed in the mid-1970s. During the 1970s the East German government peddled the

⁶⁴ The Krautrock genre also takes on a specific etymology and nomenclature when referenced in the West German context. Ulrich Adelt in "Machines with a Heart: German Identity in the Music of Can and Kraftwerk" notes, "but it should be noted that the German word Kraut is short for "sauerkraut" only in its English translation-in German it refers to, among other things, herbs, weeds, and even drugs. Although "Krautrock" has become a fairly common term to describe German popular music from the 1970s, many musicians associated with the genre reject the moniker, and it remains a disputed term to this day." Ulrich Adelt, "Machines with a Heart: German Identity in the Music of Can and Kraftwerk," *Popular Music and Society* 35, no. 3 (2012): 361.

⁶⁵ Erik Christopher, "Punk in the DDR," Punk in the DDR (blog), October 30 2012, <http://punkintheddr.blogspot.com/>.

tenets of an ideal Soviet body through embracing the values of moral rectitude, virtue, and diligence. The youth generation were the target group to lead East Germany toward a bright socialist future. To solidify this the East German state sponsored programs such as *Die Freie Deutsche Jugend (FDJ)* (The Free German Youth). However, not every individual within the youth demographic believed in the ideal Soviet future. The Ostrock scene took the slogan of the bright socialist future and turned it on its head. With this direct delegitimizing act, the punk movement began chipping away at the walls of East Germany. Throughout the development of the Ostrock scene "No future" became not only the antagonistic anti-government slogan but also the ethos of the Ostrock movement.

The slogan "No Future" transformed into an ideology that the East German government began researching, in order to halt the further development of this anti-Soviet ideology. Akin to the Soviet Union, the East German government created their own name for this new demographic of unruly youth.

Erich Honecker initiated a counter campaign to the "No Future" slogan and wider punk demographic following one of the first punk concerts held in the Erlösekirche in Berlin-Lichtenberg on June 24, 1983⁶⁶. Honecker's campaign then grew into the wider policy of *Härte Gegen Punk* (Hard Against Punk) or "The Punk Problem of 1983." Throughout the implementation of *Härte Gegen Punk* artists, musicians, and

⁶⁶ Brauer further contends, "On August 11, 1983 officials from the Stasi DEPARTMENT XX...documented a so-called *Vorkommisueberprüfung* (incident investigation). According to the file, quoted in detail in Preuss (2005) as well as in Furian and Becker (2000, 113-20), the reason for the arrest of a number of youths labeled "Punks" was a concert in the Erlösekirche in Berlin-Lichtenberg on June 24...noting that "the Minister ordered severity toward Punks to prevent an escalation of this movement". Juliane Brauer, "Clashes of Emotions: Punk Music, Youth Subculture, and Authority in the GDR (1978-1983)," *Juvenile Delinquency, Modernity, and the State* 38, no. 4 (2012): 53.

collaborator of the Ostrock scene were deported from East Germany or experienced other repressive measures. Hayton remarks,

"Known punks were jailed or drafted into the National People's Army (Nationale Volksarmee). Those registered with emigration applications were speedily given exit papers. Several punk bands were forcibly split up and the rest penetrated by Stasi spies[m]. Punks were forbidden to associate with one another publicly, banned from restaurants, refused entry to youth clubs, and even prohibited from entering certain city districts. Of an estimated two thousand punks in the GDR in early 1983, less than half, the authorities estimated, were still affiliated with the subculture a year later"⁶⁷

These repressive actions taken against punks in East Germany mirror those actions taken against punks in the Soviet Union. While the actions stand as a relative commonality between the two movements, the East German government also used infiltration to obtain information and dismantle punk communities. Unlike the Ministry of Culture sponsored rock clubs in Leningrad and Moscow, the East German government employed *inoffizieller Mitarbeiter* (IMs), 'unofficial workers' to infiltrate the movement. Members of the Ostrock scene were coerced into the system due to a variety of circumstances either personal, political, or both.

Before repression, the Ostrock scene thrived from communications with other punk communities in the United Kingdom, United States, and West Germany. Ostrock bands such as Planlos (No Plan) initially became interested in the movement through listening to western sponsored radio stations such as BBC's Radio One. In an interview with Michael Kobs of Planlos, Kobs states "I listened to western radio in the 70s-mainly John Peel's show. That was a new musical world. At some point I got a Clash poster,

⁶⁷ Jeff Hayton, "Härte gegen Punk: Popular Music, Western Media, and State Response in the German Democratic Republic," *German History* 31, no. 4 (2013):524-525.

don't remember where from. Only then did I see pictures depicting Punk."⁶⁸ Daniel Kaiser of Planlos later mentions "We maintained contacts with London punks that we'd met in East Berlin. They sent flyers or they smuggled tapes with our music out of the country. Or on occasion word got around a band from West Germany wanted to play at a church."⁶⁹

Ostrock participants enjoyed relatively more access to punk communities abroad, which allowed some Ostrock bands to use clandestine production spaces in West Germany. The use of political counter-language and anti-Socialist ideology "No Future" as protest catalyzed a punk movement focused on critiquing German socialism. As it developed it later synthesized aspects of German culture into the movement.

The proto-punk communities in the Soviet Union and East Germany both grew from exposure to syndicated Western radio, communication between Western punk communities, and general exposure to the international movement. However, the proto-punk and later Soviet Punk and Ostrock communities did not solely rely on the Western punk communities. Each community took on their unique political culture and incorporated it into their movement, which can be seen through the Ostrock scene's "No Future" ideology. Furthermore, as these communities rose to prominence both the Soviet and SED government took initiatives to counteract the spread of the "decadent," Western, and anti-Soviet behavior that the movements propagated.

⁶⁸ Michael "Pankow" Boehlke, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 48.

⁶⁹ Michael "Pankow" Boehlke, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 52.

CHAPTER 3

PANK-ROK AND DIE ANDEREN: CASE STUDIES ON GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA AND ZWITSCHERMASCHINE

The first wave punk bands of the Soviet Union and East Germany set the course for the Soviet Punk and Ostrock scenes as exemplars of the unique spirit of Soviet and East German punk. Grazhdanskaya Oborona "Civil Defence" (1984) and Zwitschermaschine "Whirring Machine" (1983), will serve as the two bands for comparison. While both their influences and developments contrast to the American and British punk scenes they both elicit similar social progressions evidence such as greater individuality and protest movements.

GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA (1984-2008): THE EVOLUTION AND FORMATION OF SIBERIA'S HARDCORE SCENE

Grazhdanskaya Oborona was formed in 1984 by founding member and controversial frontman Egor Letov. Forming in Omsk, Siberia, Grazhdanskaya Oborona amassed a cult following which quickly grew beyond the Soviet Union. Due to their popularity Grazhdanskaya Oborona gained international recognition within the global punk community. Coupled with their evolving music style, hardcore/straight-edge aesthetic, and political lyrics Grazhdanskaya Oborona set the pace for Soviet Punk while manifesting as a target of government persecution.

Before solidifying their name as Grazhdanskaya Oborona they used three aliases: Posev "The Sowing", G.O., and GroB "Grave." Like many punk bands, the use

of aliases aided in staying underground, avoiding commercialization, and most importantly avoiding government monitoring. Posev was the name of Letov's solo act before friend and bandmate Konstantin (Kuzya UO) Ryabinov joined. They later changed the name to G.O. (short for Grazhdanskaya Oborona). However, after multiple scares with the government G.O. changed their name to GroB "Grave," the name of their apartment and D.I.Y. recording studio.

