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Reflections on Music and Propaganda

Luis Velasco Pufleau

Abstract[1]

In general, the concept of propaganda refers to a method as well as the symbolic object mobilized by it. Propaganda equally constitutes a particular type of communication that involves not only the mobilization of objects, but also of discourse, places, acts, and rituals. This essay employs the writings of Max Weber, Paul Ricœur, Jacques Ellul, and Jacques Rancière to analyze propaganda as a particular type of symbolic political *dispositif* linked to a specific performance and utterance context. I examine humanitarian songs as a propaganda tool in democracy, and show the conditions and the limits of their mobilization through their contextualization. I argue that the link between music and propaganda could be defined as the willingness of a particular power or organized opposition to control the symbolic and emotional dimension of musical works. Through giving the music a meaning in this way, they try to impose a certain social order or to invalidate other possible political configurations of reality. I discuss the contradiction between the specific polysemy of musical works and the fictional construction of reality produced by propaganda, and conclude that the political dimension of music should not necessarily be reduced to the propaganda *dispositif*. These musical works require consideration of the possibilities offered through fiction in contexts of specific representation, as well as the political dimension of collaborative musical practices.

Key Words

democracy, Ellul, fiction, humanitarian songs, music, propaganda, Rancière, symbolic politics

1. Introduction

Generally speaking, the concept of propaganda refers to a method as well as the symbolic object mobilized by this method. It is in this context that some musical works, and works of art in general, can be considered as propaganda if the mobilized individual accepts the implicit ideology in the works or the intentions summoned to activate the opinion of a group of individuals or to provoke an action. Propaganda, however, equally constitutes a method of communication that implicates not only the mobilization of objects, but also the mobilization of discourse, places, acts, and rituals. What, then, is the link that supports the methods of propaganda and its symbolic objects, particularly in musical works and practices? Is it possible to define or analyze what the characteristics of works meant for propaganda might be? Does music's polysemic nature not constitute a sizable problem for a univocal analysis of its use as propaganda? These are the questions that form the basis of the reflections developed in this essay.

First, I will endeavor to give a working definition of the concept of propaganda, analyzing it as a particular type of symbolic political *dispositif* [mechanism][2] so as to better highlight its

characteristics as a strategy of domination. The fulcrum of my analysis will be the writings of Max Weber, Philippe Braud, Paul Ricoeur, and Jacques Ellul on political symbols and propaganda, and the writings of Jacques Rancière and Jerrold Levinson for the contextual and political analysis of musical works. I will then examine the use of humanitarian songs in democracy, showing the conditions and limits of their mobilization. I will show how, by triggering certain emotions and reinforcing an imagined neo-colonial scenario, humanitarian songs have contributed to the de-politicization of certain aspects of contemporary humanitarian action.^[3] My discussion of the contradiction between the specific polysemy of musical works and the construction of a fictional reality through propaganda leads me to conclude that the political aspect of musical works may retain its sense without taking the shape of propaganda.

2. Propaganda as a symbolic political *dispositif*

The concept of propaganda is extremely vast and problematic. It has been used in numerous senses and contexts, today holding a pejorative connotation or mostly being reserved for describing the persuasive mechanisms of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. The origin of the word propaganda dates from the seventeenth century, with Pope Gregory XV's institutionalization of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith) in 1622. This Curial Department's objective was the re-conquest of the faithful and the diffusion of Roman Catholic doctrine in the world. Since the First World War, *propaganda* has been institutionalized by many Western governments, including the United States and the majority of European countries, which have established ministries to control and focus information to support and legitimize their war efforts: from the Committee on Public Information (Creel Committee) in the United States (1917), the Ministry of Information in Great Britain (1918), and the *Commisariat général de la Propagande* in France (1918), to the *Otdel agitatsii i propagandy* in the USSR (1920) and the *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* in Germany (1933). The development of modern methods of propaganda was clearly not exclusive to authoritarian regimes but used also by liberal democracies, which continued to use them throughout the twentieth century to legitimize their power. Ellul has written that "every modern state is expected to have a Ministry of Propaganda, whatever its actual name may be."^[4] Modern propaganda therefore developed in times of war to legitimize the military effort and continued afterward to govern and to impose a certain social order.

