UNDERGROUND VS. MAINSTREAM CULTURAL PRODUCTION- VALORIZING THE UNDERGROUND AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH ON UNDERGROUND ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC MOVEMENT

Masters Thesis

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Table of Contents

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

When looking at literature on sociology we come across many terms, which describe the two movements central to my masters thesis. Dominant or mainstream culture is one whose values, language, and ways of behaving are imposed on a subordinate culture or cultures through economic or political power. This may be achieved through legal or political suppression of other sets of values and patterns of behavior, or by monopolizing the media of communication.[1] Here we also acknowledge that, whereas traditional societies can be characterized by a high consistency of cultural traits and customs, modern societies are often a conglomeration of different, often competing, cultures and subcultures.

Here we welcome into the picture the counterculture or the underground movement, A culture in which the values expressed and promoted are in potential or actual opposition to those of the dominant culture, sometimes amounting to a wholesale rejection of that culture. The term became particularly prominent in the 1960s as a label for the radical culture of the hippies, and for particular variants of popular culture such as rock music.[2] It is clear that underground presents an opposite and contradicts the mainstream.

Another reference explains underground or counterculture as a social group or movement whose values and way of life are opposed to the mainstream of society to some degree. The term is often used specifically to refer to the mix of alternative lifestyles and practices that spread through the USA and other Western countries in the 1960s. These embraced commitments to peace and civil rights on the one hand, and experimentation with drugs, mystical practices, and communal living on the other, animated by the decade's popular music (A dictionary of human geography)[3]. What is important here is the strong connection of such cultures with music and more generally art itself.

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[1] Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199683581.001.0001/acref-9780199683581-e-634?rskey=SApH8b&result=1

[2] Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199599868.001.0001/acref-9780199599868-e-296?rskey=Tea5UM&result=1

[3] Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199599868.001.0001/acref-9780199599868-e-296?rskey=itHl8X&result=1

So how can we delve further in to this complex relation between two opposing worlds of cultural production in todays reality. Karl Marx, although he never devoted a serious text to arts and aesthetics specifically, he did however apply Marxist ideas and his line of thought to the subject. In the book Marxism and Art, Mynard Solomon (1974) analyses how these ideas and categories have been applied to art and the theory of art. When looking at the two cultural movements, constantly changing due to the internal and external factors influencing the process of evolvement, it is appropriate to apply Marxist critique of the social and economic system. By doing so we see that artists and thus art itself, fall under the current mode of production and its systems of organization.

"According to Karl Marx, art is part of the superstructure and is inescapably determined by the mode of production or the economic system. Capitalism produces commodities, each one of which is a "fetish", or an object with abstract value. Fetishism is the projection of human nature and of human desires projected upon an external object. If one accepts the proposition that all art is commodified, (and art must be a commodity in a capitalist society), then certain consequences logically follow. All artists are cultural producers, laboring in a capitalist system for the benefits of the market. All art made within this system is a commodity to be bought and sold as objects of desire upon which human feelings are projected. The work of art in a capitalist society must be a consumer object and therefore must also be an object of desire, a fetish"(Willete, 2011, para. 2)

Art as an ideology, popularizing a certain kind of culture, is therefore necessarily connected to the current system and, in the next logic step, under the control of the ruling classes. Now, when dialectical thinking framework is applied, there is natural tendency for a counter force, a contradicting movement to be born out of the thesis itself. Hence, the mutual existence of mainstream and underground is commenced. What interests me is why people decide to identify themselves with underground rather than mainstream. What are the contradicting points of these two movements and what are their similarities on the other hand, and crucially, how do these elements reflect (are influenced by) on the current system of production at hand, which is capitalism. In the end, in accordance with dialectical thinking, I would also like to acknowledge a certain pattern, a sort of synthesis, as a result of these two worlds colliding and constantly evolving. I have a personal interest in electronic dance music, that in my opinion is quite a peculiar case to study within this topic. It has both a really strong presence in todays mainstream, popular culture, and a thriving underground scene with hotspots like Berlin, London and Amsterdam.

In the next few paragraphs I will present some general ideas regarding the dialectical method and the two cultural concepts.

Based on the essence of ancient Greek philosophers, G.W.F. Hegel went on to devise what is today known as Hegelian dialectics. It consists of three main concepts, thesis, being a certain movement or a social phenomenon, antithesis as its counter movement and synthesis, as the outcome of the two previous concepts colliding with and contradicting one another.

"Dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the common-sense notion of "thing" (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notion of "process" (which contains it history and possible futures) and "relation" (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations)" (Ollman,2003, p.13)

Karl Marx is well known as an author, resorting to the use of such dialectics in his studies on society and current systems of production (capitalism) with their specific relations and approaches to producing, exchanging and distributing. Thus, he has used dialectical thinking when devising his take on the world, concentrating extensively on the system and its implications for workers on one side and capitalists (owners of production sources) on the other.

In his book, Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marxs Method (2003), Bertell Ollman provides a close look at how dialectical thinking was applied by Marx in his studies. A top-bottom approach is present with such thinking, while dialectical research strives at understanding four kinds of relations: identity/ difference, interpenetration of opposites, quantity/quality and contradiction (Ollman, 2003).

Presupposing "mainstream" and "underground" as two, not just opposite but contradicting movements, I will try to acknowledge these four relations between them, as they intertwine and coexist in the complex social reality.

"In what Marx calls the common sense approach, also found in formal logic, things are either the same/identical or different, not both" (Ollman, 2003, p.15). For instance, if we look at different elements, embodied in the mainstream culture, we could easily describe the difference between musicians (superstar artists), their image or external appearance and also the message conveyed by their music. With dialectical thinking we go one step further in explaining their mutual identity. All these elements possess a common notion of working in favour and for the ruling class, by preserving their status as such. Art and culture, representing the mainstream, is seen as a certain kind of ideology, constructed by people in power with the intention of making their authority look natural and uncontested. As such, art and culture present themselves as an important tool, used by the elites, to blind the people and impose their will.

With interpenetration, it is all about the perspectival element influencing the two contradicting movements, so that they appear and function differently, due to their surrounding conditions. A simple example can be given by record labels, as a concept present in both mainstream and the underground. If we look at it from the mainstream perspective, we see huge corporations backed by large amounts of capital adhering to the tastes of the masses with the help of superstar artists and exaggerated marketing campaigns. On the other hand, we look at the record labels, operating in the underground, as a sort of cultural organizations, purveying a certain mixture of values and aesthetic contents, catering to the tastes of small or rather specific crowds. We also perceive them as the cultural participants, "fighting" against or opposing the line of thought offered by mainstream counterparts. It should be emphasized here, that recognition of things in such manner, of course, depends on who is looking at them.

"What is called quantity/quality is a relation between two temporally differentiated moments within the same process"(Ollman, 2003, p.16). This relation is especially important in my opinion, as it helps to explain how culture, at one point under the domain of underground, can grow out of this state into its mainstream perception. It enables a way of thinking that can perceive quantitative changes in underground culture, which, through time, can result in a qualitative change- underground becoming mainstream. It will be interesting to see in my thesis how different external (or internal for that matter) forces influence the process to take this course.

The last, and also the most important relation of dialectical thought, is of course the contradiction. Contradiction presents the optimal means for bringing change and interaction (incompatible developments of different elements in the same process, relation) of these opposing tendencies in the present. (Ollman, 2003). When applying this thought to mainstream as the thesis, it has delivered a culture, taken in by the largest crowds, finally achieving their unification and conformity. In itslef, it has provided a departure point for underground, the antithesis, as an alternative, rebelling against and criticizing the system by promoting the opposite set of values and beliefs.

With my current knowledge on the process at hand, it is a little bit far fetched to acknowledge a clear synthesis, although in my opinion, it comes about as a never ending transition of underground culture into the mainstream sphere. As such it possesses fewer opportunities to threaten the ruling elites and their status quo.

The true lesson, however, which I have come to realize just now, at the very end of writing my thesis, is that with dialectics, one gains a possibility of looking, analyzing and understanding something as a never ending process of constantly evolving concepts. It is only with comprehensive inclusion of as many factors as possible, influencing the process under examination, that we can confidently carry out and develop a dialectical understanding of a certain phenomenon.

Such way of thinking hasnt just enabled me to inherit all the contradictions present in todays world of cultural production. More importantly, it opened a new perspective on how to break down the process of life, whatever that might be, and acknowledge it in a more transparent, holistic way. This is when, the true, esoteric knowledge reveals itself.

To that end, I can now present my thesis as one of infinite exploration, and not as a standard piece of academic research aimed at establishing a definite argument. In all honesty, this has as well accounted for quite some problems, evident especially in the structure of the thesis and its forceful ending. For to reach the greater truth, one must never stop exploring or, worse yet, start ascribing dogmatic conclusions to the topic at hand. What is thesis today, can be the anti thesis tomorrow and vice versa.

In order to perceive the true value of something, we must go beyond the standard approach, and recognize something- cultural production- for the thesis and anti thesis it contains. Dialectics allow that kind of critical thinking, while acknowledging the process in which the two contradictions emerge.

3. MAINSTREAM AND UNDERGROUND- ESSENTIAL TENISON BETWEEN THE TWO AND VALORIZATION OF THE UNDERGROUND

To think of the underground is to think of something rebelious, something opposing the dominant system of values, something that carries a certain kind of cultural message. What better way to study different forms of underground movements than through their artistic production and cultural output.

A certain from of expression, comonly practised in numerous underground movements, also containing a strong political and activist aplication, is described as zine or fanzine. Originating from the field of science fiction, it has gone to become an important

media for carrying information, uninfluenced by corporate institutions, usually in charge of providing people with news and information.

   "In an era marked by the rapid centralization of corporate media, zines are indepenednt and localized, coming out of cities, suburbs and small towns across the US, assembled on kitchen tables. They celebrate the every person in a world of celebrity. Losers in a society that rewards the best and the brightest. Rejecting the corporate dream of an atomized population broken down in to descrete and instrumental target markets, zine writers form networks and forge communities around diverse indentities and interests. Emplyed within the grim new economy of service, temporary, and "flexible" work, they redifine work, setting out their creative labour done on zines as a protest against the drudgery of working for anothers profit" (Ducombe, 2014, p.7)

   What Stephen Ducombe is describing in this paragraph is sort of DIY publicaton, not just pursued within the zine itslef, but also more generaly- make your own culture and stop consuming that which is made for you (Ducombe, 2014). Made by the people for the people within the same interests, zines are meant to cover the informational needs of uderground movments. As they are made by non-professionals and not offcially published, people in charge of doing them usually don't get any financial compensation in return for their work. Thus other reasons, such as preserving underground culture and its values and core beliefs, prevail and gain that much bigger importance. Two movements, where such form of communication and raising awareness has played an especially big role in the beginning are punk movment and underground electronic dance music movement- Rave culture, to which we will pay grater attenttion in this thesis.

   Ducombe (2014) goes on to further explain the nature of zines:

   "Reffusing to believe the pundits and polititians who assure us that the laws of the market are synonimous with the laws of nature, the zine community is busy creating a culture whose value isnt calculated as profit and loss on ruled ledger pages, but is assembled in the margins, using criteria like control, connection and authenticity. I came to realise, considered in their totality, zines arent capricious ramblings of isolated cranks (though some certenly were), but the variegated voices of subterranean world staking out its identity through the cracks of capitalism and in the shadows of mass media. Zines are speaking to and for an underground culture. And while other groups of individuals come together around the shared creation of their own culture, what distinguishes zinsters from garden-variety hobbyists is their political self- consciouseness. Many zinsters consider what they do an alternative to and strike against the commercial culture and consumer capitalism" (Ducombe, 2014, p.7,8).

   In relation to dialectical thinking, zines, as a concept adopted by underground movments of all kinds, present a clear and well articulated contradiction to the mainstream. Their two sole purposes were, informing other memebers of movments on new developments, events and other activities connected to it, and articulation of the contradiction and disagreement with the current system of production, ruling elites and their ideologies, dominating in the societies superstructure. Later on I will describe how this has possibly had a negative influence on the dialectical process as a whole, with the resulting synthesis again priroritizing corporate interests, but for now we can acknowledge them as an important source of information on underground initiatves of all kinds, their values, principles and ways of acting.

In 1976 a cross national analysis of the underground press and dominant cultures magazines was undertaken by James L. Spates, with the objective of acknowledging values, pertaining to both poles. "These objectives were met by conducting a content analysis of the underground press from 1967-72 in the three countries most integrally involved in countercultural activities-the United States, Canada and Great Britain-and a comparable analysis of the dominant culture press from 1957-59 and 1967-72 in the same countries"(Spates, 1976, p.3).

At the beginning of the survey, author presents us a short description of the two opposing movements as acknowledged in the sixties. Considering underground, the main force was presented by hippies and their ideologies, as the first real movement to oppose the values of the corporate system and its pursuit of success and progress at any cost. The movement mostly consisted of young midle class people (Americans, since the movement has its roots there), who, through education, have come te realize their discontent. After the1960s, underground movements and initiatives have emerged in many different and further distinguished social settings, with different values and different backgrounds in terms of art, aesthetics and lifestyles. However, the did all retain the common notin of not acceding to ideologies and exploitation of the leading classes. Hippes, as we know them from the sixties do not exist anymore in such form.

But what is more interesting here is the description of a system Spates (1976) provides to presents the opposite, dominant culture:

"The Values of Western Society: Instrumental priorities when sociologists characterize the dominant thrust of Western values, they generally point to a single theme and its variations- the "work hard, be a success, be progressive" ethic. Hence, Talcott Parsons characterizes the main thrust of Western society as one of "instrumental activism," with individuals and groups within the society as a whole expected to work ascetically and unceasingly toward "the good life" and "the good society" (Parsons and White, 1964; Parsons, 1966; 1971). This overarching instrumental value orientation has three main subemphases. First, there is an obligation to continuing personal and group achievement, of doing more and better than has been done before and attaining public recognition for such efforts (Parsons and White, 1964: 196-8). Second, there is a requirement that cognitive processes in general and rationality in particular be the chief means of attaining individual and group ends (Williams, 1970:487-9, 464-8). And last, there is an expectation that the economic/occupational level of social organization should be the principal locus of personal or group efforts (Parsons, 1955:11-3; Parsons and White, 1964; Williams, 1970:454-5). In arguing that the above instrumental orientation is preeminent in Western ideology, most theorists are not claiming that, other important value emphases-such as democracy, equality or individuality (cf. Williams, 1970)-are not extant within the culture, but, rather, are suggesting that most Westerners tend to place their priorities along instrumental lines (Parsons, 1971: chs. 7, 8). It is just this priority on instrumentalism, however, that many young members of Western society found so objectionable in the late 1960s" (Spates, 1976, p.869).

Mind you this is a description of the system back in the seventies, yet it could be transcribed in to todays situation without any kind of adjustments. Hence the values are the same, and the dialectical process, taking place in the past decades, has seemingly always ended with the same result of underground being incorporated and rearranged by the system, to not present a threat anymore.

Through analysis of underground press, to which I am a little bit sceptical, and dominant culture press, they have found some genral conclusions regarding the core values of each. To first explain my scepticism, although these- underground- publications do provide content, that contradicts the common notions of dominant culture, you could not call them the underground press in that true sense. You could not describe them as, for instance, zines. The aim of these papers, regardless of the message, was still to address the biggest crowds possible, the mass if you want. Nevertheless, they do propagate and represent the underground culture and its values.

The results, gathered from the content analysis, show two important things. Values in the dominant culture press have not changed in the observed era, still emphasising the common notion of success and hard work within the competitive markets. On the other hand, underground press has undergone a transition in values, where the "expressive" values, previousely with the highest percentage, have ben replaced on the number one spot by the "political" values. This is just another observation of the dialectical process, resulting in a negative manner.

To look at these papers as a movement, they were basically the victims of their own success and growth, as they couldnt translate their message and values to the new mainstream environment, in which they suddenly had an interest to operate. With the emphasis on political values in their publications, they were clearly loosing the "underground" appeal and replacing it with a mere politicaly radical subculture. As such they can not be seen as an alternative in that whole sense. Just as a political alternative. In the process of moving from one pole to another, they lost their participants. In marxian terms, we could say that they were trying to establish their own "superstructure", influencing the common consciouseness of society, but couldnt compete against the one allready established.

Ducombe acknowledges the same notion in his analysis of zines:

"More disturbing was that zines and underground culture didn't seem to be any sort of threat to this above-ground world. Quite the opposite: "alternative" culture was being celebrated in the mainstream media and used to create new styles and profits for the commercial cultural industry. The history of all rebelious cultural and political movements is the history of the unavoidable contrdiction of staking out new ground within and through the landscape of the past. But today, this laying of claims may be harder than ever. No longer is there a staid burgeois to confront avant-garde art or a square America to shock with counter-cultural value; instead there is a sophisticated marketing machine which gobbles up anything novel and recreats it as a product of niche market" (Ducombe, 2014, p.9).

