

Music as a Weapon? *Ton Steine Scherben* and the Politics of Rock in Cold War Berlin

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Is popular music a tool of consumer capitalist recuperation or can it be a weapon of revolutionary change? The career of the radical rock band *Ton Steine Scherben*, founded in West Berlin in 1970, suggests that at certain moments, radical music and radical politics can be mutually constitutive. The band's history provides a richer understanding of the radical left-wing scene in West Berlin at a key moment of transition from the student movement of the 1960s to the anarchist and terrorist scenes of the 1970s, illustrating how an analysis of popular music in its social and cultural setting can broaden historical analysis.

Popular Music as an Historiographical Problem

The scholarly study of popular music—and of the connection between popular music and social movements—has received rather less attention than its importance merits. In one area in which popular music is generally acknowledged to have played an important role—the “sixties”—scholarly investigation often begins and ends with the observation that sweeping social changes were reflected in, and somehow connected to, the rising popularity of rock music. Further investigation is urgently needed, for not only does history often lag behind other disciplines in attempting to understand the nature and importance of popular media, above all popular music, but the protest movements of the 1960s and after—themselves the focus of a rising tide of scholarly interest—are unintelligible without a more sophisticated understanding of the interdependence of the political and the cultural in general, and of the role of popular music in particular. So far, the bulk of the work on the socio-cultural content of popular music has fallen to scholars working in cultural and media studies, disciplines that, along with musicology, have fueled the rise of popular music studies as a discrete field.¹ Each has produced valuable insights easily adapted for use by historians.² In the Anglophone literature, beginning with the work of the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies in the 1960s, the focus has been on uncovering modes of cultural resistance in the music- and style-based youth subcultures of the postwar period.³ More recently, themes of Americanization, cultural globalization, and local appropriation have come to the fore.⁴ In the German literature, popular music has been treated somewhat more historically, with studies focusing on music as a mode of resistance against the totalizing twentieth-century regimes of National Socialism and East German

Communism.⁵ In contrast, the role of popular music in the West German protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s—one of the rather more striking local expressions of the global youth revolt usually passing under the rubric of “1968”—is only now beginning to receive substantial scholarly attention.⁶ This is surprising, for the West German case offers perhaps the most striking example of the interpenetration of popular music and popular politics, which, while in certain ways unique, is emblematic of the mass youth protests of the 1960s more generally.

Why this lacuna? One reason may be that the decisive events and themes of the sixties and seventies in West Germany—from battles over the National Socialist past, educational reform and the democratization of the public sphere, to mass protests, state violence, and left-wing terrorism—are themselves far from being adequately explored. The events of the West German “1968,” while the subject of a vast German-language literature, are only just now beginning to pass out of the realm of “participant history” with its accompanying polemics to a more dispassionate historiography benefiting from chronological and, in the case of Anglo-American historians, geographical and cultural distance.⁷ With the big issues far from satisfactorily resolved—indeed, only just now beginning to be treated in English at all—there has perhaps been a sense that seeming ephemera-like popular music is less in need of investigation. It is also true that much of the historiography so far has privileged a rather narrow, student Marxism-centric, organization-bound view of the sixties—with a correspondingly narrow view of what constitutes “politics”—which has left out important parts of the picture. This state of affairs is thankfully beginning to change, and one goal of this essay will be to help push the change along. Here it will be argued that in the left-wing West German milieu of the late sixties—a milieu that gave birth both to the myriad permutations of the *Alternativbewegung* as well as the terror of urban guerilla groups—radical music and radical politics were mutually constitutive.⁸ Not only did rock music both generate and mirror the ideas and slogans of the movement—giving clearer-than-usual expression to the radical *mentalité*—but it mirrored, in its modes of cultural production, larger themes of the protest movements that rocked West German society in the sixties and seventies.

Where popular music has been analyzed, it has often been in a more or less generic sense, as one among other cultural products that settled, as a result of postwar Anglo-Americanization, on new territory, evoking a resonance of greater or lesser interest in its new cultural terrain. To be sure, this is part of the story; the memoir literature of participants in the West German scene of the sixties and seventies is rife with references to the importance of popular music in the radical-left *Alltag*. But it is possible to do more than treat popular music in the abstract; indeed, because of one extraordinary and well-documented group, we have the opportunity to undertake a source-driven investigation of popular music

in its socio-political setting.⁹ A band of enduring significance—not only because of the subsequent rock-star career of its lead singer Rio Reiser, but because of the emotional force and staying power of political anthems like “Keine Macht für Niemand” and “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht”—*Ton Steine Scherben* continues to be remembered as the band that supplied the “soundtrack for the revolt of a generation.” Beyond such glib pronouncements, however, the group’s early career offers a look into one of the most salient ways in which popular music not only resonated with, but helped to constitute, youth protest.¹⁰

“Only when we are strong can we change our situation!”

Ton Steine Scherben’s roots lay in the radical street theater of the 1960s. The group’s direct precursor, *Hoffmann’s Comic Teatre (Berliner Volkstheater)*, was a creative alliance between three brothers, Gert, Peter, and Ralph Möbius (the future Rio Reiser).¹¹ Wearing colorful costumes and fanciful masks, accompanied by a live band for which Ralf wrote the songs, the brothers performed on the streets and in youth homes of West Berlin beginning in 1969. Their aim was to create an art that would liberate consciousness and thereby lead to political action. To this end they developed a dozen or so pieces depicting the conflicts of daily life, several of which would later supply the basis of *Ton Steine Scherben* songs. The flagship among these was the piece “Rita and Paul,” which was performed for the first time at a youth center in the Naunynstraße in Berlin Kreuzberg in the fall of 1969.¹² The piece represented the centerpiece of the troupe’s attempt to create a politically effective art: “Das Theater zu einem praktikablen übertragbaren Instrument zu machen,” read an announcement for the show, “ist die von der Theatertruppe in Angriff genommene Arbeit. Das SINGSPIEL Rita und Paul ist das erste Ergebnis dieser Arbeit.” The piece was a sort of Romeo and Juliet tale revolving around a young worker, Paul (portrayed by Ralf Möbius), and Rita, the daughter of a factory owner. In one scene a frustrated Paul sees the face of a conservative commentator on his TV screen. “At that point,” writes Gert Möbius, “Paul, in biblical pose, grabbed the television and with burning rage smashed it to the ground.”¹³ The scene was followed by the performance of a song with a soon-to-be legendary refrain: “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht.”¹⁴ An iconic expression of rage and violent resistance against the multiple oppressions of daily life, the song would be recorded a year later as *Ton Steine Scherben*’s first single.¹⁵ (Illus. 1)