Propaganda can be considered as a political legitimization strategy that aims to provoke and influence a specific group of people. For Ellul, "propaganda feeds, develops, and spreads the system of false claims."^[5] He defines propaganda as "a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization."^[6] He concludes that propaganda provides "a complete system for explaining the world, and provides immediate incentives to action" for human beings, organizing a "myth that tries to take hold of the entire person."^[7] Thus, the aim of modern propaganda "is no longer to modify ideas, but to provoke action. ... It is no longer to transform an opinion, but to arouse an active and mythical

belief.”^[8] This definition is useful when thinking about the use of symbolic objects for propagandistic ends. However, Ellul expands this definition to almost all social relations, implying that there is a power relationship when referring to *sociological propaganda*: “the group of manifestations by which any society seeks to integrate the maximum number of individuals into itself, to unify members’ behavior according to a pattern, to spread its style of life abroad, and thus to impose itself on other groups.”^[9] Ellul’s definition becomes problematic for the analysis of the deployment of propaganda methods because it can be applied to a large number of diverse institutions or social domains such as education systems, economic activities, sports, and judicial institutions.

I propose that propaganda should be thought of as a *dispositif* that involves one or several strategies of domination which seek not only to influence but also to cause identification with and conscious support for a power that is perceived as legitimate, as in Max Weber’s definition. Such support, for Weber, is based on shared beliefs that may have rational grounds (legal authority), traditional grounds (traditional authority), or charismatic grounds (charismatic authority).^[10] These beliefs are part of an ideology, a “system of representations (ideas, images, feelings, opinions, beliefs) held to be true by an agent in the position where these beliefs allow him to give meaning and value to his practices and to the reality which surrounds him.”^[11] Ideology’s role as a legitimating force is pivotal because, as Ricœur states, “no absolutely rational system of legitimacy exists.”^[12] In fact, “the very structure of legitimation itself ensures the necessary role of ideology, which must bridge the tension that characterizes the legitimation process, a tension between the claim to legitimacy made by the authority and the belief in this legitimacy offered by the citizenry.”^[13] Propaganda’s effectiveness therefore rests in its ability to impose beliefs as legitimate (be they conscious or unconscious), founded on an ideology, in order to provoke an action in a given context.

In specific cases where propaganda notably calls upon symbolic objects, it may be considered to be a particular *dispositif* of symbolic politics: “an ensemble of heterogeneous strategies, involving the production of symbolic objects and their mobilization in power relationships, put in place by agents and institutions which aspire to legitimize or contest a social order.”^[14] I will base my discussion on the exploitation of musical works for purposes of propaganda on this definition, while insisting on the importance of their aesthetic and historic contextualization, which is at the heart of specific *dispositifs*. This approach focuses on the performance and utterance contexts of musical works as particular rituals that provide them with a specific significance.^[15] In this sense, it is complementary to approaches developed from the philosophy of language (in particular from speech act theory) or from moral philosophy, based on the semantic dimension of the message delivered by the propaganda, as well as approaches developed from the political economy analysis of mass media in democracy.^[16]

3. Ambiguous relations between music and propaganda

One musical work may contain several meanings, depending on the political rituals from which it is issued, the historical context of its creation and its reception, and the aesthetic and ideological discourses surrounding it. It also involves the efforts of political

powers to fix or to maintain at least one of the possible meanings in a work that is inherently polysemic. Thus, the manipulation of a musical work's polysemy through specific political rituals and measures constitutes one of the primary methods of propaganda, even if the deployment and reception of musical works at the heart of propaganda *dispositifs* are never linear and unequivocal. Their effectiveness and even the possibility of their deployment depend on many historical, aesthetic, and sociological factors. As Jerrold Levinson asserts, works of art are directly linked to "the history of their production, to the artistic contexts in which they are created, as well as the intentions of their authors."[\[17\]](#)