Looking through the dialectical lense, underground or countercultural movements need a new approach, new way of batteling the battle of contradictions, if the outcome or synthesis is to be more receptive for its values.

Brian wilson (2002) in his analysis of youth resistance and rave scene, is able to acknowledge this fact, and thus presents a new line of thought regarding the dialectical process. The fact that this acknowledgement is achieved by analysing rave culture (underground electronic dance music movement), presents an additional benefit to the thesis at hand. In trying to define current rave culture in Canada by looking at previous theories regarding youth culture he finds out:

"Alternatively, the MIPC theorists noted here took the subculture concept and popular notions of 'resistance' to their ultimate conclusion (or, more accurately, to their death). In the broader context of youth cultural theory, McRobbiee t. al. andt he MIPC effectively extended traditional explanations of youth cultural behaviour that focused largely on the ways that youth reactively and proactively deal with feelings of alienation. In doing so, these 'post-subculture' scholars concentrated on the potential for youth to be, on one hand, apathetic and passive in their cultural activities (i.e., MIPC), and on the other hand, optimistic and creative in utilizing alternative methods of empowerment/resistance (e.g. dance) - methods that in no way resemble the spectacular stylistic forms of resistance that characterized (classical interpretations of) punks and skinheads (i.e., McRobbie)" (Wilson, 2002, p. 380/81).

Replacing proactive and reactive behaviour with aphaty and passiveness, but still being able to utilize alternative methods of empowerment/resistance through optimism and creativity, gives this specific underground movement a fighting chance in an eternal dialectical process of life.

4. APPROPRIATION OF THE DIALECTICAL METHOD IN UNDERSTANDING MINASTREAM AND UNDERGROUND

4.1 Basics of dialectics

In order to grasp the full potential of dialectical method, we must first ask ourselves, what are the main objectives and preffered results when dialectics are applied. Ollman (2003) sums it up nicely in the following sentence answer:

"The laws of the dialectic do not in themselves explain, or prove, or predict anything, or cause anything to happen. Rather they are ways of organizing the most common forms of change and interaction that exist on any level of generality both for purposes of study and intervention in to the world of which they are part" (Ollman, 2003, p.20)

Hence the main objective is to look at a certain phenomenon from many different angles, in order to obtain as extensive picture on it as possible. Marx with this in mind, applied seven leveles of generality when analyzing a certain concept, but we will return to that a little bit later on. Let us first acknowledge the origins of the dialectical method and the all important destinction between opposition and contradiction- dialectical opposition as one of the basics of dialectical thought:

"The origins of this dialectic go back to Plato. Both opposites are negatives, in the sense that they are un-real, non-things (Undinge)—they are ideas. 'The notion of true dialectic', says Hegel in reference to Plato, 'is to demonstrate the necessary movement of pure notions, without thereby resolving these into nothing, for the result, simply expressed, is that they are this movement, and the universal is just the unity of these opposite notions " (Colletti, 2011, para. 3).

What Colletti (2011) tries to explain in his blog entry is the difference betwen real oposition and dialectical contradiction, which anticipates change, interaction and constant movement of opposing entities, thus resulting in a dialectical interpretation of the phenomenon at hand. The difference between real oposition (opposition without contradiction) and dialectical contradiction is comprehensely grasped with the following passage:

"Dialectical Opposition is traditionally expressed by the formula 'a not-a'. It is the instance in which one opposite cannot stand without the other and vice-versa (mutual attraction of opposites). Not-a is the negation of a. In itself and for itself it is nothing; it is the negation of the other and nothing else. Therefore if we wish to attach any significance to not-a, we must at the same time know what a is, i.e. what not-a is negating. But a, too, is negative. Just as not-a is its negation, so a is the negation of not-a. Thus since to say a is in effect equivalent to saying not-not-a, a too, if it is to have any meaning, must be referred to the element of which it is the negation. Neither of the two poles is anything in itself or for itself; each is a negative. Furthermore, each is a negative-relation. If in fact we wish to know what one extreme is, we must at the same time know what the other is, which the first element is negating. Each term therefore, to be itself, implies a relation to the other term; the result is unity (the unity of opposites). Only within this unity is each term the negation of the other" (Colletti, 2011, para. 2)

The destinction between the two provides a backbone to the dialectical method, acknowledging for the fact that a certain entity, or social phenomenon as is the case in my masters thesis, can not possess any significance, prior to understanding what it is trying to negate. Therefore underground as a social and artistic movement, in its broadest sense possible, does not possess any sense or logical explenation, until its element of negation-mainstream, is put in to the picture.

These two movements have both emerged in the comming decades after world war two, when technological developments and other socio-economic factors, providing new appropriations of material productive forces, have constituted a corresponding economic structure of society- capitalism, with its Capitalists or the classes in ownership of productive sources, and the laborers or classes in position of exploitation by Capitalists. Of course, capitalism with its class divisons and pertaining ideologies was present longe before the time after the war. Heretofore, it was allready studied and analyzed by Karl Marx, a famus german philosopher, whom I brought here into the picture with a clear inttention. He was no stranger to the dialectical method, applying it in his writtings and bringing in to existence the marxian thought or Marxism, which sums up his teachings, especially in the fields of economy, history and society. The initial thoughts in this paragraph pertain to the most basic Marxian thoughts.

Of course, Marx was confronted with the concept of dialectics through the literature by G.W.F. Hegel, another greman philsopher, who in turn draw his from greek philosophers, Plato, Heraclitus amongst others. Altough not devised by Marx himself(he never used the term) the dialectics took on a new form, acknowledged with the term dialectical materialism:

"The official name given to Marxist philosophy, although it is not a phrase that Karl Marx himself used. Dialectical materialism combines the dialectical approach of G. W. F. Hegel with the philosophical materialism of Ludwig Feuerbach (one of the so-called 'Young Hegelians'). Following Feuerbach, who attempted to create a secular version of Hegel's dialectic of spirit, Marx repudiated Hegel's idealism, claiming in a famous phrase that in doing so he had stood Hegel back on his feet, and prioritized matter over spirit. At its core, dialectical materialism is of the view that the world exists independently of our perception of it and that as it is the sole reality it has primacy over the ideal, the imagined, and the spiritual. Moreover, as Friedrich Engels insisted, the world is characterized by constant revolutionary changes driven by its own internal contradictions. Engels codified his view as three laws, drawn from classical philosophical sources as well as Hegel: first, the world consists of opposites that are simultaneously in state of conflict and unity (e.g. night and day); second, quantitative changes give rise to qualitative 'leaps' (e.g. the boiling of water, when the temperature passes 100°C—which is a quantity—it turns into steam—a change in its quality); third, change is a process of negation (e.g. a seed germinates into a plant, and in doing so negates its previous existence as a seed, and in turn negates that state of negation by becoming a plant, and so on). Dialectical materialism has been criticized, both from within Marxism and without, for being overly dogmatic and rather too programmatic in its approach. Jürgen Habermas critiques it for being a scientism, for mistaking a philosophy for a science in other words; meanwhile, Louis Althusser lauds it precisely because in his view it transforms philosophy into science." [4]

This modification of the dialectical thought, prioritizing matter over spirit, enabled Marx to undertake his studies in interpreting society and its connection to the current mode of production. With dialectics he was able to look at diferent entities and their relations amongst each other, as sort of a process, in constant movement, interaction and change.

With dialectics crucialy embedded in Marxs analysis of society, it is vital for me to fully grasp the method, as I feel this will be the best approach to study mainstream and undergroud culture, the two contradicting movements positioned in and defined by the current mode of production.

"First and foremost, and stripped of all qualifications added by this or that dialectician, the subject of dialectics is change, all change, and interaction, all kinds and degrees of interaction" (Ollman, 2003, p.2). What is important here to understand is to view things as processess not as static points in reality. This enables us to extract the most comprehensive thruth from our analysis, the one that includes influences from the past as well as possible future developments.

4.1.2 The process of abstraction
The key concept in Marxs dialectical method is the process of abstraction:

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[4] Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199532919.001.0001/acref-9780199532919-e-185?rskey=JhOTOs&result=3)

"In his most explicit statement on the subject, Marx claims that his method starts from the "real concrete" (the world as it presents itself to us) and proceeds through "abstraction" (the intellectual activity of breaking this whole down into the mental units with which we think about it) to the "thought concrete" (the reconstituted and now understood whole present in the mind) (Marx, 1904, 293-94) " (Ollman, 2003, p. 2).

Abstraction is the means to understanding reality, which otherwise is to complex and multilayered to analyze as a whole. With abstraction we brake it in to parts, separated units that are managable, and then organize them back together into "thought concrete" presenting a clear picture of reality. This separation from the "bigger" picture allows us to focus and put emphasis on certain common features of these other processes (Ollman, 2003)

Marxs uses the term "abstraction" in four different senses. First applies to the the process mentioned above, with analiticaly dividing aggregate concepts in to separate mental constructs, while second reffers to the results of this process.

The third sense is of special interest to me, because it refers, as Ollman puts it, "to a suborder of particularly ill fitting mental constructs. Whether because they are too narrow, take in too little, focus too exclusively on appearances, or are otherwise badly composed, these constructs do not allow an adequate grasp of their subject matter" (Ollman, 2003, p.4). He continues:

"Taken in this third sense, abstractions are the basic unit of ideology, the inescapable ideational result of living and working in alienated society. "Freedom," for example, is said to be such an abstraction whenever we remove the real individual from "the conditions of existence within which these individuals enter into contact" (Marx, 1973, 164). Omitting the conditions that make freedom possible (or impossible)—including the real alternatives available, the role of money, the socialization of the person choosing, etc.—from the meaning of "freedom" leaves a notion that can only distort and obfuscate even that part of reality it sets out to convey. A lot of Marx's criticism of ideology makes use of this sense of abstraction" (Ollman, 2003, p. 4).

So, what is the ideational result of living and working in alienated society for art? As cultural and artistic output is core differentiator between the two movements, they too can not be studied by omitting the conditions that make art possible (or impossible). This very conditions define the meaning of art in such ways, that allow us to destinguish between mainstream and underground. Leaving out the conditions, for instance, the current mode of production, social status, role of money, objectives of artistic output, technology etc. prevents us to understand art and, in the words of Ollman, "that part of the reality it sets out to convey"- mainstream and underground.

The last, fourth sense refers to a particular organization of elements in the world, where they exist, unlike other three, who only existi in the mind.

The distinctiveness of Marx abstractions derives from focusing on changes and interactions of established mental constructs. This focus is aimed at explaining certain reality

in terms of how it works, how it emerged and where it is heading (Ollman, 2003). "Each movement affects the other, and how one grasps either affects one's understanding of both" (Ollman, 2003, p.5)

What are the benefits of acknowledging change and itneraction in such fashion? Well first, by looking at historical movemets within this abstractions, Marx is able to see change as a process, a flow, "the constant alteration of movement away from something and towards something else"(Ollman, 2003, p. 5). This is contrary to the process of understanding change as comparison of two or more differentiated states in the development of the subject at hand (Ollman, 2003), resulting in a distorted view of what is actually going on.

"In contrast to this approach, Marx set out to abstract things, in his words, "as they really are and happen," making how they happen part of what they are (Marx and Engels, 1964, 57). Hence, capital (or labor, money, etc.) is not only how capital appears and functions, but also how it develops; or rather, how it develops, its real history, is also part of what it is. It is also in this sense that Marx could deny that nature and history "are two separate things" (Marx and Engels, 1964, 57)" (Ollman, 2003, p. 6)

The same goes for the future, or where a certain entitiy is heading. What something is becoming is, of course, part of what it is now nad what it once was (Ollman, 2003). Marx applied this process in his abstracting to his definitions of different units or abstractions, which is what I will try to achieve through my dialectical analysis of the two cultural movements at hand. At current state, I don't have any concrete examples, however, this quotation clearly presents these objectives in Marxs abstractions:

"All of Marx's main abstractions— labor, value, commodity, money, etc.—incorporate process, becoming, history in just this way. Our purpose here is not to explain Marx's political economy, but simply to use some of his claims in this area to illustrate how he integrates what most readers would take to be externally related phenomena, in this case its real past and likely future, into his abstraction of its present form" (Ollman, 2003, p. 6)

If I take cultural production as a process, and mainstream and underground as two distinctive abstractions of this process, then it is of ut most importance to define these two, not just through their change, past and interaction, but also in connection with the system, in which both occur. "While viewing the same thing as a process makes it necessary to extend the boundaries of what it is to include at least some part of the surrounding conditions that enter into this process. In sum, as far as abstractions are concerned, change brings mutual dependence in its wake" (Ollman, 2003, p. 7)

Thus we have presented the very basics in Marxs dialectical method, pertaining to abstractions, and how they should be formed. The red line is definitely to look at bstractions as processes, not static, separate images depicting a certain subject in a very narrow way. Rather they should be seen for what they have been, where they are heading and what is their relation to various external conditions. Problem of non-dialectical thinking is, as Ollman (2003, p. 8) ptus it, "within the common sense of our time and place, most social ties are

thought about in abstractions that focus on the parts one at a time, separately as well as statically". He goes on, praising Marxs dialectical approach as such:

"Marx's abstractions are not things but processes. These processes are also, of necessity, systemic Relations in which the main processes with which Marx deals are all implicated. Consequently, each process serves as an aspect, or subordinate part, of other processes, grasped as clusters of relations, just as they do in it. In this way, Marx brings what we have called the double movement of the capitalist mode of production (its history and organic movement) together in the same abstractions, uniting in his thinking what is united in reality. And whenever he needs to focus on but part of this complex, he does so as a moment, a form or a determination" (Ollman, 2003, p. 8)

4.1.3 Philosophy of internal relations

Marxs abstractions present a complex process to understanding different concepts that take place in our reality. But what exactly allows him to acknowledge the same concepts in so many different ways and from so many point of views. The very nature of his abstractions imply, what Ollman (2003) calls the double movement of capitalism, that subjects of studies can not be looked at as an absulute, but rather relative concepts- as organic movements with determinations from the past.

To present this case on the example of capital, a concept throughly studied by Marx:

"To grasp capital, as Marx does, as a complex Relation which has at its core internal ties between the material means of production and those who own them, those who work on them, their special product, value, and the conditions in which owning and working go on is to know capital as a historical event, as something that emerged as a result of specific conditions in the lifetime of real people and that will disappear when these conditions do" (Ollman, 2003, p. 8, 9).

The philosophy of internal relations, enables him to grasp capital as an abstraction embedded in the current system of production. Accordingly, capital has strong internal relations to other concepts (labor, product, value etc.), who are also specifically defined due to their specific role in the system- capitalism. This is why Marxs abstractions of things possess the ability to change, since the conditions defining them in reality can also change through time.

In understanding mainstream and underground as two opposing movements, we must also analyse the role of art through time in order to percieve how it influenced the two movements and what role it assigned to them within the current system of production, and vice versa. Regarding the masters thesis, special interest to me is understanding arts internal relations to other elements, also under the auspices of capitalism- the laws, politics and ideologies (values) in general- who, together with art, consist of what Marx calls the superstructure.

To provide a contrast, it is sensible to present a "common sense view" which is applied by most people, scholars and others today (Ollman, 2003). Again we will examine the

case of capital. When Ollman was explaining in his book the appropriation of dialectics by Marx to his studies, it was logical for him to look at the most obvious cases provided by Marx.This is why in this theoretical framework, we are going to see a lot of references to capital, labor, wages, production etc; which were Marxs prime abstractions of study within the mode of production of his time. Later on we will apply such way of interperting social phenomena to our filed of study. Now back to the common sense view:

"the common sense view, maintains that there are things and there are relations, and that neither can be subsumed in the other." To which he continues "On the common sense view, any element related to capital can change without capital itself changing. Workers, for example, instead of selling their labor-power to capitalists, as occurs in capitalism, could become slaves, or serfs, or owners of their own means of production, and in every case their instruments of work would still be capital. The tie between workers and the means of production here is contingent, a matter of chance, and therefore external to what each really is. In Marx's view, a change of this sort would mean a change in the character of capital itself, in its appearance and/or functioning no matter how far extended. The tie is a necessary and essential one; it is an internal relation" (Ollman, 2003, p. 9)

So the philosophy of internal relations connects different concepts with one another through their internal relations and their mutual relations to conditions defining them. This way we can perceive the system at hand, or what we are studying as an mutualy evolving process (Ollman, 2003)

"Returning to the process of abstraction, it is the philosophy of internal relations that gives Marx both license and opportunity to abstract as freely as he does, to decide how far into its internal relations any particular will extend. Making him aware of the need to abstract—since boundaries are never given and when established never absolute—it also allows and even encourages reabstraction, makes a variety of abstractions possible, and helps to develop his mental skills and flexibility in making abstractions. If "a relation," as Marx maintains, "can obtain a particular embodiment and become individualized only by means of abstraction," then learning how to abstract is the first step in learning how to think (Marx, 1973, 142)" (Ollman, 2003, p. 10)

Internal relations, connecting different concepts, can present crucial attributes of what these concepts are when they cohere, interact with each other (Ollman, 2003). Thus a whole picture can be interpreted, regarding a certain problem, by acknowledginng internal relations amongst all of its parts.