Audience participation was a critical element in the performances of *Hoffmann’s Comic Teatre*—masks were laid out on a table and young workers were invited onto the stage to play out scenes from their own lives.¹⁶ Central to *HCT*’s conception of theater was that the boundary between performer and spectator must be broken down, and that the contribution of the latter was equal to, if not more important than that of the former. “The predominant



Illus. 1: The recording of the first single “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht,” 1971. Pictured are bassist Kai Sichtermann and drummer Wolfgang Seidel. All photographs courtesy Jutta Matthes, Berlin.

cultural and political consciousness of the audience member,” reads point No. 1 of the group’s guidelines, “is the starting point for the planning and realization of the play.”¹⁷ A group of young apprentices who first appeared on the evening in the Naunynstraße performed with such verve and assurance that they were invited into a creative alliance with the members of *Hoffmann’s Comic Teatre*. In early 1970 the group split off to perform on their own as the *Rote Steine, Proletarisches Lebrlingstheater*.¹⁸ Ralph and Gert Möbius continued to perform with the *Rote Steine*, while Peter Möbius—along with Kai Sichtermann and R.P.S. Lanrue, both later founding members of *Ton Steine Scherben*—remained with *Hoffman’s Comic Teatre*.¹⁹ Like *Hoffman’s Comic Teatre*, the *Rote Steine* tried to foster political consciousness through audience participation. We attempt through our performances,” stated the group in a manifesto:

to get young people to ponder their situation. The scenes are improvised. The performance is very simple, because a person plays a situation with which he is familiar. We play with masks, which at the end of the performance are distributed among the audience. In this way we attempt to get

the spectator to play along.... We see the basic task as the building of more theater groups. When more groups are built, more young people will ponder their situation and the more there are, the stronger we will be. Only when we are strong can we change our situation!

Rooted in lived experience, the engaged theater of the *Rote Steine* mirrored a key theme of the sixties revolution in West Germany, that of self-liberation through action. In speaking the previously unspeakable, making visible previously taken-for-granted authoritarian relationships between boss and worker, teacher and student, parent and child, *Hoffmann's Comic Theatre* and the *Rote Steine* penetrated to the heart of the New Left understanding of locating the political in the everyday.²⁰ (Illus. 2-4)



Illus. 2: The Rote Steine.

At the same time, the *Rote Steine* were part of a transformation in the nature of left-wing politics in West Germany after the crisis year of 1968. With the high-water mark of the student movement past, in the wake of the assassination attempt against student leader Rudi Dutschke in April 1968 and the dissolution of the chief German student organization the SDS the following year,



Illus. 3: The Rote Steine in rehearsal. From left to right Herbert L. ("Leppi"), Klaus J. ("Jacko"), Wolfgang B. ("Bonner"), and Raymond.



Illus. 4: The Rote Steine on stage.

the youth rebellion in West Germany was carried forward by new actors motivated by new concerns. This shift was marked by a new focus on workers in general and young workers in particular. A salient feature of the new political landscape were the lots of new Marxist-Leninist and/or Maoist cadre parties, the so-called *K-Gruppen*. Alongside these were the *Basisgruppen* (“rank and file groups”), which represented a sort of “going to the people” on the part of the young left-wing intelligentsia, linked with a new focus on mobilizing working class youth. At the same time, the countercultural stream of the ’68er movement which had begun to crystallize around the famous *Kommune I* and other communes in 1968-69 became increasingly autonomous and radical. Out of this stream arose the West Berlin “Blues,” a proto-terrorist scene of anarchist hippies blending countercultural style with militant opposition to the state.²¹ Both the “Blues” scene and the *Basisgruppen* represented a new privileging of the local. Their retreat into the neighborhood, the *Kiez*, was both an attempt to transform society by focusing on concrete local struggles, and an attempt to escape from society by forming autonomous enclaves. It is with the most important of these enclaves—Berlin Kreuzberg—that the name *Ton Steine Scherben* is indelibly linked.²²

“The Discovery of Kreuzberg”

The transformation of Kreuzberg into a radical enclave was, in a fundamental sense, a product of the Cold War. At the end of the Second World War much of the district lay in ruins. At least 42 percent of its living-spaces and two-thirds of its businesses were destroyed.²³ The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 accelerated this decay. Private building activity came almost to a halt and public building was restricted to a few individual projects. Many young working families tired of the coal ovens, outside toilets, and destroyed façades and moved to the outskirts of the city. An influx of Turkish “guest workers” beginning in 1964 failed to stem the net loss in Kreuzberg’s population, which shrank from a postwar high of 213,000 in 1952 to only 158,000 in 1970.²⁴ The number of jobs was cut in half.²⁵ More fundamentally, the building of the Berlin Wall changed the spatial orientation of Kreuzberg within the city, displacing the district from near the center of Berlin to the margins of its rump western half. With many of its streets now coming absurdly to an end against the concrete barrier, Kreuzberg became a pocket of West Berlin bounded on three sides by the wall, a space both literally and figuratively “on the margins.” Connected by U-Bahn to the student districts near the Free University on the other side of the city, with cheap rents, Kreuzberg became an attractive destination for students. At the same time, it became home to draft-dodgers attracted by West Berlin’s exempt status under allied military occupation. The combination of these factors helped make Kreuzberg *the* major destination for would-be bohemians in West Germany in the late 1960s and ’70s.²⁶

For the leader of *Ton Steine Scherben*, Ralph Möbius, Kreuzberg possessed an additional attractiveness: its mix of young workers and *Gastarbeiter* seemed to offer the possibility of authentic engagement with the working class.²⁷ Möbius' later claim (as Rio Reiser, to which he will hereafter be referred)—that the move to Kreuzberg was prompted by a rumor that young proletarians still lived there—speaks volumes not only about the interweaving mythologies of band and district, but about Rio Reiser himself.²⁸ A Christian with a deep concern for social justice (although not a self-advertising one in a largely anti-religious left-wing milieu), an avid reader of the adventure stories of Karl May, and a homosexual (not openly until 1976), Reiser was an outsider with a powerful commitment to the weak and the marginalized. With its population of young workers, retirees, and immigrants, Kreuzberg was a perfect field of engagement for his populist romanticism. The band that would give expression to this romanticism was founded in August 1970 in a room off the Adalbertstraße in the heart of “Kreuzberg 36.” It included, alongside Rio Reiser, drummer Wolfgang Seidel, guitarist R. P. S. Lanrue, and bassist Kai Sichtermann. The name *Ton Steine Scherben* was suggested by Reiser. “It sound[ed] socialist,” writes bassist Kai Sichtermann, “or at least trade-union-like.” But it also represented “a secret greeting to the band that was for us the greatest model: The Rolling Stones.”²⁹