This idea opposes a vision of relations between works of art and propaganda founded on the mimetic Platonic tradition, and more particularly on what Rancière calls the *pedagogical* model of the art's effectiveness. According to this model, the mimetic tradition would suppose "a relation of continuity between the aesthetic forms of artistic production and the aesthetic forms according to which the feelings and thoughts of those who come by them are affected."[\[18\]](#) Thus, artistic representations would be "a set of signs formed according to an artist's intention." Indeed, "by recognizing these signs the spectator is supposedly induced into a specific reading of the world around us, leading, in turn, to the feeling of a certain proximity or distance, and ultimately to the spectator's intervening into the situation staged by the author."[\[19\]](#) This model, whose "effectiveness" is difficult to objectify, would not simply be a basis for propaganda art, but would also be, as Rancière remarks, the basis for a certain kind of political art that aspires to contest the contemporary economic and social order: the images and sounds would act directly on individuals, sometimes without their even realizing it, because they reveal, indicate, or incite desire so as to direct their thoughts as much as their actions.[\[20\]](#)

For the contextualist concept that I will defend here, however, the symbolic dimension of musical works and practices may rest on a text or be intrinsic to its material, its form, or its musical language according to aesthetic conventions or artistic traditions.[\[21\]](#) But more often than not, the significance that power grants to works—nationalist, Nazi, anti-fascist, anti-communist—is external to musical material or musical language and rests with the actors according to the context in which it is performed or uttered. On this point, the distinction proposed by Theodore Gracyk between the semantic properties of songs and their pragmatic reinvestment is useful: "semantic properties that are fixed by a work's musico-historical context constrain but do not fully determine the meaning of all subsequent performances. ... One and the same work with an established semantic content can be used to do different things in different performance contexts."[\[22\]](#) Philippe Braud asserts that the significance of symbolic objects must be "constructed by a continuous work of regulation and enrichment of the meaning, carried out at the heart of a group working on an authority that is seen as legitimate."[\[23\]](#) This does not mean that music does not itself carry its own meanings according to its aesthetic characteristics, but rather that one can invest a piece of work with various—even contradictory—categories and discourses.[\[24\]](#) Therefore, it is difficult to define *a priori* without taking performance contexts into consideration. All propaganda involves censorship to define what is and what is not legitimate, despite the fact that such censorship on aesthetic criteria can very often be as problematic as it is

paradoxical.[25]

Finally, the use of musical works is at the heart of symbolic political *dispositifs* primarily by their capacity to bring together emotions through a dramatic unity in political rituals or rituals conducted by the media. Control over musical works and their reception to avoid their re-appropriation or misappropriation by various agents is fundamental for any power that uses them as a way of achieving legitimacy. In this sense, without a fine analysis of the performance and utterance contexts of musical propaganda *dispositifs*, music's multiple meanings and interpretations constitute a sizable problem for a univocal use for propaganda purposes. For example, humanitarian songs in which emotional mobilization occupies a central place are deployed in complex legitimization *dispositifs* to shape a certain moral vision of the world. Humanitarian songs reinforce the supposed apolitical nature of the perpetrators of humanitarian action and its consequences in the medium to long term, making a head-on political criticism of these *dispositifs* difficult, inasmuch that this criticism would involve a debate that the intrinsic urgency of humanitarian action does not allow.

4. Music and propaganda in democracy: the case of humanitarian songs

Humanitarian aid during the famine caused by the Ethiopian civil war between 1983 and 1985, was held up as proof of the supposed moral superiority of the "West." Songs played an important role in the symbolic legitimization of this humanitarian action and the vision of the world that it promoted.[26] Such songs are part of the symbolic political *dispositifs* deployed as propaganda, made much more effective because of their seemingly anodyne and inoffensive nature and their good intentions toward victims whose lives are at risk. Such highly visible songs and concerts continue to be used to raise funds and to legitimate humanitarian action as a response to political and economic issues in the most of mediatized humanitarian catastrophes to date, including Hurricane Katrina (2005), the Haitian earthquake (2010) and the Philippines Haiyan typhoon (2013).[27] Furthermore, in the context of the 2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa, humanitarian songs persist to legitimize charity, humanitarian action, and neo-liberal schemes to 'help' African countries.[28] Thus, my analysis of humanitarian songs as propaganda in democracy could be extended to consider the relationship between politics, morality, and aesthetics in other cases of this particular symbolic political *dispositif*.