4.1.4 Levels of generality

Up to this point we have been confornted with Marxs dialectical method through its main concept abstraction, defined by the process that makes each unit abstracted as comprehensive as possible. This includes its past, as well as future possibilities to define the present form. Next, there is an important aspect of internal relations, creating a possibility for these abstractions to change over time, due to the changing conditions in the real world (mode of production) altering the nature of these very abstractions. In addition, they also enable us to

comprehend a whole picture of the studied phenomena, by connecting all these concepts through thir interactions and reciprocal influence.

The second big aspect in Marxs dialectical method is the abstraction of level of generality, on which subjects at hand are being abstracted. To exemplify with a simple example, Olmann (2003) describes Marxs inttention to destinguish between "production" and "production in general" in his unfinished Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy:

"The former takes place in a particular society, capitalism, and includes as part of what it is all the relations of this society that enable it to appear and function as it does. "Production in general," on the other hand, refers to whatever it is that work in all societies have in common—chiefly the purposive activity of human beings in transforming nature to satisfy human needs—leaving out everything that distinguishes different social forms of production from one another" (Ollman, 2003, p.12).

"Production" as such is explained on two different levels of generality in this case. One includes all the social relations participating in the process of production, it is defined by a certain system and a certain society in which it is taking place, while the other explains "production" as a human activity which is common to all societes- with different systems and conditions defining social relations- who work or produce things in order to satsfy human needs.

"The abstraction Marx makes in moving from capitalist production to production in general then is not one of extension but one of level of generality. It is a move from a more specific understanding of production that brings into focus the whole network of equally specific qualities in which it functions (and with it the period of capitalism in which all this takes place) to a more general understanding of production that brings into focus the equally general state of those conditions in which it occurs (along with the whole of human history as the period in which these qualities are found)" (Ollman, 2003, p.13).

As an interesting fact, these very levels of generality, which political economists are unable or unwilling to destinct from in their abstraction, are one of the main tools for defending their exploitative techniques, by presenting the current mode as a natural state with no posibility of alternating it:

"Then, falling for the all too common error of mistaking what is more general for what is more profound, the political economists treat the generalizations they have derived from examining different social formations as the most important truths about each particular society in turn, and even as the cause of phenomena that are peculiar to each one. In this way, for example, the general truth that production in any society makes use of material nature, the most general form of property, is offered as an explanation and even a justification for how wealth gets distributed in capitalist society, where people who own property claim a right to part of what gets produced with its help (Marx, 1904, 271-72)" (Ollman, 2003, p. 13).

In his studies, Marx uses seven levels of generality, on which hedefines all the problems of investigation (Ollman, 2003):

1. Level one captures everything unique about a person and situation, aspects that make each person different from the next one. It's what gets summed up in a proper name and an actual address. "With this level, the here and now, or however long what is unique lasts, is brought into focus" (Ollman, 2003, p.14)

2. "Level two distinguishes what is general to people, their activities, and products because they exist and function within modern capitalism, understood as the last twenty to fifty years. Here, the unique qualities that justify using proper names, such as Joe Smith, are abstracted out of focus (we no longer see them), and abstracted into focus are the qualities that make us speak of an individual as an engineer or in terms of some other occupation that has emerged in modern capitalism. Bringing these slightly more general qualities into sight, we also end up considering more people—everyone to whom such qualities apply—and a longer period, the entire time during which these qualities have existed" (Ollman, 2003, p.14)

3. "Capitalism as such constitutes level three. Here, everything that is peculiar to people, their activity, and products due to their appearance and functioning in capitalist society is brought into focus. The qualities that Joe Smith possesses that mark him as Joe Smith (level one) and as an engineer (level two) are equally irrelevant. Front and center now are all that makes him a typical worker in capitalism, including his relations to his boss, product, etc. His productive activity is reduced to the denominator indicated by calling it "wage-labor," and his product to the denominator indicated by calling it "commodity" and "value." (Ollman, 2003, p. 14)

To step away from the levels of generality for a moment, we can explain art as notion operating within capitalistic system (level three). As mentioned before, Marx, altough he never wrote any seminal works on arts and aesthetics, positioned art in the capitalistic system of production as part of the superstructure which defines itself in the forms of art,laws, politcs and other ideologies. This supersctructure establishes itslef as response to the economic structure of society and its relations amongst people in the process of production- class strugle. As with everything else in capitalism,creative products or works of art become commodities for satsfying needs, while artists become wage laborers operating in the market. The products primary objective is consumption and creation of surplus, which in capitalism gets redistributed unevenlly between workes (artists) and capitalists (owners of productive sources- in this specific case possible artists agencies, record labels, publishers, art institutions, private agents etc.). Attempt here to describe art within the capitalist system of production (level three), demonstrates in a nutshell what the red line of this thesis is going to be, while my personal assumption presupposes art, purveyed within underground movements, as an attempt to aviod such institutionalized constrains. In order to achieve that and to provide an alternative for people, willing to search for it, it must put all its efforts into containing autonomy from the system, that is try to establish as vauge as possible its internal relations to the very concepts Marx was looking at, in his studies.

4. "After capitalism, still moving from the specific to the general, there is the level of class society, level four. This is the period of human history during which societies have been divided up into classes based on the division of labor. Brought into focus are the qualities people, their activities, and products have in common across the five to ten thousand years of class history, or whatever capitalism, feudalism, and slavery share as versions of class society, and wherever these qualities have existed" (Ollman, 2003, p. 14)

5. "Next—level five—is human society. It brings into focus—as we saw in the case of the political economists above—qualities people, their activities, and products have in common as part of the human condition. Here, one is considering all human beings and the entire history of the species" (Ollman, 2003, p.14)

6. "To make this scheme complete, two more levels will be added, but they are not nearly as important as the first five in Marx's writings. Level six is the level of generality of the animal world, for just as we possess qualities that set us apart as human beings (level five), we have qualities (including various life functions, instincts, and energies) that are shared with other animals. Finally, there is level seven, the most general level of all, which brings into focus our qualities as a material part of nature, including weight, extension, movement, etc" (Ollman, 2003, p. 14)

It should be added here that these levels were included in the abstractions, not with the inttention of showing how different qualities operate on different levels of generality. Altough this might be true, all of these qualities are present simoultaneousely and equally true, they are just separated for the reasons of their analysis. They can not be perceived if they are not brough in to focus separately. (Ollman, 2003). A good exemplification:

"This is similar to what occurs in the natural sciences, where phenomena are abstracted on the basis of their biological or chemical or atomic properties. All such properties exist together, but one cannot see or study them at the same time. The significance of this observation is evident when we consider that all the problems from which we suffer and everything that goes into solving them or keeping them from being solved is made up of qualities that can only be brought into focus on one or another of these different levels of generality" (Ollman, 2003, p. 14 &15)

Different levels of generality further support the innitial notion of Marxs dialectical method- to obtain as comprehensive and as wide truht on a certain subject as possible. In order to truly understand a certain phenomenon, to grasp the highest possible reality we must include all possible views presenting themselves. Levels of generality do just that- different levels of generality provide different explanations of the sams concept. Example:

"For example, what is the relation between the claim we have already met in another context that "All history [later qualified to class history] is the history of class struggle" and the claim that "class is the product of the bourgeoisie" (Marx and Engels, 1945, 12; Marx and

Engels, 1964, 77)? If "class" in both instances refers to qualities on the same level of generality, then only one of these claims can be true, that is, either class has existed over the past five to ten thousand years of human history or it only came into existence with capitalism, four to five hundred years ago. However, if we understand Marx as focusing on the qualities common to all classes in the last five to ten thousand years (on level four) in the first claim, and on the distinctive qualities classes have acquired in the capitalist epoch (on level three) in the second (that which makes them more fully classes, involving mainly development in organization, communication, alienation and consciousness), then the two claims are compatible" (Ollman, 2003, p. 18).

4.2 Value based approach

In his book, Doing The Right Thing- A Value Based Economy, Klamer (2016) develops a concept focused on valorizing various aspects, embedded in the economic structure of our society, in a different, alternative way. By concentrating on the values and what is truly important- that what might not necessarily comply with the capitalistic logic of success and profitability- this concept presents itself as highly important in understanding the true value of underground movements today. Especially because the character of the underground movements naturally contradicts those values and ideals, pertaining to its counterpart, the capital driven, dominant culture. Klamer (2016) provides a following explanation of the Value Based Approach:

"The value based approach is intended to offer a substantive, a quality-oriented approach that is so obviously needed in the realms not only of the arts, the sciences and religion, but also in politics, organizations, social life and certainly in private life. It is meant to better understand what other people do and especially of what we do ourselves, or would want to do. It should motivate coming up with and identifying the emergence of new alternatives" (Klamer, 2016, p. 7).

Since underground movements, in any form or shape, initially dont strive to be efficient, successful, growth oriented etc. it goes without saying that standard economic tools will only do injustice to the underground, as well as to my masters thesis, if applied. Therefore, to really grasp the true value and what the participants in such movements strive and work for, value based approach is the right theoretical concept to employ.

According to Klamer (2016) there are seven distinctive characteristics, associated with the value based approach. Some of them may further illustrate the appropriateness of the model for my masters thesis.

"1. When doing the right thing, people strive to realize their values. That is, they need to be aware of what those values are and then, by interacting with others, by producing, buying, selling, socializing or conversing, they try to make those values real. This perspective contrasts with the focus on preferences and utility maximization in standard economics"(Klamer, 2016, p. 8)

The contrast with standard economics, which focuses relentlessly on preferences and utility maximization, is present as well in the underground, when placed side by side with the

dominant- mainstream- culture. The values, that people in underground social spheres try to realize are simply different from the ones embedded in the commercial culture. This fact is most strongly resembled in the cultural production as well as socializing and conversing.

2. "The realization of values is a cultural practice; economic behavior, therefore, is embedded in a culture and makes sense only in its cultural context. Consequently, we want to look beyond the financial aspects of transactions and recognize their cultural significance, or their interaction with the relevant cultural context. The idea that culture matters contrasts sharply with the standard economic perspective in which culture is given a marginal or instrumental role" (Klamer, 2016, p. 8).

The second point only reaffirms what has already been said. To acknowledge the true value of the underground- a specific cultural context, essentially different from the mainstream one- we can not resort to standard economics in our analysis.

5. "Some goods are more important than others. Some goods are worth striving for; they render actions meaningful and make doing the right thing satisfying. When practices are worth striving for they can be called praxes. In chapter 7, I will distinguish four domains of ultimate goods and praxes: personal, social, societal and transcendental. The standard perspective offers only the ill-defined concepts of welfare and well-being when dealing with ultimate goods" (Klamer, 2016, p. 8 & 9).

The fifth point is aimed at explaining that what is worth striving for might not be the same for everybody. Therefore, the goods that underground participants are striving for are not just different from the ones in the dominant, capital driven culture. They most clearly contradict one another.

By far the most important is the seventh characteristic:

7. "To make our values real, we usually need to involve others. To do so we can avail of at least five different logics: the logic of the oikos (the home), social logic, logic of governance, market logic and transcendental or cultural logic. The standard approach pays attention only to market logic and, to some extent, governmental logic" (Klamer, 2016, p. 9).

Instead of this narrow attention of standard economics, we will look extensively at the social logic, as well as the oikos (home), two main environments for underground to realize itself. My personal participance and experience in todays underground electronic dance music movement has only reaffirmed the importance of these two logics.

"S is the social sphere. Its logic is social and therefore informal. Prices do not figure, neither do rules and regulations. Social logic is the logic of reciprocity, of contributions, of gifts, of participation, cooperation and collaboration. It is the logic of relationships and of networking. In the social sphere people are partners, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, members, comrades, contributors, donors, supporters, and participants. In the social sphere people generate shared goods such as social and cultural goods. In the social sphere (creative) commons come about, and conversations take place" (Klamer, 2016, p.142 & 143).

Immediately we see the importance of social sphere, when valorizing the underground. Since art and creativity, taking place in the underground, are initially not experiencing extensive presence in the market, social sphere is the right place to valorize its existence. Of course, the transition in to mainstream, dominant culture, where market is the key logic, is always possible and many times this is the case. The dialectical thought, presented in previous pages, will better explain this nature of underground initiatives and the process of its movement through time and space. But for the sake of acknowledging the true value of the underground, social sphere is the key logic to look at.

"The logic of the oikos is akin to the social logic but it is different because it presumes kinship or a shared fate. It is the logic of interdependence, of loyalty, of family ties, of intimacy, and of love. In the oikos people are parents, children, uncles, aunts, nephews, cousins, family members, soul mates, close partners, friends of the family, and intimate friends. The oikos is good for social and intimate goods" (Klamer, 2016, p.143).

Although the community, that defines a certain underground movement, is by all means very important and represents the social logic in our story, it is the logic of the Oikos (home) that somewhat describes and defines this community. If the dominant culture, with its strong presence in the market, is trying to alienate people- customers- from art itself and present it as consumable products, in the underground, community is leaning more towards Oikos, where people experience some higher connection through art and participation. Due also to the size, underground movements, especially at the beginning, can be very intimate environments.

But what does it actually mean for underground to "realize" itself in the social or oikos sphere. Clearly,indulging in an alternative option, one that encourages active participation and consciousnesss of the surrounding environment, at the same time means practicing behavior and going about your daily activities, in a fundamentally different way from the one pursued in the dominant culture. And this core praxis, a practice to strive for (Klamer, 2016) is what defines the community or the social sphere of the underground and gives it its most important characteristic:

The purpose of the underground should not stem out of somebodies interest or because of a certain objective (as was the case with so many underground movements). Rather, the purpose of underground should be in and of itself, providing an environment for people to indulge in this alternative practice.

5. DIALCETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TWO OPPOSING MOVEMENTS

5.1 Marxian thought on the economic structure of society and commodification of art in the prevailing system- capitalism

With dialectics positioned at the center of my theoretical framework, one on which I tend to ground my research and analysis, it is important here to present some of the general

Marxist ideas on the economic structure of society and its internal relationships between people. After all, he and Friedrich Engels were one of the most imperative protagonists of dialectical thinking in social sciences, looking at the system- capitalism- as one whose internal parts are interconnected, influencing one another, but more importantly, as one in constant movement, evolving and changing through time. Toby Clark, in his book on art and propaganda, has devised a following sentence:

"Across the spectrum of radical thinking in the early twentieth century which embraced a shifting mixture of anarchism, socialism and communism, Karl Marxs ideas provided the most enduring theory of revolution. In their slim tract The Communist Manifesto of 1848, Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1890) briskly outlined a compelling vision of the nature of the Western world:

Revolution will arise inevitably as the nemesis of capitalist modernization. The ever-accelerating rate of technological expansion, economic development and commercial exchange cannot hold together; the energies and collisions set in motion by capitalist modernity will exceed the capacity of its forms of social order to contain them. Ultimately, bourgeois capitalism will expose its contradictions to the proletariat who, gaining consciousness, will emerge as the redemptive agent of a new phase in history" (Clark, 1936, p. 17).

To go further down the line, thoroughly explaining Marxism and its ideas, is beyond reach and scope of my masters thesis. However, some basics must be outlined.

Concentrating on western, developed societies, people enter in to definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. These, in turn define the mode of production currently prevailing in a certain society. "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness" (Marx in Solomon, 1974, p. 29). So here we se that the mode of production, prevailing in a certain society, is the one determining the state of consciousness of people, not the other way around- consciousness determining the social reality i.e. mode of production.

What is important for our analysis is the existence of superstructure, for which the economic structure of society provides foundations. Containing ideologies, laws, political, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic etc. elements, superstructure is controlled by the ruling class- "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force" (Marx & Engels, 1932, p. 21).

We can logically assume that the ruling classes, in order to retain the current structure of economic society, deliberately define the elements of superstructure in such fashion that material forces of production wouldn't come in to conflict with the existing relations of production. Inevitably, aforesaid conflict sparks a social revolution, resulting in a changed economic structure of society, followed by a rearranged superstructure. Dialectical evolvement of the society and its mode of production, has went down this road of dialectical

evolvement many times passing through Asiatic, ancient, feudal, and now modern bourgeois modes of production (Marx in Solomon, 1974). But where does this position art, as part of the superstructure.

As everything else, the ruling classes also devise the ruling cultural production-mainstream or dominant culture. Main objective is clear- to defend the status quo by producing generic, commodified art aimed at blinding and conforming people, abstracting their consciousness of the surroundings as well as further enforcing on them the capitalist, consumerist mindset. By serving the interests of the ruling classes, ensuring the current mode of production and further exploitation of capitalists over working classes, this art is robbed of its pure meaning and, many times, quality. With meaning, I try to grasp the idea of art being created for the right reasons and not for the ones embedded in the capitalistic thinking.