The group's populist orientation asserted itself in a number of ways, not least in its musical innovations. One of these had to do with language. *Ton Steine Scherben* was the first German rock group to sing in German, a highly unusual step in an era when rock performers in continental Europe tended to ape Anglo-American models right down to the language.³⁰ Using German was not a nationalist statement, but a localist one; it was meant to allow the group to connect as intimately as possible with its target audience, the apprentices and young workers of Kreuzberg. Communicating in a rough proletarian vernacular, alternately sung, spoken, and shouted, Rio Reiser achieved a truer and more sophisticated level of artistic expression; but he also made a political point: that the needs of everyday people, the realities of daily life, trumped norms and standards imposed from the outside. “There are often real conversations that happen on the street, in pubs, or in the workplace,” noted the band in an interview in early 1971; “[w]e just had to write them down....”³¹

This method influenced not only the language in which the songs were sung, but the themes with which they dealt. The title of the group's first album, *Warum gebt es mir so dreckig* (1971), captured perfectly the group's concern with exploring the subjectivity and psychology of oppression rooted in the experience of daily life. The first single, “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht,” expressed in a rough clipped prose the frustration of man caught in a world of inexorable and impersonal forces. The first stanza—“Radios laufen, Platten laufen, Filme laufen, TV's laufen, Reisen kaufen, Autos kaufen, Häuser kaufen, Möbel kaufen,

wofür?”—expressed a deep skepticism about consumer capitalist society and the happiness that possessions were supposed to bring.³² This skepticism resonated with the influential critique of consumer capitalism made by the thinkers of the Frankfurt School, which by the end of the 1960s had not only percolated down to inform the thought of student intellectuals, but spread out to dovetail with the world view of young people more generally. This critique had come to spectacular expression during the high period of the student movement. Born in pop-cultural form by the satirical fliers of the *Kommune 1* (media-savvy communards who used the occasion of a terrible fire in the Belgian department store *L’Innovation* in May 1967 to spoof the overheated prose of consumerist advertising copy) and in more concrete form by proto-terrorists Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin (whose arson attack on a Frankfurt department store in April 1968 signaled a new willingness to go beyond words to deeds), the critique of “Konsum-Terror” was a major component of the radicalism in the milieu of which the *Scherben* were a part.³³ Both a collective refusal and a call to arms, the refrain “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht” was expressive of the new level of combativeness with which this critique was being pursued at the beginning of the 1970s.³⁴

In musical terms, *Ton Steine Scherben* offered a raw, stripped-down sound, blues-based, with distorted guitars and sing-along refrains. While the influence of English “Beat groups” like the Rolling Stones and the Kinks is obvious, the *Scherben* occupied a transitional space among the genres. Like their American contemporaries the MC-5—a group also known for its association with radical politics and with whom *Ton Steine Scherben* toured Europe in 1972—the *Scherben* anticipated the punk rock of the late seventies. They can be placed alongside other “proto-punk” groups like the New York Dolls and the Stooges, bands that helped forge a link between the rock music of the sixties/seventies and the more stripped-down punk variant of the late seventies/eighties. In the case of the *Scherben*, however, there was a more fundamental link with punk that lay less in the realm of music *per se* than in the conditions of its production and distribution. Like many of the punk, post-punk, and hardcore bands of the 1980s, the *Scherben* sought to bypass capitalist means of production and distribution, releasing their music on their own record label and distributing it through non-traditional channels. In embracing what would later be called a DIY (“Do it Yourself”) aesthetic, the *Scherben* bridged the gap between the independent cultural practice of the 1960s—symbolized by the intense creativity of the underground press and independent art scene(s)—and the explosion of independent bands, labels, and publishers accompanying the rise of punk from the end of the 1970s.

In the hands of *Ton Steine Scherben*, this cultural innovation functioned in explicitly political terms. The name of the band’s record label—“David Volksmund”—combined a reference to the biblical story of David and Goliath

(complete with slingshot logo) with the idea of the “people’s voice,” perfectly capturing the essence of the group’s project. The idea of an artist-run record label was highly novel at a time when the official culture industry administered almost every aspect of the process of production and distribution of music. Very frequently, the industry controlled even the act of composition itself. Here, too, *Ton Steine Scherben* went against the grain by writing its own compositions and singing them in German. The band’s debut single and album did brisk business in the left-wing book store circuit. The band reported selling 10,000 copies of the “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht single,” and a similar number of the “Warum geht es mir so dreckig” LP.³⁵ By the end of the decade, *Ton Steine Scherben* had sold 300,000 copies of its own albums with no advertising and next-to-no radio airplay.³⁶ *Ton Steine Scherben* was also precocious in publishing its own “fanzine,” *Guten Morgen*. Reproducing lyrics, photos, and commentary in a vivid cut-and-paste style, it combined a concern with local, neighborhood issues, with issues drawn from the broader world, such as women’s and gay liberation, Black Power, and the American Indian Movement, and the armed guerilla struggle in West Germany. The main message of the fanzine—of the group’s entire project—was expressed in the introduction to *Guten Morgen*: “What we have done, everyone can do.”³⁷

This emphasis on self-management—both artistic and political—bled over into *Ton Steine Scherben*’s more public commitments. It was symbolized most strongly by the band’s role in the creation of West Berlin’s legendary squat, the George von Rauch Haus. The background to the creation of the Rauch Haus lay in a project of urban renewal begun by Bürgermeister Willy Brandt in 1963. According to the initiative, Kreuzberg was to be used as a giant canvas for modern urban planning. The plan, which envisioned the tearing down of buildings containing some 16,000 individual living spaces, was put into action in 1968–69.³⁸ Unlike in another district heavily affected by the plan, Wedding, the plan met with opposition in Kreuzberg. The politicization of this issue—of the issue of what was to become of the buildings of the district—crystallized around the question of the status of the Bethanien hospital complex on the Mariannenplatz. The Bethanien had been important in the nineteenth century for taking care of the poor from the surrounding district; it stood empty when the issue of urban renewal brought matters to a head in 1970. In this struggle over urban renewal were mirrored some of the main tendencies that arose in the aftermath of the student movement. The KPD-ML (Communist Party-Marxist Leninist) was especially active in Kreuzberg, where it sought to use the issue of housing as a means of connecting with the working class—one of the key goals of the *K-Gruppen*. Founded in December 1968, the KPD-ML created its own *Stadtteil* committee for West Berlin in November 1969. The *Stadtteil* committee, as expressed in the pages of *Rote Presse Korrespondenz*, was to supply “analytical work in connection with the particular type of oppression

of the masses in a particular location”—in the case of Kreuzberg, the issue of urban renewal.³⁹