GroB would remain as their recording studio and alias. Grazhdanskaya Oborona in English translates to 'Civil Defence'. In both English and Russian the term civil defence connotes various meanings ranging from patronage to the state to the protection of civil liberties. The ambiguity and moldability of their name not only mirrors Grazhdanskaya Oborona's ability to transform their sound but also their creative use of official Soviet language. Civil Defence is an official Soviet term for the military program of protecting civilians during nuclear attack or natural disaster. The group's signature song "Everything Goes According to Plan" is another example of recycling official Soviet discourse.

Grazhdanskaya Oborona's presence in the music world lasted until Letov's death in 2008. Letov began his musical career barely a year out of high school, where he established a presence in the music scene with his solo project Posev in 1982. Letov then carried his solo project from Siberia to Moscow with the help of his brother, a prominent jazz musician. While in Moscow Letov established *blat* or connections with the growing underground music scene.⁷⁰ Letov returned to Omsk at the start of Yuri

⁷⁰ Blat was the process by which people attained status in educational and social circles. However, it also served as a means to garner tangible services such as food products, medicine, etc. In comparison to Crossley's hypothesis on punk community formation in the British punk scene, the use of blat in the Soviet Union could serve as a connecting device between musicians during the Soviet Punk era.

Andropov's 1983 anti-rock campaign. However, Letov lived in Siberia, where he enjoyed significantly more creative space than his musical counterparts in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Leningrad).

November 8, 1984 Konstantin Ryabinov and Letov formed Grazhdanskaya Oborona in Letov's apartment turned studio. Due to the acoustics of their apartment studio, Letov and Ryabinov fashioned a raw lo-fi sound⁷¹ that would further characterize their music. Throughout their first official year as Grazhdanskaya Oborona, Letov expanded to include: Natalia Chumakova, Alexander Chesnakov, Pavel Peretolchin, Yanka Dyagileva, Oleg Sudakov, and Ardushkia.⁷²

Grazhdanskaya Oborona's discography is split between official and unofficial releases. Their first unofficial release *Poganaia Molodezh* "Nasty Youth," appeared in 1985 on magnitizdat. However, music production of "Poganaia Molodezh" halted when the KGB obtained information on Letov's tape. Letov and Ryabinov were conscripted into military service. Learning of his fate, Letov allegedly wrote a suicide note, which prompted the KGB to send him to a psychiatric hospital instead.

After his forced hospital stay and Ryabinov's military service, Letov immediately upon arrival to Omsk, began recording in 1985. Due to the KGB forbidding the band to perform, Letov played each instrument separately in his 1985 recording of "Poganaia molodezh." Due to Letov's resolve the band reformed and added new members. Between 1985-87 Letov released 11 official albums and numerous unofficial albums. As

⁷¹ lo-fi refers to the distortion, background noise, or limited frequency response that accompany some sound recordings. Before lo-fi became a popular technique in the post-Punk era, low budget recording studios did not have high quality equipment to produce hi-fi sound, resulting in the lo-fi sound often attributed to punk recordings of the 1970s and 1980s

⁷² This is not an exhaustive list of Letov and his band members, due to the multiple variations in his band structure.

his music gained traction Letov narrowly escaped prosecution by the KGB by hitchhiking through the Siberian wilderness.

A year before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Grazhdanskaya Oborona performed their last show in Novosibirsk, where Letov famously announced that he no longer wanted to tour or make music because he did not want the band to become commercialized. Akin to the fears that stemmed from the first punk era, Grazhdanskaya Oborona broke up before they realized their 'commercial success.'

GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA'S INFLUENCES

Letov's myriad and often contradictory influences contribute to his controversial character. On Grazhdanskaya Oborona's website curated by the remaining members, they write, "Music in the beginning centered around punk-rock and post-punk with elements of garage influences, continuing throughout the work, by the end of the 1980s we evolved into avant-garde noise-rock with elements of hardrock, but by the end of the 1990s we moved to psychedelic rock and shoegaze."⁷³ More succinctly, the band infused their understanding of the subgenres into their music, helping them develop their unique sound.

In an interview with Evgenii from Kiev Letov lists bands that influenced their sound stating, "Pink Floyd's period of 66-69, perhaps is the best at that moment together with Tomorrow, Kaleidoscope, Deviants, Beatles, July, Pretty Things, Nirvana, The End,

⁷³ "Музыка на началь'ном этапе предсталила из себя панк-рок и пост-панк с силь'ным гражым влиянием, sokhraniaiushchimsia na proniazhenii vsego tvorchestva, k kontsu 1980-kh evoliutsioniprovala v avangradny noiz-pok s elementami khardrocka, a s 1990-x dvinulas' v storonu psikhodelicheskogo roka i shugeiza." "Конец наступает тогда, когда уничтожается живая энергия творчества," *The Official Site of Grazhdanskaya Oborona*, accessed September 27, 2016, <http://www.gr-oborona.ru/>.

Misunderstood, etc. "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn" and "A Saucerful of Secrets" in general one of the best albums in the history of rock music."⁷⁴ The psychedelia of the Pink Floyd era coupled with the emerging grunge of Nirvana showcase the wide range of his work.

Musical genres were not the only source of inspiration or influence for Letov. Various religious practices such as Russian Orthodoxy, Taoism, and other East Asian religions inspired Letov's work. Officially the Soviet Union ascribed to atheism, while Letov used a combination of early Russian Orthodoxy, Taoism, other East Asian religions and nihilism throughout his work. Golobov states, "More appealing to Russian punks proved to be a raw Russian Orthodoxy, full of doubts, challenges, and spiritual search."⁷⁵ Letov uses these varying religions as a conveyor for political subversion. A year before the fall of the Soviet Union, Grazhdanskaya Oborona produced an entire album containing political subversion through religion in an album entitled *Pryg-Skok* (Hop-Hop1990).⁷⁶

Grazhdanskaya Oborona's artistic and political progression evidences through their first unofficial album "Poganaia molodezh" and their later album, "Vse Idet Po Planu." While these albums superficially showcase the development of a youth punk

⁷⁴ "Pink Floyd периода 66-69, пожалуй, лучшая психоделическая группа Британии на тот момент вместе с Tomorrow, Kaleidoscope, Deviants, Beatles, July, Pretty Things, Nirvana, The End, Misunderstood и т. п. «The Piper at the Gates of Dawn» и «A Saucerful of Secrets» вообще одни из лучших пластинок в истории рока." *The Official Site of Grazhdanskaya Oborona*, accessed September 27, 2016, <http://www.gr-oborona.ru/>.

⁷⁵ Gololobov, Ivan. "There are no atheists in trenches under fire: orthodox Christianity in russian punk," *Punk & Post-Punk* 1, no. 3 (2012): 309. doi: 10.1386/punk1.3.305_1.