Art, either as a form of liberating consciousness or just as an example of cultural production striving for the highest levels of quality, finds its place in the underground, rendering it an important alternative in the world of cultural production. But above all, underground provides a social sphere, where like minded people are able to express themselves and participate in culture, freed of the established, predominant ideas of the superstructure. This reason alone is enough to further explore and valorize the underground, as part of the societies cultural production.

5.2 Historical overview of art and its role in the society within different periods of capitalism

A thorough look at the history of art, more precisely at its participance as an ideological element in the societies superstructure, will provide the necessary background for understanding and further examination of the two studied concepts- mainstream and underground. The terminology was firstly used in the 1960s, when the youth and hippie countercultures have emerged, expressing discontent towards the mainstream and its corporate values embedded in western societies.

Due to this fact, mainstream and underground are of no use when describing the role of cultural production in society, before the 1960s. As they can only be defined and explained within the epoch of last fifty years, the fifty years of modern capitalism, application of the two termins is incompetent when looking at the more early stages of capitalistic society. Needless to say, art has indeed performed a relevant role in those previous stages, the only difference being that the dialectical battle between the contradicting expressions of artistic and societal values was not captured in these two movements.

But first, to rationalize our endeavour on the path of historic overview, Italian philosopher Antonio Labriola describes historical materialism in his Essays on the Materialistic Conceptions of History. If we are to study the role of arts in these different eras of capitalistic life, we must first understand and acknowledge ethics, arts, religions, sciences etc. as the very products of these economic conditions (Labriola, 2005)

Maynard Solomon, in his book Marxism and Art (1974) extracts another paragraph from Labriolas essays, further explaining historical determinism:

"It is not otherwise with historical determinism, where, in the same way, we begin with motives religious, political, aesthetic, passionate, etc., but where we must subsequentely discover the causes of these motives in the material conditions underlying them."

He goes on:

"And thence follows indubitably this second consequence that in our doctrine we have not to re-translate into economic categories all the complex manifestations of history, but only to explain in the last analysis (Engels) all the historic facts by means of the underlying economic structure (Marx), which necessitates analysis and reduction and then interlinking and construction" (Labriola in Solomon 1974, p. 96 &97).

Labriola, in the upper paragraph, nicely describes the dialectical method of interpreting certain concepts, in this case arts, through the analysis of its history. To understand the complex nature of art and its presence in different historical epochs, we must establish several points of departure, preferably as much as possible, that will depict different angles on the topic as we will efficiently explain the role of arts by connecting historic facts with underlying economic structures, representing each epoch separately. Such is the nature of dialectical thinking, not striving towards definite conclusions, but trying to acknowledge as many facts as possible, extracted from the analysis.

Another good illustration is expressed by Engels in his letter to J. Bloch where he talks about the materialist conception of history:

"We make our history ourselves, but, in the first place, under very definite assumptions and conditions. Among these the economic ones are ultimately decisive. But the political ones, etc., and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds also play a part altough not the decisive one" (Engels in Solomon, 1947, p.30)

Accordingly, I will describe in the following paragraphs different stories from different environments in different capitalistic epochs, with the intention of providing various points of view on the role of arts in the prevailing economic structure of society. This will shed further light on the historic process that has brought upon the emergence of underground and mainstream cultural movements.

5.2.1 "Utalitarian" or "art for arts sake" approach to art

The way art is related to social life, has its basic characteristics ingrained in the current mode of production, defining everyday operations and relations between individuals. In this sense, modern day capitalism, and its ruling classes, put the art, or better yet artistic production, to work for their interests in a rather different way, than in any other time in history. It is all due to environmental factors and conditions, the prevalent forces carving the path of historical development in a certain direction.

Gerorgi Plekhanov (in Solomon, 1974) addresses some questions and notions, regarding the role of art in society, that are existent in all capitalistic epochs, and those before capitalism for that matter. For him art is an automatically generated process, under the influence of previously mentioned historical forces. The aim of this process, indicated in both

underground and mainstream, or within different social classes, is to address the needs of "the class or stratum whose tastes it expresses" (Solomon, 1947, p.127)

Georgi Plekhanov contemplates art and social life in his unaddressed letters from 1912, acknowledging the fact that art can either be approached from the "utalitarian" point of view or wit an idea of "art for arts sake".

While the first approach is commonly used in both spheres, I would argue that the latter mostly pertains to the underground or counterculture movements, with its participants creatively expressing themselves for the sake of the art from itself, and the quality surrounding it. Exclusion of any further interests, or even societal influences, keeps the movement and its pertaining creative expression "pure" and in touch with its initial values.

Utilitarian view of art perceives it as something which should reproduce and explain life, something which is able to put a mirror in front of society. This is simultaneously arts task and its strength, promoting human consciousness and improving social order. Art, as a product of a certain epoch is an exceptional tool to pass judgement on the phenomena of life. In the utalitarian view, art operates as a thing, an object of mediation between the senses and the intellect, between cognition and feeling; it is a means of educating mans senses. (Solomon, 1947)

Plekhanov addresses here the utility, embedded in artistic production, only from a positive perspective, presenting its ability to awake and liberate consciousness amongst the masses, the inferior social classes. This then triggers the conflict within the material forces of production, when people are able to recognize the exploitation inflicted upon them through the existing relations of production. Such is the positive take on the utalitarian view of artistic expression.

But at the same time we can say that, artistic output is as well utalitarian when serving the needs and interests of the opposite nature. Of course, here we think of the ruling elites, who in their hands possess the power and the sources to disseminate artistic output, commodified and simplified down to a mere product of entartainment with the exact contradicting intentions. If before, the goal was to educate and inform people in to overseeing the injustices and exploitation engrained in the current mode of production, now the main intention is to make people entertained, conformed and thus further blinded in their perception of reality. Whatever the case may be, additional objectives, not pertaining to the art form itself, are expressed through the "utalitarian" approach to art.

"The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it" (Marx & Engels, 1932, p. 21).

From here on it logically proceeds, that production of art, in charge of the ruling classes, will strive towards obtaining the power and superior position to submissive masses.

As such art must in no case be provocative or expressing discontent towards the society and its underlying structure. It has to be provided for the people in the form of a product, which is then consumed for the purpose of satisfying the need and establishing content in ones life. Fundamentally, it is robbed of any artistic value and relevance, mentioned by Plekhanov in his explanation of the "utalitarian" art in a positive sense.

Utilitarian approach to art is thus practiced in both contradicting poles, fulfilling their contradicting interests and expressing their opposite system of values. Plekhanov (1912) introduces here the "art for arts sake" as a counterweight to utalitarian approach. This approach is aimed at perceiving arts as an end in itself, as an expression not influenced by surrounding conditions, establishing its message and value. To do so, it would diminish the dignity of a work of art (Plekhanov, 1912).

Rather than acknowledging which approach is the correct one for the artist to use in his artistic expression- neither is the "right" one, they can both be applied in a sensible way when the opportunity for that arises- a more relevant question is introduced by Plekhanov:

"What are the most important social conditions in which artists and people keenly interested in art conceive and become possessed by the belief in art for art's sake?" (Plehkanov, 1912, para. 16).

A story of the poet Alexandr Pushkin, depicts perfectly how the surrounding social conditions can result in changed views on the two approaches to art:

"There was a time when he did not believe in the theory of art for art's sake. There was a time when he did not avoid strife, in fact, was eager for it. This was in the period of Alexander I. At that time he did not think that the "people" should be content with the whip, dungeon and rack. On the contrary, in the ode called Freedom, he exclaimed with indignation:

Unhappy nation! Everywhere

Men suffer under whips and chains,

And over all injustice reigns,

And haughty peers abuse their power

And sombre prejudice prevails.

But then his attitude of mind radically changed. In the days of Nicholas I. he espoused the theory of art for art's sake. What was the reason for this fundamental change of attitude?

The reign of Nicholas I. opened with the catastrophe of December 14 , which was to exert an immense influence both on the subsequent development of our "society" and on the fate of Pushkin personally. With the suppression of the "Decembrists," the most educated and advanced representatives of the "society" of that time passed from the scene. This could not but considerably lower its moral and intellectual level" (Plehkanov, 1912, para. 19-22).

Clearly Pushkin began to switch sides with the change of authority in the Russian empire and with the growing discontent. In this same period he composed To the Poet, a poem incenting artists to abandon the utalitarian approach to art and replace it with "art for arts sake". But whether he liked it or not, this very poem most definitely falls under the category of "utalitarian" art addressing and passing judgement on a certain aspect of real life.

The story hear gains another interesting dimension due to Pushkins discontent, as Plekhanov explained:

"According to the touching and very widespread legend, in 1826 Nicholas I. graciously "forgave" Pushkin the political "errors of his youth," and even became his magnanimous patron. But this is far from the truth. Nicholas and his right-hand man in affairs of this kind, Chief of Police Benkendorf, "forgave" Pushkin nothing, and their "patronage" took the form of a long series of intolerable humiliations. Benkendorf reported to Nicholas in 1827:

"After his interview with me, Pushkin spoke enthusiastically of Your Majesty in the English Club, and compelled his fellow diners to drink Your Majesty's health. He is a regular ne'er-do-well, but if we succeed in directing his pen and his tongue, it will be a good thing."

The last words in this quotation reveal the secret of the "patronage" accorded to Pushkin. They wanted to make him a minstrel of the existing order of things. Nicholas I. and Benkendorf had made it their aim to direct Pushkin's unruly muse into the channels of official morality. When, after Pushkin's death, Field Marshal Paskevich wrote to Nicholas:

"I am sorry for Pushkin as a writer," the latter replied: "I fully share your opinion, but in all fairness it may be said that in him one mourns the future, not the past." This means that the never-to-be-forgotten emperor prized the dead poet not for the great things he had written in his short lifetime, but for what he might have written under proper police supervision and guidance" (Plehkanov, 1912, para. 23).

Here we se a really particular case of the essential dialectical tension between the two opposing worlds unraveling, which could easily be translated in to todays world of underground and mainstream culture movements. As Pushkins discontent grew, he decided to apply the principal of "art for arts sake" in his creative expression, which is a characteristic of underground movements. The belief in art for art's sake arises wherever the artist is at odds with his social environment" (Plehkanov, 1912, para. 28).

Nevertheless, his works, such as The poet, still possessed a critical note and were because of that acknowledged by the ruling classes- Nicholas I. in this case. As Pushkin presented a threat to their interests and objectives, as he was seen as a counter force to their engagements, Nicolas I. wanted to make him a voice of his own regime. Hence, he still wanted for Pushkins work to stay "utalitarian" but the purpose and the message must be changed and become exactly the opposite.

It is not hard to imagine, numerous counterculture movements, with its revolutionary and opposing values, referring now to the more recent history, that were expressing discontent

towards the exploitation of the masses. Those more successful in gathering followers, gained such a momentum, that at one point, were sucked in by the corporate marketing machine and translated in to the mainstream sphere for the same reasons Nicholas I. began patronizing Pushkin.

For instance, looking at the youth and hippie culture of the sixties, associated artists and their creative outputs, fifty years later, present a comprehensive piece of todays mainstream archive. Some of the acts of Woodstock festival (69) are todays superstars of musical world with their works acknowledged by the masses and sold for large profits. And this is all part of the dialectical process in which our society participates. Of course, there are at the same time underground movements present in all this art forms, that have otherwise been alternated for the masses, where artists are doing the right things for the right reasons. And this is what I am interested in. The main difference is that they are doing it on the basis of "art for arts sake" which allows them to stick with the right set of values.

Another example, demonstrated by electronic music, might provide an even clearer picture of the two opposing but at the same time colliding worlds of underground and mainstream. The reason for this is that despite electronic dance music (EDM) being one of the biggest and most commercialized cultural products in todays society, it also has several strongholds around the world, still preserving the initial image and cultural values of electronic music, famously summed up in the abbreviation PLUR- peace, love, unity, respect. What enables them to pursue the right thing is their exclusion from the "utalitarian" world of art. Deliberate apathy and nihilism towards societal issues, embedded in the bohemian way of life, establish a different environment where direct expression of discontent does not apply. We will return to the electronic music later on, but for now let us continue with other documentations of art and its role through the history of capitalistic era.

5.2.2 The Tolstoyan view of art and the resurgence of mainstream culture

The utalitarian view of arts has also been, amongst others, taken up by Tolstoy, dismissing all art forms not directly accessible to lower class mentality and thus acknowledging great works in history of the arts, such as Divine Comedy, Shakespeare, Goethe, Raphaels transfiguration etc. as decadent and immoral (Solomon, 1947). Juriy Nikolajevich Davidov, a modern soviet critic, in his analysis of Tolstoyan view of art explains how the principal of justice applied to the realm of art has essentially become a negative force doing more harm than good. This seed of destruction, embedded in the initially positive intention of making art accessible to the masses, provides a good dialectical explanation of the resurgence of mainstream, low quality culture.

"Davydov shows that Tolstoys "communism" treats art as a consumer product of a purely material nature, that it leads to a leveling that considers man in general and the artist in particular as a thing, in Marxs words as a "piece of communal and common property" which society can manipulate in accordance with its desires" (Solomon, 1947, p. 246).

In their discontent, the people of October revolution have demanded equality, on material as well as spiritual level. Tolstoy, appealing to this notion, and striving towards equality of all people before art knew that certain artistic expressions, will not fit the peasant

mentality of the masses in that time. "His moral awareness enables him to pinpoint the social contradiction inherent in the distinction between "the art of the upper classes" and "the masses"."(Davydov in Solomon, 1947, p.247)

The problem arose when the principle of justice was applied to the realm of art, resulting in a single possible solution for solving the problem of accessibility. If art was to be equally accessible to all, it had to be lowered to a level, that allowed such accessibility. That, of course, possesses serious problems for the quality of artistic expression, despite the positive intention of making art egalitarian.

The very same principle is still used today by corporations, producing mainstream cultural products for masses to consume. Enhanced with no or little cultural and artistic value, they are devised in such way to appeal to the masses.

"By consciously identifying his own position with that of the Russian peasant after the Reform, the "country laborer", Tolstoy was adopting the viewpoint of a man for whom agricultural labor was the source of all wealth, and all cultural values" (Davydov in Solomon, 1947, p. 248).

Again, some clear parallels can be drawn with todays society, where mainstream culture is epitomizing the value system of the masses, emphasizing and further enforcing the "instrumental activism" as explained by Spates (1976). To consume, to achieve, to strive for the "good life"- exactly the kind that is presented to them in commodified cultural products- are just some of the basic objectives embedded in this generic cultural production. Consequentely , the ruling classes, in charge of mainstream cultural production, are able to maximize consumption, profits and, in the next step, wealth and power.

5.3 Avant art groups in Bolshevik Russia- underground movement aspairing to devise mainstream culture

With the rise of Bolsheviks after the October Revolution in 1917, a tendency to devise an accessible culture, a culture that would include all the citizens of Soviet Russia has spawned together with taking over the political power. Lev Nikolajevič Tolstoy, Russian writer and politician, tackled this notion by dismissing all art forms and works of art not appealing to the peasant mentality of the masses. While making art egalitarian and promoting equality in society, such act of abolishement also meant diminishing the quality and level of engagement each individual had to apply in his confrontation with art. Suddenly art was moving towards its commodified status in order to include everyone in its consumption.

Unlike Tolstoy, artistic movements of the Russian Avant-garde, among them Suprematists, Futurists and Constructivists had a different, or better yet contradicting view on how to organize the "psyche of the masses", now participating in consumption of art. Short period of time, after the revolution and before Stalins increased state control over art, beginning in the late 1920s, has seen active engagement of these movements. Devising a culture for the masses, essentially contradicting the notion emphasized in the Tolstoyan view of art, makes these movements an interesting area of analysis for my thesis. Moreover, it provides a rare example of an artistic initiative, originally opposing the established and

traditional, but at the same time expressing clear tendencies to operate in the mainstream sphere of cultural production.

Toby Clark (1963) wrote the following on these emerging movements:

"From the outset it was clear that the revolution which created the worlds first Workers' and Peasants' Government had entirely altered conditions for the patronage, audience and sites of art. Soviet art was to be principally state funded, public and directed to mass audience. But how were "the masses" to be conceived? What was to be their role in the production of art; what was the status of their tastes; and what was art supposed to do to them? These issues provoked a cluster of further questions: Should culture become "proletarian" or should it just be called "socialist" and aspire to be classless? Should it incorporate the achievements of bourgeois culture, or were all traditional kinds of art irredeemably tainted with capitalism and therefore to be abandoned? " (Clark, p.74, 1963)

Rising out of these revolutionary circumstances, avantgardists strived to eradicate the old conservative ways of thinking. Their artistic endeavors expressed this idea through abstract art, including pure geometric forms, usually brightly colored, intended to address viewers senses with dynamic effect (Clark, 1963).

