COMMODIFYING THE UNDERGROUND

Manifestations and Dynamics of Graffiti and Street Art Communities Towards Institutionalisation in Lisbon

MASTER THESIS

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Abstract

To understand informal dynamics within subculture movements the present research analyses the extent of Lisbon's commodification of street art, a previously underground practice with a troubled relationship to its predecessor movement, graffiti. Answering whether the expected commodification has impacted the local communities of graffiti writers and street artists, and how artists navigate the borders between commissioned street art, illegal street art and graffiti, relate to their artist peers, adapt to new opportunities and how the tensions are constructed and managed was central to the analysis. The theoretical framework relies heavily on notions of urban policy shift, due to the growing importance of the creative city, on the theory of the commons, on the study of socially constructed symbolic boundaries, opposing notions of worth and ambivalence. A bifold qualitative approach was taken covering content analysis and in-depth interviews conducted with artists, entrepreneurs, and municipal enablers. The findings tell the story of a divided, matured, and commodified urban movement. With many outliers, the scene is scattered across a spectrum, from the ones balancing commission works and illegal practice to those that reject any form of institutionalisation. As expected, given the socially constructed nature of the definitions, there are as many definitions and boundaries as there are agents capable of defining them. This in turn translates into a cacophony of boundaries, divisions, and tensions. These dynamics are of course not particular to urban art and are, in fact, present in most art forms baffled with the opportunities that derive from commercialisation.

Keywords: Creative City; Graffiti and Street Art; Boundary Work; Institutionalization; Commercialisation;

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1. Introduction

Picture your average medium to large city. The urban areas of Berlin, New York, Lisbon, or Rotterdam for example. Although all relatively different in their architecture, culture, and urban policies, one connecting urban trend can be pinpointed. In any of these metropolises, and many more across the globe, both the roughest neighbourhood and *hippest* new place in town, at opposite ends of a societal spectrum, have one thing in common: urban art on its walls. From trains, bus stops, trash bins, tunnels to 20-meter-high side facades of buildings and entire neighbourhoods amidst gentrification, a city deems itself vibrant once all of them are covered and recovered in spray paint. Just the thought of this practice alone makes it possible to hear the characteristic rattle and hiss of spray cans at work.

Not many art forms have been able to grow so rapidly into an established and well-regarded practice the way street art has. At the beginning of the present century, in the western world, this urban movement has experienced an unprecedented shift in recognition, evolving from the defacing of public space into a highly regarded, established, and legitimate art form (Molnár, 2018). This growth in popularity and generalised acceptance as a legitimate art form has many underpinning causes, yet one may argue it stems from a combination of social-media-induced virality, and the commodifying approach current municipal initiatives exert over the art form (Molnár, 2018).

Public art is currently widely accepted as a positive input for cities or places with its ability to contribute to the creation of more artistic and attractive public cityscapes, due to its unique and modern way of adding aesthetic values to public spaces or streets (Fun, 2017). Nonetheless, this rapid shift in external approval, and the commercial opportunities that derived from it, imply that artists are still in the process of readjusting. This grey zone where the boundaries between vandalism and commissioned works are blurred translates into tensions between the original illegal and underground community, the established and professional few, and the set of artists who are still struggling to find their berth.

These tensions become increasingly complex once we dive into the intricacies of the street art movement. Street art's "troubled" relationship with its predecessor movement, graffiti, and the socially constructed nature of the boundaries of their respective communities, presents us with a complex and dynamic ethnological predicament. Wrapped around competing notions of worth, artists and graffiti writers feud over artistic value, loyalty, ownership, commodification, and unspoken rules of a community that has been effervescent for almost 50 years.

Graffiti and Street Art

When it comes to urban culture, and of course artistic movements, definitions are commonly far from linear and sometimes become a means to foster disagreement and contribute to previously existing tensions. Street art and graffiti are no exception. Therefore, in an attempt to identify and comprehend some of these tensions an understanding of both art forms, their points of intersection, and inevitable limitations of such definitions, is key to comprehend the tensions created and the dynamics between communities.

Street Art

Street art is sometimes broadly defined as all forms of grassroots artistic expression and performance in public spaces from the beginnings of history (Molnár, 2017). The use of public space seems to be the overarching component of most definitions of street art. However, the fact that a piece is *de facto* displayed in the street does not suffice in defining it as street art. The true essence of street art boils down to intention, hence only a piece that purposely uses the street as an artistic medium not only a material medium can be labelled street art. This means an artwork where material use of the street is internal to its meaning qualifies as street art (Riggle, 2010). However, this begs the question, taken that graffiti uses the street as a medium can it be labelled as street art?

Graffiti

Precisely defining what the graffiti movement encapsulates is a cumbersome if not impossible task, due to the ever-changing and informal nature of urban movements, especially those underground. The lack of a clear definition is in fact one of the pillars of the tensions analysed throughout this research. However, for the sake of the present study, let us focus on the so-called "artistic graffiti" which is done in a distinctive style that originated in New York City in the 1970s and 1980s, created with a distinctive intention and notorious attitude (Riggle, 2010). Originally practised by the poorer youngsters of New York city, graffiti is an urban movement comprised of various practises, most associated with spray painting public spaces and privately owned property following a set of unspoken rules. Those deep within this scene, create through their practices a skin-tight community and dogmatically follow a set of specific values and rules.

The original graffiti movement, very embedded in the underground scene of the time in the United States, was complementary to other urban practises like breakdancing and the birth of the musical genre Hip-Hop. Both then and now, graffiti encapsulates a set of painting techniques and a specific and complex lingo, with works ranging from *throw-ups*, *burners* or *pieces*, to actions such as *tagging*, *bombing*, or "getting it up", referring to getting one's message up on the streets.

In modern graffiti, however, a wide range of styles and tools have outgrown the traditional spray can and marker. The use of other utensils and techniques like stencils, paste-ups, or *throwies*, has pushed the borders of the traditional practice. The heart of the art form has shifted from the spray can, currently focusing on the intention behind the ink message. The vandalistic, subversive, anarchical, rebellious nature of the practice and the preservation of the cult's values are what currently helps one define what is part of the movement or simply fresh paint on a wall. The maturation towards what some could label as conceptual art movement means it is now harder to pinpoint the line between graffiti and other urban practices and art forms.

Graffiti vs street art

The statements above make one beg the question: What is street art and what is graffiti? Are there tensions between the two communities, and why?

A popular statement on their differences comes from a British journalist, who stated the only difference between street art and graffiti comes from the relation one has to the spray can (Akbar, 2011). Akbar stated that if you are a municipal worker in sanitation, you call it graffiti, and if you are the one wielding the can will likely call it street art. Although this witty remark is loaded with sarcasm, it does not describe the real dynamic between street art and graffiti. Instead, it points to the deep connection between vandalistic spray paintings and the way most individuals are first exposed to something labelled as street art.

Artistically speaking, street art as a movement has of course predecessors (Molnár, 2017). The techniques, artistic means and style of illustration draw heavily on earlier traditions of expressive popular culture such as graffiti and pop art (Lewisohn, 2008). Street art is however a broader and more heterogeneous category than graffiti, since it has a more diverse palette of techniques, beyond the spray paint and markers, the traditional tools used in graffiti (Molnár, 2017). Moreover, conflicting attitudes towards commercialisation, commodification, authenticity, ownership and loyalty create a principle divide between artistic communities of otherwise similar art forms.

Surely, the influence graffiti has had in the modern street art movement is undeniable. Many of the pieces labelled as street art have a lot in common with the traditional graffiti movement aesthetics and style. To that extent, Nicholas Riggle (2010) did a very good job at summarising it:

> "Street art and graffiti are *different* arts that sometimes meet in a single work. Some street art is graffiti; some artistic graffiti is not street art. There is no essential connection between the two. This is not to deny that graffiti and street art have a strong *historical* connection. In fact, a case can (and should) be made that graffiti was *the* driving force behind the development of street art." (p.253)

The similarities between both urban movements blur the artistic boundaries of the movements, making it socially disputed and most importantly subjective the decision of where graffiti ends, and street art begins. This grey zone and the “predecessor pride” graffiti embodies, are at the core of the tensions addressed in the following chapters and have been at the centre of discussion for the past 20 years.

Lisbon’s Case Study

A city’s vitality can be assessed through many different lenses, one of which is by analysing its cultural sector. This cultural dimension of the city includes rituals and symbols (Nas, 2011), of which street art and graffiti can be seen as part of. In essence urban writings, like graffiti and street art can be interpreted as urban symbols which contribute to the symbolic dimension of the city.

Alongside the growing acceptance of street art, a rise in the importance of city branding is observable. City branding can be defined as the bridge between cities and marketing and has seen an increase in the attention of researchers as a technique to attract residents, visitors, and investors (Poço & Casais, 2019). The increasing relevance of establishing a strong brand forces cities to actively address and promote their own defining identity.

With the rise of globalisation, cities have seen increasing competition in the attraction and capturing of tourists, residents, and workforce. This new paradigm in modern society, where geographic borders are increasingly meaningless and where competition is fierce, thus city branding enters the picture as a necessary tool for the necessary extra marketing effort. Kotler et al. (1999) argue a clear and strong city brand enables municipalities to increase the perceived value of the city and its governing bodies, all while contributing to communal participation, attraction, and retention of talent but also tourism revenue and inward investment.

Parallel to this, the concept of the Creative City, brought to fame by the works of Richard Florida (Florida, 2003), empowered by recent prospects that predict the growing

economic and social importance of creative jobs, compels governments to pay extra attention and address it with knowledgeable insights.

Lisbon, as one of Europe's capital cities and prime touristic destination, has pioneered several initiatives, at a municipal level, aiming at branding itself as a creative and entrepreneurial hub. Following the footsteps of other European cities, like Berlin, Lisbon is being reborn after years of financial crisis, thus pushing for the "poor but sexy" slogan once used to describe the German capital. This attempt to capture and motivate new creative talent into the city has compelled the municipal governing bodies to embody and endorse a clear brand, a creative city brand that is.

Nonetheless, building a trustworthy brand takes not only time but a multitude of coherent initiatives, which take time to implement and generate results (Kavaratzis, 2004; Turok, 2009). One of these very developments comes from the municipal office dedicated to culture, urbanism and heritage management, who from an early moment took an interest in managing graffiti and street art in Lisbon. In fact, Lisbon's urban art has become a "fundamental part of the city's landscape and identity and that this has been used to promote their image internationally" (Campos & Sequeira, 2020). With this goal in mind a specialised department was created: Galeria de Arte Urbana, or Urban Art Gallery, hereafter referred to as GAU.

Galeria de Arte Urbana (GAU)

Founded in 2008 as part of the municipal cultural heritage management department, consists of a specialised team coordinated by Hugo Cardoso (one of the interviewees). GAU which promotes urban art initiatives, both graffiti and street art, was born out of the necessity to provide alternative sites specifically dedicated to urban art, "where it was possible to exercise the activity in a legal and structured way" (GAU, 2016), with the intention to manage an "effervescent" community of artists. Alongside the growing public's acceptance of street art, GAU's mission is now the promotion of graffiti and street art in an authorised and respectful manner, in clear opposition to acts of vandalism. In an attempt to intermediate between the municipality and communities of writers and street artists in Lisbon, GAU established a dialogue between the two parties,

with the intent to raise awareness towards the importance of the preservation of Lisbon's cultural heritage (GAU, 2016).

As stated on their website, after an initial phase dedicated to overcoming the resistance and disbelief, from the general population but also apprehensive artists, GAU began setting its role as a "facilitator", which allowed it to reach an increasing number of interlocutors and projects, until it became a national and international platform of reference (GAU, 2016). In 2016, GAU begins a more strategic approach, trying to decentralise the offering of culture from the city centre, starting with a street art festival (Muro) in Marvila, the easternmost part of Lisbon.

Currently, GAU embodies the institutionalising approach Lisbon's city council takes towards street art and graffiti through the creation of legal spots to paint, both curated and "ungoverned" walls, dynamization of large-scale street art festivals, open calls for artists, and management of project proposals.

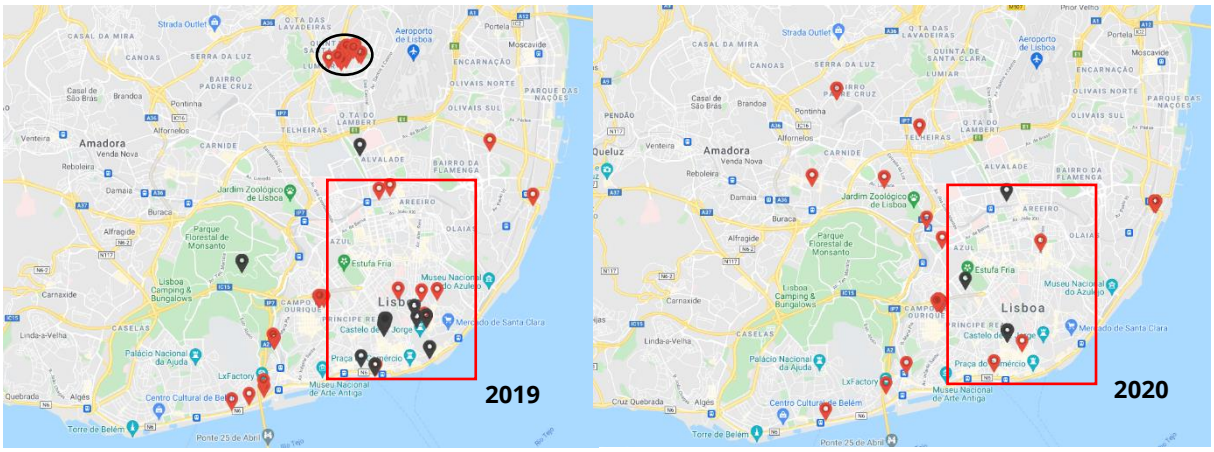

Figure 1- Map of GAU's Initiatives 2019 and 2020 (GAU, 2021)

The figure above depicts the initiatives sponsored by GAU in the years 2019 and 2020 and pinpoints the more than 50 individual works being contracted by the municipal organisation, identifying those which have been in the meantime removed (black pointer). With a clear focus on the outskirts of the city centre (red square) and impoverished neighbourhoods such as Quinta do Mocho, Bairro Padre Cruz, or the emphasis in the region of Lumiar in 2019 (black circle), with 16 murals being painted, fostering urban development.