In late 1984, musicians and television and film personalities launched several initiatives that were mediatized by major national television networks. Among the first to do so was the singer Bob Geldof, who formed the collective Band Aid in Great Britain and recorded the song *Do They Know It's Christmas?* with, among others, the singers Bono, Phil Collins, and Sting. In July 1985 they organized Live Aid, two simultaneous concerts in London (Wembley Stadium) and Philadelphia (JFK Stadium) broadcast live via radio and television that, according to the organizers, garnered an audience of 1.5 billion, mostly in Europe and North America. In total, between 1985 and 1991, the project raised at least 144 million dollars, managed by the Band Aid Charitable Trust.[29] In the United States, some musicians came together to form the collective USA for Africa and record the song

We Are The World, which rapidly met with great success. Among the musicians were Michael Jackson, Tina Turner, Lionel Ritchie, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, and Bob Dylan; they sold approximately seven million copies and raised more than 60 million dollars.[30]

In France the singer Manu Dibango brought together a group of African musicians in late 1984 to record *Tam Tam pour l'Éthiopie*. Then the French singers Renaud and Valérie Lagrange formed the association *Chanteurs sans frontières* in early 1985 to give "help to victims of famine in every corner of the world, with no consideration whatsoever of political or social order, the sole goal being assistance and charity." [31] They recorded *Chanson pour l'Éthiopie*, which was a great commercial success, and transferred almost all of the funds raised—more than 1.7 million copies sold, worth more than 3 million euros—to *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF) to confront the humanitarian emergency in Ethiopia.[32]

From their beginnings, humanitarian songs and their music videos have been inescapably accompanied by discourse (the construction of victim figures), moral injunctions (the necessity of saving the victims) and mediatised rituals (concerts, artists appearing on television).[33] All these strategies come together to constitute a humanitarian musical *dispositif*, which is a remarkable example of symbolic politics in democracy. One of the foundations of these *dispositifs* is the media-based elaboration of a fiction, which portrays the participation of the artists as spontaneous, urgent, disinterested, and free. This fiction is put in place by the discourse issued from the artists and the media, as well as by the texts in the songs and the artists' actions as shown in the music videos.[34] Moreover, regardless of the geopolitical context, all of these humanitarian songs show men and women with headphones on, pressed into action by the humanitarian "emergency," singing in front of microphones in a recording studio to raise funds to rescue the victims. The media discourses are similar: faced with the unbearable suffering of victims, "we" have had the idea of doing a song for *them*, for the children of this or that country. Humanitarian songs can therefore be seen as media-based hymns of liberal democracies, destined to bring together moral communities that are as ephemeral as they are powerless, at a time when humanitarianism replaces the political ideologies of the twentieth century.

In most media-centered discourses, the participants in humanitarian songs shrug off the diplomatic and strategic questions resulting from their participation, creating an impression of fraternal action which may harm the historical understanding of conflicts and make the establishment of sustainable political and economic solutions difficult for the affected populations.[35] In fact, the effectiveness of these humanitarian musical *dispositifs* is dependent on transforming political issues into moral issues, hiding the historical and geopolitical depth of the problems and rendering the humanitarian intentions immune to attack, since they are morally *good*, *necessary*, and *urgent*. [36] According to Slavoj Žižek, when the media "bombard us with those 'humanitarian crises' which seem constantly to pop up all over the world, one should always bear in mind that a particular crisis only explodes into media visibility as the result of a complex struggle. Properly humanitarian considerations as a rule play a less important role than cultural, ideologico-political, and economic considerations." [37]

