

Schiller, Melanie, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

“We are the natives of Trizonesia!” - German Pop Music and Nationalism

After WW2, Germany was divided into four sectors. When in 1948 the Western Allies decided on a collaborative administration, the first term to represent the shared West German identity was coined: Trizonesia. This term became particularly famous through a popsong. In this paper, I will analyze the intricate relation between popular music, national identity, and belonging. I will scrutinize the different narratives of “Germanness” in the early post-war years and the re-articulations of a non-existent nation in a carnival song which became so popular that it was even used as a surrogate anthem for this newly forming nation. By doing a textual analysis of the song: “We are the natives of Trizonesia”, I will show how not only popular music is an excellent medium for exploring national identities, but also how Anderson’s famous “imagined community” (and a new national belonging) is articulated in a performative act in the streets of Cologne.