⁷⁶ Ivan Golobov in: "There are no atheists in trenches under fire: orthodox Christianity in russian punk" states, "This rupture was expressed through the collision of punk aggression and Christian love, seriousness and cynicism, the spirit of anarchy and the appeal to the authoritarian ideologies of Communism and Nationalism." Ivan Gololobov, "There are no atheists in trenches under fire: orthodox Christianity in russian punk," *Punk & Post-Punk* 1, no. 3 (2012): 313. doi: 10.1386/punk1.3.305_1.

band, they also showcase the undercurrent of the Washington D.C. hardcore/straight-edge scene and Soviet cultural inheritances. The following sections focus first on Grazhdanskaya Oborona's first album "Poganaia molodezh" and on their later "Vse Idet Po Planu." For each album I chose the title track for analysis, as the title track describes the main themes within the album. Additionally, I took each song and compared it to the hardcore/straight-edge scene as well as focusing on the specific Soviet and Russian cultural inheritances within the song.

POGANAIA MOLODEZH' 'NASTY YOUTH' (1985)

In 1985 Letov and Ryabinov released their first unofficial album *Poganaia molodezh'* through magnitizdat. The material used in *Poganaia molodezh* was originally allocated for Letov's first Posev album. Before Letov left for his forced hospital stay, the KGB ordered him to destroy the master copies. Unfortunately for the KGB the initial circulation of copies of *Poganaia Molodezh* spread among Posev's small listenership.

Poganaia Molodezh' consists of 15 songs, 7 on side A and 8 on side B, with the title track appearing fifth on the A-side. With a rapid tempo and juvenile aggression, "Poganaia molodezh" uses the recognizable stylistic characteristics of punk from the first wave hardcore/straight-edge scene in Washington D.C. As a whole the song consists of Letov's rapid talk-singing and shrill laughter set against a danceable rhythmic beat.

As "Poganaia molodezh" progresses Letov contorts the sound of the guitar into complete distortion. Although these are specific tonal references to the punk movement,

Letov further employs trademark punk stylistic structure through his use of call and response. Additionally, what anchors "Poganaia molodezh" to the canon of punk songs is that it barely hovers over two minutes. Beyond the tonal and structural references to the punk canon "Poganaia molodezh," as a text presents a critique against the idealized Soviet man and idealized utopian socialist future. In general punk texts use three broad narrative devices to critique the social and political environments.

Most punk critiques are based within the "good" versus "bad" dichotomy, where the target of critique manifest the "bad" and the individuals critiquing the regime as the "good." The target of critique are made fun of through derision, use of epithets, and or satire. Lastly, the listenership is called to act upon commands established throughout the body of the text. These commands are the tangible forms of protest that the punk movement uses to elicit socio-political change.

*"POGANAIA MOLODEZH" AND MINOR THREAT: THE SOVIETIZATION OF THE
HARDCORE/STRAIGHT-EDGE SOUND*

The song "Poganaia molodezh" indirectly mirrors the lyrical and stylistic structure of the hardcore/straight-edge band Minor Threat, further showcasing the impact of globalization and transferability of the punk movement as a reproducible transnational template. Letov based "Poganaia molodezh" by establishing the dichotomy between the "good Soviet Man" and the filthy youth. He then derides the Soviet regime and empowers his listeners to take action against the tepid regime. Letov sings,

*"Both day and night through the streets stagger the crowd - filthy youth
They puke port wine on respectable citizens - filthy youth*

*They break the windows and stick members - filthy youth
They scream hysterically - impossible to eat - filthy youth"*⁷⁷

Letov establishes a dichotomy between the "filthy youth" and the idealized version of the respectable "Soviet Man."⁷⁸ Letov uses the 'us versus them' dichotomy by referencing anti-Soviet actions exercised by the filthy youth. The filthy youth attack respectable members of Soviet society, break windows, and drink excessively, which could serve not only as a descriptive analysis of the social environment in the Soviet Union but also as a possible self-reference to Letov and his listenership.

The first stanza could also refer to the idea that the youth generation possess the power to break down traditional "good Soviet" behavior through anti-Soviet actions. Their acts of hooliganism could also represent the first stage of dissent as described by Havel in his essay, "The Power of the Powerless." Moreover, Letov sheds light on the social environment of the Soviet Union during the mid 1980s by referencing the rampant alcoholism and absenteeism of the late Soviet era. He later commands his listenership to action, singing,

*"Do not scare us,
We have nothing to lose,
And we do not care at all and grind!"*⁷⁹

Letov then de-legitimizes the Soviet state by referencing its lessening power to incite fear and by attacking the State sponsored notion of the idealized "socialist future."

⁷⁷ "Poganaia molodezh'," *Grazhdanskaya Oborona*, (1982).

⁷⁸ The archetype of the Soviet Man was produced by the Soviet government as the embodiment of communist and Soviet (Russian) values which included but not limited to leading a substance free life, being an active member of the communist party, and adhering to other tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

⁷⁹ "Poganaia molodezh'," *Grazhdanskaya Oborona*, (1982).

Letov's bold denouncement of the Soviet government's waning power not only addresses the waning power structure but also the political history of state oppression.⁸⁰ Furthermore, Letov acknowledges the universal sentiment of youth apathy for the future by attacking the notion of the "idealized Socialist future." He emphasizes this by stating that the youth generation has the autonomy to change their future. In his lyrics the youth generation transform into members of the civil defence, inciting that they should impose martial law and continue their punk actions against the state stating,

*"Let[s] impose martial law - filthy youth
Long live the Civil Defence - filthy youth
It is still becoming more punk - filthy youth
It is still becoming increasingly more - filthy youth"⁸¹*

Letov reverses the mythologized political slogan formerly used for the ruling political leaders of the Soviet Union on its head, by replacing it with his own party slogan, "long live the Civil Defence." This serves as a further de-legitimizing act while also signifying a transfer of power from the old (Soviet regime) to the young (youth) regime. This calls to mind Russia's history of transferring power structures during the initial days of the Soviet revolution.

However, *Grazhdanskaya Oborona* does not solely represent Soviet heritage in satire but also as reflective of the hardcore/straight-edge movement in Washington D.C., particularly through the band Minor Threat in their song "Screaming at a Wall." Mackaye sings,

⁸⁰ The history of mass political repression as an institution in Russian began Ivan the Terrible's creation of the *oprichnina* (secret police) during the 16th century.

⁸¹ "Poganaia Molodezh'," *Grazhdanskaya Oborona*, (1982).

*"I'm gonna knock it down,
Any way that I can,
I'm gonna scream, I'm gonna yell,
I don't want to have to use my hands,*

*You're safe inside and you know it,
'Cause I can't get to you,
And you know I resent it,
And my temper grows,*

*You better reinforce those walls,
Until you don't have no room to stand,
'Cause someday the bricks are gonna fall,
Someday I'm gonna use my hands"⁸²*

Minor Threat's lyrics almost stand in tandem to Grazhdanskaya Oborona's in that they both hit the aforementioned three points. What delineates Grazhdanskaya Oborona from being a direct parallel to Minor Threat and other hardcore/straight-edge bands is Letov's satirization of Russian and Soviet imperial history. Additionally, Letov commands his listenership to restructure the traditional societal norms of the "respectable Soviet Man" and revolt. Whether Grazhdanskaya Oborona directly used Minor Threat as an example is unclear, however, it does point to the ease with which the seven waves influenced international movements.

*SOVIET ICONOGRAPHY IN "VSE IDET PO PLANU" 'EVERYTHING GOES
ACCORDING TO PLAN"*

⁸² "Screaming at a Wall," *Minor Threat* (1982).