Objectives and relevance

Many are the scholars who highlight the potential street art encloses in engaging local residents, promoting new social connections among local communities and as the key driver for urban or place revitalization (Fun, 2017). Moreover, street art is a rapidly growing creative industry, producing over 180,000 pieces per year, and an active player in urban environmental development by modifying and changing the perception of its surroundings (Santamarina-Campos, de-Miguel-Molina, de-Miguel-Molina, & Segarra-Oña, 2019).

Local businesses, museums, advertising campaigns, fashion design, video games, performing/visual arts, locations for TV and films are just a few of the many that have used street art's energy, charisma and design as inspiration (Santamarina-Campos et al., 2019). In fact, according to Santamarina-Campos et al (2019), these emerging opportunities have confirmed street art as a very important economic driver for a variety of industries like tourism (400 million per year), and in regeneration and local business development (15-50% increase in revenues).

Indeed, previous research points to the incomplete "touristification" and commodification of urban art in Lisbon, (Campos & Sequeira, 2020; Grondeau & Pondaven, 2018), however fails to infer the impacts this commodification has had on the artistic communities present in the city. Parallel to this, research on the topic of the commodification of street art focuses mainly on the study of both street art and graffiti as artistic movements and their commercial opportunities (Molnár, 2017; 2018; Riggle, 2010; Santamarina-Campos et al., 2019). Thus, research leaves unstudied the ethnological kinetics of the communities which founded and integrate the urban art scene based in Lisbon.

A case study approach on the aftermath of previous and current municipal initiatives allows for an impact assessment and can provide insights into the convolutions of these particular subcultures. These insights enable governing bodies to better implement policies and manage, informal, innovative practises, and can most certainly serve, via parallelism, other cultural urban movements. Moreover, these

insights can aid in the formulation of future strategic municipal decisions such as Urban management, Sanitation policies, Tourism management, and Brand management.

Inevitably, the institutionalisation, increasing acceptance and legitimacy of a previously underground, and illegal, practise has implications in the internal dynamics of the original scene. Urban movements like graffiti and street art were blessed, or cursed, with new and emerging opportunities and markets, however, this rapid shift calls for readjustment of boundaries and has caused, yet another, identity crisis within the artistic communities. Artists navigate the boundaries between both urban movements and share different views on the apparent commodification of the underground subculture and borders of their own communities.

To understand informal dynamics within subculture movements, the present research aims to analyse the extent of Lisbon's commodification of street art, a previously underground practice, something previous literature already hints at, whilst pinning the extent of the municipalities' influence in the phenomenon. However, given the sociological relevance of addressing the communities at stake, the body of the analysis will aim at answering whether the expected commodification has impacted the local communities. Trying to understand how artists navigate the borders between commissioned street art, illegal street art and graffiti, relate to their artist peers, adapt to new opportunities and how the tensions that arise from it are constructed and managed internally will be central to the analysis.

Truly, interpreting these sociologic quarrels requires a complex and thorough ethnological fieldwork. The subjective nature of the perceptions of those embedded in the underground scene means that to fully grasp the intricacies of these communities, one must be part of it. "Outsiders" cannot, and will not be allowed to, decipher the full puzzle due to their lack of lived experience. For that reason, a purely theoretical approach does not suffice.

2. Theoretical Framework

The creation of a research question, interview guide (see appendix 2) and forthcoming analysis of the findings is supported by a wide scope take on institutionalization theory. Supported by three main theoretical framework pillars and their intersections, a narrower inspection is conducted. Starting with an introduction to policies for creative cities and the institutionalization of art, followed by a take on innovation with regards to cultural commons, complemented by a breakdown of the factors that make up the "hybridization" of the artist and boundary work.

Policies for Creative cities

Central to the theoretical framework, and to fully understand the essence of the tensions generated through the social contest of symbolic boundaries, an understanding of the mechanisms of the policy shift, rooted on the established notion of the creative city, and the consequential institutionalisation of art, is key.

The foundations for this policy shift lie in the notion of the creative city, brought to fame by Richard Florida. In the past, Florida's research has highlighted the relation between cities inhabited by creative individuals and economic growth (Florida, 2006). Describing cities has "cauldrons of diversity", where creativity is one of the main forces in innovation and in driving economic development (Florida, 2003; 2006). His works, with emphasis on *"The Rise of the Creative Class"* (2006), have incited and inspired a change in urban policy, turning creative people and the creative industries into the panacea of economic development (Morgan & Ren, 2012). Policymakers, lured by the "promise" of economic growth, were prompt to put in motion strategies that would capture and help creativity and the creative class thrive.

In this endeavour of crafting a creative city, theorists defend a distinctive urban space is needed (Drake, 2003). Small differences between cities or urban spaces, Drake (2003) argues, play a role in achieving a competitive advantage, so important in a globalised world as ours. With "competitive advantage" one may claim Drake is referring to, amongst other initiatives, the process of creating a strong city brand. In this case, like

with Julius Caesar's wife, the creative city "must be above suspicion", given that more than being *de facto* a creative city, a city must be successful at branding itself as such if it wishes to capture and retain foreign talent.

An abundance of factors can, and should, contribute to the creation of a city's identifying brand (Kavaratzis, 2004), however for the sake of this study let us focus merely on the use of arts. Scrutinising the methods used to construct a sustainable city brand, Marques and Richards (2014) analyse the richness and complexity of the resources art can bring to cities and have pointed to the potential art has in making a city creative. They mention art's increasing importance in the development of creative clusters and quarters, due to its intangible and symbolic dimension, which complements a place's collective identity, but also explore art's aptitude in processes of city branding and placemaking (Marques & Richards, 2014).

On the other hand, some researchers, most noticeably Jamie Peck (2005), have hinted at the negative consequences that creative city policies use of art can have. Peck is very critical of the banalisation of creativity this institutionalisation brings about, arguing that "rather than 'civilizing' urban economic development by 'bringing in culture', creativity strategies do the opposite: they commodify the arts and cultural resources, even social tolerance itself, suturing them as putative economic assets to evolving regimes of urban competition" (Peck, 2005), p.763)

Regarding one of the art forms inherent to this thesis, street art, Schater (2014) builds on Peck's critique and states these policies act has a "cheap fix to a complex problem" serving as tools for material development rather than societal, embodying the "instrumentalization of a purportedly non-instrumental practice", claiming they represent "art's absolute subservience to strategy".

Apace with this perspective, Morgan and Ren, suggest the works of Florida, although celebrating and elevating art and creatives to godly levels of economic relevance, fail to account for cultural dissidence (Morgan & Ren, 2012). These "dissidents" are what the authors classify as the "creative underclass", composed of creatives who actively engage in expressive resistance and destabilisation of economic power and notions of morality (Morgan & Ren, 2012). One may argue this creative

underclass shares a lot of similarities with the graffiti community and its subversive mindset.

Indeed, cities under a neoliberal urban policy regime have fostered the increasing privatisation of public space, with the premise that tight aesthetic control over urban space fosters social order (Molnár, 2017). These policies, backed by Wilson and Kelling's "broken windows theory" (1982), have distorted the nature of misdemeanours such as graffiti and illegal street art turning them into what Molnár calls "quality of life" crimes (Molnár, 2017). This pejorative label and the neglect of graffiti's artistic value, accompanied by the praising of street art has a key cog in the creative city-making machine, generates a cognitive dissonance which is at the source of tensions later addressed.

Undeniably, policymakers have drawn from the notions of city branding and urban development to alter their attitudes towards cultural commons. The will to best stimulate the development of commons has forced city governments to take a stand and make decisions on how to approach these pools of innovation.

Literature on the attitude governing bodies take towards urban commons identifies three major approaches, that of a neglecter, a "placemaker" or facilitator and lastly the role of a contractor or subsidiser. The birth of urban commons is often linked to the neglect of spaces, communities and practices from formal governance, which was the case with cities like Berlin or New York (Klemek, 2011). In these cities, after moments of social and political turmoil, commons emerged to solve societal issues that plagued impoverished neighbourhoods. In the absence of public provision and the lack of private interest, individuals were quick to unite and initiate collective action as means of protest. These informal groups with shared identities were at the birth of many social and artistic movements aimed at reclaiming urban space, like squatting or graffiti (Borchi, 2020). However, as mentioned before, governing bodies are increasingly attentive to the rise of urban commons and are progressively more prompt to act upon them.

However, the attitude with which governing bodies approach these commons is oftentimes contradicting and perhaps distasteful. Van Reusel et al. (2015) pinpoint this contradiction with regards to some placemaking attempts stating: "the tension between institutionalisation and autonomy also highlights a contradiction between the need to

gain or to claim the right of citizens to use this land as an urban common and/or to be treated as a fully-fledged partner within the planning process."

Addressing independent collective governance and the institutionalisation of the commons is the starting point of the present research and is addressed in the following chapter.

Theory of The Commons

An understanding of the concept of commons is central to the notion of privatisation of a shared practice and is essential in the untangling of the tensions later addressed, thus this chapter entails an overview of commons theory.

Literature suggests the first mention of a concept remotely similar to a debate on the commons comes from the work from Coman (1911), regarding irrigation management. Decades later, the widely reviewed work of Hardin (1968) on the so-called "Tragedy of the Commons", reignited the discussion around collective action and resource management. Hardin argues finite resources, such as land or space, can never be managed autonomously by decentralised collective action (Hardin, 1968). He claims the only to avoid this "tragedy" is to privatise resources or create a set of managed public property. This led to years of policymaking that rejected the potential for communal management, which was criticised by many researchers, including Ostrom (1990) who stated "relying on metaphors as the foundation for policy advice can lead to results substantially different to those presumed to be likely" (p.23).

Indeed, the relevance of Elinor Ostrom's works cannot be overlooked when discussing collective action. Ostrom argues that one solution to the chronic tragedy of the commons arises from independent self-governance (1990). Ostrom uses examples from the communal management of the so-called "natural common-pool resources", such as rivers and forests, and was one of the first to introduce institutional diversity into the discussion. She argues these sustainable commons are well-defined and self-managed small groups of individuals, who follow a set of specific rules known to those within the community, which member respect and punish transgressors (Ostrom, 1990).

Ostrom's set of management principles can, however, be applied to other forms of co-production and management of shared resources. The vast interdisciplinary study on commons, and of what in essence classifies as a common-pool resource, has generated a plethora of definitions and theorisation of distinct commons such as neighbourhood commons, knowledge or information commons, social commons, infrastructure commons, and finally cultural commons (Borchi, 2020). In addition to this, Ostrom and Hess's (2007) work on the knowledge commons has elevated the discussion on co-creation and innovation, with the characterisation of a knowledge-sharing commons and its relevancy in the "knowledge-based economy" we live in (Borchi, 2020).

The characterisation of a knowledge-based commons is at the root of Jason Pott's (2019) innovation commons. In a knowledge-based economy, where innovation seems to be the driver for economic growth and the (Schumpeterian) entrepreneur elevated to a god-like status, Potts' contributions argue innovation is in fact an organic, social and evolutionary process (Dekker, 2020). Potts argues innovation derives from the pooling of knowledge from enthusiastic individuals who, often without realising, are contributing to reduce uncertainty and "maximise likelihood of opportunity discovery"(Potts, 2019). This innovation commons, like Ostrom's natural commons, relies on a temporary institutionalisation of a shared practice, governed by co-created rules of cooperation, sharing and openness (Dekker, 2020).

These moments of shared practice, where belonging comes hand in hand with participation, and a sense of shared identity is created through coherent practices, serve as "incubator" to the entrepreneur, and share a lot of similarities with artistic and urban movements like Hip-Hop, Jazz (Dekker, 2020), and graffiti. These urban communal movements, often described as a branch of the umbrella definition of urban commons, have also been labelled as independent commons by Standing (2019), due mostly to their spontaneous, non-institutional and often subversive nature, deeply connected to commons arising from governmental neglect. These have also originated from informal gatherings with no clear economic purpose and have "matured" to complete scenes with arguably the "visible hand" of an entrepreneur seeking to bring the results of the shared practice to the "outsider's" market, with economic gain in mind.

Potts' contribution thus gives an interesting economic justification to the yet to be addressed stamp of the artistic "sell-out" (Dekker, 2020). According to Potts, the entrepreneur, who typically starts as a hobbyist or amateur, with no understanding of its contributions to the common pool, emerges from the "club" or group they were part of by bringing to the market part of the shared knowledge, via privatisation. Likewise, the boundaries between the amateur and the professional (entrepreneurial) artists, are of great relevance to the understanding of tensions between communities and are addressed in the next theoretical chapter.

Finally, Potts concludes that once the purpose of the commons is achieved, and a marketable product is created, the community becomes unsustainable and is bound to collapse (Potts, 2019). However, as Dekker points out, this is usually not the case with cultural scenes in most art forms, which after achieving commercial breakthroughs tend to bifurcate into the "underground" and the commercial scene (Dekker, 2020).

Hybrid artist and Boundary Work

Hybrid Artist

The emergence of opposing values and logics within the arts gives rise to an artistic identity crisis addressed throughout this chapter. There is a growing body of literature that points to the rise of multi-faceted artists and ambivalence in the arts, as a consequence of commercialisation. In order to grasp the concept of ambivalence and its twin concept, hybridity, one must first comprehend what autonomy entails within artistic life.

Abbing (2002) reflects on the dynamics between artistic compromise and artistic freedom, arguing that autonomous artists "follow their own will independent of others", whilst an artist who deliberately chooses "to make an artistic compromise in exchange for more rewards, he or she ends up with less artistic freedom"(p.87). However, most importantly he points to the subjective nature of autonomy, wondering how autonomous an artist can actually be if he or she funds their "true art" practice with side jobs or other commissioned works (p.87). Moreover, he criticises the "all-or-nothing

doomsday arguments" some individuals may call upon when addressing autonomy, which do not allow for discussion on the level of factual artistic compromise.