The interest of the *K-Gruppen* notwithstanding, the impasse around the status of the Bethanien was broken by classically-anarchist methods. The seizure of what would become the Georg von Rauch Haus at the end of 1971 was actually the second of two building seizures with which the *Scherben* were connected. The first took place in July after a TSS concert in the Mensa of the Technical University. The concert, which also featured performances by the bands *Agitation Free* and *Ash Ra Temple*, was part of an informational event organized by Peter Paul Zahl, editor of the leading Berlin radical organ *Agit 883*, in cooperation with the *Rote Hilfe West Berlin*. The *Rote Steine* were present, along with a contingent of young workers, students, and radicals from the West Berlin anarchist scene. The activist Lothar Binger intended to use the concert as a jumping-off point for the seizure of an empty building in Kreuzberg, to be used for the creation of a self-organized youth center. After the *Scherben*'s performance, as agreed upon ahead of time with Binger, Rio Reiser called upon the crowd to go into action. The result—the seizure of an empty factory building at Mariannenstraße 13—was the first such building seizure in West Berlin. By the end of the decade, more than 300 buildings in West Berlin were under the control of squatters.⁴⁰



Illus. 5: *Ton Steine Scherben* in the Audimax of the TU Berlin, 1973.

Ton Steine Scherben's performance was recorded by Klaus Freudigmann and later made up the live side one of the *Scherben*'s first album.⁴¹ But the events of July 3 were merely a prelude to a more spectacular event, one with which the name *Ton Steine Scherben* would become indelibly associated. By the end of

1971, tensions between the radical milieu and the state were coming to a head. The Red Army faction militant Petra Schelm had been killed in Hamburg in July, only a couple of weeks after the Mariannenstraße building seizure, leading to terrorist reprisals. On December 4, the anarchist militant Georg von Rauch was killed in Berlin in a shoot-out with police. The “murder” (as the radical left understood it) of von Rauch symbolized the increasingly pitiless struggle between terrorists and the state and lent even greater urgency to the struggle over urban space in West Berlin. A “Teach-In” scheduled at the Technical University on December 8 was to deal with the issue of the Bethanien, specifically the Martha-Maria-Haus, the former nurses’ dormitory on the north-west side of the complex facing the Berlin Wall. Rio Reiser and his friend Anne Reiche—a leading figure in the Blues scene and shortly to be a member of the *Bewegung 2. Juni*, the anarchist counterpart to the RAF—envisioned the seizure of the Martha-Maria-Haus as the prelude to a seizure of the entire hospital complex, forming the basis of a “Freie Republik Bethanien.”⁴² Fueled by anger over the death of Georg von Rauch, the Teach-In on December 8 resulted in quick and decisive action. After the performance of *Ton Steine Scherben*, and accompanied by massive flyering and public announcements, some 600 militant youth descended on the Bethanien by automobile and subway. “I remember the performance of *Ton Steine Scherben* in the Audimax of the TU,” recalls Christina Perincioli, women’s activist and filmmaker:

where between the songs ever shorter political texts were read. That was new and great; until then, rock music had spoken only to the gut. But the crowning event came when the entire demonstration suddenly took off and we seized the Bethanien. That still has the power to inspire me today, the channeling of a cultural event into political action.⁴³

The Martha-Maria-Haus, seized by young workers, apprentices, runaways, aided and abetted by members of the local Basis Group (“Basis-Gruppe Heim- und Lehrlingsarbeit”) and radicals from the Blues milieu, was quickly renamed the “Georg von Rauch Haus.” The house became a major “scene” location, not only for runaways and drug users, but for members of the proto-terrorist groups. Police raided the house on April 19, 1972, on information that Michael “Bommi” Baumann, a friend of the deceased Georg von Rauch, member of the Blues scene and later the *Bewegung 2. Juni*, was hanging out there.⁴⁴ The purported discovery of a “bomb laboratory” in the house was reported on with relish by the conservative *Bild Zeitung*, and the CDU agitated, without success, for the house’s closure.⁴⁵ The seizure represented an initial blow in the struggle over urban space in Berlin, giving rise to a battle between squatters and authorities that would last well into the 1980s.⁴⁶

For the members of *Ton Steine Scherben* the seizure of the house—and the intimate connection between their music and radical political action that it

helped solidify—proved to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the group immortalized the seizure in its famous “Rauch Haus Lied,” a song that appeared on its second LP, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, released in October 1972. On the other, the unity among anti-authoritarians celebrated in the “Rauch Haus Lied” was far from a reality: at the very time at which the song was being recorded, with residents from the house invited to sing on the rousing chorus: “Das ist unser Haus—Ihr kriegt uns hier nicht raus”—the members of *Ton Steine Scherben* were on far from friendly terms with the people in control of the Rauch Haus. Accused of having written a song that, as Rio Reiser paraphrased it, had “nothing to do with reality,” the group was prohibited by the Haus’ leaders from appearing at a Teach-In against a threatened eviction in March 1972.⁴⁷ “This didn’t hamper the same people,” recalls the *Scherben*’s bass player Kai Sichtermann bitterly, “from showing up two months later in Klaus Freudigmann’s studio in the Admiralstraße to chant along as the song was being recorded for the LP.”⁴⁸

This falling out between the *Scherben* and the people in control of the Rauch Haus was emblematic of a more fundamental conflict between the band’s anarchist-bohemian orientation and the dogmatic authoritarianism of many of its fellow leftists. Rio Reiser, for one, was repelled by the theoretical jargon of the student movement. “I had problems with the students,” he writes. “I found what they said and how they said it boring. The fliers, the language, it was all Greek to me. The revolutionization of the *Lehrbetriebe*. That always smelled a little too much like school.”⁴⁹ The conflict between the *Scherben* and what Reiser called the “political managers” had already reared its head in the wake of the *Scherben* gig preceding the seizure of the Mariannenstraße 13 property in July 1971. According to Rio Reiser it was his co-conspirator Lothar Binger (“Lothar X” in Reiser’s account) who, after instigating the seizure, called the police to make sure that a conflict with the authorities would ensue.⁵⁰ Here, Reiser observed, “ice cold Leninism had shown its face.”⁵¹

“Music as a Weapon”?