Grazhdanskaya Oborona's later album of unofficial release, "Vse Idet Po Planu" stands as a heavily politically charged album that directly satirizes the Soviet regime by attacking the cult of Vladimir Lenin, the five year plans, and stagnation of the late Brezhnev era. Letov additionally uses Soviet iconography to deride Soviet culture of any legitimate value. Letov emphasizes the satire of the Soviet system by concluding each stanza with the phrase "everything goes according to plan."

In "Vse Idet Po Planu" Letov stands as a stronger lyricist and composer. The piece begins with a fuzzy guitar and steady beat, echoing the effect of a march or procession. As the piece progresses the distortion steadily increases, fading intermittently throughout the song. After the long guitar solo ends, the song quickly descends into chaos as Letov takes on a harsh staccato tone, which he interjects with his maniacal laughter and screams. The later half of the song descends into chaos with the addition of garrulous laughter and distorted conversations. The increasing distortion builds as the distant conversations move to the foreground, accelerating in tempo and heightening with the addition of crashing metal objects. The song closes with Letov repeatedly whispering the word communism set against his shallow scream.

"Vse Idet Po Planu" is a harsher song, devoid of the danceability of their freshman album "Nasty Youth." Letov opens "Vse Idet Po Planu" by alluding to the broken social system which has corroded under the societal and political stresses of the late Soviet period. Letov remarks,

"And our father Lenin absolutely "asleep (fell asleep),"⁸³

⁸³ 'Usop' is a slang term that can either translate as heavy or bad sleep depending on the intended context.

*It has decayed on a mold and on white honey,
And reorganization everything goes and goes according to the plan,
And all dirt has turned into naked ice
And everything goes according to plan"⁸⁴*

"Vse Idet Po Planu" showcases as a satirical version of official state history and propaganda. Grazhdanskaya Oborona bases this by opening with a political and cultural reference to Vladimir Lenin, the harbinger of Soviet culture, politics, and values. He critiques the cult of Lenin by describing Lenin as asleep, which directly contrasts with the myth of the ever present and forever living Lenin.

Lenin is kept alive throughout official Soviet history through the mantra, "Lenin zhil, Lenin zhiv, Lenin budet zhit" (Lenin lived, Lenin lives, Lenin will live). Lenin was effectively mythologized as a sacred political and cultural icon and for Letov to critique that mythology shows his commitment to exposing elements of the outmoded political culture and possibly, the waning relevance of early Soviet history. Letov shifts the narrative, focusing generally on political corruption within the late Soviet era through the metaphor "it has decayed on mold and on white honey," where Letov links mold to corruption.

He then references and satirizes the five year plans⁸⁵ and various other reorganizations of the state that served more as a facade for tangible political change, than as meaningful change. He contextualizes the facade of political change by ending each stanza with "i vse idet po planu" (and everything goes according to plan). Like the cult of Lenin, the implementation of the five year plans and reorganization proposals were pivotal and mythologized events within Soviet history, as these plans helped

⁸⁴ "Vse Idet Po Planu," Grazhdanskaya Oborona, (1988).

⁸⁵ The Soviet government's five year plans set goals for production and consumption in the USSE from 1928 till 1991. The First Five Year Plan was announced by Iosif Stalin on October 1st 1928.

create and industrialize the state. However, they also served as a tumultuous period wrought in shortages and reforms. To criticize this aspect of Soviet history is akin to criticizing the cult of Lenin, as these two are central to the development of Soviet history and the Soviet Union. To further steep the text in Soviet iconography, Letov peppers the remaining stanzas with cultural icons and references such as the sickle and hammer and star, singing,

*"But on a peak-cap on mine a sickle and a hammer and a star,
As it is touching - a sickle and a hammer and a star...
Only one grandfather Lenin good was a leader...
And under communism everything will be fucking great"⁸⁶*

Unlike "Pogonia Molodezh," which almost directly reflects the Washington D.C. hardcore/straight-edge scene, "Vse Idet Po Planu" (Everything Goes According to Plan) presents as a more nuanced satirical and critical view on Soviet political culture while still maintaining the tonal elements of distortion and explicit staccato of the hardcore/straight-edge scene.

GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA'S LIVE PERFORMANCES

Live performances showcase the band's aesthetic and serve as a place for the punk community to congregate. Additionally, live performances function as a reproducible text from which the audience can copy. One of the earliest recordings of Letov's live performances feature him in an all-black ensemble complete with a jacket clad in safety pins and other sharp metal objects. Here again the influence of American and British punk culture exudes throughout Letov and Grazhdanskaya Oborona's early

⁸⁶ "Vse Idet Po Planu," Grazhdanskaya Oborona, (1988).

punk aesthetic. Golobov and Steinholt state, "They felt no inhibition in expressing this attitude in their songs, behaviour and dress style. They took jeans and leather jackets as their marker of style and decorated them with painted anarchist symbols, safety-pins, toilet chains or razor blades, cultivating an appearance based on shock aesthetics."⁸⁷

Throughout the performance of unknown origin⁸⁸ Letov commands the stage by screaming and dancing on stage, echoing the aggressive performance style of hardcore/straight-edge bands such as Black Flag, who pioneered the aggressive performance style. During the performance, the lyrics are jumpy and almost incoherent. However, the point of many punk performances does not solely fixate on the music but on the community and performance as a whole.

ZWITSCHERMASCHINE (1979-1983): AVANTGARDE PUNK IN DRESDEN AND EAST BERLIN

"Life only existed for the movement-there was no future in the country that I was imprisoned in...this shared sentiment bound and interlocked the various characters in a real community."⁸⁹

THE FORMATION OF ZWITSCHERMASCHINE

One of the first punk bands to make an indelible mark on the Ostrock scene emerged in Dresden. Relatively far from the East Berlin scene, Zwitschermaschine

⁸⁷ Ivan Golobov, "Punk in Russia: Cultural Mutation from the "Useless" to the "Moronic," (2014): 28, doi, http://www.academia.edu/3455928/Punk_in_Russia_Cultural_Mutation_from_the_Useless_to_the_Moronic.

⁸⁸ Video footage of Letov performing may come from the late 1980s, however no locational or date information is attributed to the fan-shot video.

⁸⁹ Cornelia Schleime, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke. 190. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005).

(Whirring Machine) appeared in 1979 stemming from two graduate students of the Dresden Art School, Cornelia Schleime and Ralf Kerbach.

During their nascent stages at the Dresden Art School Schleime and Kerbach frequently switched names of their group, a tactic the band used during the Punk Problem of 1983. Starting out as Schwarz/Weiss (Black/White) and changing to Ende (End). Before moving from Dresden to East Berlin, Schleime and Kerbach finally agreed on the name Vierte Wurzel aus Zwitschermaschine, (The Fourth Root from the Whirring Machine) or Zwitschermaschine for short. Zwitschermaschine like previous punk bands were not classically trained musicians. In an interview with Schleime, she mentions her and Kerbach's intentions during the early formation of the band stating,

"Kerbach taught himself the guitar, progressing unbelievably fast, searching for sound structures resembling breaking ice. My voice had a low tone to it, making me sound like an old diesel engine. After provisionally sketching out what we wanted to do, we approached Zeidler - a friend of Kerbach- and talked him into learning to play the bass. Kerbach bought some sheet music at a book store to give Zeidler an idea of what he was supposed to do" (179).