The victimization of certain African populations by the humanitarian involvement of *Band Aid* and *Chanteurs sans frontières* transformed the donor public's view of the armed conflict in Ethiopia from a political one to a moral one and the unforeseen consequences of humanitarian action into a moral issue. As Luc Boltanski shows:

The development of a politics of pity thus assumes two classes which are not unequal by reference to merit, as in the problematic of justice, but solely by reference to luck. ... For a politics of pity, the urgency of the action needing to be taken to bring an end to the suffering invoked always prevails over considerations of justice. From such a perspective it is only in a world from which suffering has been banished that justice could enforce its rights.[38]

Bob Geldof, co-founder of *Band Aid*, received the Third World Foundation prize in 1986 for his "mammoth personal crusade against human suffering and human indifference, with which millions the world over identified." [39] The Foundation was of the opinion that he had "created a world-wide community of concerned people. No longer passive spectators, they had become active participants, linked around the globe." [40] Humanitarian songs have therefore marked the imaginations of several generations, with their cortège of victims, heroic doctors, and charitable singers.

However, since the 1980s many individuals, such as the South African poet Khadija Tracey Heeger, have raised concerns about the way in which such songs reduce recipient populations to the status of victims who are deprived of all individuality and ability to act. She summarizes her rejection of the pretences of their lyrics in the introduction of her poem *Cheche La Afrika*:

I am not just famine and war torn,
I am not just derelict white calcium and ravaged
black edifices.
I am not here to be the subject of mourning
and a pageant for the ills of colonialism,
apartheid, femicide, genocide, xenophobia.
My blood is thicker than my sorrows.
My blood is thicker than the ink in those history
books
that would squander the truth about me
and deck the tables of my children with lies about
themselves.
My eyes are open.
I have looked into the fires and in the flames of
time.
The jewels of Africa are revealed.[41]

Nonetheless, the political usefulness of humanitarian musical *dispositifs* is undeniable for the legitimation of governments in liberal democracies and for installing and maintaining a certain social order since the end of the Cold War. François Mitterand, the French president from 1981 to 1995, confirmed this in an appearance on the TF1 television show *Ça nous intéresse, monsieur le Président* on Sunday April 28, 1985. The host, Yves Mourosi, interviewed him about the actions of certain singers to raise funds to fight famine in Ethiopia:

Yves Mourousi: Sing for Africa, sing for Ethiopia, does it do any good in your opinion, you who are familiar with international organizations? When Renaud and a whole group of French singers, when Americans sing for Ethiopia, do you have the impression that it does any good?

François Mitterrand: Yes, because it creates emotion. All societies function with emotion. Societies are not simply mechanisms, and governments and institutions are not machines. Imagination, pity, solidarity, love, they exist, and if these singers are singing for love with their hands held out to help save people, then they are doing something useful, believe me.^[42]

Mitterrand accurately and cynically raised the fundamental point that musical humanitarian *dispositifs* are successful because of their emotional power by referring to the importance of emotions in how a city-state functions, as well as in how the legitimation of power is obtained. Humanitarian songs have undeniably manipulated emotions and enabled the development of a politics of pity in the public sphere. After the collapse of the communist regimes in the East, humanitarianism became a means of action to transform the world *here and now* that would be hypothetically freed from the weight of "ideologies," while taking the place of the welfare state. Humanitarian songs, in agreement with the political logic promoted by humanitarian enterprises, preach help for the less fortunate without regard for who is responsible in conflicts or in the management of crises, while deploying a fiction which paints the "victims" as powerless subjects of neoliberal charity. For Live Aid, Christophe Pirenne indicates, in contrast to the rock festivals of the 1960s, "it was no longer a matter of questioning the way that Western society works, but rather it was a question of treating the wounds of that time while adhering to the capitalist principle of healing through money."^[43] Such political powers maintain the illusion that citizens can "do" something to change the world through the spectacle of the media; donors become consumers of the poverty of others, transformed into benevolent bearers of charity through the commercial exploitation of moralistic musical works.