This idyllic belief over artistic autonomy, where an artist should be "selflessly devoted" and "unwilling to compromise their art" (Abbing, 2002), emerged in the late 18th century where artists with their bohemian lifestyle "rebelled" against the powers that were. This romantic take on art is also addressed in Becker's (1982) "Art Worlds", where the author argues that artists are inevitably attached to their artistic productions and that only a select number of "talented", "gifted" and "able" are worthy of the title of the artist. For this reason, Becker states that society finds mechanisms to sort "artist from nonartists", be it by markets or enforced state control (Becker, 1982). To these mechanisms, one may argue that also individuals embedded in the scene serve as gatekeepers, determining who is an artist or not. This "in or out" mentality is at the core of community and group formation and will be touched upon later on in the present thesis.

Furthermore, Bekker argues that members of society regard some necessary activities in the production of art as "artistic", while other tasks are reserved for businessmen and women (Becker, 1982). According to this view, the often entitled "personnel", should be responsible for tasks "less necessary to the work's success, less worthy of respect", leaving the artist to focus on his gift and talent, the so-called "core practice" (Becker, 1982). This inference on the worthiness or not of artists and entrepreneurs stems from opposing notions of worth which will be addressed in the following chapter, and that are deeply relevant in group formation.

Nevertheless, the increased focus on creativity and innovation as economic drivers of the creative city as part of the rise of the so-called creative industries has pushed for some form of hybridity in artistic practice. Artists are increasingly complementing their core practice with other forms of "applied art" as means to support their true practice. This in turn has made artists ambivalent in the sense they now engage in "business tasks" formerly only reserved to personnel, as well as their previous talent or calling (Abbing, 2002).

This troubled relationship between artists and businessmen and women reflects the peculiar way money is seen within the artistic sphere, where it is "veiled" and "denied" (Abbing, 2002). Abbing notes that money is always regarded with suspicion unless it derives from family and friends or is gifted (Abbing, 2002). This money is especially suspicious when it originates from businesses or from state aid, which the author argues has selfish interests in the arts it subsidises.

Hence, this problematic dichotomy between business and art limits the commodification of cultural goods and is at the root of much debate within the artistic world (Becker, 1982). Furthermore, it creates a usually turbulent transition from amateurs to professionals. Many scholars highlight the need for some institutionalisation of the practice (Abbing, 2002; Velthuis, 2005) or rituals (Zelizer, 1978) to resolve often competing values of money and artistry.

The study of boundaries between amateur and professional has been addressed in the study of other art forms like photography or literature (Bourdieu, 1990; Weber, D., 2000), and are of great relevance to the present study. These works have noted that players in the cultural sector create symbolic boundaries between "worthy and less worthy", and as Weber (2000) puts it, regarding publishing houses, "It is through this active process of defining and redefining these subtle distinctions that publishing decision-makers are able to impose an order of value on the complex and shifting literary marketplace." (p.143). The permeability and social construction of these ever-changing boundaries are addressed in the following chapter.

Boundary Work

In a society where social-economic boundaries and tangible differences are already divisive enough, the construction of symbolic boundaries contributes to the development of tensions and demarcations. From the early distinction between "Sacred" and "Prophane" (Durkheim, 2008), to the relationship between ethnicity and status groups (Weber, M., 1978), for long sociologists have studied the role of symbolic

resources such as traditions and conceptual distinctions in the creation, maintenance and contest of institutionalised social differences (Lamont & Molnár, 2002).

Epstein states that "distinctions between people, groups, and things create the boundaries that separate them physically and symbolically" (Epstein, 1992). Indeed, social actors tend to label groups as similar and different, where the notion of boundaries determines their responsibilities towards such groups, and how these are constructed (Lamont & Thévenot, 2000).

These socially constructed boundaries, known as symbolic boundaries, are defined by Lamont and Molnár (2002) as "conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality" (p.168). This insightful quote highlights the socially constructed definition of the boundary and hints at its subjectivity and the possibly conflicting nature of these demarcations.

By the same token, these groups are connected (and divided) through much more than simple face-to-face encounters. Sociologists highlight these boundaries are defined primarily by common identities, yet minimally by physical or other social boundaries (Anderson, 1983), and that definitions of reality are often created through a world of imagined personal connections (Cerulo, 1997). Along these lines, scholars argue this shared identity is supported by common vocabularies and symbols which help differentiate the insiders and outsiders (Lamont & Molnár, 2002), but also generate feelings of similarity and of belonging (Epstein, 1992). As previously noted, this relates closely to street art and graffiti due to their symbolic nature, own language and intense demarcation between insiders and outsiders.

Furthermore, although boundaries are created along feelings of shared identity, they are the genesis of exclusion, through the processes of demarcation as defined by Bourdieu (1984). This in turn is responsible for feelings of divergence, even between groups with plentiful points of convergence (Epstein, 1992).

Referring to the previously mentioned cultural agent who ponders on labelling a task as worthy or not, one cannot overlook the contributions of Boltanski and Thévenot with their work *"On Justification: Economies of Worth"* (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2008). In their book, the authors argue for a pluralistic society, where no unified or universal sense of what makes something valuable exists (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2008). Rooted on notions of (non-economic) individualism and subjectivism, their work rejects a common social order and in opposition illustrates 6 independent, different and opposing "orders" of a cognitive framework by which individuals can assess worth: civic, market, inspirational, fame, industrial, and domestic (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2008).

Boltansky and Thévenot (2008) defy the Weberian notion of the modern market society ingrained in neo-liberal dogmas, and instead argue that players in modern society, in any social domain (economic, artistic, communal, etc), simply judge worth on different levels within the previously defined six levels of worth. This, however, they argue is at the root of conflict, since different notions of worth inevitably draw a critique on the remaining, taken that what one level deems worthy, the others forcefully deem suspect (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2008).

How to address and successfully manage this conflict of worth is at the core of David Stark's (2011) work *"The Sense of Dissonance: Accounts of Worth in Economic Life"*, where the author takes an interpretive approach to sense-making and understanding what is, in fact, worthy and how to measure it, stating "As our lives are a search to find out what is really valuable, we try, we fail, and we try again to learn from our mistakes.". Stark (2011), builds on Boltanski and Thévenot's levels of worth and argues each and every situation is subject to human understanding, and the fact human understanding is subjective and oftentimes conflicting, is the cause for frictions or what the author names "uncertainty". Successfully managing this uncertainty, Stark argues, requires some artificial predictability, oftentimes embodied by organisations and institutions, which through a great deal of tolerance, retain these tensions and therefore navigate these boundaries of worth (Stark, 2011). This is in essence the concept of "heterarchy" Stark explicits throughout his work, and what one could argue GAU aims at achieving in Lisbon.

Moreover, other scholars, like Thornton and Ocasio (2008), supporting Stark's (2011) claims, have hinted at the entrepreneurial potential these apexes of conflict generate. The dissonance that arises from opposing notions of worth, allows for entrepreneurial action to resolve the tension, a process which relates nicely with Pott's innovation common's proposed dynamics (Potts, 2019; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

Resolution

Central to this theoretical framework and at the intersection of all three pillars addressed is the concept of institutionalisation. Taking the theoretical framework one step further and drawing parallelisms with the relevant art form of the present thesis, one can begin to comprehend how this commodification of the arts impacts the cultural commons such as the graffiti and street art communities.

As Dekker (2020) mentions, policymakers have devoted increasing attention to managing urban commons frequently under the wing of previously mentioned placemaking practices and Richard Florida's creative city. However, these policymakers often overlook the importance of space and meeting places in scene generation, for example, the importance of the New York metro as the birthplace of the graffiti movement (Dekker, 2020). Ultimately, the shift in policy serves not more than strategic municipal goals like tourism, urban development, and city branding.

Moreover, the dynamics of Potts' innovation commons clarify the privatisation of cultural commons and connect it deeply to notions of institutionalisation. Aiming at discrediting the creative genius, the focus on community-based creativity is something Pott's brings to the discussion (Dekker, 2020). In essence, both graffiti and street art communities are closely related to cultural commons, due to the shared nature of their practice and values, and the socially contested boundaries of their communities. Nonetheless, the rise of commissioned street artworks follows the mechanisms defined by Potts' innovation commons (Potts, 2019), with an entrepreneurial artist emerging from a common practice to receive monetary reward for his art.

This “selling out” generates an animosity between communities ”that revolves around competing visions of aesthetic expression, authenticity, (perceived and real) attitudes toward commercialization and gentrification and claims to turf” (Molnár, 2017). A tension that is ultimately resolved by the contributions of governing bodies. This institutionalisation of the practice and the commons helps to resolve the valuation problem, with the competing values of art and money. This dynamic follows Swedberg’s organisational theory which argues institutions efficiently navigate frictions that arise from competing logics and levels of worth (Swedberg, 2005).

Artists in the urban art scene are plagued by tensions arising from competing notions of worth. Street artists, who often commercialise their art and deem monetary rewards as worthy, are opposed by a graffiti community that rejects a business/market logic. Moreover, the institutionalisation of the practice goes against the values of a graffiti community which values loyalty to their scene, are deeply attached to their art and that according to Abbing (2019) create art which not meant to be shared, since “self-developed art (…) is especially meaningful for them. At least for a while they can keep it for themselves”. In that sense, the graffiti community already has a justification for a sulking attitude, given they have already failed to keep their practice to themselves.

On the flipside, institutionalisation gave “artist-entrepreneurs” the craved marker of professionalism, credibility, and a signal of artistic relevance. As Weber (2000) states, institutionalization allows for more consensus in the worthiness of cultural products, since many of these symbolic boundaries are shaped and reinforced by institutions, thus minimising tensions and once again as a signal of credibility of the art and artist.

Assuredly, the institutionalisation of an art form is bound to split opinions, especially in a previously underground and rebellious practice. The case of Lisbon’s urban art is an example of this very thing. The tensions between opposing notions of worth, attitude towards commercialisation, institutionalisation, the instrumentalization and “touristification” of this practice oppose communities of street artists, graffiti writers and those in between, and is at the gist of the present research.

3. Research Methodology

Research Design

The relevance of this thesis is strongly linked to its ability to deliver new insights on how municipal, institutionalising, and commodifying initiatives impact creative communities and their inevitable tensions. Consequently, and since the emphasis is on the interpretation of a local paradigm and generating new bridges between theory and reality a more inductive approach was taken. In this case, theory and previous literature served mainly as a framework and support for the findings generated through the research method.

The subjective and complex nature of the issue and its impact on policymaking requires a more constructionist and interpretivist approach in order to originate adequate insights to guide policymakers (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, since the apex of the research is supported by the theoretical notion of boundary work and socially constructed definitions, stemming from the assumption that social reality is a constantly shifting and emergent property of individuals' creation, a qualitative approach was deemed better suited.

Additionally, based on a case study approach, since it entailed the intensive and detailed analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2012), the city of Lisbon was at the centre of the research. The analysis took place through the dissection of the strategic decisions taken by the municipal departments dedicated to urbanism and tourism and through the gathering of primary data from local stakeholders via means of in-depth interviews.

Understanding how actors within the graffiti and street art scene define and redefine boundaries, definitions, *ethos,* and themselves, is at the core of boundary studies. This, however, can only be properly studied through an in-depth qualitative and interview-based approach, given these definitions are personal, socially constructed and often contradictory. Moreover, only "insiders" are deemed worthy and trustworthy of collecting insights from within the subculture. Hence, given the sociological nature of the study, and the absence of a detailed ethnographic study, the choice of interviews was

inevitable, due to their flexibility, richness of details and ability to substitute ethnography (Bryman, 2012).

Alongside the interviews, and to further infer the strategic intentions of Lisbon's city council, an analysis of two relevant reports was conducted. The scrutiny of Lisbon's Tourism Association strategic plan for the region of Lisbon for the years 2020-2024 (ATL, 2019) and the Urban Development strategic planning report for the years 2021-2025 published by Lisbon's municipal urbanism department (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020). These reports offered insights into the thought processes of these departments and help to identify the role urban art plays in the greater municipal branding and urban development strategic plan. This qualitative content analysis offers a more complete and grounded interpretation of findings since it enables corroboration of interview statements. Moreover, this bifold approach to qualitative analysis enables the interviewer to refer to relevant data during interviews and assess the extent of empirical relevance and truthfulness of the strategic commitment.

All interviews were conducted through the months of April and May 2021. The majority through video call, although some, due to lack of availability from the interviewees, were realised through phone call or email-based interview. Interviews were conducted in their vast majority in Portuguese. Being the sample in its vast majority of Portuguese origin and the case study aimed at Lisbon, it was only reasonable to not limit the possible respondents to those with above-average English skill. The reasoning behind the choice of language was to collect the most honest, truthful, and personal comments on the scene. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner and the interview guide adjusted according to the category of the interviewee as seen in the interview guide (see Appendix B).

Sampling Method and Sample Description

Since the scope of this research was the municipality of Lisbon, the sample was composed of stakeholders both based in Lisbon and/or who were active in the local scene. Taken that the research goal was to infer on the dynamics of the artistic communities present in the city, the sample includes an extensive number of local artists.

Given time restrictions were posed and since access to a larger pool of interviewees would not necessarily deliver better insights, following the principles of purposive sampling, a set of major stakeholders was defined, and a sufficient sample was drafted to answer the questions set out to answer. Preliminary research was conducted to carefully select respondents whose experiences would offer an overview of the local scene and ecosystem. In this case, the sample should include three major stakeholders, starting with artists, the municipal body responsible for these initiatives (GAU), and entrepreneurs within the ecosystem.

Considering the most relevant insights would derive from the comparison between definitions from dissimilar artists and stakeholders, a selective approach was taken. This non-random sampling aims to provide a diverse pool of interviewees, providing different education and/or artistic background, gender, career, style, and provenance to enrich findings and provide means of comparison between subjective definitions.