Schleime then recalls the influence from the Krautrock scene and English punk bands stating, "Those in the band who could play came from a traditional rock background which led to constant quarrels because we thought them too mired in cliches and too perfect-both things we tried to avoid. This was why we frequently changed drummers. Mica Rom became our second singer. Our songs influenced by Can⁹⁰ and The Stranglers."⁹¹ Schleime states that perfection and the traditional rock

⁹⁰ Ulrich Adelt in: "Machines with a Heart: German Identity in the Music of Can and Kraftwerk" states, "Can was formed in 1968 in Cologne and belonged to the group of early Krautrock pioneers...At its core an instrumental outfit, the band worked with different singers over the years. The four steady members of Can, with the possible exception of guitarist Michael Karoli, were no traditional rock musicians". Ulrich

sound were unwanted and moreover, manifest as the antithesis to Schleime and Kerbach's understanding of the punk movement.⁹²

Zwitschermachine's influences stem from the individual band members rather than as the band collectively, making an esoteric amalgamation of musical influences. Schleime emphasizes their approach to music composition by stating, "Our aim was to irritate and to drift off into a world no longer interested in understanding. We didn't want to be there for anyone-apart from ourselves. Each singer wrote their own lyrics reflecting our lack of expectations in a bizarre and melancholic manner."⁹³

The amalgamation of varying influences makes Zwitschermaschine's music cacaphonic and further underscores the movement away from traditional rock sound and structure. More importantly, the valuation Zwitschermaschine places on drifting and irritating relates to the German theatrical tradition of *Epische Theatre* presupposed by Bertolt Brecht in the early 20th century. While Zwitschermaschine heavily uses this and other aspects within the German cultural tradition, they also express a subdued political message,⁹⁴ which is atypical for both the Ostrock scene and punk movement in general.

Zwitschermaschine expanded outside of the Dresden Art School to include a foundational member of the Prenzlauer Berg literary and punk scene, Sascha Anderson. The inclusion of Anderson drastically altered group dynamics, affecting the

Adelt, "Machines with a Heart: German Identity in the Music of Can and Kraftwerk," *Popular Music and Society* 35, no. 3 (2012): 363.

⁹¹Cornelia Schleime, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke. 179. (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005).

⁹² Kerbach and Schleime's understanding of the movement exemplify the aforementioned problems in assigning each international movement with the word "punk," as each movement's leaders have differing connotations of what being a punk and what punk means to them.

⁹³Cornelia Schleime, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 181.

⁹⁴ During the movement most punk bands exuded a clear political stance, however, Zwitschermaschine did not focus on performing outright politically charged songs. This could be a side effect of their secondary leader, Sascha Anderson's position within the Ministry for State Security.

overall artistic and aesthetic trajectory of the band. Schleime contends, "Our appearance changed too. Anderson appeared on stage with wild hair and worn out jeans-as if the bum look was still in fashion. Micah and me tried to balance this out and dressed up...our appearance became more programmatic and lost its unconscious attitude."⁹⁵ Anderson holds a contentious position within Zwitschermaschine as he worked extensively with the Stasi as an *Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter* or informant for the Ministry of State Security.⁹⁶

Anderson soon controlled the production of music, taking Schleime's position of leader until their disbandment in 1983. Anderson, after establishing himself as leader moved the band to the East Berlin community of Prenzlauer Berg, where they gained recognition within Anderson's circle. During their East Berlin residency Micha Rom and other members left, citing artistic differences and Anderson's oppressive attitude. Before their split Zwitschermaschine recorded, produced, and circulated the first Ostrock LP, entitled, *DDR von Unten/eNDe* (East Germany from Under/End) in West Germany.

Unlike Grazhdanskaya Oborona, Zwitschermaschine produced only one LP and lasted under three years before their breakup in 1983. Although their time was short, they still managed to have a huge impact on the Ostrock scene and more importantly exposed the international punk community to the Ostrock scene. Additionally, Zwitschermaschine presents as an example of government infiltration within the Ostrock

⁹⁵Cornelia Schleime, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 181.

⁹⁶ Sascha Anderson in an interview with Iris Radisch states, "Mein erstes Treffen mit der Stasi hat stattgefunden...das muss 1972 oder 1973 gewesen sein, Ich war gerade zwanzig und kurz vor dem Ende meiner Lehre als Schriftsetzer" (My first meeting with the Stasi started...it must have been 1972 or 1973, I was around twenty and was soon at the end of my position as writer). Sascha Anderson, interview by Iris Radisch, "Das ist nicht so einfach: Ein Zeit Gespräch mit Sascha Anderson," *Die Zeit* (Hamburg, Germany), November 1, 1991.

scene. While Grahdanskaya Oborona dealt with clear political oppression, Zwitschermaschine exemplifies a band that dealt with heavy government interference, yet still managed to push the "No Future" agenda toward other Ostrock bands and wider international punk community.

ZWITSCHERMASCHINE AND BERTOLT BRECHT: THE CONTINUING TRADITION OF VERFREMDUNG AND EPISCHE THEATRE

Schleime emphasized the need for Zwitschermaschine to "irritate and drift off into a world no longer interested in understanding." Despite Schleime's esoteric definition and Zwitschermaschine's incorporation of bands such as Can and The Stranglers, their varied style and commitment to crafting a new style of punk anchors their ethos in tenets espoused by Bertolt Brecht.⁹⁷ "Geh Über die Grenze" and "Alles Oder Nichts und Noch Viel Mehr," two singles from *DDR von Unten/eNDe* exemplify Brecht's *Verfremdung* (Estrangement) and *Epische Theatre* (Epic Theatre)⁹⁸ as well as showcasing the foundational influences from the Krautrock and the British punk scene.

Broadly, Brecht's theory of Epic theatre describes the process in which a theatrical, musical, or artistic event awakens the political consciousness of the spectator. Walter Benjamin, states, "Epic theatre, by contrast, incessantly derives a lively and productive consciousness from the fact that it is theatre. This consciousness

⁹⁷ Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), a prominent German playwright, director, and outspoken Marxist developed a theory and practice called Epische Theatre "Epic Theatre" where the theatre becomes a space for political ideas, aesthetic theory, and dialectical materialism.

⁹⁸ Siegfried Mews in: *A Bertolt Brecht Reference Companion* writes, "The adjective "epic" in Brecht's usage...has very little to do with a lofty heroic epic; what it normally refers to is the narrative genre as such "Epic" (episch) is then more or less synonymous with the adjective "narrative," whether in verse or in prose." Siegfried Mews, *A Bertolt Brecht Reference Companion*, ed. Siegfried Mews. (California: Greenwood Press, 1997) 40.

enables it to treat elements of reality as though it were setting up an experiment, with the ‚conditions‘ at the end of the experiment, not at the beginning. Thus they are not brought closer to the spectator but distanced from him.“⁹⁹

Just as *Grazhdanskaya Oborona* heavily incorporated aspects of Russian and Soviet cultural and political history, *Zwitschermaschine* incorporated German cultural elements and made reference to specific German political events such as the construction of the Berlin Wall. Critiquing or referencing the Berlin Wall in a negative light does not solely critique the Berlin Wall but what the Berlin Wall represented for the SED government. According to the SED the Berlin Wall functioned as protection from "Western Fascism," further underscoring the SED's commitment to protecting and fostering cohesive German socialist culture.¹⁰⁰

"GEH ÜBER DIE GRENZE": AN INCORPORATION OF KRAUTROCK PSYCHEDELIA AND ESTRANGEMENT THEORY

Appearing on the A-side of *DDR von Unten/eNDe*, "Geh Über die Grenze" delivers an extremely low-fidelity sound, characteristic of punk productions during the early 1980s. Without a discernible danceable beat "Geh Über die Grenze" borrows the

⁹⁹ Walter Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht* (New Edition), trans. Anna Bostock (Verso, 2003), 4.