5. Propaganda, fiction and the political dimension of music

There is propaganda, which acts a vehicle for a defined ideological discourse to maintain or transform a social order wherever there is a deliberate will to seduce or to persuade a specific group through various discursive and symbolic strategies. The ritualization of musical works, such as in humanitarian musical spectacles, constitutes one of the most powerful means of using music as a source of propaganda through its capacity to trigger emotions and to construct imaginary scenarios. This ritualization has the power to shape perceptions of reality because it presents facts and situations as truth, according to Ellul:

In our time ... facts do not assume reality in the people's eyes unless they are established by propaganda. Propaganda, in fact, creates truth in the sense that it creates in men subject to propaganda all the signs and indications of true believers. For modern man, propaganda is really creating truth. This means that truth is powerless without

propaganda.[44]

However, as Rancière highlights, “there is no ‘real world’.
Instead, there are definite configurations of what is given as real,
as the object of our perceptions and the field of our interventions.
What is ‘real’ always is a matter of construction, a matter of
‘fiction’.”[45] Propaganda’s role, therefore, is one of fictional
construction with a specific political bearing, giving its agents the
capacity to act and to speak, constructing scenarios, and
legitimizing a defined political, economic, and social order. This
fiction’s power rests, overall, in its capacity to overwhelm and
delegitimize alternative ways of thinking, alternative ways
of looking deeper into reality, and alternative ways of giving a
voice to agents in the public sphere who previously had none. As
Rancière asserts:

What characterizes the mainstream fiction of the
police order is that it passes itself off as the real,
that it feigns to draw a clear-cut line between what
belongs to the self-evidence of the real and what
belongs to the field of appearances, representations,
opinions and utopias. Consensus means precisely
that the sensory is given as univocal. Political and
artistic fictions introduce dissensus by hollowing out
that ‘real’ and multiplying it in a polemical way. The
practice of fiction undoes, and then re-articulates,
connections between signs and images, images and
times, and signs and spaces, framing a given sense
of reality, a given “commonsense.” It is a practice
that invents new trajectories between what can be
seen, what can be said and what can be done.[46]

Controlling music’s polysemic nature is a primary concern in its
use for the purposes of propaganda. To be effective, propaganda
must remove from music, or any art, what Rancière calls the
aesthetic distance. It means the capacity of actors to interpret
musical works differently from what the artist originally intended,
outside of its initial performance context and exterior to a specific
configuration of communal life: “the suspension of every
determinate relation correlating the production of art forms and a
specific social function.”[47] The link between music and
propaganda could therefore be defined as the willingness of a
defined agent or counter-agent to control the symbolic and
emotional dimension of musical works by giving them a meaning
in a particular context so as to impose a certain social order or to
invalidate other possible political configurations of reality.
Humanitarian musical *dispositifs* impose a moral and a political
construction of reality, removing the ‘aesthetic distance’ of
musical works and elaborating a charitable fiction.

Nevertheless, I consider that it is possible to create musical works
with an assumed political and ethical dimension without having to
associate them with a propagandistic *dispositif* or an overall
propaganda system. A full examination of this topic may require
another essay but I think that such works require more systematic
consideration of the possibilities offered through fiction in contexts
of specific representation, as well as of the political dimension of
collaborative musical practices. Such compositional approaches
would offer other ways of exploring present actions and make the
fulfillment of collective utopias thinkable, while at the same time
accepting the risk of polysemy and aesthetic distance inherent in

each individual's subjective reception of a work of art.

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Endnotes

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[2] Michel Foucault defines the *dispositif* [mechanism] as “a resolutely heterogeneous ensemble, composed of discourses, institutions, architectural developments, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical propositions, morals, philanthropies; in what is said and what is not said, these are the elements of the *dispositif*. The *dispositif* is itself the network that one can establish between these elements. See Michel Foucault, “Le jeu de Michel Foucault,” in *Dits et écrits II: 1976-1988* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001 [1977]), pp. 298-329.

[3] This analysis revisits ideas previously developed in Luis Velasco Pufleau, “Chansons humanitaires, dépolitisation des conflits et moralisation des relations internationales à la fin de la Guerre froide,” *Relations Internationales*, 156 (2014), 109-123.