The sample consists then of 8 interviewees, including artists based in Lisbon, and artists based elsewhere as means of comparison, municipal body GAU, and a local street art entrepreneur. Of the 6 artists interviewed, 4 of them are based in Lisbon, 1 in Porto and the remaining in London. All artists have painted, legally through GAU, in Lisbon at least once. A table compiling respondent's relevant information can be found in Appendix A.

1. Respondent 1, is a seasoned and revered street artist, based in London. Regarded as one of the forefathers of the UK's street art movement, he has painted across the world with its characteristic pop-art style. Drifting from deep within the

underground scene, the respondent currently identifies as a contemporary urban artist, given his works range from canvas, prints, murals, sculptures but also collaborations with fashion brands. Its last work in Lisbon was conducted in early 2021.

2. Styler is an artist based in Lisbon, currently identifying as a street artist but who has spent many years amongst the "big sharks" of the Portuguese graffiti scene. He now paints commissioned works all across Portugal and Europe, with his hyper-realistic portraits and animals, far from his initial works in graffiti influenced lettering.

3. Boa-Hora Estúdio (BHE) is a collective based in Lisbon, composed of 5 artists with different backgrounds from graffiti to backgrounds in design and illustration. Although all members were present in the interview the interlocutor was mainly Miguel Brum, an experienced street artist and writer, although non-conforming to any label that restricts his works to a name. They have recently worked with GAU and the parish of Arroios in an initiative to improve the urban surroundings of Mercado de Arroios (Figure 2).

4. Fedor is an artist based in Porto, born in a family with ties to art and painting, but who found his teenage hobby in graffiti. He is part of a revered Porto-based street art collective: Colectivo RUA. Currently identifying as a street artist, since it is "what he does the most", painting an interesting mix of graffiti lettering and cartoonish characters, he also does commission works for privates, often not signing with his name.

5. Pariz One has been a deeply involved graffiti writer in the Lisbon scene since the late 90s. Respected as one of the most influential artists in the scene, he has pushed for the growth of graffiti and street art through initiatives of his own and through GAU. Being the sole interviewee identifying himself as a graffiti writer, interestingly enough he also undertakes commissioned works and sells prints of his works, which alternate between graffiti-style lettering to realistic portraits and cartoons.

6. Mariana Santos is an artist with a background in fine arts with her works focusing mainly on low-relief and engraving realistic portraits of old television series stills. Recently working with GAU in one of her first big-scale murals, she decides not to

label herself as a street artist, simply seeing these works of public art as “an extension of her work”. She has never been part of the graffiti movement and has no intention to.

7. Aside from artists, also Juliana Almeida was interviewed. She is at the time of the interview the project manager in charge of Underdogs’ urban art program. With strong ties to GAU, this project developed by Underdogs aims at showcasing artists signed with the company on large scale murals and other means of legal street presence. Underdogs, initially a street art gallery currently brands itself as a cultural platform and showcases renowned national and international urban-inspired contemporary artists, fostering the development of close relationships between creators, the city, and the public.

8. However, one of the most in-depth interviews conducted was with Hugo Cardoso who has been working with the municipality since 2016 and is currently the Chief-Coordinator at Galeria de Arte Urbana (GAU).

Limitations

The present research has diverse limitations. Starting from the case-study approach and the decision to pursue a qualitative research method. Both these approaches are known to limit the replicability of the findings, due to the subjectivity involved (Bryman, 2012). Moreover, the risk for unintentional bias and/or lack of transparency are common plagues with all qualitative studies (Bryman, 2012).

However, besides the above-mentioned limitations native to qualitative and case-study research, the sample is also not without its limitations. The sample composed of 8 interviewees is not sufficient to draw generalisable and/or definite conclusions. Although the sample was not randomly picked, due to the priority given to richer insights and spectrum of statements, the sample difficultly represents the diversity of artists and stakeholders endemic to this particular art scene.

Moreover, the fact no “pure-graffiti” writer was interviewed is another notable limitation. Although some interviewees identify as graffiti writers, and most have

participated in graffiti movements and/or illegal street art, none of the interviewees opposes commissioned or institutionalised works. The *ethos* of graffiti oftentimes mentioned is assessed solely from agents active within both fields or completely outside of the graffiti sphere, therefore lacking possible divergent perspectives from those pursuing graffiti simply for art's sake.

Given the communities' idiosyncrasies, and the emphasis given on common shared practice throughout the present research, the fact no crew or crew member was addressed can be seen as a limitation. Although the sample contemplates a collective, this community is closed, and serves economically driven goals, unlike common graffiti crews.

Lastly, in a sensitive topic such as this, where the dynamics between artists, municipality and locals are so complex, the lack of insights gathered from locals limits the research. Local perspective was mentioned throughout interviews but was never confirmed by an extensive study of public perception towards urban art.

Ethical Issues

Since much of the art addressed throughout this thesis is still illegal, some participants in the interviews can experience an ethical dilemma, since they may not want to incriminate themselves by confirming they perform street art, since it is still in its majority illegal in Portugal. Furthermore, artists may not want to highlight negative aspects of the initiatives performed by the municipality since it serves as a contractor and supporter. Anonymity was always offered and assured since the aim of in-depth interviews was to generate truthful and delicate insights. Anonymity was however only requested in one of the interviews.

4. Findings

The following chapter aims at presenting the findings derived from the analysis of the interviews conducted with influential stakeholders within the street art scene of Lisbon. Apace this, a deductive sensemaking exercise was done to relate the findings to the existing theory, the theoretical framework and the two official documents published by the municipality. This analysis allows for inference on possible correspondences and/or dissimilarities with existing literature, thus providing valuable insights particular to Lisbon and its communities, but also perhaps enable parallelism with a larger scope of cultural communities and different geographies.

The findings are aligned with the concepts brought forward during the introduction and are analysed through the scope defined throughout the theoretical framework. Moreover, the semi-structured nature of the interview guide questions grants the findings some structure and enables a division into three previously mentioned overarching topics: the impact of municipal initiatives, the dynamics of Lisbon's street art communities and the emerging markets for street art.

Impact of Municipal Initiatives

An extensive component of the interviews revolved around the impact municipal initiatives have both on Tourism, Urbanism, City Branding, but also on local communities of writers and street artists. These questions stem from a more deductive approach since concepts of city branding, placemaking and the creative city have been a relevant theme of research in recent years and seem to be present in most of the world's capital cities, as a way to better compete in a globalised world (Riza, Doratli, & Fasli, 2012).

1. *Strategic Tourism Oriented Initiatives*

Whilst interviewing GAU's Coordinator, Hugo Cardoso, and after the scrutiny of Lisbon's Tourism Association strategic report (ATL, 2019), the city's intention to foster tourism was made very clear. Lisbon's strategic intent to foster commissioned works of street art, mostly in the periphery of the city and suburbs (Oeiras, Carcavelos and Loures), which is supported by GAU's initiatives as seen in Figure 1. These efforts serve as means to attract tourists to these less-visited zones but also entail an urbanistic agenda. This was confirmed by the interviewee and the analysis of the reports and is aligned with the findings of Campos & Sequeira (2020). Hugo Cardoso summarises it:

"The strategy for culture was to create alternative routes of culture and art in the city of Lisbon, to decentralize the cultural offer, to create spaces where culture does not have penetration and openness, as well as what was important for valuing public space and valuing of municipal heritage."[1]

A closer look at Lisbon's Municipal Strategic Urbanism Plan for 2021-2025 (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020) reveals a similar intent. Based on 5 strategic pillars, and supported by a budget of 1 337 566 092€, spread through the 5 years of the plan, the allocation of funds is the following:

1. Better Quality of Life and Environmental Change (75%)
2. Combat Exclusion and Human Rights Advocacy (15%)
3. Open, Transparent and Decentralised Governance (8%)
4. Economic Incentive to Innovation (0,9%)
5. Global City (1,3%)

In the latter pillar, fostering a Global City, the budget is divided into two major projects: The Creative City (<0,1%) and the Cultural City (~1,3%). Interestingly the initiatives within the Creative City umbrella plan focus mainly on the stimulation of entrepreneurial and creative industries fostering, leaving all art-related projects to the cultural city folder.

[1] "A estratégia para a cultura passava por criar percursos alternativos de cultura e de arte na cidade de lisboa, descentralizar a oferta cultural, criar espaços onde a cultura não tem penetração e abertura, bem como aquilo que era importante de valorização de espaço publico e valorização de património municipal."

Although purely administrative, this separation can entail further consequences since the municipality's understanding of the creative city leaves art and culture out of the loop, focusing solely on creative industries.

Initiatives addressing the Cultural City vary from the organisation of Lisbon's yearly book fair, Lisbon and Estoril Film Festival, local roman ruins restorations to the support of graffiti initiatives through GAU. At first, one could praise the inclusion of graffiti initiatives in the municipal budget, however, more thorough scrutiny of the document reveals the monetary investment gap compared to other art forms. Urban art initiatives were budgeted with the sum of 65 043€ for the year 2021, of which roughly a tenth dedicated exclusively to graffiti, with no further budget planned till 2025, whilst Lisbon's metropolitan orchestra, for example, is expected to receive 1 150 000€ (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020).

The situation becomes even bleaker for graffiti enthusiasts when comparing this budget with the planned anti-graffiti initiative to take place in 2021. This project, developed by the Urban Hygiene department (which has a budget 27x bigger than that of the Cultural Heritage department) is expected to require 1 449 183 €, a sum roughly 241 times bigger than the allocated 6000€ for stimulation of graffiti (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020).

This apparent dissonance is enhanced by the role given to urban art, of which graffiti is arguably part of, in Lisbon strategic plans for sustainable tourism, urban development, city branding (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020). However, more than strategic, the current weight street plays in the overall brand of the city is already noticeable. Hugo Cardoso continues with:

> "*Today any bulletin, any form of communicating Lisbon, shows Padrão dos Descobrimentos, the Tram 28, Pastéis de Nata, and Street art. Almost at the same level."*[2]

[2] "Hoje qualquer boletim, qualquer forma de comunicar Lisboa, mostra o padrado dos descobrimentos, o elétrico 28, pasteis de nata e arte urbana. Quase ao mesmo nível."

2. Lisbon's Street Art Branding

The empirical evidence seems to support the prevailing idea that Lisbon has been in recent years affirming and confirming its "commitment to becoming a premier street art destination" in the likes of Berlin, São Paulo or Melbourne (Navarro, 2019). The vast majority of interviewees also confirms this assumption. When questioned about what endemic characteristics they deem responsible for this, the majority highlights the considerable number and diversity of street art pieces, ranging from small interventions to large-scale facades. Parallel to this, some interviewees pinpoint the prideful manner Lisbon's locals perceive street art. Respondent 1, from London, states:

> *"I've only been a couple of times, but they definitely seem to have quite a prideful view of the street art around Lisbon. That may have just been the team that hosted us but given the frequency and scale of the painted walls around there it certainly felt like the city was celebrating public art rather than condemning it."*

However, more than pride or the sheer number of the murals, artists like Mariana Santos and Pariz One, also point to the long-term commitment the municipality has made with pushing for a city with more public art and with embracing the practice as a legitimate art form. Pariz One states:

> *"There are several factors [that make Lisbon a street art hub], but above all it is due to the intelligent way in which the municipality associated itself with Graffiti instead of fighting it (as it was a lost war)"*[3]

[3] "São vários os fatores, mas sobretudo deve-se a forma inteligente como a Câmara associou-se ao Graffiti em vez de o combater (pois era uma guerra perdida), isto levou a organização de eventos (do qual fui mentor muitas vezes) e legalização de murais."

3. *Urban development and Gentrification*

The above-mentioned "intelligent way" the municipality's governing bodies have associated themselves with the art form is not an act of mere chance. In fact, the municipal urban development report contemplates strategic initiatives of street art as a beacon for urban valorisation (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon City Council), 2020). This strategic decision to utilise street art as an urban development tool was also confirmed by Hugo Cardoso. He states:

> *"Everything follows the same backbone, which for us is very important, the valorisation of the public space, and what are the experiences for residents, those who live, who visit, who work or who study."*[4]

This commitment and its impact are already palpable since many of the initiatives organised by GAU have led to comments during interviews confirming the urban development nature of the practices. Most artists interviewed understood urbanistic development to be the ulterior motive behind the promotion of projects supported by GAU, together with some venting about gentrification. Styler states:

> *"I just want to get away from Lisbon because my rent is very expensive. They are taking advantage of this [street art] to increase rents. Many give their best and the municipality is the one cashing in on tourism and urban development. Street art has become a tool."*[5]

This negative feeling could also be a fallout of a greater sentiment of discontent towards the extensive use of street art as means of urban valorisation, consequently, bringing gentrification into the picture (Campos & Sequeira, 2020). But most relevantly it points to the commodification and institutionalisation of the art form, described as a "tool".

[4] "Vai tudo bater à espinha dorsal que para nós é muito importante, é a valorização do espaço público, e aquilo que são as experiências para os residentes, quem vive, quem visita, quem trabalha ou quem estuda."
[5] "Eu quero é fugir de lisboa, que a minha renda está muito cara. Eles estão a aproveitar-se disto para aumentar as rendas. Muitos dão o seu melhor e a câmara é que ganha com turismo e desenvolvimento urbano. A arte urbana tornou-se uma ferramenta."

Indeed, the use of street art is not restricted to strictly cultural initiatives within the urbanism master plan. One of Lisbon's strategic initiatives is to promote proximity commerce with a focus on local farmer's markets in historical neighbourhoods, like Mercado de Arroios. This almost century-old market in the city centre was plagued by unorganised parking of delivery and costumer's cars in the surrounding area of the building, making commuting a complicated task. The problem was solved with the help of street art collective Boa-Hora Estúdio, also part of the interviewees, with their intervention delineating pedestrian lanes and limiting parking around the market with their characteristic styled works (Figure 2).