Ton Steine Scherben’s thorny relationship with the dogmatic left reflected a basic tension at the heart of left-wing activism, one that revolved around questions of revolutionary organization and tactics. This tension found its reflection in the basic and longstanding split between statist and anarchist versions of socialism that, as early as the conflicts between Marx and Bakunin during the nineteenth century, had been played out across a broad set of antinomies: on the one hand theory, order, hierarchy; on the other emotion, spontaneity, autonomy. The ideological struggles of the twentieth century in Russia, Spain, and elsewhere only intensified these conflicts. In Germany, the erasure of the left’s past by the experience of Nazism meant that that past—along with these fundamental conflicts—had to be discovered anew. Lost classics of anarchism

appeared alongside works of Marxism in a broad outpouring of recovered theory, reproduced at the grass roots by bootleg publishers or reprinted and distributed by the burgeoning world of left-wing publishers and distributors. The broad split between authoritarian and anti-authoritarian versions of socialism was reflected in West Germany's two main guerilla groups, the Red Army Faction and the June Second Movement, the latter playing anarchist clown to the former's Communist seriousness.⁵² The split was by no means always so clear in reality, but the broad distinction between the highly theoretical, dogmatic, organization- and worker-centric approach (e.g. of the *K-Gruppen*) on the one hand, and the separatist, lifestyle-oriented, anarchist scene on the other, was highly characteristic of the period after the high-water mark of the West German student movement, when problems of revolutionary organization temporarily obscured by spectacular events and Rudi Dutschke's charismatic leadership could no longer be glossed over.

Ton Steine Scherben existed at the heart of these conflicts. But the band confronted a more fundamental problem, one that had to do with the relationship between art and politics. The intimate association between *Ton Steine Scherben* and the radical-left milieu of West Berlin in the early seventies was only in part a product of the band's own commitments; it was also a product of the place and moment in which the band first rose to prominence. The *Scherben*'s first major gig took place at the beginning of September 1970. The occasion was the "Festival der Liebe," a major open-air rock concert on the Baltic Sea island of Fehmarn. Sponsored by the sex shop magnate Beate Uhse and billed as the "German Woodstock," the festival featured performances by big names such as Rod Stewart, Canned Heat, and (in the final performance before his death) Jimi Hendrix.⁵³ Rain, sound problems, and violence by biker hoodlums contributed to an atmosphere of frustration which was ready to burst into the open by the time the *Scherben* performed. When the band took the stage late on the third day of the festival, it was with the knowledge that the festival organizers had already departed with the receipts, news that not only angered the band but capped off the growing frustration of the 500 or so festival volunteers. Rio Reiser's command from the stage—"Hauen wir den Veranstalter ungespitzt in den Boden!"—was sufficient to set off a riot that saw the festival facilities go up in flames.⁵⁴

The *Scherben*'s (literally) incendiary performance at the festival helped to cement an association between the group and radical action that subsequent events did little to disrupt. Just a few weeks later, the song "Keine Macht für Niemand" was used in the television documentary on the West German left: *Fünf Finger sind eine Faust*.⁵⁵ In the wake of the broadcast, the station was besieged by some 1,000 cards and letters asking whether it was possible to buy the song on record.⁵⁶ The band swiftly pressed the song as its debut single, which appeared in August.⁵⁷ The widespread perception that "rock" and "revolution"

were natural bedfellows, combined with the ever-widening conflict between the radical left and the state, contributed to making *Ton Steine Scherben* a focal point for efforts at political enlightenment and political mobilization. The band's performances were often accompanied by spontaneous discussions involving both audience and band.⁵⁸ The band's music, when not the band itself, was a presence across West Germany, accompanying building seizures in other cities, and appearing wherever radical activists came into conflict with the state. On tour in October 1970, the band was expelled from Switzerland after their final concert in Basel developed into a political demonstration.⁵⁹

The tendency of young people to place their political aspirations onto the *Scherben* dovetailed with the growing imbrication of the band in the radical scene. In September 1971, members of the band relocated to a large eight-room *Altbau* at Tempelhofer Ufer 32 on the Landwehrkanal in Berlin-Kreuzberg. They did so at the invitation of Jörg Schlötterer, anarchist man-about-town, erstwhile secretary of the executive board of the *Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund* (SDS) and former member of the *Kommune II*. Alongside the more celebrated *Kommune I*, the *Kommune II* had been an attempt, undertaken at the beginning of 1967, to marry the theory of the student movement with praxis, to live radical politics on a daily basis. Moving in with one of the "stars" of the Extra-parliamentary Opposition—whose former roommate was none other than the fugitive Red Army Faction militant Holger Meins—the *Scherben* moved a step closer to the heart of the radical scene in West Berlin.⁶⁰ Schlötterer became involved musically with the band, playing flute and helping to organize concerts and record distribution. But his real importance lay elsewhere. Appointed "spiritual advisor" to the band, in tongue-and-cheek reference to the American group MC-5's relationship with its manager/political guru John Sinclair, Schlötterer served as a bridge between the *Scherben* and the student political scene. "Ideological advisor would have been more correct," as Kai Sichtermann puts it.⁶¹ "Through his knowledge and his speaking abilities," he continues, "the *Scherben* were now, at concerts with a large student audience, better armed against verbal attacks."⁶²

The *Scherben*'s stage presentation, which had begun to incorporate multimedia elements like images projected on the wall behind the band, evolved to include more explicit political references. Performing under a banner bearing a slogan by the nineteenth-century humanist dramatist Georg Büchner—"Friede den Hütten! Krieg den Palästen!"—Rio Reiser sometimes read excerpts from Chairman Mao's little red book between songs. Other band members joined in.⁶³ *Ton Steine Scherben*'s radical image was further bolstered by an incident involving the group's manager and saxophonist Nickel Pallat in December 1971. Pallat was invited to appear on the WDR television program "Ende offen..." to take part in a round table discussion on "Pop und Co—Die andere Musik zwischen Protest und Markt." Other panelists included the countercultural impresario

Rolf Ulrich Kaiser, the sociologist Heinz-Klaus Metzger, and the journalist Wolfgang Hamm. After abusing Kaiser for some minutes for his service to “the oppressor” (through his involvement in the music industry) Pallat pulled out an ax and attacked the studio table as shocked fellow panelists backed slowly away. “So,” remarked Pallat as he walked away from the shattered table, “weiter diskutieren.”⁶⁴

This enactment of symbolic violence against the system was spectacular in its shock effect; yet the issue that so exercised Pallat—the ability of the popular culture industry to exploit, and thereby depoliticize the rebellion symbolized by rock music—was a serious one, widely discussed in the West German left. The ideal nature of the relationship between music and politics was not easy to establish. A manifesto published in *Agit 883* a few weeks after Pallat’s televised act of “propaganda by the deed” attempted to codify it. Entitled “Musik ist eine Waffe,” the piece sought to cast the creation of music in essentially political terms, as a key component of the political struggle:

Music can become a collective weapon when you stand on the side of the people for whom you are making music! When you say something with your lyrics, describe a situation that everyone recognizes, but about which each eats themselves up inside in isolation, then everyone will hear that they are not [alone] and you can demonstrate the possibility for change. Music can also become a weapon when you recognize the causes of your aggression. We want that you do not internalize your rage, that you are clear about where your discontent and your doubt come from....