¹⁰⁰ The official name of the Berlin Wall was the *Antifascistische Schutzmauer* (Anti-Fascist Protection Wall). Before changing their name to Planlos, the East German band called themselves Antifascistische Schutzmauer, but eventually were forced to change their name because of threats from the SED regime.

atmospheric psychedelia of early Krautrock bands such as Can by emphasizing changing vocalization and instrumentation. Can heavily influenced Zwitschermaschine and like Zwitschermaschine, Can used the idea of collective influences from their group members in the development of their sound. Aldert states,

"Already on their first album, Can worked with their concept of what Irmin Schmidt called "spontaneous or collective composition" (rather than "improvisation"), creating songs on the spot but giving them a clear structure and remixing them and adding overdubs later. Because the overall sound of the group was more important than its individual parts, Holger Czukay called Can an "orchestra" rather than a "band" and compared their musical approach to passing the ball in soccer"¹⁰¹.

The esoteric nature by which Zwitschermaschine composed their music is evidenced clearly throughout "Geh Über die Grenze." Despite their direct influence from Can, Zwitschermaschine's adoption of tonal structures from a West German band speak to the band's emphasis on deriving and building from German cultural phenomena. This reiterates the idea that as the punk movement traveled, regions imposed their own culture onto the movement, making it their own.

Although based off of West German music culture, "Geh Über die Grenze" also accurately uses the Brechtian technique of interruptions. Interruptions or the changes in action through "freezing" or "halting" the progression of action aids in the process of estrangement and thus the social and political awakening of the spectator.¹⁰²

Zwitschermaschine employs the use of interruptions through odd instrumentation,

¹⁰¹ Ulrich Adelt, "Machines with a Heart: German Identity in the Music of Can and Kraftwerk," *Popular Music and Society* 35, no. 3 (2012): 364. Irmin Schmidt and Holger Czukay from TV documentary *Kraut und Rieben*

¹⁰² Walter Benjamin in: *Understanding Brecht* adds, "This uncovering of the conditions is effected by interrupting the dramatic processes; but such interruption does not act as a stimulant; it has an organizing function. It brings the action to a standstill in mid-course and thereby compels the spectator to take up a position towards the action, and the actor to take up a position towards his part." Walter Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht* (New Edition), trans. Anna Bostock (Verso, 2003), 100.

jarring vocalization, and other distancing musical effects which disrupt traditional song structure. Through these interruptions, the listenership of Zwitschermaschine awakens their political consciousness and further initiates processes of dissent (refer to appendix entry 2 on Havel and "The Power of the Powerless").

"Geh Über die Grenze" begins with an eerie xylophone layered on top a heavily distorted guitar chord that straddles the line between music and cacophony. The artificial sounding tone is soon thrown off with the addition of drum, bass, wind instruments, and sound of a yelping dog. As the song progresses, the piece rapidly devolves into the avant-garde with the addition of lyrics which echo, fade in and out, and are overshadowed by the complex instrumentation.

The inclusion of the yelping dog is the first "interruption" signaling to the listener a change in developing action within the song. The second and equally jarring interruption occurs with the added layer of a heavy staccato guitar chord, which almost mimics and makes fun of a traditional drum beat. Each of these elements function as a means to shock the listener, bring attention to non-traditional song structure, and awaken the political consciousness of the listener.

Zwitschermaschine also employs Brecht's interruptions through their political charged stanzas which repeat throughout the entirety of the song. Starting in the middle of the piece, members of Zwitschermaschine repeatedly sing, "Geh Über die Grenze, auf der anderen Seite steht ein Mann an der andere Seite"¹⁰³ ("Go over the border, on the other side a man stands, on the other side") in varying sentence constructions. With each additional sound element, the stanzas tangentially change. The lyrics stand as a

¹⁰³ "Geh Über die Grenze," Zwitschermaschine, 1983.

clear critique of the Berlin Wall, the mirroring and screaming effect may also underscore the attitude towards the wall.

New music movements such as the punk movement were given a heavily politicized view from the government. Although "Geh Über die Grenze" does not explicitly criticize the government the avant-garde nature of the song politicizes the song itself due to it being a punk song with foundational influence from West Germany. Listening to or engaging with music such as Zwitschermaschine's was directly tied to breaking the "socialist national culture." Each of these founding elements in Zwitschermaschine's music, due to it being outside of approved Socialist culture, makes the listener engage with the anti-Socialist culture and behavior the SED disapproved of and fought against.

Engaging in these activities was directly associated with the "fascist West." Georg Maas and Hartmut Reszel state, "For example, when rock 'n' roll emerged in the mid-1950s it was banned in the GDR because of its American origin" it was the era of the 'cold war' and East German politicians were in search of a socialist national culture, on which could articulate an "*antifaschistische-demokratische Erneuerung*" (anti-Fascist-democratic renewal).¹⁰⁴ Just as the Soviet government deemed listening to Western music as decadent, the SED government linked music outside of the pre-approved cannon as fascist western music. Listening to Zwitschermaschine was thus a direct political act against the state.

¹⁰⁴ Georg Maas and Hartmut Reszel, "Whatever Happened to...: The Decline and Renaissance of Rock in the Former GDR," *Popular Music* 17, no. 3 (1998): 267.

*"ALLES ODER NICHTS UND NOCH VIEL MEHR": ZWITSCHERMASCHINE'S
INCORPORATION OF BRECHT AND THE FOUNDATIONAL BRITISH PUNK SCENE*

Zwitschermaschine's second song, "Alles Oder Nichts Und Noch Viel Mehr" (All or Nothing and Much More) presents as a more "traditional" punk text with its incorporation of elements from the British punk scene. However, it still adheres to the jarring instrumentation and vocalization characteristic of the band. Although the start of "Alles Oder Nichts Und Noch Viel Mehr" begins with the traditional structure of vocalization, prominent guitar chord, and steady drum beat, Zwitschermaschine again incorporates repetition and jarring lyrics which both complement and clash with one another.

Through their use of jarring lyrics and repetition, Zwitschermaschine employs the second concept of Brechtian theory, defined as "the pedagogical tools for revolution."¹⁰⁵ In Brechtian theory the use of pedagogy through artistic productions serve as a second channel for political awakening of the listener or spectator. The pedagogical tools for revolution come in tandem to the use of "interruptions" as a further means to educate and awaken the listener and spectator. Zwitschermaschine implements Brecht's notion of pedagogical tools through repeating the two stanzas, "alles oder nichts und noch viel mehr" (All or nothing or much more) and "blut und zucker und noch viel mehr" (blood

¹⁰⁵ Freddie Rokem in "The Aesthetics of Learning: Bertolt Brecht's Die Ausnahme und die Regel (The Exception and the Rule)" states, "Learning and pedagogy are for Brecht also a form of interaction with the world that is *revolutionary*, both in the sense of contemplating a particular phenomenon from constantly changing perspectives moving „around“ it, but also by changing the world itself thorough revolutionary social change, which as Brecht's Galileo also argues, is based not on new forms of knowledge he propagates for." Freddie Rokem, "The Aesthetics of Learning: Bertolt Brecht's Die Ausnahme und die Regel (The Exception and the Rule)," *Theatre Topics* 25 no. 1 (2015): 57.

and sugar and much more). The base of the song firmly stands within a "traditional" song structure, as it starts with a simple guitar chord, drum beat, and vocalization.