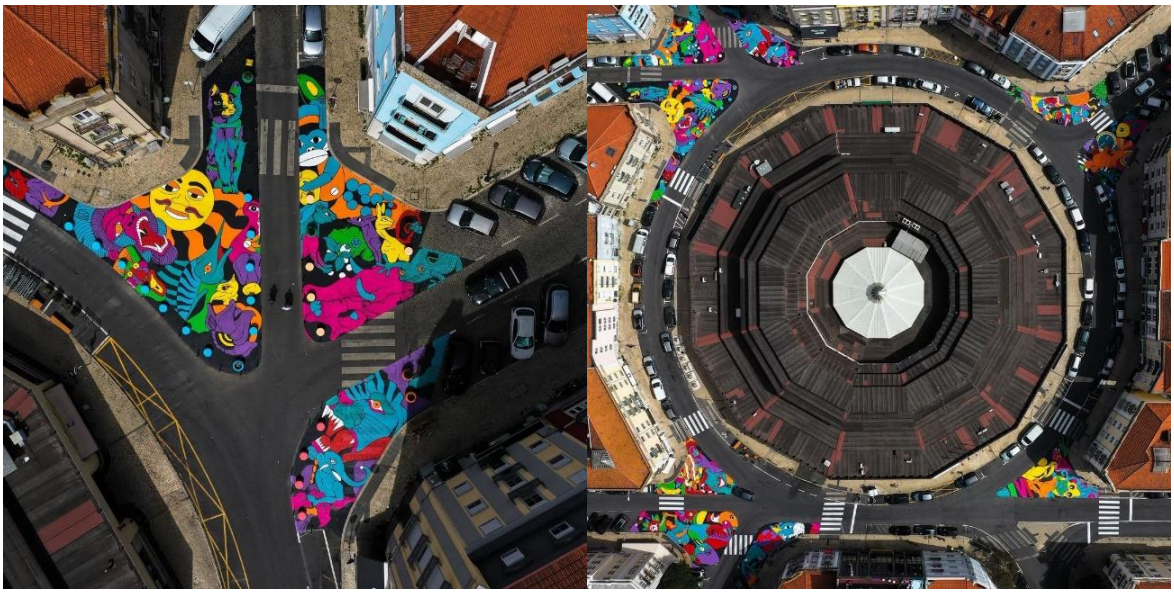

Figure 2 - Surroundings of Mercado de Arroios; Intervention by Boa-Hora Estúdio 2021 Fotographs: Francisco Calado (Boa-Hora Estúdio [boahora_estudio], 2021)

One can take two conclusions from this initiative, firstly that street art is being used as a city ordination tool, but secondly, after further research, it reveals the dynamics of funding since the project was supported not by GAU, but by the parish of Arroios. This extra step in the institutionalisation ladder exposes the deep institutionalisation of the practice and the increasing bureaucracy and confirms GAU as the curating and ruling entity, not necessarily the subsidiser.

One thing is certain, the municipality has deterred from its previous role as neglecter of the commons and practice embodying a supportive role as a facilitator. Miguel Brum from BHE, with no previous mention, brings the concept up and states *"City councils have become facilitators."*[6], also confirming this phenomenon occurs in other municipalities at a smaller scale.

This shift in attitude towards the scene is congruent with the literature that analyses the subject of policymaking and governance over creative commons, which currently identifies three main stages of approaches: Neglecter, Facilitator and Contractor. According to the findings derived from the interviews, Lisbon is somewhere in between a Facilitator and a Contractor. Far beyond the days of neglect, Lisbon's city council has acknowledged the practice and even taken the next step into actively promoting it. The thriving scene's behaviour is being shaped by the municipal initiatives and most artists in the scene highlight the creation of legal walls as one of the most relevant.

4. Legal Walls

The freedom and apparent authenticity of a legal, unmediated, free painting wall seem to be the selling point of these places since they are the closer it gets to the practice of the traditional graffiti since no briefing or institutionalised control is exerted over the practice. The organic painting and repainting of the wall mimic the dynamics of street walls, only lacking the adrenaline adjacent with vandalism and the risk associated with it. Hugo Cardoso from GAU also singles out the appease of vandalistic urges as one of the reasonings behind the creation of these walls. He states:

> *"The importance of free painting walls is above all the creation of a space that can somehow, I would not say prevent, but appease the need for intervention in the city, which exists."*[7]

[6] "As câmaras tornaram-se facilitadores."

[7]" "A importância do projeto de muros de pintura livre é sobretudo a criação de espaço que possa de alguma forma, não diria impedir, mas aplacar a necessidade de intervenção na cidade, que existe."

This reasoning exposes the acknowledgement that graffiti as an urban movement cannot, and will not, ever be controlled completely. Artists also finger this, with Miguel from BHE clarifying those municipal entities are not trying to put an end to graffiti.

Artists value these initiatives since they enable a younger generation of beginners to practice their art form in a safer way. Allowing them to spend virtually unlimited time creating the piece, with no pressure from being caught by the police, getting injured, or dealing with poor illumination when painting at night. Fedor supports the creation of legal walls stating:

> "I used to go out and do lettering [illegally], but I did it because it was fast. If I could paint a cartoon character, maybe I would rather do that"[8]

These legal walls also add another dimension to the consumption of street art, which can now, not only be seen but also created by those who visit or dwell in the city. During one of the interviews, Hugo Cardoso told a story about a family spray painting in one of the legal walls in the city centre, during a holiday in Lisbon:

> *"A year or two ago a whole family was there with a mother, father, two children aged 3 or 4 years, all 4 were painting on the panels. That seems interesting to me and it is the role that we still need to play."*[9]

Nonetheless, this lack of barriers to entry makes the art form apparently less exclusive and can spark a sentiment of resentment on a scene that prides itself on being unique and of a select and brave few. This is not a tragedy endemic to graffiti and street art, in his work Abbing (2019) highlights the increasing tension between exclusive and less serious and popular art, which can be observable in many art forms.

[8] "Eu ia e fazia *lettering*, mas fazia porque era rápido. Se pudesse fazer um boneco se calhar preferia fazer um boneco"

[9] "Há um ou dois anos estava lá uma família inteira com mãe pai e dois filhos com 3-4 anos estavam os 4 a pintar nos painéis todos. Isso parece-me interessante e é o papel que nos falta dar."

5. Evaluation of GAU's Work

Regardless of mentions of gentrification, the general sentiment gathered from the street art community interviewed towards GAU's work is that of gratefulness. Many artists, like Fedor based in Porto, were vocal about their positive take on the municipal team's initiatives and values and share the green-eyed wish that specialised teams such as GAU's are created in other municipalities, such as his.

Alongside artists, also the entrepreneur interviewed mentioned the important role GAU plays in Lisbon's street art ecosystem and for their business. Addressing a relevant concept identifiable in the literature, Juliana states "GAU's support is key. This institutionalization was fundamental for us to get where we are now."[10] In fact, one could argue GAU operates in line with Stark's (2011) heterarchy theory given the organisation balances opposing notions of worth between graffiti's notion of domestic worth (loyalty), and other notions of worth such as market or inspirational as defined by Boltanski and Thévenot (2008).

Central to the whole research, the present institutionalisation and commodification of the art form go against the credo and socially constructed and perceived *ethos* of graffiti and street art, thus splitting opinions on the positivity of the impact created. Groundeau and Pondhaven (2018) arrived at a similar conclusion in their work, where the authors identify a rift between the "tolerated", "financed", "integrated in municipal policy", "promoted" and "aseptic" street art, and the illegal and vandal movement with no commercial intent. Commenting on this very topic, Pariz One, with years of experience in graffiti, highlights those institutionalised initiatives fail to include those who are revered within the graffiti community, stating:

> *"I do not believe that there is discrimination in the true sense of the word, but there is no doubt that there is no concern and due appreciation for the artists that are part of*

[10] "O suporte da GAU foi fundamental. Essa institucionalização foi fundamental para a gente chegar onde está agora"

the culture and its history. Design for the project and its composition is valued more than the artistic name associated with a sub-culture, and its years of experience."[11]

Indeed, the community of artists who identify themselves as graffiti writers are hesitant and unsure about these municipal initiatives since they represent the institutionalisation of a previous subversive and rebellious art form. Moreover, the public-private funding structure of GAU is believed to create suspicion within some communities (Grondeau & Pondaven, 2018), due to arguable conflict of interests. Unfortunately, not sufficient empirical evidence was collected to infer the position of the community of graffiti writers. The lack of interviewees who identify with the "doctrines" of graffiti means this question is left partially unanswered which can/should give way to further research.

Nonetheless, the street artist community interviewed shares the unanimous opinion their community has been positively affected by municipal initiatives. Interviewees recognise the growth and increased affirmation of their scene. Artists now see this art form as a more valid career path, hence, the support given by the municipality has attracted and enabled more artists to develop their art in large-scale "canvases". It seems the institutionalisation served as recognition for the art form, signalling its value, thus, this marker of professionalism and credibility has drawn artists from other art fields due to the increased status of the practice. Respondent 1 comments on the street art scene stating:

"It's definitely grown and continues to do so, the public interest and fascination with street art as well as its acceptance and attention from the likes of businesses and municipalities has meant that it's become a much more viable career path and therefore more artists have turned their attention to the street. This, in turn has led to a common feeling of adversity from those engrained in the illegal side of things, who are often of the belief that this monetisation represents a "selling out" and divergence from what working in the streets should represent"

[11] "Não acredito que exista discriminação no verdadeiro sentido da palavra, mas sem dúvida que não existe uma preocupação e devida valorização dos Artistas que fazem parte da cultura e da sua História. Valoriza-se mais o design para o projeto e a sua composição do que o nome artístico associado a uma sub-cultura, e os seu anos de experiência."

This statement from respondent 1, which had previously worked mainly in an illegal fashion, and now makes a living and an artistic career solely on his legal works, is illustrative of the existing tensions between the two communities. The way these tensions are navigated by artists is addressed in the following section.

6. The Reputation of the art form

Although much disharmony is present within the urban art scene, a vast majority of the interviewees mentions street art has a better reputation now versus 5-10 years ago. Locals, businesses, tourists, and other artists regard street art as a legitimate art form. This goes in line with the extensive literature that analysis this subculture, and Lisbon does not seem to be any different.

This shift in reputation is not only organic but seemingly supported by municipal initiatives. The locals, and previously mentioned artists, perceive murals commissioned murals by GAU as urban development and therefore tend to support them, as they would any other well-intended investment done by the municipality. Artist Pariz One, born and raised in Lisbon, highlights the importance of municipal initiatives validating the art form, stating:

> *"These projects promoted by the City Councils and Parish Councils end up validating the painting of public spaces as an emerging art and it has come to be respected as such."*[12]

Alongside the public and local acceptance, also businesses and other organisations are increasingly more receptive to the art form. Respondent 1 states:

> *"The attitude of businesses and municipalities is what continues to change, for better and for worse. Clearly, they've come to understand the appeal of public art and how a mural or sculpture can offer a much-needed face lift or publicity boost to an area.*

[12] "Estes projetos promovidos pelas Câmara Municipais e Juntas de Freguesia acabam por validar a pintura de espaços públicos como uma arte emergente e tem vindo a ser respeitada como tal."

Though I think many still simply view street artists as graffiti heads who decided to monetise their craft to make some cash - this is very rarely the case."

Nonetheless, a usually older generation is sometimes reticent about the practice. Mariana Santos also mentions, an older generation, who still does not understand street art and when confronted with the apparatus of lifts, cranes, buckets of paint, brushes, and spray cans, often doubts the nature of the artists' intentions. Respondent 1 shares his doubts about any actual education in public perception:

"I think the public perception of street art has stayed more or less consistent for the past decade, though I think the two worlds of graffiti vs street art or illegal vs legal still remain very much one entity in their eyes. I've painted close to a hundred murals around the world, and I still get asked if I'm allowed to be painting in the street. I could be a week into painting a ten-story building, and someone would still ask if I had permission."

7. Lay Public's Acceptance of Graffiti

Besides this residual tension, things take a more complicated turn when instead interviewees are asked whether this acceptance has trickled down to related art forms, like graffiti writing. This is where opinions start to diverge between stakeholders who think the perception of artistic value from graffiti and other illegal street artworks has improved substantially and those who believe it stayed roughly the same.

One of the interviewees, Styler, tells a playful story, where he explains how the perception of the artistic value of graffiti has changed, even in the eyes of the authorities for whom it has become less of a vandalistic and anarchical practice. Styler says:

"I notice a lot of difference. In the past, when the cops arrived, we were all "dragged away" … Nowadays(…) once they realise who I am, in [abandoned] factories where I

paint and painted in the past, they go and stop there to smoke cigarettes and watch me paint, while they should be doing their rounds. It's crazy... but it's cool. (Laughs)"[13]

Also, Hugo Cardoso from GAU suggests that the traditional style of graffiti writing, lettering, is increasingly more accepted as fallout from generalised street art familiarity:

"There has been a lot of change in the way people look at graffiti and street art. One thing, the affirmation of street art and facades also led to the affirmation of graffiti itself. Today people already see lettering, although it always depends on the location, not as a mega-aggressive thing but they already recognize the artistic value in an artistic expression as lettering. This difference is big. Does everyone think the same? No."[14]

Alongside these statements, the artist Fedor mentions that sanitation and police handle paintings differently which can lead to a sense of injustice. This feeling of injustice comes from the arbitrary nature of how sanitation handles differently certain styles of paintings. Also, Olivero (2014) highlights this dissonance "the social-political oligarchy rejects the artist and the conditions that create the art unless the art is somehow accepted on the establishment's terms.".

Figure 3 - Two Works from Fedor Top- Legal (Fedor, 2021) Bottom- Illegal (Fedor, 2020)

[13] "Noto bué diferença. Antigamente quando a bófia chegava era de arrasto... Hoje em dia até em fábricas em que eu pinto, que eu descobri, e agora que conhecem o meu nome, vão para lá fumar cigarros e ver se eu estou lá a pintar enquanto fazem a ronda. É uma cena marada, mas é fixe. (Risos)"

[14] "Tem havido muita alteração na forma como as pessoas encaram o graffiti e a street art. Uma coisa a afirmação do street art e das empenas levou também por si a afirmação do próprio graffiti, hoje as pessoas já vem o *lettering*, depende sempre da localização, não como uma coisa mega agressiva, mas já reconhecem o valor artístico na expressão artística como o *lettering*. Essa diferença é grande. Toda a gente pensa assim? Não."