Our public are the people of our generation: apprentices, Rockers, young workers, “criminals,” people in and out of group homes. Our songs deal with their situation. Songs exist to be sung together. A song has impact when a group of people can sing it. Our songs are simple, so that many can sing along.”⁶⁵ It concluded:

We don’t need any aesthetic; our aesthetic lies in political effectiveness. Our public is the measure, and not some flipped-out poet. We have learned to make songs from our public, only from them can we learn in the future how to write songs for the people. We belong to no party and to no tendency. We support every action that serves the class struggle, no matter which group organizes it.⁶⁶

This understanding of the role of music, in its collectivism and in its privileging of political effectiveness over aesthetics (or in its attempt to elide the distinction between the two) was not new; it would not have been very out of place, indeed, in the mouth of Berthold Brecht. Yet it was also very clearly the product of a distinct conjuncture marked by the collectivist claims associated with the anti-imperialist struggles of the Third World, and the intense politicization of

every sphere of life in West Berlin's left milieu.

Yet art and politics did not fit together so nicely as the "Musik ist eine Waffe" manifesto implied. For one thing, the deployment of the *Scherben* on the political front(s) involved a bottomless pit of commitments. After the release of the *Warum geht es mir so Dreckig* album, the sleeve of which bore the band's phone number:

the telephone at the T-Ufer was never silent. Twenty-four hours a day. Most of the calls had to do with requests for the *Scherben* to appear in connection with a school strike, a college strike, to help prevent an announced increase in public transit fares, for planned building seizures, Knasthilfe, Rote Hilfe, Schwarze Hilfe, or in connection with a student government election. In between all that there were offers to perform at discothèques, youth homes, [for] Catholic or Evangelical youth groups, Falken, Jusos, the SDAJ.⁶⁷

Pressure for the band to make its presence felt on the political scene came especially from Reiser's friend Anne Reiche. "We were to become the rock and roll fighting battalion," writes Reiser, "and to make music that would bring people 'shouting into the streets.'"⁶⁸

To this end, Reiche commissioned Reiser to write a *Kampflied* for the movement. The result—"Keine macht für Niemand"—became one of the group's most well-known songs. Challenging ideological and Cold War *bloc* boundaries ("Im Süden, im Osten, im Norden, im Westen, es sind überall dieselben, die uns erpressen"); calling for the destruction of walls both literal and figurative ("Reißen wir die Mauern ein, die uns trennen. Kommt zusammen, Leute. Lernt euch kennen"); repeating again and again a refrain rejecting authority in all its forms ("Keine Macht für Niemand!"), the song was an anti-authoritarian statement of singular power. Yet its anarchist sentiments were not universally appreciated on the left; it was rejected, for example, by the leadership of the RAF as "useless for the anti-imperialist struggle."⁶⁹ The tension between the band's bohemian anarchism and the left-wing cadres stretched back to the earliest performances of *Hoffmann's Comic Teater*. "The revolutionary cadres rejected the review out of hand," writes Gert Möbius, "because in ideological terms it ended too resignedly.... [But] who can say what 'resigned' is?" Who? Was not Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* also resigned, but also revolutionary?⁷⁰ Gradually members of the band began to see the relentless politicization of their music within the scene as stifling. "Playing at a Teach-In was all but a duty," complained Rio Reiser, "we were required [to do it], it was like in the GDR.... That was happening even before *Keine Macht für Niemand* came out."⁷¹ The political importance of the band brought with it political scrutiny. This scrutiny was so intense, writes Kai Sichtermann, that the band feared to buy new amplifiers lest the cry go up: "What, the *Scherben* have new amplifiers? For so-and-so-many thousands of marks? Traitors!"⁷²

“Der Traum ist aus”

The tension between art and politics—which in the eyes of the *Scherben* had become a tension between fun and sterile dogmatism—came increasingly to expression in the group’s live performances. Whether harassed for adding “good time” rock and roll standards to their set;⁷³ called out for strewing glitter across the stage (“we threw glitter over the revolutionary masses,” writes Kai Sichtermann⁷⁴); or challenged for engaging female background singers who committed the sin of dancing on stage (inspiring a heated discussion with audience members about the role of women),⁷⁵ the *Scherben* increasingly found themselves the focal point of highly politicized and emotive debates. “The Scherben were expected to be politically correct,” writes Kai Sichtermann, “and it was the others who decided what politically correct was. The Scherben were [seen as] the *Hochkapelle* of the left, and so everyone believed they had the right to have a say in what the Scherben did.”⁷⁶

This ultimately insupportable situation made up one element in the band’s decision to escape the hothouse environment of West Berlin, which it did in June 1975 by moving into a commune at Fresenhagen in Schleswig-Holstein.⁷⁷ Here again, the *Scherben* mirrored larger developments, for the 1970s were an era when many on the left dropped out and turned inward, experimenting with eastern religions or relocating to the countryside for experiments in communal living. Yet, with the move to Fresenhagen, the history of the *Scherben* and the history of radical politics in Germany began slowly to diverge. For this reason, the subsequent careers of *Ton Steine Scherben* and of Rio Reiser as a solo performer lie beyond the scope of this essay. Yet of the early period, when the history of the band and the history of the radical left scene in the Federal Republic so strongly converged, several concluding points need to be made. First, the history of *Ton Steine Scherben* suggests the importance of analyzing the West German “1968” not only in a wider temporal perspective, but also in a wider social one. The revolutionary impulses that rocked West German society from the mid-sixties through the late seventies were by no means merely the product of a narrow “student movement,” but extended to places where the highly theoretical writ of the SDS did not necessarily run. It is no accident, after all, that one of the most important sites at which this broader “1968” was elaborated—the field of popular culture—was a realm of which the student movement was deeply suspicious. It is precisely because popular culture and radical politics were capable of so deeply interpenetrating one another that analysis must extend beyond the SDS to encompass the counterculture to which, increasingly from the end of 1960s, young workers belonged.

It is important to emphasize, furthermore, that the meaning of music itself is not fixed—i.e. does not just derive from the content of the lyrics or the intentions of the performer—but is socially determined. We have seen how the social meaning of *Ton Steine Scherben* was supplied as much by the audience as

by the band itself; and this one reason why in recent years the radical right, which has long attempted to steal the iconography and style of the left, has appropriated the music of *Ton Steine Scherben* as well.⁷⁸ This strange turn only reinforces the necessity of going beyond a simple acknowledgement of the importance of popular music to an attempt to contextualize it, understanding it not simply as art or cultural practice but as multifaceted social phenomenon. The band *Ton Steine Scherben* was, in the explicit nature of its connection with radical politics, the exception rather than the rule. But as recent scholarship is increasingly illustrating, examples of the intimate connection between social movements and popular music abound.⁷⁹ We have but to look for them.