Knowing one of the main goals of Zwitschermaschine is to subvert the traditional punk structure, their use of a traditional song structure creates a meta-analysis of the Ostrock scene and wider punk movement as well as a critique on the political status quo. The punk movement started as a subversion of the traditional rock structure and as a political platform to critique status quo powers. However, as subversion established as the norm, some movements became self-referential. The increasing self-referentiality contributed to the downward mobility and waning usefulness of subversion as a tool for political and societal critique. This then created tension and growing exclusivity in some areas of the movement, creating what Zwitschermaschine noticed in the 1980s as "atomized" group structure.¹⁰⁶

However, their use of traditional sound structures is not solely limited to a critique of the self-referential Ostrock scene but also as a form to deride political structure. Unlike Grahdanskaya Oborona's direct derision of Soviet political structure, Zwitschermaschine derides the SED regime indirectly through undermining the traditional sound structure with inane and nonsensical lyrics. The repeated lyrics, "alles oder nichts und noch viel mehr" ("all or nothing or much more") and "blut und zucker und noch viel mehr" ("blood and sugar and much more") function more as a rhythmic than narrative device.

Zwitschermaschine's use of nonsensical and inane lyrics borrows from the tenets of the early British punk bands, who did not focus on developing insightful lyrics or a set

¹⁰⁶ Cornelia Schleime, interview by Bodo Mrozek, *Ostpunk!: too much future : Punk in der DDR 1979-1989*, ed. Michael Boehlke (Berlin: Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2005), 190.

political ideology. Although the punk movement was undoubtedly a political movement, a majority of the bands starting out did not focus their energy on politics. Brian Cogan contends, "Still, it is unclear to what extent major bands such as The Clash and Sex Pistols actually believed in the political statements they were making."¹⁰⁷ Although Cogan uses the example of anarchism, the anti-Socialist ideology associated with the "No Future" campaign can serve as the ideological background Zwitschermaschine believed in. However, this does not mean that Zwitschermaschine's political intentions are clear, as they did not explicitly advocate for a certain ideology like the first wave English punk bands mentioned above. Despite the ambiguity, the meaningless lyrics could represent the general anxiety towards a listless "No Future" East Germany.

Zwitschermaschine brought the Ostrock scene to the Western world, and furthermore, showcases how the punk movement changes with the social and political environment of the region. Seth Howes states, "Zwitschermaschine's contribution to DDR von Unten/eNDe was therefore configured much more like protopunk, punk, and postpunk releases by Cleveland's Pere Ubu, Essex (UK)'s Crass, or New York's James Chance and the Contortions, than the stripped down raw punk SchleimKeim offered on the flip side."¹⁰⁸ Zwitschermaschine's music is both complex and simple, borrowing from the West German Krautrock scene and foundational British punk scene as well as the German dramaturgical theories of Brecht.

CHAPTER 4

¹⁰⁷ Brian Cogan, "Do They Owe Us a Living? Of Course They Do!" Crass, Throbbing Gristle, and Anarchy and Radicalism in Early English Punk Rock," *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 1, no. 2 (2007): 78-79.

¹⁰⁸ Seth Howes, "Killersatellit" and Randerscheinung: Punk and the Prenzlauer Berg," *German Studies Review* 36 no. 3 (2013): 585.

THE PUNK MOVEMENT AS TABULA RASA

"Over 25 years after the original punk summer of 1977, punk continues to attract a considerable following. Many of those who follow punk today were first attracted to punk music during the late 1970s and have remained fans ever since"¹⁰⁹

The punk movement of the 1970s and 1980s served as a rallying cry for youth generations and marginalized groups. Stemming first from the parent movements in the United States and United Kingdom, the movement quickly spread beyond these borders to Africa, Asia, and the Soviet controlled territories of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union, effectively manifesting as an international movement. However, the movement did not solely concentrate on the development of a more inclusive socio-political frontier, but also a complete revolution of music and the music industry.

Individuals within the punk movement wanted to change how music was produced, consumed, and analyzed. Dawson Barrett states, "Punk, at its core is a form of direct action. Instead of petitioning the powerful for inclusion, the movement has built its own elaborate network of counter-institutions, including music venues, media, record labels, and distributors."¹¹⁰ These individuals often had little to no professional music training and formed their own recording studios and independent record labels. This "Do-It-Yourself" attitude, bred through the movement further eschewing the notions of the antiquated music tradition.

As the movement progressed, fragmentation occurred allowing far-right leaning groups, such as Neo-Nazis and various other political extremists into the movement.

¹⁰⁹ Andy Bennett, "Punk's Not Dead: The Continuing Significance of Punk Rock for an Older Generation of Fans," *Sociology* 40, no. 2 (2006): 219.

¹¹⁰ Dawson Barrett, "DIY Democracy: The Direct Action Politics of U.S. Punk Collectives," *American Studies* 52 no. 2 (2013): 23-24.

These political extremists co-opted some of the masculine aesthetics and harsh sound of the hardcore/straight-edge movement. Barrett further states, "When punk emerged in the mid-1970s, it quickly became a subject of interest to activists and scholars who saw in it the potential seeds of a new social movement. While the former, including both the neo-fascist National Front and the Socialist Workers Party sought inroads for youth recruitment."¹¹¹ At the same time, drug use and general civil disobedience overtook the face of the movement, creating the perception of an illegitimate and unviable platform for societal and political change.

Speaking to the growing fragmentation of the later punk movement, some participants alluded to dissatisfaction in the movement. One participant in an interview with Perry Grossman, exclaims, "Punk drew lines! It divided the young from the old, the rich from the poor, then the young from the young, the old from the old, the rich from the rich, the poor from the poor, rock and roll from rock and roll."¹¹² However, the increasing downward mobility and fragmentation of the movement did not hinder the development of the movement internationally. Its significance as a mass cultural icon can be seen today, well after the original movement's end in the late 1980s.

AFTER THE 1980s: PUNK'S LEGACY AND REDEFINING THE DIALECTS OF THE MOVEMENT

¹¹¹ Dawson Barrett, "DIY Democracy: The Direct Action Politics of U.S. Punk Collectives," *American Studies* 52 no. 2 (2013): 23-24.

¹¹² Perry Grossman, "Identity Crisis: The Dialectics of Rock, Punk, and Grunge," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 41 (1996-1997): 20.

The punk movement officially ended in the late 1980s, with the arrival of a new music genre, "positive-punk," commonly referred to as goth or post-punk. The international movement came to a halt as these new music genres and subgenres took precedence. While stemming from the punk movement this newer movement focused more on sound than on the punk principals of the 1970s and early 1980s. Positive punk emphasized more distortion, heavier use of electronic mediums, and slower tempo.