Those that are more realistic and "portrait-like" tend to stay, while more "abstract" compositions tend to be washed off. This exactly what can be seen in Figure 4 where the bottom painting with a cartoon, although illegal and on private property is not removed given the municipal sanitation services recognises the artistic value, whilst the future of the top lettering piece in traditional graffiti style would be unsure if done illegally. This later dynamic will be addressed later when the emerging markets for street art are mentioned. Apace with the previous statements, Respondent 1, summarises:

> *"I think more acceptance, appreciation and enjoyment around street art is a great thing. Street art exists to bring art into the public domain to be owned and enjoyed by a borderless community. think that does in some cases allow people to better appreciate the work of a writer, or certainly better understand the ethos behind it"*

Yet another example of the growing acceptance comes from a recent initiative conducted by Underdogs[15], mentioned more than once in interviews, with the revered and iconic New York city tagger and writer JonOne. In collaboration with the cultural platform, JonOne created a variety of pieces for an exhibition, prints, exclusive canvases and objects and an intervention in a wall, once again coordinated by GAU. The pieces created with very flashy tags in a clear anarchical old-school style create an interesting bridge between the underground vandalistic roots of the artist and modern aesthetic values.

Figure 4 - JonOne's Mural in Lisbon (Christcost.a, 2021)- Supported by Underdogs and GAU Photos: Christcost.a

[15] Further details of this piece can be found here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySOGtu2MoQw

In opposition to the statements above, some artists mention the reputation of graffiti writers has remained more or less the same, at least in the eyes of the general public. Pariz One states:

> *"Pure graffiti starts to have some spaces again, but I always feel it is seen as the poor relative by these institutions, perhaps because of the scars left in the past and for being generally misunderstood by the public, when in fact graffiti is the Father and Mother of everything that has been done at the institutional level."*[16]

Communities and their tensions

A central component to this analysis is the way stakeholders within the street art and graffiti scene in Lisbon navigate the socially constructed boundaries of their respective communities. Consequently, the bulk of the interview guide, and findings, is comprised of an analysis of the intricacies of these communities, their reputation, tensions, and the hybrid nature of the artist. Due to the complex nature of these ethnological findings, it is also here that most opinions diverge.

1. *Illegal nature of the practice*

The *ethos* of graffiti, or the contested and socially constructed of it, is at the root of all tensions between the scenes. Starting from the friction that arises from the attitude of the individuals and communities towards the licitness or illegality of the practice. This tension has been studied by scholars who have also pinpointed and tried to explain the origin of friction (Diógenes, 2015)**.**

Those that operate deep within the graffiti community tend to lean towards one side, one that believes illegality brings added value to the artistic product. Moreover, agents in the field of graffiti do not want to be accepted. As Eric Felisbret, an author on

[16] "O graffiti puro começa a ter novamente alguns espaços, mas sinto sempre que é visto como o parente pobre por estas instituições, talvez pelas marcas deixadas no passado e por ser incompreendido de forma geral pelo público, quando na verdade o Graffiti é o Pai e Mãe de tudo o que se tem vindo a fazer a nível institucional."

street art and graffiti puts it: "From the perspective of a graffiti writer, the debate about whether graffiti is art or crime is pointless because, ideally, it is both" (Felisbert, 2014).

Likewise, some of the artists interviewed also identified that although graffiti was at the root of the whole street art movement, it has slowly distanced itself from other forms of legal work. Fedor states: *"Tags, I think, are associated with vandalism and I think that most people who do them also do so in that context."*[17]

The dominant form of graffiti is and has been, tagging, a stylized signature done with a spray can or marker used to mark turf and to communicate within the subculture (Mubi Brighenti, 2010). This internal communication is key to the community since it serves as "street credit" and a means of internal communication. Thus, prominent and respected writers are the ones who "get up" the most. The intricate style of the signatures makes it most times undecipherable to outsiders, only members of the community can appreciate the skill and sophistication in lettering and assess the danger of placing tags in hard-to-reach locations (Molnár, 2017). Moreover, this consumption requires ample symbolic capital highly specific to the scene and requires a complete immersion in the milieu (Bourdieu, 1984), further reinforcing the shared practice of the subculture. Miguel from BHE builds upon this stating:

> *"Do Lisbon residents accept graffiti better? No. They will never accept it, nor are they supposed to accept. Who likes to have a name on the wall of their house or building? It is not understandable. Those who paint graffiti do not try to explain graffiti to those who are not in graffiti. It's ego, it's name, it's a cultural niche"*[18]

The fact that "true graffiti" is done with the sole intent of being understood by those within the community is exactly what a cultural common encapsulates. This set of rules, lingo, culture, exclusivity, all relate to the essence of a subculture, or as Miguel puts it "cultural niche". This consequently creates an invisible and excluding barrier, between those who are within the subculture, and those who are inevitably out. Different actors

[17] "Os *tags* acho que são associados ao vandalismo e acho que a maior parte das pessoas que o faz também o faz nesse contexto."

[18] "Moradores de lisboa aceitam melhor graffiti? Não. Nunca vão aceitar, nem é suposto aceitarem. Quem é que gosta de levar com um nome qualquer na parede da sua casa e do seu prédio? Não é compreensível. Quem pinta graffiti não tenta explicar graffiti a quem não está no graffiti. É ego, é nome, é nicho cultural."

within the street art scene are bound to perceive this border differently, which one can argue is at the heart of this animosity between communities. The issues and the tensions this thesis argue exists derive from the uncertain and subjective nature of this exact border.

2. *Socially Constructed Definitions and Subjectivity of The Arts*

When questioned about the way they perceive themselves, some steer towards graffiti writers, others more to street artists, but some like Miguel Brum and Mariana Santos pointed to the subjective nature of these denominations. Miguel, referring to his collective BHE, states:

> *"Those are all names, and names are labels that limit things and fit everything in a certain profile, which is not necessarily the place where we want to be placed. It's all about intervention, and communication. The arts are subjective."*[19]

The long-lived debate on the subjective or objective quality of art and talent of artists, although complementary is out of the scope of the present thesis, however, Mariana Santos follows it up by stating:

> *"I don't feel the need to identify myself as one or the other. I do murals, painting, engraving, in galleries but also on the street. I don't see it as two different facets but as extensions of my work."*[20]

The latter quote highlights yet another characteristic of the art embedded within the street art scene: the hybrid nature of the artist. More than simply dividing their works between paid and unpaid, street artists most of the time take on this hybrid form where they perform paid commissioned works for entities, but still on the side practice graffiti or other illegal forms of urban art. This distinction is sometimes identifiable by the

[19] "Isso são tudo nomes, e nomes são rótulos que balizam as coisas e encaixam tudo num determinado perfil, que não é necessariamente ao sítio onde queremos estar encaixados. É tudo intervenção, e comunicação. As artes são subjetivas."
[20] "Não sinto necessidade de me identificar como uma coisa ou outra. Faço murais, pintura, gravura e em exposições, mas também em rua. Não vejo como duas facetas diferentes, mas como extensões do meu trabalho."

artist's signature on their pieces. The name with which an artist signs a large piece contracted by GAU, is not the same as the tag or bombing they do on the weekends with their friends, maybe after a couple of drinks. The insights derived from interviews support existing literature on the commodification of street art (Abbing, 2002; 2019; Molnár, 2018). The growing number of "hybrid" artists who do not sign their commissioned works in an attempt to achieve authenticity and reputation for their "true artistic self" points to the personal and subjective boundaries artists navigate.

3. *Peer Pressure and "Selling Out"*

The dispute over borders makes one want to take the next step and wonder, can any kind of commissioned work ever be labelled as graffiti? Here opinions split, with some artists being very clear about how they think graffiti should or should not be. Pariz One, with his years of experience in graffiti, states:

> *"From the moment that the piece leaves its natural habitat for me, it is no longer graffiti and becomes art or graffiti-related, not losing its history or value, but thus becoming an extension of what is true graffiti."*[21]

Respondent 1 agrees and follows it up by saying:

> *"I wouldn't call any commissioned works graffiti, that would go against the whole ethos of graffiti and its vandalistic roots."*

Both interviewees, and others unquoted here, suggest there is a "true" form of graffiti. This "more authentic" form of intervention follows a set of guidelines, both in style, tools, place or canvases, but most importantly in the intent with which it is done. Those who practice "true graffiti" identify as graffiti writers and are well aware they are performing graffiti. This truthful "ethos of graffiti" seems to linger, yet as with all subculture

[21] "A partir do momento que a peça sai do seu habitat natural para mim deixa de ser graffiti passa a denominar-se arte ou graffiti-related, não perdendo a sua história ou valor mas passa assim a ser uma extensão do que é o verdadeiro graffiti."

movements, where no written rulebook exists, these set of definitions and dogmas tend to be bent to one's will or through the influence of peers. At this point it is thought-provoking to mention that Pariz One, although partaking in a variety of commissioned works, identifies as a graffiti writer, thus defying the definitions of some agents in the traditional graffiti scene.

As expected, some artists do not view the culture of the scene as rules set in stone. Some like Fedor, who grew up within the graffiti scene but nevertheless shares a more mellow and compromising take on these barriers, when asked whether commissioned works should be labelled as graffiti, states:

> *"I don't think it stops being graffiti despite being commissioned. It just does not follow the normal standards. We cannot live clinging to the past. Otherwise, we either painted on the trains in New York or it's not graffiti."*[22]

This provocative statement about the true nature of graffiti shows, ironically, how these definitions can be bent and overcome through social reinforcement. In fact, the "true" essence is inherently dynamic and ever-changing since it is comprised of numerous beliefs of agents scattered across cities and the globe, who are self-entitled writers. One could almost nod to a famous quote from Lenin, who states that a lie told often enough becomes the truth.

Ultimately, (some) artists are hybrid creatures, they adapt. Adapting their works to please a wider audience, one that is willing to pay for it or to allow it to be painted on their walls. This artistic compromise, however, is at the gist of yet another tension between communities, since adapting one's message and art to be understood and perceived by those outside the community can be seen as a major breach of an unwritten pact on authenticity (Abbing, 2002). Fedor illustrates this by stating:

"There are guys who do bombing and who have an incredible style. If they organised it in differently way they would be able to make a super interesting composition. But they don't

[22] "Não acho que deixe de ser graffiti apesar de ser encomendando. Simplesmente não segue os padrões normais. Não podemos viver agarrados ao passado. Senão ou pintávamos nos comboios em Nova York ou então não é graffiti."

want to. The reality is that they don't want to because they are afraid their friends call them sell-outs."[23]

This fear of backlash from the community, which labels infractors as "sell-outs" exists and persists within Lisbon's scene. Styler builds on this, saying:

> *"There are a lot of people who think that I am a sell-out. I'm not a sell-out. Graffiti doesn't pay the bills. A lot of people from lettering try to get into this [street art] business and fail."*[24]

Graffiti as an urban movement shares a lot of the characteristic of Jason Pott's Innovation Commons (2019) since it is comprised of informal moments of joint creation where uncertainty is too high to develop a marketable product. The shift from the "zeroth" phase to "phase 1" of the innovation process, as defined by Potts, requiring the intervention of the entrepreneur, is in a way what the municipality of Lisbon incites, by actively promoting street art as a legitimate product (commodity). The reduction of uncertainty allows for artists to commercialise their artistic product. These new products serve a purpose more than just joint creation and participation. This, of course, impacts the original commons, which can see artists that leave the commons, to earn a monetary reward for their work, as "sell-outs".

The use of the word "sell-out" denotes the link between monetary reward and the rupture with the "ethos" of the community. This point of friction between both communities arises from the idyllic view on ownership some graffiti artists bring forward. The original graffiti movement, and a fringe of the street art scene, is rooted in the beliefs of public ownership which goes against the ideals of commercialisation of shared intellectual property. The fact many artists turn to the commercialisation of their works generates friction between those who pursue *l'art pour l'art* and those who sell their works or partake in commissioned projects. Further analysing the words used by

[23] - "Há gajos que fazem *bombing* e que tem um estilo incrível e se organizassem aquilo de maneira diferente eram capazes de fazer uma composição super interessante. Mas não querem. A realidade é que não querem porque tem medo que os amigos digam que se calhar ele é um vendido"

[24] "Há muita gente que pensa que eu sou um vendido. Não sou um vendido. O graffiti não paga as contas. Não sou um vendido. Muito pessoal das letras tenta partir para este ramo e não consegue."

Styler, the mention of "business" also acknowledges some commodification of the practice.

4. *Persisting Tensions*

These tensions arising from opposing views on authenticity have been around for decades, not only limited to graffiti and street art but also with other art forms, including music, with genres originating from skin-tight communal practices such as Hip-Hop, Punk or Jazz (Abbing, 2002), or many other examples in technology and science.

When addressing Lisbon's case, opinions also parcel out, ranging from those who see these rift between communities increase to those who reject such tensions. When questioned about feelings of animosity towards writers, Fedor acknowledges some tension but wonders "why would we be torn with the graffiti community?". He mentions the only possible reason for resentment would come from the lack of opportunities given to those who practice graffiti. He states:

> *"The gap between communities already existed before. I don't think it's dividing things any further. I think this division happens in people's minds. The people who only do lettering are as they were, they have no support, and have no walls."*[25]

Mariana Santos follows this thought saying:

> *"There is some [division], but there is not as much as it might seem. There is a grey area. If news, articles, conversations, or things appear on Twitter or Instagram, these are some people who have this idea, but there are many more who do not share that opinion."*[26]

[25] "Essa divisão já existia. Não acho que esteja a dividir mais as coisas. Acho que essa divisão acontece na cabeça das pessoas**.** O pessoal que só faz *lettering* está como estava, não tem apoio, não têm paredes."