¹ See for example Keith Negus, *Popular Music in Theory. An Introduction*, (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press and University Press of New England, 1996); Tony Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop, and Rap in Europe and Oceania*, (London; New York: Leicester University Press), 1996.

² See Timothy S. Brown, “Keeping it Real’ in a Different ‘Hood: (African)-Americanization and Hip Hop in Germany,” in: *The Vinyl Ain’t Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Culture*, Dipannita Basu and Sidney Lemelle eds. (London: Pluto, 2006).

³ The classic CCCS study is still in print: *Resistance Through Rituals*, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson eds. (London: Routledge, 1993).

⁴ Andy Bennett, *Cultures of Popular Music*, (Buckingham [England]; Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2001).

⁵ Michael H. Kater, *Different Drummers. Jazz In The Culture Of Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); *Bye Bye, Lübben City. Bluesfreaks, Tramps und Hippies in der DDR*, Michael Rauhut and Thomas Kochan eds. (Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2004).

⁶ See Detlef Siegfried, *Time is on My Side. Konsum und Politik in der westdeutschen Jugendkultur der 60er Jahre* (Hamburg: Wallstein, 2006).

⁷ For recent work in English dealing with aspects of the protest movements of the 1960s and 70s see Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of ‘68. Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); *Between Marx and Coca-Cola. Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies*, Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried eds. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006); Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home. The Weather Underground, the Red Army faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution in the Age of Détente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 2003.

⁸ See Sabine Von Dirke, “All Power to the Imagination!” *The West German Counterculture from the Student Movement to the Greens* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

⁹ See for example the comments by Ulrich Enzensberger, a member of the Kommune I, in: Ulrich Enzensberger, *Die Jahre der Kommune I. Berlin 1967–1969* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2004).

¹⁰ Wolfgang Seidel, “Berlin und die Linke in den 1960ern. Die Entstehung der Ton Steine Scherben,” in: *Scherben. Musik, Politik und Wirkung der Ton Steine Scherben*, Wolfgang Seidel ed. (Mainz: Ventil, 2006), 25–50.

¹¹ The troupe was named after the eighteenth-nineteenth-century poet and dramatist E. T. A. Hoffmann; see “Informationen. Hoffman’s Comic Teater. Prospekt Programm,”

Rio-Reiser-Archiv, Berlin.

¹² Kai Sichtermann, Jens Johler, and Christian Stahl, *Keine Macht für Niemand. Die Geschichte der "Ton Steine Scherben"* (Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2000), 16.

¹³ Gert Möbius, "Hoffmann's Comic Teater, Rote Steine, Ton Steine Scherben, 1969–1971," in: *Ton Steine Scherben. Geschichten, Noten, Texten and Photos au 15 Jahren*. Kreuzberger Hefte VI (Berlin: Dirk Nishen Verlag in Kreuzberg, 1985), *APO Archiv Berlin*, Nachlass Tilmann Fichter.

¹⁴ The lyrics to the song were written by Norbert Krause.

¹⁵ For a first-hand account by a member of Hoffmann's Comic Teatre see Achim Müller, "Eisen erzieht," in: *Scherben. Musik, Politik und Wirkung*, 115–24. See video of the band performing "Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht" at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwE8dlRnsio>.

¹⁶ "Informationen. Hoffman's Comic Teater. Prospekt Programm," Rio-Reiser-Archiv, Berlin.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15. Point Nr. 2 continues: "There should in the play be no unknown premises [Voraussetzungen], that is, no premises that are known to the actor, but not the audience member;" *ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*.

¹⁹ See a slightly different version of the founding of the Rote Steine in Gert Möbius, "Hoffmann's Comic Teater, Rote Steine, Ton Steine Scherben, 1969–1971."

²⁰ *Hoffmann's Comic Teatre* also became involved in working with children, a characteristic concern of the West German New Left. See the piece by Peter Möbius based on the group's experience in the Spielclub Kulmerstraße, a project of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spielumwelt in der Berliner Neuen Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst; Peter Möbius, *Kursbuch* Nr. 34, December 1973, 25–48.

²¹ A classic description of this scene is to be found in Michael Baumann, *How it all Began* (Arsenal Pulp Press, 1977). See also Ralf Reinders and Ronald Fritsch, *Die Bewegung 2. Juni. Gespräche über Haschrebellen, Lorenzentführung*, Knast (Berlin, Amsterdam, 1995).

²² On the *Kommune I* see Timothy S. Brown, "A Tale of two Communes: The Private and the Political in Divided Berlin, 1967–1973," in: *Between The Prague Spring and the French May 1968: Transnational Exchange and National Recontextualization of Protest Cultures*, Martin Klimke, Jacco Pekelder, and Joachim Scharloth eds. (Berghahn, forthcoming, 2009).

²³ Hasso Spode, "Zur Sozial- und Siedlungsgeschichte Kreuzbergs," in: *Kreuzberg*, Helmut Engel, Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, Wilhelm Treue eds. (Berlin: Nicolai, 1994), XXV.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, XXVI.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ For a fascinating look at the social makeup of Kreuzberg from an insider see J. C. Wartenberg, *Kreuzberg K 36. Leben in (der) Bewegung, Kreuzberg inside bis zum Fall der Mauer* (Berlin: J. C. Wartenberg, 2005), 15–16.

²⁷ See Thomas Groß, "Die Erfindung Kreuzbergs," *Die Tageszeitung*, April 8, 1994.

²⁸ Ralph Möbius adopted the name Rio Reiser in 1978; Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 13.

²⁹ Part of the appeal of the Stones lay, tellingly, in that they seemed "proletarian;" Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 14. The name *Ton Steine Scherben* echoed the name of the trade union Bau Steine Erden; Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 11.

A further connotation—“stones” breaking glass into “shards”—is obvious.

³⁰ Hartmut El Kurdi, *Schwarzrote Pop-Perlen. Keine Macht für Niemand. Ton Steine Scherben. The Essence of Rock Volume 2* (Wehrhahn Verlag, 2001). Singer Udo Lindenberg is often mistakenly given credit for being the first German-language rock performer.

³¹ Peter Winkler, “Aggressiv, kritisch und unverschleiert: die Berliner ‘Ton Steine Scherben,’” *Berliner Zeitung*, February 16, 1971.