Not just the role of art in devising this new Soviet society, but also the role of an artist has been addressed, especially amongst constructivists trying to understand what is the artists right to exist (Gough, 2005). The idea of avant-garde enlightening or creating a shift in the perception of the masses (Clark,1963), was also embedded in their expressions, seemingly preoccupied with form. Thus, the constructivist strives to present the connection between the abstractness of their art and the sociopolitical imperatives of the new republic (Gough, 2005).

Futurists, for instance, were confronted with the same problem, on account of Lenin and his colleagues envisioning the culture of future in more conventional fashion:

"The Russian Futurist movement — a fundamental component of the Russian cultural scene from the early 1910s through until 1930 — is often, like all avant-garde movements, characterised as being little more than the utopian daydreaming of young artists who, inebriated by the euphoric atmosphere of the revolutionary experience, believed that they had been presented with a historic opportunity to build a better world through artistic endeavour" (Glisic, 2012, p.355).

What all three movements have in common is the progressive nature of their artists, indulging in abstract artistic representations in order to leave behind the outdated values and cultural patterns, expressed through traditional art forms of pre-revolutionary Russia. Creating a new communist environment, and in the next step, a new communist consciousness was positioned at the fore front of these initiatives. This objective presents a strong connection with todays underground movements striving for the same thing.

Iva Glisic (2012, p. 357) captures the idea in the following paragraph:

"The Bolshevik Revolution sought to strip Russia of all traditional political, economic and social structures in order to make room for the creation of a completely new, experimental, future-bound society. Russian Futurists understood that this kind of political atmosphere had to be coupled with the right cultural production if the seed of revolution was to grow into a future Communist society".

Despite the political atmosphere, oriented towards the "new", towards this reinvented mentality of the masses, the reconstruction of Soviet society didnt take place as aspired by avantgardists. An interesting insight to this acknowledgment, can be derived by looking back to Stephen Ducombe and his writings on Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture (2014).

Ducombe explains that zines, as a form of underground press, didnt seem to be of any threat to the above-ground world, as all opposing movements, either political or cultural, are dealing with the unavoidable contradiction of staking out new ground within and through the landscape of the past (Ducombe, 2014). Disregarding the fact that 1920s Soviet Union society is basically impossible to compare with the 1990s society in United States on economic social or political level, an important lesson is to be learned.

The most striking feature that all Russian avant-garde movements have in common, the one that at the same time severely diverges with the nature of contemporary underground initiatives, is clearly articulated intention of devising a culture for the masses. With their artistic expression, and the context in which it was presented, they were undoubtedly imposing their ideas and values beyond the narrow circles of educated minorities, supposedly participating in this modern and progressive art. Their intention was to align the psyche of the masses. As such, they were moving away from the realm of the underground.

There might be a sophisticated marketing machine needed in todays society, which gobbles up anything novel and recreates it as a product for a niche market (Ducombe, 2014), but it was definitely not needed in the time of Russian avantgardists. They themselves had the intention of participating "above-ground". Of course, it is true that the avant-garde movements were in fact part of the Bolshevik uprising. However, their ideas of a newly structured soviet perception, were going against the conservative art predetermined by the Party leaders.

For Stalin and his autocratic cultural policies it goes without saying, but also Lenin, as a leader of Bolsheviks before him, had a different view on the role of art, one that is more concentrated on the broader framework of education (Clark, 1963), rather than extreme and revolutionary ideas of avantgardists.

While also devising a mass culture, they believed the masses- workers and peasants- would comply better with more conservative culture. With the civil war still raging after the revolution, it was important to keep the revolutionary flame burning amongst people. For instance, a popular form at the time were street festivals and mass-action dramas which stressed popular involvement (Clark,1963):

"Mass spectacles would embody the collective spirit of that class, replaying the drama of its historical path, and projecting its mission into the future. Much the same thing could be said about the Bolshevik cultural program in general" (v Geldern, 1998, p.125).

Clearly Lenin was suspicious of the avant–garde movements as he believed the working classes were not yet prepared to confornt and engage with such progressive culture. He did however seek to gradually elevate the tastes of the masses through education, initially embedded in the Partys cultural plan. Explaining these events through a dialectical framework, we can say that avantgardists were confronted with an opposing force in their openly articulated ideas and beliefs. The highest officials within the Party understood the role of art in a different way, resulting in a different, less radical cultural output. And this very cultural output was the one that gained the status of mass culture, state culture in the end.

Judging by the fact that Stalin moved further away from the avant-garde, when replacing Lenin after his death, shows how the initial resistance towards avantgardists in the Party might influence this course of events. They were abolished in 1932 (Clark,1936). If the avant-garde art groups are to be perceived as participants in the underground, then it is their clear intention to operate on a mass scale that has compromised their presence under Lenins authority, and their suspension under Stalins.

"Between Lenins death in 1924 and Stalins rise to power some five years later, the Party leadership maintained its policy of permitting relative pluralism in the arts, but it became increasingly clear that realist approaches were officialy favoured more than the avant-gardes experiments" (Clark, 1963, p.85).

5.4 The Dada movement

Operating around the same time as Russian avantgardists, a short-lived artistic movement was born out of the response to the First World War and its numerous atrocities. But even more importantly, dadaists present a direct contrast to avantgardists, in terms of what they wanted to achieve with their artistic expressions and in which direction they wanted their movement to go. Of course, they were aware of political relevance embedded in their art, but they had no intentions what so ever in reorganizing the "psyches of the masses".

Dadaism was an anti-art/, anti-war movement who in order to reject the dominant cultural values of the first world war society in Europe looked at art itself with contempt (Clark, 1963). The name Dada originates from baby talk, further emphasizing the nihilistic nature of the movement and disagreement with accepted aesthetic criteria. Feyerabend, a member of the Dada movement explains in the following fashion:

"A Dadaist is convinced that a worthwhile life will arise only when we start taking things lightly, and when we remove from our speech the profound but already putrid meanings it has accumulated over the centuries ("search for the truth"; "fight for justice"; "passionate concern," etc.). And when he is prepared to initiate joyful experiments even in those domains where change and experimentation seem to be out of the question (example: the basic functions of language). I hope, therefore... the reader will remember me as a flippant Dadaist and not as a serious anarchist" (1972, as cited in Richmond, 2007, p. 448).

The term anti-art itself depicts dadaists not so much as an art movement but more like a radical group operating in the field of art. Expressing criticism through contending representation, what they tried to achieve with representational art was to expose the dangerous claims of presentation which allowed for lazy and self-defeating assumptions of eternal truth, afflicting both knowledge and the future and, more importantly, the everyday lives of individuals (Richmond, 2007). These ideas provided the foundations for the nature of the movement, with the irrational behavior and nonsense detected in their works of art and their attitude towards the public, and its numerous acts of anarchism, which Feyerabend feared he would be remembered by. Militarism, nationalism, and colonialism, deeply anchored in the institutions of western societies, were despised by dadaists.

Compared to the avantgridsts of Bolshevik Russia, all the characteristics describing dadaists point considerably more towards a movement operating in the realm of the underground. For instance the movement started in 1916 in Zurich- the peaceful dead center of the war—at the Cabaret Voltaire (Richmond, 2007), and later spread to other cities in Europe and US. However, the existence of the initial group seized in the early 1920s, clearly disregarding the chance of encountering growth. The very growth that avantgardists sought after with all their endeavors.

The nature of the movement and their artistic output was clearly rejecting and criticizing the institutions in which they would have to operate if striving to reach the mainstream public:

"Out of this maelstrom of imagination, social and political comment, radical rejectionism, and antifoundationalism was born an antinationalist, internationalist, and unsettling movement that influenced some of the most significant experimental writers, thinkers, and artists of the twentieth century" (Richmond, 2007, p.449).

Their ideas were very well suggested through their works of art, where they attempted to disorientate and disrupt the expected medium and matter of art (Richmond, 2007). Experimentation with events, chance, installations, mobiles, collages, phonetic poems, and film was aimed at abolishing the traditional and formal ways of thinking and embracing change, development and new technologies. "Dadaism was defined by its attempt to challenge and reformulate, to unsettle and innovate" (Richmond, 2007, p.450).

Being anti-art and anti-war, at the same time meant being anti-establishment which kept dadaists on the counterculture side of artistic production. Altogether, this is where the members of the initial Dada movement intended and wanted to be. They bolstered their artistic expressions with clear notions of criticizing social, economical and political structures of the society at war. But they did it with the intention to agitate and to oppose the established views and beliefs on art, catering to the utalitarian outlook of western capitalism. An outlook that in their view had reduced the working classes to industrial wage slaves and had produced a deadly war machine (Clark, 1963). Although exposing the troublesome nature of contemporary society, they never expressed the "operating in a mass scale" tendencies as Russian avantgardists did. In relation to my thesis, this kept them in the underground realm.

"Dadaism was never far from anarchism, with its focus upon chance as a method of representation, and what Richter (1965) has described as "excesses. . . insolence, insulting behavior, pointless acts of defiance, fictitious duels, riots" (Richmond, 2007, p. 450)

In fact, it was this connection with anarchism that, in the end, pushed the movement towards becoming a more institutionalized entity. Because of their acceptance amongst a left wing audience (Richmond, 2007), associated acts of anarchism lost the character of irresponsibility, and were suddenly seen as valid expressions of discontent. The later emergence of surrealism was heavily influenced by Dada, adding to the credibility factor, while worth mentioning here is also their westernized intellectual agenda, associated with modernity and modernization (Richmond, 2007). All these factors would contribute to an ever more institutionalized character of the Dada movement, resulting in the newest branch of mainstream art.

It is safe to assume that such course of events, coupled with the end of the First World War, created a rationale for the members to seize their endeavors under the auspices of the original Dada movement, as it was conceived in 1916 in Zurich. Numerous cultural projects of the future, also after the Second World War, were planting their roots in the original dadaist thought, such as the Fluxus movement (Clark,1963) and the Situationists. This could not have happened if Dada wouldnt become a mainstream art institution.

If a clearly expressed wish to "reach the masses", was the crucial element, that denied avantgardists the status of an underground movement, then, for dadaists, exact opposite was the case. Such a different and radical approach to art and its implications for politics and society prevented the dadaists to stay "underground". However, what both movements did have in common was the relevance of their artistic output for the current social developments. They were also both very clear in expressing this relevance. Hans Arp, one of the key figures of Dada, feared this very notion coming from "the other side of the story":

"We had a dim premonition that power-mad gangsters would one day use art itself as a way of deadening men's minds" (Richter, 1965, p.25).

5.5 The Situationists

"The Situationists International formed in 1957 out of the Lettrist international; a Parisian avant-garde art group who predated punk by almost 30 years in painting slogans on their trousers. Owing as much to Dada and the Surrealists as Marx and Bakunin, the Situationists' Starting points were that the original working class movements had been crushed, by the bourgeoisie in the west and the Bolsheviks in the east; trade unions and leftist political parties had sold out; and capitalism could appropriate even the most radical ideas and return them safely in the form of harmless ideologies" (Tom Vague in Debord, 2012, para. 13).

Tom Vagues introduction depicts an artistic movement in the 1960s, a time when society, together with capitalism as its underlying system, has already evolved in to its next

stage, the stage of consumer capitalism. Leading situationist, Guy Debord, has acknowledged this transition through his critique of the Society of the Spectacle (1967):

"At the heart of the Society of the Spectacle is a vociferous critique of capitalism, as well as an attempt to update the Marxist analysis of commodity production to the postwar French context. Debord argues that 19th-century capitalism, focused as it was on the disciplining of labour in production, had been so successful that it had to change in order to remain economically viable. The answer was to be found in increasing its inroads into every aspect of human existence, not just production" (Teurlings, 2013, p.515)

Society of the spectacle defines the new nature of social relations between people, one governed by images or "spectacles". Marxs theory of alienation, which he applied to the sphere of production was now appropriated by Debord and adjusted to the sphere of consumption. This separation-alienation, as the core of Debords society of the spectacle, empowers capitalism to not just separate workers from the product of their labour, but also to enforce this same separation in other aspects of human existence- focusing especially on the aspects of culture, art, entartainment and other areas falling in to the realm of culture industry- as mentioned by Teurlings (2013).

Particularly important to this notion of spectacle are commodities itself, used to mediate the spectacles to the masses as well as becoming spectacles themselves. The way for people to escape separation, now experienced in other spheres of human life, not just production, is to rediscover their unity as consumers (Fox Gotham & Krier, 2008). Looking at the superstructure of society containing laws, politics, ideologies and culture, such use of "spectacles" is especially effective when applied by capitalists to their production processess in entartainment and leisure industries, both part of culture industries. As the leading entities, backed by huge amounts of capital, corporations become the main creators of mass culture, imposed on people through consumable products. The products in turn, create an ideology in which people fulfill their existential needs by consuming more. It is a sort of magical circle, increasing the benefits of capitalists and at the same time shadowing the downsides of capitalism:

"The spectacle is a tool of pacification, depoliticization, and massification that ''distracts'' and ''seduces'' people using the mechanisms of leisure, consumption, and entertainment as ruled by the dictates of advertising and commodified media culture" (Fox Gotham & Krier, 2008, p.157)

Unfortunately, we have to say that Hans Arps predictions of art being used to deaden peoples minds have come true only a few decades later.

Guy Debord and his fellow situationists were able to perceive this new stage of capitalism, infecting all social spheres of life and achieving amongst passive masses to acknowledge the current social order as a fixed, natural entity (Kaplan, 2012). Opossing the established institutions and corporations in charge of mass cultural production naturally renders the Situationists as an underground movement, one quite similar to the Dadaists and at the same time different from Avantgardists.

The two similar movements especially coincide in the fact that their true calling was not one of providing a substitute to the current situation, as it was the case with avantagrdisits and their endeavors, but the one of agitating, expressing discontent and igniting the revolutionary flame within their followers. This very radical tendencies were the reason for dadaists exclusion from the underground world, along with the lost revolutionary spirit of the First World War. Anarchist behavior was embedded in the Situationists as well.

While these kind of movements true value derives from the fact that they are able to devise a new environment, one where they are free and encouraged to convey all of their ideas and beliefs, it is this clearly articulated opposing position to the established, corporate and institutionalized world which in the end costs them their "underground" nature or existence all together, as was the case with the original Dada movement from Zurich.

In the case of The Situationists something similair happened. No, they were not transcribed in to the mainstream art institution, nor was there a war that ended and took away the revolutionary spirit. In the case of The Situationists, sophisticated marketing machine (Ducombe, 2014), the one that was at the same time producing "spectacles" and pacifying the society, was there to suck them in and transform them in to yet another spectacle for people, to passively accept this new development in their society:

"Such is the sorry fate of the Debordian critique: despite capturing the popular imagination it has been stripped of its social component and integrated into contemporary capitalism, made into a structural and even functional feature of it" (Teurlings, 2013, p.524).

The way Teurlings came to this conclusion was through reading Boltanski and Chiapello's The New Spirit of Capitalism (1999) where they state that capitalist mode of production has encountered two types of criticism: the artist critique and the social critique.

"The first focuses on capitalism as a source of inauthenticity, and as a major limitation on the freedom and autonomy of people. It is rooted in the 19th-century bohemian lifestyle that opposed bourgeois society, but the critique has taken many cultural forms, like the Jazz Age of the 1920s, or 1960s counterculture. The social critique, on the other hand, focuses on capitalism as a system of exploitation, stresses the inequalities that are its result, and is historically associated with the labour movement." (Teurlings, 2013, p. 523)

The flexible nature of contemporary capitalism in the 1960s was able to incorporate the artistic critique expressed by The Situationists, including new forms of organizing such as fluid network-like arrangements with autonomous workers (Teurlings, 2013). "At the same time, the social critique has been discredited and represented as belonging to a rigid past that has been overcome by advances in production" (Teurlings, 2013, p.523)

The Situationists as a movement never lost their underground status, but yet their potential to agitate has been taken away by the system, finding a way to integrate the opposition in to its operating mechanism. One can ask himself, what is then the purpose of an underground movement, if any act of agitation and expression of opposing position will result in immediate disarmament and assimilation with the opposition. This acknowledgment has

contributed a lot to the passive nature of todays underground movements, especially in the electronic music scene.

Teurlings (2013) provides a rather intriguing answer, by addressing the problem from the other pole, that is ability of capitalism to use criticism of itself as raw material to be exploited (Teurlings, 2013). Starting from a then-existing situation and the immanent-pragmatic attitude were the key factors that allowed capitalism to build upon the situation in which it found itself. This approach and attitude needs to be applied to the realm of underground, if any of todays movements want to stay on the opposing site while still retaining all of the initial values and ideas.

5.6 International counterculture of the 1960s

Guy Debords critique of the society, that has given rise to the Situationists, was rightly so arguing for a new stage in development of capitalism- consumer capitalism. How right his viewpoint actually was, is also confirmed when looking at improved material lives of Northern American and British citizens, the two western societies exceedingly ingrained in the new consumerist culture and logic. Applying a dialectical framework, it is not surprising that these two countries were also a birth place of countercultures in the 1960s.