[4] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda. The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Vintage, 1973 [1965]), p. 20.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[6] *Loc cit.*

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 62.

[10] Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978 [1922]), pp. 215-254.

[11] Alain Accardo, *Introduction à une sociologie critique*

(Marseille: Agone, 2006), p. 21.

[12] Paul Ricœur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 13.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Luis Velasco Pufleau, "Autoritarisme, politique symbolique et création musicale. Stratégies de légitimation symbolique dans le Mexique postrévolutionnaire et le Nigeria postcolonial," *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 19, 4 (2012), 15.

[15] 'Ritual' is understood here, after Victor Turner and Ronald Grimes, as "transformative performance revealing major classifications, categories, and contradictions of cultural processes." (Victor Turner, "Process, System and Symbol: A New Anthropological Synthesis," *Daedalus*, 106, 3 [1977], 77).

[16] For example, see the theoretical framework proposed by Sheryl Tuttle Ross in "The Propaganda Power of Protest Songs: the Case of Madison's Solidarity Sing-Along," *Contemporary Aesthetics*, 11 (2013) or the propaganda model developed by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

[17] Jerrold Levinson, *L'art, la musique, l'histoire* (Paris: L'éclat, 1998), p. 7.

[18] Jacques Rancière, "Les paradoxes de l'art politique," in *Le spectateur émancipé* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2008), p. 58.

[19] Jacques Rancière, "The paradoxes of political art," in Steven Corcoran, ed. and trans., *Dissensus. On Politics and Aesthetics*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2010 [2008]), pp. 135-36.

[20] For various examples of this issue see Toby Clark, *Art and Propaganda in the Twentieth Century* (Londres: Calmann and King, 1997).

[21] Jerrold Levinson defines aesthetic contextualism as "the claim that works of art are ontologically, epistemically, and appreciatively bound up with their contexts of creation and projection." See Jerrold Levinson, "Contextualisme esthétique," *Philosophiques*, 32, 1 (2005), 125-133.

[22] Theodore Gracyk, "Meanings of Songs and Meanings of Songs Performances," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 71, 1 (2013), 25.

[23] Philippe Braud, *Sociologie politique* (Paris: LGDJ, 2008), p. 53.

[24] The example of the song "Lili Marleen," sung by both the Nazi troops and Allied troops during the Second World War with slight variations in the lyrics, confirms the capacity of different actors in the same conflict to appropriate musical works and the difficulties faced by the political authorities in anticipating and controlling these dynamics. On this subject see Rosa Sala Rose, *Lili Marleen: Canción de amor y muerte* (Barcelona: Global Rhythm Press, 2008); Christina Baade, "Between the Lines. 'Lili Marlene,' Sexuality, and the Desert War," in Susan Fast and Kip Pegley, eds., *Music, Politics and Violence* (Middletown: Wesleyan

University Press, 2012), pp. 83-103.

[25] For example, see the incoherence of aesthetic criteria in the Nazi censorship of the *Entartete Musik*, organized in Dusseldorf in May 1938 as part of the 1st Congress of the Music of the Reich, where works by Webern, Stravinsky, Mendelssohn, Mahler, Bartók, Milhaud, and the German composer Hermann Reutter—the latter being close to the regime—were banned. On this subject see Amaury Du Closel, *Les voix étouffées du IIIe Reich. Entartete Musik* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2005); as well as Laure Schnapper, "Qu'est-ce que la musique 'dégénérée'?", in Laurent Feneyrou, ed., *Résistances et utopies sonores* (Paris: Cdmc, 2005), pp. 27-37.

[26] The concert at Madison Square Garden in New York in 1971, organized by George Harrison to help the civilian victims of the armed conflict in Bangladesh, constitutes a precedent for this legitimization.

[27] For some examples of humanitarian songs, see the YouTube channel *Chanson humanitaire*:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFC3_49dijnhUqhHFW3ACjg.