[26]**"**Existe alguma (divisão), mas não existe assim tanto como possa parecer. Há uma zona cinzenta. Se aparecem notícias, artigos, conversas ou coisas no Twitter ou Instagram, isso são algumas pessoas que tem essa ideia, mas existem muitas mais que não partilham dessa opinião."

Another interesting example comes from the artist Tamara Alves, who recently posted on her Instagram page a compilation of photographs (Figure 5), comparing her freshly painted work (right picture), a mural supported by GAU, and the current state of the wall (left picture), covered with *tags* and *throw-ups*.

Figure 5- Side by side of Mural from Tamara Alves, now covered with Tags and Throw-ups (Alves, 2020)

A closer look at this post gives insights into the dynamic between scenes. The comment section of this post is flooded with comments from fans condemning the acts of "vandalism" and "jealousy" over her beautiful painting. However, this does not seem to be the intention behind Tamara Alves' post. The artist writes in the description of the post*: "I love her. I know this wall won't last much longer because it will soon become something else but I love her anyway. I love how she's changing with this city and with everyone that left their mark on her skin."(Alves, 2020)*.

This interesting post once again points to the fact that most street artists understand and accept the practice of graffiti, even when it "sabotages" their works. The general code or belief is that any piece of street art, commissioned or not, is ephemeral and that the street is everyone's. Miguel Brum makes a funny remark about this very same topic saying: *"Tags, throw-ups, bombing are a cultural niche, a tribe. Writers have as much right to have their word on the street as McDonald's or Coca-cola."*. Interestingly all the artists above-mentioned, who do not see the tensions growing, come from an artistic background that is not pure graffiti, and use tools other than the spray can in

their works. This could signal those tensions are created and engrained from within the most dogmatic graffiti community, however, this question remains unanswered.

Notwithstanding, some artists see these tensions increasing due to the rise in popularity of street art. Municipal initiatives have created opportunities for street artists, but failed to include much of the graffiti community, perhaps due to the lack of approachability of the subculture. Alongside this, the work of Grondeau & Pondaven concludes this institutionalisation and instrumentalization of the underground culture and image has split the scenes between those who collaborate with GAU, even whilst performing illegal works, and those who do not (Grondeau & Pondaven, 2018). This was the case witnessed in the present research.

Moreover, a handful of artists point to an increase in tensions and division between established communities. Styler states: *"The street art scene has divided graffiti people and street art people immensely."*[27] and respondent 1 who although not based in Lisbon, shares their thoughts of the worldwide dynamics:

> *"To summarise, the more the legal world of street art continues to grow through increasing attention from both the public and from businesses/municipalities (both of whom help to fund careers in street art), the greater the divide between the two sides."*

Pariz One, who acknowledges an increasing tension, yet does not agree necessarily with Grondeau and Pondaven (2018), yet focuses on "the new kid on the block", the visual artists, stating:

> *"There is a lot of this feeling of division, I do not feel it between those that were successful writers in the past that now focus more on paid work, but on those emerging artists that have nothing to do with Graffiti and its culture, and appropriate the word street art to do this type of work, thus confusing the general public about who they are and where they are inserted."*[28]

[27] "A cena do *street art* dividiu imenso as pessoas do graffiti e as pessoas da street *art*."

[28] "Existe muito este sentimento de divisão, não sinto em relação a que já deu cartas no passado enquanto writer e agora centra-se mais nos trabalhos remunerados, mas sim em relação aqueles artistas emergentes que em nada tem

5. *Changing Backgrounds*

Figure 6- Mural by Mariana Santos in Lisbon (Santos, 2021) Painted completely using paint brushes.

This new tension identified by the interviews is a direct result of the increasing accessibility of the practice of street art. Municipal support enables artists from other artistic realms to, in the words of Mariana Santos, "give street art a try". Artists interviewed, like Fedor, Miguel Brum, Styler, Mariana Santos alongside Hugo Cardoso from GAU, mentioned the growing number of street artists with no background/ experience in graffiti. Architecture, Design, Fine-arts students are becoming increasingly more prominent in these commissioned works. This takeover adds fuel to the fire by further distancing street art from the community that, arguably, fathered the movement.

Remarks made during interviews also hint that these artists experiment with the practice but do not usually stay. Using street art as a medium for grand and public exposure, these artists are sometimes criticised by the "light-heartedness" with which they commodify and instrumentalise urban art.

Emerging Markets for street art

The growing popularity of street art translates into increased job opportunities for visual artists and writers. The possibility to display their works in big-scale murals to a large local audience, have pieces included in street art tours, and spill-over from social media buzz are milestones artists overcome by creating urban art pieces. Businesses and

haver com o Graffiti e a sua cultura, e apropriam-se da palavra *street art* para fazer este tipo de trabalho, confundindo assim o público em geral sobre quem são e onde estão inseridos."

organisations spawn an increasing incentive to the practice, given they “window-shop” designs, aesthetics, and artists they would like to hire for future artistic commissions.

However, as the street art markets mature, the chronic oversupply characteristic of the arts begin to shine through. Mariana Santos points to the precarity of street art gigs, which are often underpaid. Seemingly, it is not only graffiti that “doesn’t pay the bills” also street art often fails to do so. It seems as though the superstar effect, as defined by Rosen (1981), is becoming established, with a selection of very prominent urban artists cashing in on the increased popularity of the art form, leaving a long-tail of aspiring street artists behind.

1. Social Media as An Asset

In the past, the ephemeral nature of graffiti made the community grow tight since only those active within the scene were aware of minor changes and pieces that perhaps only lasted a week, or a single night. This made the communities unified and more importantly: local. This has, however, changed through the means of photography and the rise of social media communities. Social media plays an enormous role in the rise in the popularity of graffiti and street art. Never again were communities bound by geography. Writers in Europe gain inspiration and communicate with writers in New York, and a larger audience of enthusiasts can suddenly become part of the scene without ever holding a spray can or jump in a train yard.

The above-mentioned importance of social media and photography, brought forward by the work of scholars such as Molnár (2018), were in their vast majority confirmed through the statements of the interviewees. All the interviewees confirmed the impact social media has on urban art. From mentions of community generation, increased job opportunities, fan-base creation and management, inspiration and political pressure were some of the concepts discussed. These support the literature which suggests street artists are aware of the economic benefits of developing an online

presence, especially in social media showcasing their works (Santamarina-Campos et al., 2019).

Fedor goes a step further mentioning the development of graffiti and street art photography and the importance this has on social media. Mentioning specific photographers who follow him and his works, highlights the deep connection artists have with those documenting their art online. Nonetheless, like many other art forms, the subjective nature of quality assessment, means those with an ability to promote themselves online are more likely to secure gigs and be revered as successful artists. ParizOne states:

> *"Unfortunately, social media work not only as a measure of popularity, but also as artistic valorisation, and this has an impact on the life and artistic identity of each one."*[29]

This "impact on artistic identity" is made explicit by the adjustment of one's art in other to please a larger audience. This concept, native to many if not all art forms, also directly linked to the above-mentioned commercialisation and artistic compromise, "forces" street artists to adapt their artworks, undertaking specific styles of painting to entertain a larger audience.

2. *Adapt to Survive*

These specific styles were identified by Miguel from BHE, who mentions that styles which easier to understand by the audience, such as Realism, and portraits, are the ones who get the most jobs. Building on this notion of relatability, Fedor, mentions the need to adapt one's works in order to please the general lay audience:

> *"It is important for people to relate to what they are seeing. If people understand what is there, they are more likely to value it. And this takes us back to the tags, people can't*

[29] "Infelizmente as redes sociais funcionam não só como um medidor de popularidade, mas também como de valorização artística, e isto tem impacto na vida e identidade artística de cada um."

even read the tags: "they are scribbles, it sucks". We have adapted a little, and maybe our art has suffered a bit."[30]

The quote above is in line with the literature, and the work of Molnár (2017) which differentiates the intended audiences for street art and graffiti. Yet again, graffiti seems to not satisfy the artistic needs of a lay audience, which is usually drawn to more realistic and recognisable designs.

3. *Commodification and Institutionalization*

The adjustment of one's art to spark interest in the masses is in itself a hint at the ongoing commercialisation of urban art. Here, as in many other art forms, and industries, commercialisation and commodification go hand-in-hand. The phenomenon of commodification of street art is at the gist of Molnár's (2018) research over Berlin's street art scene (a city that has been a trendsetter) and was supported by the statements of interviewees. One of them being Fedor, who states:

"Unfortunately, whether you like it or not, this is a business. We cannot think that everything is beautiful, and we do what we like, and people will value us for that. It doesn't always work that way."[31]

In disagreement with the above-quoted nihilistic view of artistic defeat, Mariana Santos, mentions the individual nature of this commodification. She argues individuals are at the source of this phenomenon and that the art form itself is not yet completely commodified. She states, when asked whether street art has become commodified, that although some artists commodify the practice, others do not, steering the discussion to the individual role of each artist, not the collective role.[32]

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[30] **"**É importante as pessoas relacionarem com aquilo que estão a ver. Se as pessoas compreenderem o que está lá, é mais provável que lhe deem valor. E isto leva-nos de novo aos *tags*, as pessoas nem conseguem ler os *tags* : "são rabiscos, não presta" .Adaptámo-nos um bocadinho, e isso se calhar a arte sofreu um bocadinho."

[31] Infelizmente, quer queiras quer não isto e um negócio não podemos achar que e tudo lindo e fazemos o que gostamos e as pessoas vão nos dar valor. Nem sempre funciona assim."

[32] "De certa forma sim. Contudo, é um papel individual não é um papel coletivo. Muitos artistas podem mercantilizar a coisa, mas outros não."

Nonetheless, the commodification identified seems to have been key for entrepreneurs who craved the reduction in uncertainty to jump from “phase 0” to “phase 1”. Juliana Santos from Underdogs comments:

> *"Certainly, it [street art became] popularized in a way that I think is very positive, but it commercialized in a way that is very reflective of the times we live in, where everything ends up being swallowed up by this machine [capitalism]."*[33]

The institutionalisation was a game-changer for entrepreneurs in the scene due to the municipal support created. For the first time, the municipality was not against street art but actively promoting it. The access to extra funds and institutionalisation was the start of it all. Juliana Santos states the change in perception of street art was key for their business and that GAU played a major role in this:

> *“The business happened as urban art evolved. They walked together, supporting each other: Underdogs and GAU, bringing other artists. This change in thinking was essential, I don't even know what it would have been like twenty years ago... Perhaps Underdogs would not exist.”*[34]

4. Future of the scene

The complete maturation of the scene seems to be imminent. Some respondents wonder how long the “bubble” will keep on growing. Mariana Santos points to the eventual stagnation of the street art movement as we know it. Stating that street art is the current fad and that in some years perhaps will be replaced by another artistic movement. Whether the movement will persist, she believes once it ceases to function

[33] “Com certeza, popularizou de uma forma que eu acho muito positiva, mas comercializou de uma forma que é muito reflexo dos tempos que a gente vive, onde tudo acaba por ser engolido por essa máquina (capitalismo).”

[34] “O negócio aconteceu enquanto a arte urbana evolui. Foram andando juntos, um puxando pelo outro: a Underdogs, a GAU, trazendo outros artistas. Foi essencial essa mudança de pensamento, nem sei como seria há vinte anos atrás... Talvez a Underdogs não existiria.”

in a “commercial way” it will be kept alive by the artists and the cultural movement behind it.[35]

Already street art “as we know it” is beginning to mutate, and the drift from mural-based interventions is slowly picking up pace. The increasing emphasis on small scale interventions from tilework, installations, statues seems to be the prevailing trend, which was confirmed by Juliana Santos who explains murals now play a secondary role for Underdogs’ artists.

However, more than simply reducing the dimension of the interventions, some argue the art form will also move beyond the physical dimension altogether. The rise of digital art and the already established online consumption of street art photography served as foundations for new digital formats of commercialising street art. Outside the public art realm, Non-Fungible Tokens or NFT’s are taking the art world by storm, offering new sources of income for artists and pushing the boundaries of art and ownership. Indeed, also Underdogs has “jumped on the wagon” with their most recent NFT drops. The project called EPHEMERAL ETHERNAL introduces 5 compilations of illustrations, music and video works from “all-star” contemporary urban artists in collaboration with the cultural platform. Respondent 1 explains why it believes digital art will for sure be part of the future of street art:

> *“Much like Street Art there are no gallery walls or cultural boundaries around the world of digital art, people from all around the world can share and appreciate creativity across the internet, I think that’s great.”*

This statement pinpoints the drift from the physical towards the digital realm. The already mentioned exodus from local to online communities is now accompanied by the migration of works as well to sets of bits and bytes. Whether this new trend will be successful or not, only time will tell, however, it most certainly be considered another heresy from those ingrained in the old-school graffiti cult(ure).

[35] “Quando deixar de funcionar dessa forma comercial, continuará a funcionar na forma de movimento artístico.”

5. Conclusion

With the increasing acceptance and the emergence of an economy around the practice of street art, as part of a municipal agenda striving for a creative city brand, the present thesis aimed at assessing the degree of commodification and instrumentalization of the previously underground art form. Moreover, it aimed at studying the dynamics and attitudes of artists embedded in this milieu towards this phenomenon.

Firstly, it is safe to say that Lisbon has been able to incorporate urban art as an integral part of its brand, both locally, but most importantly in foreign markets. The initiatives taken by GAU and supported by municipal governing bodies have undoubtedly cast the city as one of the big European players of urban art and contributed to a, although incomplete, "touristification" of street art, as concluded by Campos and Sequeira (2020). Lisbon's long-term commitment to affirming itself as a creative city plays a role in the local acceptance of initiatives such as street art and have contributed to the urban development of many neighbourhoods, through the creation of street art tours, infrastructure rehabilitation, and the deconstruction of prejudice towards regions and peoples.