³² “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht,” *Warum gibt es mir so dreckig* (David Volksmund, 1971).

³³ See Wilfried Mausbach, “‘Burn, ware-house, burn!’ Modernity, Counterculture, and the Vietnam War in West Germany,” in: Schildt and Siegfried, *Between Marx and Coca-Cola*, 175–202.

³⁴ For a detailed analysis of the lyrics of “Macht kaputt was euch kaputt macht” see Werner Faulstich, *Zwischen Glitter und Punk. Tübinger Vorlesungen zur Rockgeschichte Teil III, 1972–1982* (Rothenburg-Oberdorf: Wissenschaftler Verlag, 1986), chapter 22.

³⁵ *Guten Morgen*, Rio Reiser Archiv, Berlin, p. 45.

³⁶ Albert Koch, *Angriff auf’s Schlaraffenland—20 Jahre deutschsprachige Popmusik* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein Verlag, 1987), 53.

³⁷ *Guten Morgen*, p. 1.

³⁸ Spode, “Zur Sozial- und Siedlungsgeschichte Kreuzbergs,” XXVII.

³⁹ *Rote Presse Korrespondenz*.

⁴⁰ Kai Sichtermann raises the possibility that there might have been an earlier Hausbesetzung in another city; Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 54.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴² Rio Reiser, *König von Deutschland. Erinnerungen an Ton Steine Scherben und mehr*. Erzählt von ihm selbst und Hannes Eyber (Berlin: Möbius Rekords, 2001), 239.

⁴³ Quoted in: Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 72.

⁴⁴ See “Terror-Zentrale ausgehoben. Bei ‘Bethanien’ eingerückt,” *Der Abend*, April 19, 1972. See also D. Discher, “Bethanien: Terrorzentrum oder Experimentierfeld mit Fehlern? Bei Razzia in Wohnkollektiv Materialien für Attentate gefunden,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, April 20, 1972.

⁴⁵ Evelyn Köhler, “Kontroversen um Bethanien. CDU löste heftige Debatte aus,” *Berliner Zeitung*, January 7, 1972.

⁴⁶ Spode, “Zur Sozial- und Siedlungsgeschichte Kreuzbergs,” XI–XXIX, XXVII.

⁴⁷ Reiser, *König von Deutschland*, 246.

⁴⁸ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 87. On the leadership factions within the house see J. Grabowsky, “Die drei Interessengruppen waren zu keinen Kompromissen bereit,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, December 15, 1971.

⁴⁹ Reiser, *König von Deutschland*, 114.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁵¹ Quoted in: Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 54.

⁵² This theme appears repeatedly in Baumann, *How it all Began*.

⁵³ Hendrix died on September 18 in London.

⁵⁴ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 20–25.

⁵⁵ The film, by the director Michael Böhme, was broadcast on September 28, 1970.

⁵⁶ Albert Koch, *Angriff auf’s Schlaraffenland—20 Jahre deutschsprachige Popmusik* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein Verlag, 1987), 53.

⁵⁷ The cover was pressed on the Rotaprint machine owned by Gerd Möbius, which had

previously belonged to West Berlin's *Kommune 1*.

⁵⁸ Peter Winkler, "Aggressiv, kritisch und unverschleiert: die Berliner 'Ton Steine Scherben,'" *Berliner Zeitung*, February 16, 1971.

⁵⁹ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 47.

⁶⁰ On Meins see Gerd Conradt, *Starbuck. Holger Meins. Ein Porträt als Zeitbild* (Berlin: Espresso, 2001).

⁶¹ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 62.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "This glorification of Mao at that time was terrible," Kai Sichtermann remembers. "We were naïve and starry-eyed," Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 50–51. The Büchner slogan was used by the Rauch Haus Kollektiv as well; see Georg-von-Rauch-Haus-Kollektiv, *Frieden den Hütten, Krieg den Palästen. 6 Jahre Selbstorganisation* (Berlin: Selbstverlag, 1977).

⁶⁴ On Rolf Ulrich Kaiser, and on the Nickel Pallat incident see Timothy S. Brown, "'The Germans Meet the Underground': The Politics of Pop in the *Essener Songtage* of 1968," in: *Musikkulturen in der Revolte. Studien zu Rock, Avantgarde und Klassik im Umfeld von '1968'*, Beate Kutschke ed. (Köln and Weimar: Böhlau, 2008). Video of Pallat's appearance on "Ende offen..." can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQsPZmdi_yc.

⁶⁵ "Musik ist eine Waffe," 883, December 24, 1970. The piece was republished in: *Schwarze Protokolle* Nr. 1, July 1, 1972. A very different piece under the same heading appeared in 1972 in the group's fanzine *Guten Morgen*, p. 23.

⁶⁶ "Musik ist eine Waffe."

⁶⁷ Reiser, *König von Deutschland*, 244.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ See Hartmut El Kurdi, *Schwarzrote Pop-Perlen. Keine Macht für Niemand. Ton Steine Scherben. The Essence of Rock Volume 2* (Wehrhanverlag, 2001), 37.

⁷⁰ Gerd Möbius, "Hoffmann's Comic Teater, Rote Steine, Ton Steine Scherben, 1969–1971."

⁷¹ Quoted in: Kai 87.

⁷² Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 89.

⁷³ This took place at another Rauch Haus Teach-In, in March 1972; Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 97.

⁷⁴ This was the infamous (in the band's lore) "glitter gig" of April 1974; Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 124.

⁷⁵ Joachim Hentschel, "Spur der Steine," *Rolling Stone*, März 2005.

⁷⁶ Sichtermann et al, *Keine Macht für Niemand*, 124.

⁷⁷ See also Steve B. Peinemann, "Aus der Großstadtszene aufs Land geflohen: Ton Steine Scherben," in: *Die Wut, die du im Bauch hast. Politische Rockmusik: Interviews, Erfahrungen* (Rowohlt, 1980).

⁷⁸ The songs of the Scherben, notes Wolfgang Seidel, now "belong to the standard repertoire of every NPD meeting;" Seidel, "Berlin und die Linke..." 50. On this theme see also Mirko Heinemann, "Streit um Rio's Erbe," *Das Magazin*, July/August 2006: 74–77.

⁷⁹ See for example *Bye Bye, Lübben City*; Detlef Siegfried, "Einstürzende Neubauten. 'Wohngemeinschaften, Jugendzentren und private Präferenzen kommunistischer 'Kader' als Formen jugendlicher Subkultur," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 44 (2004): 39–66; Timothy S. Brown, "Subcultures, Pop Music and Politics: Skinheads and Nazi Rock in England and Germany," *Journal of Social History* 38/1 (Fall 2004): 157–78.