The 1960s, which gave birth to the numerous movements of all kinds of causes, from womens rights, civil rights, gender and race equality, to expressing dissent towards political imperialism and corporate power, were at the same time characterized by substantial economic improvements of peoples lives, paving the way for consumerism to define the key economic narrative in the developed world. However, despite the prosperity and the affluent majority at the time, all previously mentioned movements were actively expressing dissent towards the current social and political circumstances, prevailing in the western world. Today known as the countercultures of the 1960s, they were also present in other countries, as is seen with the Situationists, yet North America and Great Britain were the two key environments, especially when looking at the cultural output accompanying these initiatives.

A Dictionary of Human Geography explains the counterculture in the following fashion:

"A social group or movement whose values and way of life are opposed to the mainstream of society to some degree. The term is often used specifically to refer to the mix of alternative lifestyles and practices that spread through the USA and other Western countries in the 1960s. These embraced commitments to peace and civil rights on the one hand, and experimentation with drugs, mystical practices, and communal living on the other, animated by the decade's popular music."[5]

At that time, the term "underground", which I also use to describe movements such as the Avantgardists and Dadaists, operating before 1960s, was beginning to be generally associated with these countercultural movements. From here on the true nature and value of

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[5] Retrieved from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199599868.001.0001/acref-9780199599868-e-296?rskey=itHl8X&result=1

underground movements is perceived, expressing the opposite values, beliefs, principles, lifestyles and aesthetic standards as to the ones of the dominant culture. Although the term was not used before, it can with all justice be ascribed to this kind of movements before 1960s.

So, what sets apart the countercultural movements of the 1960s in US and Britain when compared to the previous similar initiatives. It was exactly this abundance, technologic development and economic prosperity, all happening at the same time, which enabled people to perceive the sociopolitical crisis surrounding them. For instance, movements such as the Russian avantgardists and Dadaists where the result of direct opposite circumstances, specifically state revolution and world war. The nature of the time in which countercultural movements spawned prevented them from being marginalized, as was the case with previous examples, analyzed in my thesis. On the contrary, they were firmly positioned within the mainstream society (Suri, 2009). From the very beginning, we can argue, that these movements didnt stand a chance in retaining their "underground" status, since they were appealing to the dissatisfied masses. Identical faith and path, as experienced by the Situationists, was waiting for them, with capitalism and its flexible nature, cunningly incorporating the opposing (counter) cultural foundations in to their logic of dominant culture.

If we raise another comparison to previously analyzed underground movements, we se that regardless of their intention to agitate or not, to present an alternative or not or to demand change in society (or not), the counterculture movements of 1960s never really possessed the power to make any of these decisions. Whether they liked it or not, these decisions were made for them, by the masses identifying through their causes. Simultaneously, this fact embedded great power and influence in these movements, as well as ensured the inevitable cohesion with the dominant capitalist system at one point.

To some extent, even the countercultural movements themselves were aware of this, as we will se in this second attempt to valorize the 1960s movements, to find their true value and contribution to the societies' development:

So for the first time, the primary achievement of a certain underground movement- counter cultural movements of the 1960s in this case- was not to shed light on a problem or to just express discontent with current conditions in society, or to provide an alternative solution, as was the case with Avantgardists for instance. Their true success was in establishing a social sphere within the suffocating capitalist system, for people to liberate themselves and actually participate in the "alternative" itself:

"The international counterculture was, in fact, complicit in many of the elements of society that it criticized. It was not a call for revolution, despite its rhetoric, as much as it was a movement for rapid and personal reform within existing social and political structures" (Suri, 2009, p. 48).

Another similar acknowledgment is presented by Grunenberg and Harris (2005) in their description of hippies, one of many groups partaking in the countercultural movement:

"Hippy communes represented, after all, an alternative to mainstream society largely undertaken by middle-class dissidents, not an attack on the world capitalist and imperialist system" (Grunenberg, Harris, 2005, p. 24).

Such an environment opened new opportunities, new forms of social behaviors and moral stances, evident in the areas of sexuality and artists expression (Grunenberg, Harris, 2005). People participating in this liberation were not some social renegades but students, educated people, suburban housewives and other credible groups of people in society, making this movement immediately detached from the "shadows" of the underground. At the same time, such demographic of participants clearly shows, that they were not expressing dissent because of material things or lack of them, rather it was about the spiritual, the self-awareness and consciously defying the capitalist, consumerist logic embedded in dominant culture.

Important aspect worth mentioning in understanding this newly structured society of communal values and views, is the justified drug use, influencing the process of liberation. Besides complying with the bohemian logic of pleasure, drugs were enabling oneself to liberate his psychic space as well as liberation from the self, the ego (Grunenberg, Harris, 2005). Such status of drugs, in particular LSD, with the ability to alter peoples minds, was also conveyed by many artists at the time, putting it in the center of the social transformation and experimentation process.

Whether drugs had a negative or positive effect on the liberation of 1960s western societies, or even if they were one of the crucial reasons for this transformation to take place is beyond comprehension of my masters thesis research. It is, however, important to acknowledge that countercultures and their underground social spheres have enabled for these practices to take place, their open mindedness allowed people to further experiment and establish a culture, opposite to the dominant one. This is the true value of the underground.

Above all, underground in that time must be acknowledged for exposing the repressive cultural apparatus (Suri,2009), working intensely to hide the current social and political crisis behind the representation of "good life". Production of spectacles as ruled by the dictates of advertising and commodified media culture, and the intention of further bluring peoples awareness of their surroundings was pursued through saturation of consumer goods in these so called culture industries- entertainment and leisure industries (Fox Gotham, Krier, 2008). This way, the masses were happily enslaved in their own conformed worlds of endless consumption and satisfaction, while the dominant system kept on growing, expanding their power and utilizing on peoples obliviousness.

The need for a cultural revolt was clear, abandonment of values, morals and social behaviors, pertaining to the capitalistic logic, was offered by this new countercultural environment, where the self-criticising quality (Suri, 2009) prevailed, resulting in a new countercultural society.

As for the cultural output representing these movements, the inevitable transition in to the mainstream occurred, one could say almost at the very beginning, because of the huge popularity amongst the dissent masses. A very clear reason for that, one that also applies to

Dadaists and the Situationists, is that they (artists) were all, from day one, clear representatives of the countercultural values and ideas, posing a threat to the system and setting the flexible capitalist machine in motion. Let us look back at Teurlings (2013) and his explanation of the systems ability to incorporate the artistic part of critique while discarding the social part.

Countercultures of the 1960s are yet another example of underground cultural production, that failed at retaining their artistic expression and style away from the dominant capitalist culture and its integrative mechanisms. Again, the true value of underground, forming an antithesis in the dialectical process, is reaffirmed, just as the synthesis (integration with thesis- mainstream) is imminent.

6. ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND ITS ASSOCIATED SOCIAL SPHERES- THE PECULIAR NATURE AND REMARKABLY STRONG PRESENCE OF THE GENRE IN BOTH MAINSTREAM AND UNDERGROUND

6.1. Emergence of the rave and dance music culture in the nineties

It is somewhat appropriate to highlight a certain bedrock element, that was largely responsible for the upbringing of a late eighties, early nineties youth subculture- rave and electronic dance music culture- with its corresponding underground movement. David Hesmondhalgh (1998), in his analysis of The British Dance Music Industry: A Case Study of Independent Cultural Production, acknowledges this crucial element in a very nice fashion:

"The appropriation of digital technologies of production by musicians is felt by many journalists and dance fans to have democratized music-making (e.g. Toop 1995: 214-6). In particular, the explosion of small independent record companies in Britain since the dance music boom of the late 1980s has been seen as a challenge to domination of the music industry by multinational corporations, and many commentators have compared the intervention of the dance indies with that of punk companies in the late 1970s and early 1980s" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p. 235).

Accordingly, a decentralized cultural production, supported by an anti-corporate rhetoric in its social sphere- underground/illegal raves and parties, specialized record stores, independent record labels, clubs, artists, promoters etc.- has given birth to a new kind of underground initiative, specific in its characteristics and peculiarly passive in its resistance.

The underlying philosophy of the movement is best captured by the concept of PLUR- peace, love, unity, respect. Believed to be coined together by Frankie Knuckles, one of the original protagonists of the dance music culture (Heller, 2014):

"Each of PLURs words refers to a particular aspect of a collective philosophy initially shared within the Rave community. According to my interviews with rave culture practitioners, dancers and DJs, peace refers to inner peace of the soul, and outer peace with the surrounding environment and the world. Love refers to loving yourself and all those around you, not just your family and loved ones, but your neighbors and strangers, especially

those you met at a Rave. Unity represents a collective togetherness/ connectedness felt by all participants of the Rave: the dancers, the promoters, the DJs, the passer-byers, everyone. Respect includes yourself and all those around you and includes the ability to embrace those views and background that differ from yours. Ideally, there are no prejudgments, only welcoming, positive, accepting attitudes" (Heller, 2014, p. 4)

Especially the notion of respect clearly shows the transition of this opposing cultural movement towards a more pragmatic stand on the current social situation. As with the countercultures of 1960s, the ones engaged were mostly "middle" class citizens, predominantly affluent and somewhat educated. Despite the numerous parallels with the 1960s movements, one important difference must be emphasized: the form of resistance in dance music culture is "adaptive-reactive" and also "trivial" (Wilson,2002) at some times, while with previous countercultural movements it was all about challenging the status quo head on and clearly establishing the opposing position.

It is also worth mentioning here that capitalism, and its pragmatic approach to dealing with opposing ideas, was always successful in neutralizing such forces in the past, moreover, making them part of the dominant culture and system. As we will find out, dance music culture was yet another opposing force, successfully incorporated by capitalism in to its domain, however the passivity and the subtle nature of the resistance taking place, called for utilization of new strategies and pragmatic responses by music industry corporations.

More important than transition itslef, is the actual movement, its value and its significant contribution in the sense of alternative possibilities and lifestyles, before and after the transition.

The roots can be traced back to the mid eighties in US, where gay african-american communities were dancing to disco in clubs (Heller, 2014), expressing themselves freely and unknowingly planting the seeds of PLUR mentality. While DJs were pushing the boundaries and rearranging the disco sound in to its descendant house, an even more important mentality was emerging, one in the next step fully encapsulated by dance music culture. This very freedom, the liberation from established standards and allowing yourself to seek emancipation through hedonism and pleasure created a vibe, greatly cherished in the dance music community and only achieved by applying the PLUR philosophy.

Together with the heavier and darker side of electronic music- techno- house has established an environment for like minded people, not succumbing to the dominant culture, but at the same time practicing a very subtle and passive form of resistance:

"There was evidence that some ravers were symbolically, subtly, and purpose- fully resisting mainstream value systems and culture. For example, the promotion of the PLUR philosophy and emphasis on 'breaking down communication barriers' were considered crucial 'corrections' to the violence and alienation that (in their view) represent the status quo" (Wilson, 2002, p. 400).

or:

"Although sometimes sensational styles (e.g., the candy raver look) and activities (e.g, frenetic, often drug-induced dancing) were adopted and practiced, they were not necessarily meant to garner attention from those outside the rave scene and certainly not appall or shock (although, when the styles are carried over into everyday wear that can stand out as peculiar) - an interesting appendage to conventional understandings of 'spectacular' subcultures, such as punks and skinheads" (Wilson,2002, p. 400).

The passivity, dealt with in the dance music underground movements was mainly aimed at empowering oneself to embrace the alternative and to keep the homogeneous community away from the eye of the authority, rather than challenging the status quo in the society or expressing discontent publicly. It also served as protection against the people who were engaging in it for the wrong reasons- hype generated around the movement or senseless drug use-, altough the success in both cases was poor. Some might describe such behavior as useless and mark the dance music underground movement as one without a cause, but for the participants it was all about escaping the constrains of capitalism, its social structure and its dominant culture.

Contributing to the already secretive and mysterious nature of underground dance music movement was also extensive drug use amongst its followers. While assigning illegal behavior to the movement has pushed it even more underground and gave authorities a strong argument to prosecute and fight against it, the drugs, ecstasy in particular as the drug of choice (Wilson, 2002) of early ravers, played an important part. They influenced and accelerated the process of liberation and "breaking down the barriers".

Returning back to the central role of technological revolution, enabling everyday people to participate in cultural production, such democratization and decentralization of electronic dance music production brought upon the most defining characteristic of underground dance music movement- independence.

More specifically, independence from big corporations and established music publishers further defined the nature of the movement:

"Dance music resists certain key features of other sections of the music industry. It is common to hear the claim, for example, that the lack of a star system within dance music concentrates attention on 'the music itself', rather than on personality and 'image" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p. 234/235).

If the emphasis in popular music was on the author/artist himself, in the dance sector it was all about the genre and the focus of audiences on shifts in styles rather than on the identity of performers (Hesmondhalgh, 1998). It all makes sense when we realize that the goal of big record labels is to maximize sales and profits, thus the identity of the artist is important. Huge amounts of time and money are spent for artists promotion, in to establishing a public image of them through videos, live concerts, tours and other public appearances.

"Once promotional money has been spent on establishing an artist's name and identity, record companies aim to produce a series of increasingly profitable albums. The artist's name

serves as a brand, around which meanings can be attached and varied, in accordance with changing audience patterns" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p. 239).

This, of course, was working against the character of dance music as well as its aesthetic standards. For one, the people participating were not attracted by "stars" but rather by the music itself, the numerous genres that were evolving every day. This only increased the anti-establishement rhetoric within the underground movement where labels and organizers of dance events would acquire credibility by pushing forward new, progressive sounds and acknowledging the quality of the music rather than the hype behind a certain artist. Such line of thinking coincided with the PLUR nature of the movement, emphasizing collectivism over individualism. Next to that, this fact contributed very much to the emergence of specialist record stores, another important participant in the social sphere of the underground movement, categorizing records according to a constantly shifting set of sub-genres (Hesmondhalgh, 1998).

As for the aesthetics, one of the most important elements in popular music-the voice or vocal- was only one of many elements consisting of a dance tune and many times not even the predominant one. This further diminished the authorship factor as well as the importance of artist identity.

So, the independent cultural production, crucially defining the nature of institutions participating in the movement- independent labels, promoters and event organizers- didnt just reinforce the anti-corporate rhetoric in the community on the production side, but also on the consumption side:

"The relative lack of concern with authorship within postwar dance music culture (as compared to that within rock and other forms) perhaps reflected a lack of interest amongst dance audiences in rock notions of authenticity, sincerity and integrity, and a preference for other values: immediacy and sensuality, but also, as Will Straw (1993) suggests, a pleasure in secrecy and obscurity, in the idea that a sound would not become known to everyone, but would remain the particular province of the dance fan and his/her associates. In post-house dance music, the relative lack of emphasis on authorship within dance music became a key ideological goal" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p.238).

The above stated ideology, and many others have conceived a way of thinking and acting, only applicable to the dance music culture and its movement. The intentional passivity, observed in participants underground activities and resistance might indicate the lessons learned from previous countercultural movements, where it was all about expressing discontent and challenging the status quo. However, as popularity grew and the media presence was expanding, the inevitable transition towards mainstream was beginning to take place.

6.2 The dialectical process: Underground and dance music movement and its internaly genrated transition in to the mainstream sphere

The factors that pushed the underground dance music towards a mainstream audience can be divided in to two groups- operating on the supply side (production) and the demand side (consumption). Notably, from a dialectical stand point, it is exactly those factors which helped establish the movements defining independent nature, that would ultimately start destroying the original underground appeal.

Starting on the production side, the independent nature of dance music labels and other participants in the scene was mostly possible due to the technologic developments, democratizing and decentralizing production of dance music. This, in a way, emphasized the anti-corporate rhetoric within and amongst these institutions, constituting a large part of the social critique embedded in underground dance music. The other big part was of course the PLUR philosophy and escaping the constrains of capitalism through self empowerment and living the "alternative".

Definitely, these small labels, in order to survive, had to participate in the market just like everyone else. Alongside big corporate labels, the competition was hard which resulted in occasional partnerships, raising a key issue within the production politics of dance music culture (Hesmondhalgh, 1998):

"While some sections of a 'subcultural' music believe that they should be heard in the mainstream, others argue that the music's force comes from its resistance to co-optation. But many audiences and producers believe both at the same time" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p.240).

This simultaneous resistance to and coexistence with the mainstream experienced by dance music, is by far the clearest example of the "essential tension" between the two opposing worlds, happening within all cultural outputs of the counertcultural nature, not just electronic dance music. What makes dance musics underground movement stand out is its intensified anti-corporate rhetoric, meaning that all underground institutions,prepared to cooperate with big corporations, would automatically lose their underground credibility:

"The danger for an independent in 'crossing over' is, in the terms of dance music culture itself, the loss of 'credibility': gaining economic capital in the short-term by having a hit in the national pop singles chart (or even having exposure in the mainstream or rock press) can lead to a disastrous loss of cultural capital for an independent record company (or an artist), affecting long-term sales drastically" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p.241).

