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THE MOVIDA MADRILEÑA VS SPANISH PUNK CULTURE: DISENCHANTMENT, HEDONISM AND THE YOUTH'S POLITICAL COMMITMENT DURING THE SPANISH TRANSICIÓN

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IN “The Construction of Youth in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s,” Mark Allinson states that the eighties’ and nineties’ “Spanish youth culture is distinct in that its emergence from the heady excesses of a suddenly liberated post-Franco Spain deprives it of the social signification as deviance or resistance often associated with youth subcultures” (265). This resonates with those scholars who argue that the culture of the Transición was rather celebratory and that it functioned, among other things, as an element of political deactivation and amnesia regarding Spaniards’ recent dictatorial past (Labanyi; Subirats; Resina; Vilarós; Martínez; Morán). In addition to this, Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi speak of youth culture during the Transición as the “official image of Spain” (312), placing Spanish youth cultures strictly within the dominant culture of the time and blurring the possibility of imagining the existence of other deviant or resistant subcultural formations. Finally, other scholars such as Nuria Triana Toribio go as far as to state that “movida or Nueva Ola, were the names given to Spanish punk” (275), in a definitive maneuver that cancels any possibility of a deviant punk subculture to have existed in Spain by establishing an ontological equivalence between punk and the mainstream and predominantly middle/upper-class Movida madrileña. Let me advance two of the most common erroneous conclusions drawn from these and other similar perspectives: that the Movida madrileña is the epitome of all youth cultures and subcultures in Spain and that there was a generalized political apathy among most young people during the Transición. Refuting these two conclusions is one of the main goals of this article. In order to do so, I will carry out a comparative study between the Movida madrileña and a another understudied but rather popular youth movement that I will,