[28] This is the case of Bob Geldof's *Band Aid 30* and the remake of their song "Do They Know It's Christmas?", released on November 17, 2014 (see <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/nov/17/band-aid-30-single-raises-1-million-pounds-within-minutes-x-factor-debut>). The French version of this song will be released on December 1, 2014, by the singer Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, wife of the former French President Nicolas Sarkozy. In the current context of Sarkozy's contest for the Presidency of the French Party Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP), on December 6, 2014, the lead role of Carla Bruni-Sarkozy in this symbolic political *dispositif* has a manifest propagandistic dimension.

[29] Other sources cite 225 billion dollars as the actual figure (Bénédicte Rey, "Band Aid, une vague de solidarité inégalée qui a servi d'impulsion," *AFP Infos Mondiales*, November 26, 2009). While the exact sum of money raised is unverifiable, the *Band Aid* Charitable Trust gives the figure of 144 million for the period 1985-1991 (<http://www.live8live.com/docs/bat-withlovefrombandaid%20.pdf>, consulted the 20th August 2013). Additional information concerning the division of the funds raised through the sale of *Band Aid* and *Band Aid 20* DVDs and CDs is available on the BBC website. (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/4055325.stm>, consulted February 20, 2014).

[30]
http://www.usaforafrica.org/We_Are_the_World/introduction.html, consulted February 20, 2014.

[31] "Statuts association 'Chanteurs sans frontières' (Article 2. Objet)," Sous-Préfecture de Boulogne-Billancourt, 12 juin 1985.

[32] *La chanson pour l'Éthiopie* was the second most sold hit of the 1980s in France, just behind *La danse des canards* ("Le top France des 80's," *Le Parisien*, January 11, 2012).

[33] For an analysis of the main musical, visual, and discursive characteristics of humanitarian songs, see Luis Velasco Pufleau, "Chansons humanitaires, dépolitisation des conflits et moralisation

des relations internationales à la fin de la Guerre froide," *op. cit.*

[34] For an example see: <http://www.unicef.fr/contenu/actualite-humanitaire-unicef/paris-africa-lhistoire-dune-belle-mobilisation-pour-la-corne-de-lafrique-2011-11-02>, consulted February 20, 2014.

[35] From the abundant bibliography on this subject, see particularly Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *Anthropologie et développement. Essai en socio-anthropologie du changement social* (Paris: Karthala-APAD, 1995); Bernard Hours, *L'Idéologie humanitaire ou le spectacle de l'altérité perdue* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998); Laëtitia Atlani-Duhault and Laurent Vidal (eds.), *Anthropologie de l'aide humanitaire et du développement* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2009); Didier Fassin, *La Raison humanitaire. Une histoire morale du temps présent* (Paris: Seuil/Gallimard, 2010); as well as Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, eds., *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

[36] From among the primary critics concerning the moral and political implications of humanitarian action, see particularly Bernard Hours, *op. cit.*

[37] Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books, 2009 [2008]), p. 2.

[38] Luc Boltanski, *Distant Suffering. Morality, Media and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1993]), p. 5.

[39] "Third World Foundation News: 1986 Third World Prize," *Third World Quarterly*, 9, 2 (1987), 699.

[40] "Third World Foundation News: 1987 Third World Lecture," *Third World Quarterly*, 9, 3 (1987), 1044.

[41] Khadija Tracey Heeger, *Cheche La Afrika* (extract), reproduced in the program for the Cape Cultural Collective presented on October 8 and 9, 2013 at *Maison de la Poésie* in Paris as part of the 42nd *Festival d'Automne à Paris* (Autumn Festival in Paris).

[42] Interview with François Mitterand, French president, for the TF1 program *Ça nous intéresse, monsieur le Président*, Paris, Maison de la Radio, April 28, 1985 (<http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/857006300.html>, consulted February 20, 2014).

[43] Christophe Pirene, *Une histoire musicale du rock* (Paris: Fayard, 2011), p. 442.

[44] Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda. The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

[45] Jacques Rancière, "The paradoxes of political art," *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[46] *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 138.