Looking back at Teurlings (2013) and his description of capitalisms flexibility in striping the social critique away from the artistic one, again the system was on the run to capitalize on this new subcultural knowledge, by covertly including it in to its dominant structures while leaving the social, and in this case corporate critique behind. This time, in order for partnerships to work, music industry corporations had to create an illusion, adopting various means to make it look as though dance specialists are autonomous of their parent

companies (Hesmondhalgh, 1998). From financing partnerships, distribution deals, separate offices etc. only one conclusion is relevant for our discussion- instead of independence, so crucial to the nature of the movement, we can now talk of only pseudo-independence (Hesmondhalgh, 1998) and succumbence to the system.

By this point, dance music as an underground movement was aware of the threats, embedded in the systems ability to incorporate, rearrange and offer the same culture in a form of a product. Yet, the anti-corporate rethotic wasnt enough. Wholesome exclusion of cooperations and partnerships with corporations is needed in order to avoid contamination.

Even if the underground institutions would hold on to that piece of advice, there is always a question of the audience (demand side) and the growing popularity of the movement.

Firstly, it should be stated that the initial underground movement was as well full of people, killing the "vibe". The accepting nature of PLUR philosophy at the same time meant that many rave goers were able to participate for the wrong reasons- hype and popularity, especially after the extensive media coverage acknowledging the illegal activities and drug-abuse. These people were effectively dissemenating the rave philosophy (Wilson, 2002) in a negative sense.

But even bigger impact on the dialectical transition towards mainstream had, again, the technology. In his five theses on rave resistance, Wilson (2002) touches the aspect of technology in the second:

"Clearly though, the excessive consumption of technology by some ravers clearly falls in the parameters of 'deviant' as defined by many mainstream commentators on youth who have disapprovingly used the term "screenagers" to describe media/computer/technology savvy youth" (Wilson,2002, p. 402).

While in the early days, the embrace of technology was seen as tool for acheaving self empowerment, there has come a point when technological emprovements have started working against the movements foundations:

"Technology did not deter non-dancers from attending Raves either. Each attendee was free to express him or herslef. However, with the introduction of the iPhone in 2007, young people began recording themselves and others at underground music events. Posts exist on YouTbe and Facebook of Rave/EDM from that same year" (Heller, 2014, p. 8).

Continuing:

"This shifts the experience of Rave, originally intended to be a night of spiritual dance practice to an evening of shared photo and video opts" (Heller, 2014, p. 9).

This diminished the underground appeal of dance music on several levels. Apart from taking away the mistique and secrecy, with putting the culture in the center of virtual attention, more importantly it destroyed the PLUR mentality practicised in these events. People were no longer losing themselves in the moment but rather cpaturing it on camera.

This is not the initial alternative dance music tried to establish. And on a more business level, such exposure meant opportunity for different corporations to further infiltrate in to the scene and rearrange rave references in order to sell their products. Interesting example:

"In 2012, Absolut Greyhound Vodka released a commercial that references Burning man, one of the largest annual outdoor art, music and dance events in the United States. The commercial begins with partygoers dressed in Raver attire, about to witness a futuristic dog race across the desert sands of Nevada, powered by the rhythms of electronic dance music. An amazing display of technology, music and fashion, stripped from Rave culture, is used to sell vodka" (Heller, 2014, p, 55/56).

Yet another subculture of opposing beliefs has been absorbed by the dominant system, rearranging its ideologies and cultural output in to mass-media product for further exploitation and profit maximization. The initial cause has been lost amongst the general public, yet the true underground exists, smaller in numbers and even more passive than before. To strive for preservance of untainted ideologies, as well as the quality of cultural output, is at the forefront of institutions which operate in the underground environment, and which I tend to focus my research on.

7.ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH: UNDERGROUND DANCE MUSIC INSTITUTIONS: CONVERSATIONS ON THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

7.1 Methodology

With the two previous chapters, I set out to acknowledge the dialectical process of underground movements. Starting at the beginning of the twentieth century, through abstraction of each movement separately, I was able to perceive the surrounding circumstances, creating the environments that brought upon all analyzed underground movements. Needless to say, each and every one had its own specificalities and particular characteristics, stemming out of external conditions such as the current stage of capitalistic society- mode of production, societal developments, political atmosphere etc.

A turbulent stage, taking place in any of these factors has generally contributed to the birth of analyzed movements, indulging in the countercultural production. This process of abstraction has enabled me to gather some knowledge and establish some general views on the underground as an entity.

A decision was made, born out of the fact that I myself have had several years of experience in participating and contributing to this particular movement, to look closely at the underground electronic dance music scene, its beginnings in the late eighties, early nineties, its inevitable transition in to the mainstream sphere of cultural production and its contemporary presence in both underground and mainstream. The latter fact has had a profound effect on establishing a rationale for my research, looking specifically at underground electronic music scene and its social sphere.

From a dialectical point of view, this movement renders itself exceptionally interesting because of its strong presence in both underground and mainstream today. A crucial difference is thus present, when compared to all the other analyzed movements, whose process of evolvement always brought them to the point of becoming a predominantly mainstream participant. Consequently, the underground aspects were neglected, left behind.

Yet with electronic music this wasnt, and still isnt the case. Of course the beginnings, stemming out of technological developments, enabling everyday people to engage in an independent cultural production, were heavily induced with anti-corporate rhetoric clearly distancing the movement away from the institutionalized, mainstream environment. But, with the growing popularity of electronic dance music, graduall movement towards the "commercial" realm resulted in a multibillion cultural industry we see today. Proclaimed as the EDM- electronic dance music scene, this abbreviation signifies the commercial endeavours in electronic music.

To understand why the underground hasnt lost its appeal, despite the complete and thorough transition experienced in the scene, is yet another rationale for my in dpeth observation of electronic dance music and its pertaining social spheres. Differentiation between the two worlds of cultural production is that more reinforced in the case of electronic dance music, which might result in a better observation of what the true value and contribution of the underground is. In addition, it provides a specific case, in terms of dialectical analysis, of a movement that started underground, went mainstream, and finally experienced fragmentation in to both spheres.

Besides dialectics and dialectical thinking, theoretical foundation on which I base my analysis and research also consists of the value based approach (Klamer, 2016). I brought this in to picture here with a reason, to better explain the decision and rationale for doing ethnographic research in the social sphere of underground electronic dance music.

Ethnography and participant observation is best captured by Alan Bryman (2012) in his book on social research methods, where he outlines some of the main characteristics. He is able to establish this characteristics by looking at a book on female drug users, where extensive ethnographic research was also undertaken:

"In this book, ethnography will be taken to mean a research method in which the researcher:

 • is immersed in a social setting for an extended period of time;

 • makes regular observations of the behaviour of members of that setting;

 • listens to and engages in conversations;

 • interviews informants on issues that are not directly amenable to observation or that the ethnographer is unclear about (or indeed for other possible reasons);

 • collects documents about the group;

• develops an understanding of the culture of the group and people's behaviour within the context of that culture;

• and writes up a detailed account of that setting.

Thus, ethnography is being taken to include participant observation and is also taken to encapsulate the notion of ethnography as a written product of ethnographic research" (Bryman, 2012, p. 432)

Immediately we see, how utterly important the social sphere is for an ethnographic researcher. It will provide a social setting where people go about their daily activities and where I will have to present myself as a credible person. Only then, will I earn the trust of people participating in the underground scene, to share their opinions with me on the topic at hand. As it turns out this was quite a problem with some organizations, clearly not willing to participate in such structured conversations. Judging from the fact that underground as an environment is more prone towards anti-establishement rethoric, might explain such disinterest on their side to talk to me. As a student I am of course participating in the opposite, contradicting world- institutionalized world.

Nonetheless, this points out the major issue, which I experienced in my research:

"One of the key and yet most difficult steps in ethnography is gaining access to a social setting that is relevant to the research problem in which you are interested" (Bryman, 2012, p. 433). At the and I was able to gain access to some institutions, while others declined. It should be emphasized here that luckily, the ones willing to participate, openly discussed this seemingly more and more closed and to some extent elitist community, which especially helped to establish a contrast between the early underground scene in the nineties (accessability and liberation for those seeking it) and the underground electronic dance music scene today (closed community, hard to reach on a personal level). Reasons for such transition will be discussed when we get to the actual analysis of conversations undertaken.

Disregard of my attempts to reach out to this group of people has required a gradual transition from overt to covert ethnography (Bryman, 2012). Based on the knowledge and experience, gained in Slovenia, where I have been an active participant in the small, but very lively underground movement, I knew that the social sphere in such cases operates on a very intimate level of closely knit personal relationships and interactions. Although outsiders are allowed to participate in the events of public nature- parties, after parties, random socializing in preffered places- they dont actually engage in the conversations and activities carried out by the "leaders". Several years of participance and constant justification have earned me credibility, to be a part of that small group within the community. I knew I didnt have the same background here. That is why I decided to begin my ethnographic research in an overt fashion, clearly explaining my intentions to everyone with whom I wanted to talk. I also stated I was a student at Erasmus University, thinking that might present me as a liable person. Looking back I clearly see that was a mistake.

After failed initial attempts, i didnt resort to the other- covert ethnography- in the full sense of the meaning, but rather took some sort of middle ground between the two possibilities. I started going to record stores, the ones I went to numerous times before, yet without the intention of striking a "research" conversation on the underground scene and its evolvement. The people, owners, were always very prepared to talk to me, but on a different topic, the topic of records and music specifically. When I tried to steer the conversation towards underground, and their opinion on it, they almost subconsciously managed to move away from the topic and back to the music. This alone might have a lot to say on the closed nature of todays undergorund scene in electronic music.

Returning back to the middle ground, I then, after all, decided to explain that I am a student, and would like to talk to them more specifically on the notion of undergorund, its process of evolvement and their opinion on the course it has taken from early nineties till now. Unsurprisingly, I was again confronted with mild resentment, however, because I was able to establish some level of credibility beforehand, I didnt receive a fully negative answer. The reason, I think I was steering between overt and covert ethnography, is because after that point, I never again brought forward the idea of me doing research for my thesis. Further the conversation went, the more they were prepared to share with me, both the owner of the record store, and some sellers in numerous record fairs, with whom I did some informal conversations.

As you might acknowledge, I was focused a lot at the beginning on talking to people from record stores and others, engaged in the medium one way or another- private sellers from record fairs, collectors etc. There is a rationale for such targeting. David Hesmondhalgh (1998) acknowledges the record store as such:

"Another key institution in the formation of local dance music infrastructures outside the major cities has been the specialist record shop" (Hesmondhalgh, 1998, p. 237)

And he continues:

"Significantly, though, the one area of music in which record retail specialists burgeoned in the early l990s was dance. The 1994 Monopolies and Mergers Commission Report on the UK music industry reported an estimated 13 per cent fall in the total number of retail outlets for recorded music between 1989 and 1994, a fall which particularly affected consumers outside big towns (MMC 1994: 278). But dance shops are opening while other specialists and general small stores go bankrupt. In addition, many of the remaining independent rock/pop shops now have dance sections" (Hesmondhalgh,1998, p. 237).

Emergence of specialized record stores, focused on electronic music goes hand in hand with the nature of the underground movement, extensively discussed in the fifth chapter. The social sphere which I am looking at, thus gains one of its most important entities, where basically all the other participants- audiences, artists, promoters, people working for clubs etc.- meet and interact. By providing a gateway to the core of any undergrounds movement- its cultural production- record store gains a special status. This status is emphasized because of the following:

"Together with hip hop culture, it was precisely this broadly conceived electronic dance social milieu that established both the record store and the club as key cultural venues in the urban landscape of the 1990s, despite the reign of CD and subsequent emergence of cheap portable digital players. DJs were the gatekeepers of these two taste communities that not only greatly contributed to vinyl's cultural and commercial lasting when the mainstream music industry gave up on the format, but also endowed it with the meanings of avant-garde artistry and alternative coolness" (Bartmanski, Woodward, 2015, p. 12)

The two authors here were analyzing vinyl as a product and its resurgence in recent years, yet they expressed an important characteristic of the medium and its connection, identification with the initial underground electronic dance music movement. Vinyl was, and still is a symbol of the underground. Even today, the borderline exists, as most of the commercial DJs prefer the modern digital technology, while the underground scene stayed true to vinyl and record players.

Before resurgence, it was dance music who pushed vinyl through the though period of replacement- CDs and later digital formats. In the underground, it was the primary carrier of the cultural production, also because of its ability to be manipulated by DJs. Of course aesthetic and political reasons followed, influencing the image of vinyl to this very day, as an opposing symbol to commercial culture, backed by ever new technologies. The fact that the role of vinyl hasnt changed in the electronic dance music culture over the years, made it a good departure point for my research. Next to that, I also collect records, so I am somewhat familiar with the record store scene here in the Netherlands.

7.2 Informal conversations in record fairs

As it turns out in my favour, the dutch have a considerably big and active market for vinyl records, with the demand spanning from more popular music right down to niche genres and styles. This is confirmed by the fact that just in Rotterdam, I had three record stores, solely specialized in electronic music, not counting all the others with broader stock. Compared to my hometown in Slovenia, where there are no specialized stores and only one or two general, that is a lot.

I was also able to visit five record fairs, where three of them were predominantly focused on electronic music (two in Rotterdam and one in Amsterdam), one, in Amsterdam, was offering electronic music as well as other genres, while the last one, in Utrecht, had a really small representation of sellers with electronic music. The one in Utrecht is recognized to be the biggest record fair in Europe, clearly showing that vinyl resurgence is not stemming out of electronic music scene. This is important for our discussion, because it further supports the notion of vinyl in electronic music as a symbol of the underground, and not of commercial EDM.

In these fairs, I managed to have some interesting conversations with sellers, mostly private, selling their own collections. For the first three fairs (Two editions of Crate Diggerz in Rotterdam and a record fair in Volks hotel Amsterdam), my idea of masters thesis research hadnt been yet articulated, so the topic of underground was not well discussed. Of course,

everything revolved around music- different titles, releases, EPs, albums and so on, which al of my interlocutors spoke so fondly of. The narrative revolved around quality of course, but every now and then I would be presented with an anecdote on how this record or that artist also contains a greater message.

For instance, the Detroit collective Underground Resistance, in their work, aimed at expressing the everyday struggle of african american communities and their marginalized status, while the music was seen as an escape to a better place. Or if we look at a record- Nick Holder feat. Jemini - "America Eats Its Young"- a political message couldnt be clearer. All these sellers, mostly of older age, spoke with great pride on their experiences and participation in the underground back in the nineties. Despite the passivity and apolitical behaviour when compared to underground movements before the nineties, underground dance music scene initially had some of the active rebellious spirit.

Interestingly, when compared to the talks at the other two record fairs, the picture hadnt changed much. Despite my clear questions on where do they see the underground today, which l later replaced with a question if the underground in their opinion still exists, I was confronted with moderate resentment to answer them. The sellers where dodging the questions and trying to bring the conversation back to the music itself.

This brought me to my first acknowledgment of underground movement today, striving for different values and ideologies than the one in the nineties. The few answers that I managed to extract, pointed in the direction of expressing the importance of social critique more than the actual cultural production. Of course the quality was important, but the meaning was elsewhere. I also got a few direct answers that the underground in electronic music doesnt exist anymore, to which I could partially agree, since the initial movement, with its characteristics and ideologies, is no more present today. But so are not the circumstances- socio economic- influencing the emergence of the movement in the first place. Without doubt, todays underground movement is not what it was in the nineties. To understand why so, I had to expand my research. Talking to record stores, specialized in electronic music and operating in todays underground scene might provide me with such answers.

7.3 Conversations with record store owners

I decided to reach out to record stores through email, explaining in a few sentences what my intentions are. Crucial for establishing initial contact and presenting myself as a credible person, was help from one of my school mates, who had previously cooperated with these people through organizing his own events in the scene and working for a booking agency. From my previous experience, I knew reaching out to institutions, operating in the underground, would be harder than talking to any other entity, not identifying itself through this environment.

Of course, there is a logic to that, which I respect. Not wanting to share your ideas and thoughts with just about anyone usually serves to protect the purity of the scene and to avoid participation of the wrong people for the wrong reasons- stemming out of money driven, capitalistic values. Wrong people with wrong intentions enforce the genesis of transition in to

the mainstream, exclusion of social critique and reduction of quality to reach bigger audiences. Thus, we must realize that underground starts on a personal level.

Unfortunately, all three requests for conversations were declined, two of them replied with either shortage of time or the fact that there is nothing much to discuss- convinced that the differentiation between underground and mainstream is clear and transparent. I think, however, that more esoteric lessons are to be learned here.