However, as the original punk movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s faded from view, genres such as rap, hip-hop, and house, among various other genres started to use the tenets of the punk movement. In the "death" of the movement came a more inclusive definition of what it meant to be punk. Punk grew to not only define a genre, but to also denote the practices of musicians and artists whose work strove to break tradition. Although the movement became more inclusive and universal, the traditional "rock" punk movement still existed. Modern exemplars of the movement include but are not limited to Perfect Pussy (United States, Riot GRRRL), Dregs (United Kingdom, hardcore/straight-edge queercore), Diät (Germany, post-punk), and Leningrad (Russia, pop-punk). Punk continues to assert its dominance in the music and political scene of the modern era. De Gallier states,

"Punk has always been a genre of dissent. Its early days were characterized by grand, anti-establishment statements that have achieved almost meme-like ubiquity when it comes to the written history of the genre, from the Sex Pistols' cries of "I am an anarchist!" to the Dead Kennedys' barred satire. But as the political climate across the globe has changed for the worse, so too has punk adapted, with more modern DIY punk bands approaching social issues with a noticeable softer perspective."¹¹³

¹¹³ Thea de Gallier, "How punk became personal: through the genre is known for its aggressive energy, a new generation of DIY artists are channeling their anger away from nihilism into something more inclusive and emphatic," *Dazed & Confused Magazine* (London, United Kingdom), March 10, 2017. <http://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/35035/1/how-punk-became-personal>.

Despite the official end of the Soviet Punk and Ostrock scenes, as well as the countries themselves, a legacy of social revolution through the punk tradition continued. In recent years, punk groups such as Russia's Pussy Riot took the Russian and wider global political community by storm. Behind household names such as Pussy Riot stands a larger Russian punk movement that encapsulates both the modern political environment and Russian cultural history. In an interview with Jenya from Russian avant-garde punk band Glintshake states,

"The energy of Russian avant-garde is the fuel which gets the blood pumping in our songs. We use different techniques and less obvious musical references; our work does look back to the 20s and 30s, but it also mixes funk, punk rock, and some bits of mass culture...In the catastrophic political context of today, we often perceive art as our last and only hope...Revolutionary art from a hundred years ago could help us break the vicious circle - or at least teach us some new songs to sing."¹¹⁴

Germany also continued the punk tradition, albeit in a form different from the traditional "rock" sound. Following the electronic heavy Krautrock genre of former West Germany, the techno scene emerged in reunified Germany. Although the techno scene constituted a completely different musical sound, the genre held fast to the D.I.Y. punk tenets of the original era. In an interview with D.I.Y. punk techno collective, Money \$ex Crew the leader under the alias of Twit One states, "The focus is simple. It's about music, that you like. Without labels on genres or names."¹¹⁵ Although not specifically

¹¹⁴ Anastasiia Fedorova, "The avant-garde punk band shaking up moscow's music scene: Meet Glintshake, as they paint a vivid soundscape using the bold colours of Russian avant-garde," *i-D Vice* (London, United Kingdom), 4 January 2017. https://i-d.vice.com/en_gb/article/the-avant-garde-punk-band-shaking-up-moscows-music-scene.

¹¹⁵ Twit One in an interview with Philipp Kutter states, "Der Fokus ist simpel: Es geht um Musik, die ihnen gefällt. Ohne Beschränkungen auf Genres oder Namen." Philipp Kutter, "Warum dir die neue Money \$ex

stated, the Money \$ex Crew continues the punk tenets while also infusing German techno into their movement. The international punk movement is both a barometer for social and political changes as well as a tabula rasa. With every new iteration comes a reflection of a region's cultural inheritances and political environment; serving as a transnational movement devoid of derivational movements and critiques.

NECESSITY FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT: WHY THE SOCIALIST PUNK

SCENE MATTERS

"Soviet punk arrived as both a provocation and a call-to-arms... One minute you're a straight-backed Young Pioneer, spooning down whatever music Melodia (the USSR's sole, government-run, record label) deemed toothless enough for mass-consumption-Italian love songs, life-affirming Soviet ballads... the next you are head-banging to ditties like "Old Age - No Joy", "Corpse Smell," and "Hey Broad, Throw Up." Years before Gorbachev took the podium at the 1986 Congress of the Communist Party and uttered the word "glasnost," musical Perestroika had already begun."¹¹⁶

The emergence of punk communities in the Soviet Union and East Germany spoke not only to the mass popularity and transmission of western musical phenomena but also to the power of political opposition in the Soviet and East German youth generations. Punk communities in the Soviet Union and East Germany gave Soviet youth a space to voice their opinions on political matters, and engage in political discourse. Involvement in politics was notoriously hard, due to the exclusivity of the political realm and the swift silencing of those who were perceived as working against

Records Platte schmecken wird," *Thump Vice* (New York, New York) April 11, 2017. <https://thump.vice.com/de/article/money-sex-records-twit-one-7-inch-stream-slipmat-contest>.

¹¹⁶ "Allowed for Performance: Punk and Rebellion in 1980s Siberia," *Noisey Vice* (New York, New York) April 6, 2015. https://noisey.vice.com/en_us/article/siberian-punk-scene-in-the-1980s.

the state. Even in the face of repression the Soviet and East German youth generations led the beginnings of societal perestroika.

It moreover showcased that these two regions, considered to be closed off from Western phenomena such as the punk movement, created a unique amalgamation of Soviet and Western punk. The Soviet and East German youth generations used the tenets of the foundational Western punk movement to create the Soviet Punk and Ostrock movements. In both Soviet regions, punk spread exogenously and endogenously through exposure to Western media, globalization, and the propagation of punk texts through samizdat and magnitizdat.

While some scholars praise the punk movement for its accessibility, some see the movement in international regions such as the Eastern bloc as derivative; this stands far from the truth, as both the Soviet Union and East Germany fashioned unique movements with their own nomenclature. The Soviet Union's Soviet Punk movement focused on using Soviet cultural history and directly attacking the late Soviet era, while the East German Ostrock movement focused on using German cultural aesthetics and propagating the anti-Socialist "No Future" campaign. These examples alone point to the fact that both the Soviet Union and East Germany crafted unique and non-derivational movements.

Two foundational bands within the Soviet Punk and Ostrock movements, Grazhdanskaya Oborona and Zwitschermaschine rose to prominence in their respective regions, contributing heavily to the international movement, while also bringing awareness to the punk movement's development in Soviet communities.

Appendix

1. In Karl Marx's "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844," Marx states, "indeed, work itself becomes a thing of which he can take possession only with the greatest effort and with the most unpredictable interruptions. So much does

the appropriation of the object as alienation that the more objects the worker produces, the fewer he can own and the more he falls under the domination of his product, of capital." This idea of breaking free from appropriation and alienating the worker leads to a general concept that Marx calls, "seizing the means of production," a phenomenon that exists through the adherence to D.I.Y. culture in the punk scene. Karl Marx, "Alienated Labor," *Marx: Selected Writings*, (Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), 60.

2. In Vaclav Havel's "The Power of the Powerless," Havel states, "In this revolt the greengrocer steps out of living within the lie. He rejects the ritual and breaks the rules of the game. He discovers once more his suppressed identity and dignity. He gives his freedom a concrete significance. His revolt is an attempt to *live within the truth*." Havel hypothesizes that a social revolution can take place when individuals under Soviet systems break free from the system. Living within the truth functions as a necessary first step for social revolution. Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," in *The Power of the Powerless*, 1985, ed. John Keane (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1985), 39.

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