Before that, its appropriate to quickly describe some characteristics and similarities pertaining to the three record stores, especially Clone (Rotterdam) and Rush Hour (Amsterdam). For the third one, Triphouse (Rotterdam), it needs to be emphasized that they didnt emerge back in the nineties. Why, you will se in the following paragraphs.

What both Clone and Rush Hour have in common is their current structure, consisting of a brick and mortar store, distribution operation and a record label for releasing their own music. But more importantly, they both originated in the nineties, which means they were brought up with the initial underground movement in electronic dance music and its core values. Through the years, they also both experienced substantial growth, attracting bigger audiences, expanding their operations and in general participating in the market with more success.

Yet, this growth was not stimulated by huge investments aimed at attracting larger crowds and higher profits. Or at least it didnt seem so. In other words, both record stores primary objective was following their artistic vision and experiencing growth in accordance with it. Not expanding their business at any cost. This is the true value of the underground, one present today as much as back in the day. With that, they were able to grow organically, establish international recognition, retain their initial underground appeal and credibility, all whilst experiencing ever bigger success in the market. Being successful in the market and at the same time not "selling out" is a concept not known to the initial underground movement in electronic music. The anti-corporate rethoric alone would not allow that.

So what can we acknowledge here and how can we explain the resentment of these institutions in talking to me?

Firstly, the underground electronic dance music movement has moved away from its initial ideologies, abandoning the anti-corporate rethoric and redefining the concept of credibility, one of much importance in the scene. Judging from the passivity and apolitical behaviour, already prevailing in the nineties, these institutions went one step further in protecting their cultural production. By willingly participating in the market, following the values and logic of capitalistic mindset, they seemed to be more in line with the system, lowering the threats of experiencing transition. Obviously, that meant loosing some of the underground appeal, especially the part on being socially critical and fighting against the "establishment".

The implications are both positive and negative. Reffering back to Teurlings (2013), it is almost as these institutions purposefully let go of the social critique in order to preserve the

artistic one. This might explain why in todays movement, there is basically no talk of fighting against the system, while the music and the art are at the forefront. The same experience I had, when talking to an owner of a different record store. We will return to that later on.

It might also explain how the environment of liberation and living the alternative was replaced by this elitist community, only concentrated on the music itself. Such concentration is good, while the inaccessibility robes the movement of the values, so crucial in the beginning. You could say that the movement today is more narrow minded, but then, we must think of the trade-off taking place. For me, it is worth staying on the side lines of rebelliousness in order to secure the quality of cultural output. Of course the question arises to what extent do people actually participate because of the quality. It might just be because of the hype or current popularity. Hence,one more reason for unallowed admittance in to the scene as well as in to the more narrow circles of people leading the scene. As for "changing the world" we can refer back to Wilson (2002, p. 380 & 381):

"In doing so, these 'post-subculture' scholars concentrated on the potential for youth to be, on one hand, apathetic and passive in their cultural activities (i.e., MIPC), and on the other hand, optimistic and creative in utilizing alternative methods of empowerment/resistance (e.g. dance)".

Besides, the culture itself has experienced transition and appropriation in to the mainstream realm long before these two record stores became successful in the market logic. They should be viewed as strongholds of the underground today.

With what has been said right now, it is easier to understand why the resentment to debate on the topic. I simply do not have much credibility in the dutch scene. And on a more specific note, the owners might think their underground credibility was going to be challenged by me, which could be the case, if I tried to analyze them as participants in the underground today, through the lense of the underground movement in the nineties. In hindsight, reaching out through mail was also a bad decision, so I decided to visit my next record store in person.

7.3.1 Thatz It Record Store Rotterdam

For my next conversation I decided to visit a record store Thatz It, located near Noordplein in Rotterdam. As others, Thatz it met the criteria of supplying mainly electronic dance music with some smaller selections of other genres like RnB and Hip Hop. My direct presence enabled me to strike a conversation with the owner on different topics, before I actually stated that I want to do an in depth conversation on the underground for my research. Needless to say, once the request was out, the initial reaction was not very satisfying, yet after some time the owner, Michel, was speaking openly about his experiences in the scene, leaving me with more than 3 hours of debate and usefull information.

As I already have problems with the scope and exceeding the limit, I will only highlight the most important ones, especially those pertaining to the social sphere of underground.

Although the record store was there for the last five years, Michel was participating in the scene long before, when it started in Holland, working in clubs and DJing. His initial contact with the scene was established through radio, but for the social sphere, his older brother played a very important role, by taking him in to the company and introducing him to everyone. So again we se that underground is first and foremost a personal thing, which wholly contradicts the commercial, dominant culture. There its all about recognition and impersonal exposure to large crowds. Even more interesting, he said that he wasnt originally appealed by the movement itself, just the music, exemplifying the importance of art over social relevance.

Along the conversation he explained the true value of the underground as an environment where everybody was equal, every body had the same right when they were standing in the discotehque. He continued that gangs were connected with each other for the first time, whereas normally they were fighting. In the underground they were interacting and creating a common environment.

To understand what he is saying, we must know that the first instances of underground dance music movements were born in America, in marginalized african american, latino and gay communities, who were seeking liberation through dance and hedonism. Regarding the socio-economic circumstances, it is clear that the social critique was present at the beginning in America, yet these people didnt express clear opposition as was the case, for instance, with the countercultural movements of the 1960s. In dance music, people were establishing their own way of resisting the status quo.

So it comes with no surprise, that social critique was gradually pushed back when the movement started emerging in Europe. "Because we had it good here and in New York it was very different" was his answer to the question on why the "fighting the system" part of the movement was not that strong here in Europe. Reinforcing the fact that external circumstances, such as the county where you live, national economy, demographic and ethnographic characteristics of a certain society etc, define the nature of the underground movement, we can now with certainty conclude that what we have today is as well an underground movement, just the circumstances influencing and defining it are substantialy different.

As I said earlier, the whole conversation was again revolving more around music than the movement itself. Michel always found a way to explain certain characteristic or idea of the underground through an anecdote about some artists or songs. But what especially struck me was the repeatedly stated fact, that commercial or popular music isnt necessarily bad music. This shows the flexible nature of underground mentality, practicing the same flexibility as the capitalist system does, whenever confronted with a critique of a certain underground movement. It is appropriate therefore, to differentiate between forced and natural transition in to the mainstream sphere of culture.

Coherent with the previous paragraph, he also evokes the dialectical nature of cultural production, when saying that affluent people were actually the ones responsible for the emergence of the movement, opening clubs, record stores etc. The thesis evoked its antithesis.

Another example of the same thing is evident from the section of conversation where we touched the beginnings, and how the popular music- Motown label in Detroit for instance- influenced artists, later on devising the sound of the underground.

To conclude, there is one more thought I would like to emphasize. At the end, the conversation led us to the scene today, where Micheles opinion was that techno and house, as the two main sounds of underground electronic dance music are not underground anymore. I could agree with this statement to the extent of comparing ti to the initial movement in the nineties. When I started explaining him my take on the "real" underground today and how it is defined by the environment and system surrounding it, I got an unexpected answer on the "realness" of underground:

"Well the real underground is where different people meet each other, in different styles and cultures and being in a club where the environment is a little bit messy, not perfect. That is the beauty of the underground- accepting everybody"

While the acceptance might not be true for reaching the core of the scene, it is true that everybody is able to participate. From rich to poor, "appropriate" people to social delinquents. And that is the true value of the social sphere of the underground. Not having to comply with any preconceived notions in order to participate, is something dominant culture is not capable of. If you dont fit certain social standards, as ordered by the system, if you dont comply with the generic form of an individual in the masses, then youre not welcome to participate. In the eyes of the dominant culture, people participating in the underground are outcasts, not worthy of their cultural product. I myself see this as yet another subtle weapon of the ruling classes, used to further distance the masses from realizing the bigger picture.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In the conclusions, I tend to highlight the main acknowledgments, acquired from chronological analysis of underground movements and ethnographic research on the contemporary underground electronic dance music movement. This should allow me to form a general picture on the underground, its character and its contribution to the world of cultural production, as an alternative option.

Firstly, we must ask ourselves what is the relevance of underground, as an environment of specific cultural production. Basically all analyzed movements, with the exception of the Russian Avantgarde, were established to operate as an antithesis to the mainstream, dominant culture. The opposing nature of aesthetics, standards of quality, ideologies, principles and opinions on socio-economic conditions of society, in which the movement emerged, all emanated out of resentment. And if it wasnt for capitalists, with their ruling ideas in the superstructure and their simplified, generic cultural production aimed at satisfying everyone and further numbing their consciousness, this resentment would never had existed.

By taking the opposing position, the objective was and still is the same. Providing an alternative, in terms of culture consumed as well as lifestyles adopted, underground creates a social sphere around its cultural output for like minded people to liberate themselves from the constrains of the system in power- Capitalism. Naturally, the philosophy and mind set behind these movements brought upon values, crucially different from the ones pursued in the dominant culture.

First and fore most, artistic vision, artistic integrity and artistic quality all outrank the importance of commercial success and profitability. For to make art that is complex, daring, challenging the status quo, esoteric and, in many cases of underground cultural production, groundbreaking, usually means not experiencing strong market presence or recognition amongst the masses. Some of the movements went one step further in this sense, adopting an anti-corporate rethoric, which meant that any financial and commercial achievement was equated with the loss of underground credibility.

Next to that, there was one more value, which extended in to a role of underground artistic production- social criticism and expressing discontent over the oppression of the working classes through art. This brings me to my next conclusion.

By analyzing a timeline of around 100 years, obviously different movements emerged in different environments- societies, and under different circumstances defining the economic structure.

The poet Alexandr Pushkin was contemplating the role of an artist already in the imperial times of Russia, while the Avantgardists strived to devise a mainstream branch of national culture after the revolution. Similarly, Dadaists basically emerged out of the first world war, while the countercultrual movements of the 1960s encountered and fought a totally different "established" environment. What I am trying to say is that different circumstances, defining the economic structure of society, contributed to the different natures of these, all underground, movements.

It was the post-revolutionary atmosphere, that encouraged Avantgardists to "go mainstream," while The Dadaists strongly opposed such idea. In the end, their radically new approaches in devising and presenting art as well as strong criticism of the society at war, prevented them from avoiding such transition. They became an art institution initslef and experienced a natural trnsition.

One might say that the Situationsts, altough in a totally different capitalistic setting, learned something out of the past, by acknowledging the ability of the system to rearrange anything, any art in to a product, a spectacle for the crowds, regardless of its initial aspiration to criticize Capitalism. Clearly, countercultures of 1960s didnt pick up this notion, judging by how popular and commercialized rock music got. In their defense, there probably wasnt much they could do about it- another natural transition. As with the Dadaists, their voice was too strong to remain underground. This could also justify the passivity and apolitical behavior, found in underground electronic dance music movements today. But back to that later.

As each movement, through the course of last 100 years or so, learned something from the past, so did the system, threatened by opposing ideologies and beliefs. Underground is a personal thing. This also means, that at a certain point, capitalism would be granted permission to enter the opposing sphere, pick up the basic characteristics of the art and its production and rearrange it to fit its dominant capitalistic logic.

An important dialectical process to recognize here is "the" point- the point when capital enters the opposing cultural production. For Dadaists, their strongly emphasized opposing position created such momentum. They couldnt avoid becoming an art institution, just because their discontent and radicalness resonated through the whole movement with such intensity.

Same went for the 1960s movements, which presented themselves as a threat to the system. Unlike with Dadaists, their "point" was a different one, one which would forever redefine the process of transition and one that Debord of the Situationists predicted in his Society of The Spectacle.

To put it in the harshest terms possible, capitalists realized that with culture, initially rebellious and critical towards the system, money could be made when social critique is abandoned and art rearranged in to a spectacle, product for the masses. Since underground is a personal thing, there will always be somebody who will be prepared to sell "out" the culture and its pure intentions for higher earnings, recognition, status of a super star. For that somebody, it "payed of" to enter the mainstream sphere. For the artistic expression itself and for the underground movement pertaining to it, consequences are irreversible.

This brings me to the final part, my ethnographic research on contemporary underground electronic dance music movement. Besides my personal involvement and interest in it, one other rationale for looking closely at this movement is the fact that electronic dance music, as a form of cultural production, is specifically known for its strong presence in both worlds, commercial and underground.

In the fifth chapter I tackled the internally generated transition in to the mainstream sphere by electronic dance music, while in the sixth, several outcomes of these implications are studied and explained. But for underground movements in general, the following applies:

For any underground movement, art produced and the social sphere surrounding it should outweigh the social criticism, usually taking place in any contradicting cultural movement. As things go, the first two consistently guide the production process and people participating in to the right direction of doing the right things for the right reasons. What matters is the culture and the community of people indulging in this alternative option. As for the critique of the society, as much as it is important, its always the decisive factor in presenting a threat to the dominant system, normally setting the course of the movement on the path of transition. From this perspective, passivity and also elitism to some extent- when trying to reach the core of the scene- make sense as tools for securing the purity of the scene.

Electronic dance music, as a form of cultural production, and its strong presence in both mainstream and underground today, has defined an interesting social context- a sort of gray area in which contemporary underground exists. Despite the original anti-corporate rethoric, lots of underground institutions who grew up with this logic didnt lose their reputation and credibility, once they reached the corporate stage themselves. This however, only worked for those institutions, who reached the corporate stage organically, not abandoning their initial artistic vision and quality. Needless to say, "gray area" also exists the other way around, with commercialized endeavors packaging their products under the "underground brand" for more appeal, thus diminishing the true value of it and setting the course for further dialectical evolvement.

Compared to the initial movement, contemporary underground electronic dance music movement demonstrates a change in core values, resulting in both positive and negative implications. As the dialectical thought teaches us, such process of evolvement will never stop. And underground movements of any kind, if true to their underground nature, will always evolve accordingly with the idea of presenting an alternative option in the world of cultural production.

I think it is only appropriate to conclude my thesis with some observations of the process at hand, its limitations and what I personally was able to gain out of this learning experience.

Dialectics as a core theoretical foundation, providing a red line for my analysis and research, have proven to be a vital element in my thesis. Besides defining the structure of my thesis, revealing itself with gradual progress, they allowed me for the first time in my life to perceive something as "this and that" at the same time, just by understanding and accepting the analyzed phenomenon as a process, going through different stages, influenced by different factors.

Before that, my ego and my personal involvement in the underground scene in Slovenia would never acquiesce to such interpretation. Either something is underground or it isnt and vice versa goes for mainstream. With dialectics, I was able to go pass the "black or white" stage in understanding, and rather focus on the "gray area", area where reality actually takes place. Critical thinking and acceptance of the fact that two contradictions, analyzed in my thesis, exist together and influence each other on a daily basis, would not have been possible if only standard economic concepts were applied.

Same goes for the Value Based Approach (Klamer, 2016), remarkably useful when establishing the true value of the underground, its importance and its contribution to the variety of cultural production, otherwise predominantly capital driven in todays western societies. Some limitations did arise however, regarding the critical thinking.

Acting upon certain values might not necessarily result in a right thing to do, especially when we observe the predominant set of values in western capitalistic societies. Instrumentalizm, success, profitability, these are the values considered to be "right", thus exposing a lack in ability of the approach to be critical. To look at something as a process in

different stages and situations, and in need of different reasoning for each of these situations, calls for a different set of values on which people base their decisions. The strong emphasis on striving for the right thing sometimes neglects the critical judgement of how this will be achieved.

Without question, dialectics as well have presented themselves as a foundation with several limitations and problems, experienced throughout the process of writing my thesis. If a comprehensive recognition of cultural production in todays society was to be made, one can never stop adding areas of analysis or research, as each and every one could render itself crucial for better understanding. With this said, I got carried out several times, not really knowing what to focus on and what to leave out. This feeling of being lost was good, because it triggered the need in me to explore further, yet the structure of the thesis and the final product suffered.

Usually, academic papers pursue the goal of presenting some fixed knowledge, something that could be said about the cultural production in todays society indefinitely. But since the society is constantly changing, and relations within the economic structure adjust accordingly, it is hard to say which factors and circumstances will influence cultural production in the future or why underground and mainstream exist as they do. We can only go as far as to see where these movements were, where they are today, and what brought them here. Dialectics dont allow for dogmatic facts.

As for my personal gain, what I find most important is that through interpretation and exploration, I am not just able to better understand and articulate the true value of underground, as an environment of alternative cultural production. I am as well more capable of contributing to it and preserving it in its right form by engaging in its praxis. This will enable me to participate not for my personal benefits, but for the benefts of the movement itslef. Only then will I be worthy of inclusion in to the "inner" circles.

Referring to the research part specifically, ethnographic observations and conversations have given me the experience of actual participation in the circles, within the dutch scene. Despite my previous presence, I am grateful for that, since my position in these circles has substantially changed. Regarding my clear wish to one day actively contribute and participate in this environment, economically as well, renders this fact highly important.

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