In fact, the importance of these initiatives already rivals other means of cultural public investment. Also, Abbing (2019) expects this very phenomenon, where at a local level the development of "decent" graffiti can be seen as important as investment in more traditional venues like theatres or concert halls. Nonetheless, the present research found that, at least at a municipal level, the budget for urban art projects is still a fraction of other traditional art forms. Although decision power is centralised (GAU), budgets and motivation often come from parishes who better understand the needs of their residents, and from privates wishing to upgrade their properties or promote their signed artists.

Secondly, undoubtedly, institutionalisation and instrumentalization are identifiable in Lisbon and are responsible for an increased entropy within the scene. It is, however, important to distinguish between aesthetics and individuals and their communities when addressing the commodification of graffiti and/or street art. Although street art is now more commodified and instrumentalised than ever, the same

cannot be said for individuals who practice and identify with the traditional graffiti dogmas. This community continues to maintain a clear subversive and anarchical attitude. For that reason, graffiti-based communities would never allow themselves to be controlled by the institutions they seek to discredit. Nonetheless, due to some externalities from the growing acceptance of street art, also the graffiti aesthetic is becoming increasingly open to commercial opportunities.

The graffiti movement has thus boiled down to intention, becoming increasingly focused on vandalism, claims of turf, and ego. What started from the need to be seen and heard, performed by impoverished youngsters of New York, has shifted to the replication of behaviours mostly connected to feelings of belonging and collective mobilisation, since youngsters and beginners are no longer forced to do it illegally.

The canon of the commons has inevitably changed. Not anymore are graffiti and street art communal activities motivated by governing neglect, they have transcended to the realm of communities built upon shared practice. This shift "defangs" the *ethos* of the surviving movement since the protest has lost momentum. Artists, in most art forms, are increasingly subservient to capitalistic values and as Abbing (2019) hints in his latest book, "The Changing Social Economy of Art – Are the Arts Becoming Less Exclusive?":

"The symbolic and social boundaries are quickly becoming weaker and more flexible than they were before. (…) In the worlds of art, the art ethos is less intense. It still influences decisions, but a market ethos is often more important. Art is no longer grand, and art-world-unity no longer a major goal."

The findings of the present research seem to support, to an extent, the quote above. The interdependency of artists and organisations makes boundaries less serious and opens the door for artists to navigate them freely, often steering them towards a more commercial stand. Not endemic to Lisbon, this phenomenon and its prevalence make Schater worry "[street] artists from within the practice have themselves seemed to

acquiesce to this neo-liberal narrative so uniformly (…) that even ambivalence is hard to find." (Schacter, 2014).

Although a divide is identified, it is, as expected, socially constructed, hence artists disperse themselves across a spectrum, from those who completely reject any means of commercialisation and institutionalisation, to those who have embraced the emerging opportunities offered by the neo-liberal capitalistic approach to the urban movement. As expected, given the socially constructed nature of the definitions, there are as many definitions and boundaries as there are agents capable of defining them. This in turn translates into a cacophony of boundaries, divisions, and tensions. These dynamics are of course not particular to urban art and are, in fact, present in most art forms baffled with the opportunities that derive from commercialisation.

Similarly to group identities, stakeholders' opinions diverge regarding the dynamics between communities. The dispersion of, individual and communal, identities across a spectrum, paves the way for heterogeneity in tension acknowledgement. Scholars have hinted that the tensions between Lisbon's communities reside between collaboration or rejection of the institutionalised power (GAU) (Grondeau & Pondaven, 2018). However, it seems as though this tension is unilateral, given that agents with a minimal or non-existent background in graffiti tend to neglect this hostility. This leads to the conclusion that the existing tensions are created and reinforced by individuals and their respective communities, usually at the end of a spectrum, closer to the original attitude of graffiti. This conclusion is however constrained by the lack of inference of this particular community in the present study.

Interestingly, those who stand for traditional graffiti doctrines, do not identify as artists, referring to themselves as writers. The stigma around the label of *art* comes from the suspicion this term is usually used to justify monetary value. Graffiti could qualify as the ultimate bohemian art form, done completely for art's sake, required only writers would consider themselves artists. Hence, the discussion surrounding the compromise over artistic freedom or not should perhaps be framed around whether the practice aims at being artistic in the first place.

Finally, the findings of this study are particularly relevant for municipal governing bodies seeking to stimulate cultural and urban commons. Preliminary research on policies directed at fostering the commons highlights the paradox that in order to stimulate cohesive and sustainable urban commons, governing bodies must allow them to form organically, or in other words ignore them. That is not to say governments should remit to inertia, instead, they should foster the emergence of these communities by creating the urban spaces (physical and not) propitious for the organic creation of such connections. Previously, Jason Potts argued for something similar, stating that policy to stimulate the commons ought to be implemented at an early stage of the innovation trajectory, thus minimising rent-seeking and facilitating collective learning (Potts, 2019).

However, unlike Pott's (2019) predictions and alongside Dekker's remarks on Potts theory, the scene does not seem to collapse (Dekker, 2020). Precisely as expected, the scene has followed different paths, bifurcating between the underground scene, which will never be subservient to institutions, and the handful of commercially successful superstars (most collaborating with Underdogs). The later artists seem to successfully incorporate the previously mentioned steps towards commercial success: Recognisable aesthetic, Realistic and/or "family-friendly" style, Influential Social Media Accounts, and commodification of their works through prints, canvases, personalised objects, etc.

Ultimately, the theoretical framework does in its broad sense apply to the dynamics witnessed in the urban art scene in Lisbon. The broad scope of the present study allowed for the understanding and consolidation of many puzzle pieces and comprehend the bigger picture of municipal governance. However, in hindsight, the broad scope, and its focus on institutionalisation through GAU, inhibits both conclusions on the creative city and city branding as well as on boundary work and the dynamics of the commons. Nonetheless, the compromise found between both allowed for up-to-date knowledge creation regarding the study of boundaries within the street art scene and graffiti communities of Lisbon, as well as hinted at advice for cultural commons governance and policymaking.

The present thesis leaves, however, some open questions, which can/should give rise to future research. Perhaps the most important path yet to be explored is the shift from physical to online communities, and how the dynamics endemic to the online world reflect themselves on boundary and tension creation and management. The rise of online forums dedicated to urban art and social networks, which have pushed commons away from solely physical meeting places and gave way to the creation of borderless virtual communities, represent a large sample whose dynamics are yet to be completely studied. Moreover, other factors such as an artist's location, personal experiences, academic and professional background, peers and political views, are amongst the variables which were not studied in the present research but can influence the construction and definitions of these boundaries.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Interviewees List

Respondent	Category	Location	Name	Background	Website
1	Artist	London	Anonymous	• Very active in 00's Graffiti scene of London; • Revered street artist; • Identifies as a contemporary artist, not as writer;	-
2	Artist	Lisbon	Styler	• Started with graffiti, active during the 00's and 10's in Lisbon and Paris; • Currently identifies as a street artist	https://www.instagram.com/stylerone90/?hl=pt
3	Artist	Porto	Fedor	• Started with graffiti but has a background in arts and illustration • Active in the graffiti scene of 10's; • Currently identifies as a street artist, but also illustrator;	https://www.instagram.com/fedor.rua/?hl=pt
4	Artist	Lisbon	Boa Hora Estúdio (BHE) - Miguel Brum	• Collective with varied backgrounds, some graffiti and others illustration and design; • Some members active in the graffiti scene of 10's; • Miguel Brum has a background in graffiti and street art; • Do not label themselves as one or the other;	https://www.instagram.com/boahora_estudio/?hl=pt https://www.instagram.com/_miguelbrum/?hl=pt
5	Artist	Lisbon	Mariana Santos	• Background in fine arts; • Past works mostly focused on painting; • Currently plans on doing more murals; • Does label herself as one or the other;	https://www.instagram.com/mariana95santos/?hl=pt
6	Artist	Lisbon	Pariz One	• Active in the 00's and 10's graffiti scene in Lisbon; • Identifies as a writer; • Does commissioned works;	www.Pariz-One.com
7	Street Art Cultural Platform	Lisbon	Underdogs Gallery – Juliana Almeida	• Cultural platform (Gallery, Museum, facilitator, Private and public project managers); • One of the biggest players and entrepreneurial initiatives in street art in Lisbon; • Founded in 2010, as Gallery; • Juliana is the Project Manager for Public Art, collaborating with GAU;	https://www.under-dogs.net/
8	Municipal Organisation	Lisbon	GAU – Hugo Cardoso	• Project team from Cultural Heritage sub-division within Municipal Cultural Management department; • Founded in 2008; • Hugo is the coordinator of GAU;	http://gau.cm-lisboa.pt/muro.html

Appendix B - Interview Guides

Artists

Introduction

1. Where do you live and work?
2. What kind of pieces do you make?
3. What piece are you proudest of?

Exploratory questions

1. Do you consider yourself a street artist? (Just artist, writer, bomber, or something else/in between). **Consideras-te um artista de urbano? Artista simplemente, bomber, writter, ou algo entre os dois?**

2. Do you see a change in how street art is seen by the general public now versus 10 years ago? What changed? Did the municipalities play a role in this? Were these changes positive or negative? **Vês uma mudança na forma como o públic vê a arte urbana agora versus há 10 anos atrás? A câmara ajudou?**

3. Have the changes made the scene grow? Or split? (Writers vs "Commissioners") **Estas mudanças fizeram a comunidade crescer? Ou dividir-se entre os que fazem so graffiti pela intervenção no espaço público e os que fazem trabalhos comissão.**

4. What made Lisbon one of the capitals of European street art? (More permissive police, economic crisis, lack of art market, subversive nature of the people). **O que é faz Lisboa atualmente uma das capitais da arte urbana da europa se não do mundo?**

5. How has the municipality tackled this growth? Did they promote the growth or just monetised/capitalised over it? Was it urban management or marketing, or both? **Como é que a câmara tem abordado este crescimento? Tem promovido este crescimento ou monetizou-o? Foi gestão urbanista, ou marketing or ambos?**

6. How are the initiatives developed by the municipality (such as GAU) seen by the community? Do all share the same opinion? Are there artists being left out? Perhaps there's discrimination in what kind of art is being displayed? **Como é que a comunidade de artistas vê estas iniciativas como a GAU? Há artistas que ficam de fora, talvez por escolha própria? Há discriminação?**

7. Does the municipality choose what is considered street art and vandalism? Do you agree with that distinction? **Sentes que a câmara escolhe o que é vandalismo e o que é arte urbana? Concordas com esta distinção?**

8. How are street artists adapting to the new paradigm**? Como é que os artistas se estão a adaptar a estas novas oportunidades?**

9. Do you personally see commissioned works by the municipalities/businesses and other organisations as graffiti? Does it make them less artistically valuable or is it just the inevitable commodification of a growing scene**? Pessoalmente, vês trabalhos através de comissão como graffiti ou classificarias como outro tipo de produto artístico? Fá-los menos valiosos ou é simplesmente a mercantilização inevitável de uma comunidade crescente?**

10. Do you see with good eyes the recognition (some) street artists are receiving from the general public? Do you see it change the way other street artists' works are seen? (even writers and tagger?) **Vês com bons olhos o reconhecimento público que alguns artistas estão a receber? Achas que a comunidade de artistas que fazem intervenções nas ruas estão a ser mais aceites?**

11. What are the most promising trends in street art (both structurally and artistically)? Will these changes influence your art/message? **Quais são as tendências mais importantes atualmente na arte urbana? Isso tem influenciado a tua mensagem ou arte?**

12. How much of the buzz around street art nowadays has to do with the rise of social media and virality? **Quanto do crescimento da arte urbana se deve as redes sociais e a viralidade que isso gera?**

Policymakers and Enablers

Introduction

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and your organization? **Podes apresentar-te e à tua organização brevemente?**
2. What is your role within the street art and graffiti scene? **Qual o vosso papel dentro das comunidades de street art e graffiti?**

Exploratory questions

1. What role does street art play in Lisbon's Urban development? And branding? **Qual é o papel que a arte urbana tem no desenvolvimento urbano de Lisboa? E no Branding da cidade?**

2. What has been the reasoning behind facilitating and contracting street art in Lisbon? Such as commissioned works with gentrification in mind and GAU for example. **Qual foi a ideia por detrás da facilitação e contratação da street art ? em Lisboa? Como projetos que visam gentrificação e a criação da GAU por exemplo?**

3. What made Lisbon one of Europe's capitals of street art? (More permissive police, economic crisis, lack of art market, subversive nature of the people)
   O que faz lisboa uma das capitais da europa quando falamos de arte urbana? (artistas, polícia, falta de mercado para artistas, incentivos por parte das câmaras e governo)

4. Where and how does the municipality draw the line between tags and old school graffiti and street art? **Como é feita a seleção das peças que são autorizadas a ser pintadas?**

5. How do you see the future of Lisbon's street art? **Como vai ser o futuro da arte urbana em Lisboa?**

6. How are street artists adapting to the new paradigm? **Como é que os artistas se estão a adaptar a este novo paradigma?**

7. Can you conceive a future where Lisbon decriminalises graffiti and other forms of street art? **Algum dia veremos a câmara legalizar o graffiti por exemplo?**

Entrepreneurs

Introduction

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and your organization? **Podes apresentar-te e à tua organização brevemente?**
2. What is your role within the street art and graffiti scene? **Qual o vosso papel dentro das comunidades de street art e graffiti?**

Exploratory questions

1. Do you see a change in how street art is seen by the general public now versus 10 years ago? What changed? Did the municipalities play a role in this? Were these changes positive or negative? **Vês uma mudança na forma como o públic vê a arte urbana agora versus há 10 anos atrás? A câmara ajudou? Foram mudanças positivas ou negativas?**
2. Did the changes in perception of street art influenced your business? **Estas mudanças na perceção do público influenciaram o vosso negócio?**
3. Is street art seen as a commodity? **A street art está mercantilizada?**
4. Is the street art scene healthy? What about graffiti**? A comunidade de street art está saudável? E do graffiti?**
5. How are street artists adapting to the new paradigm? **Como é que os artistas se estão a adaptar a este novo paradigma?**
6. Do you see a future in entrepreneurship linked to street art? **Vês um futuro para o empreendedorismo ligado ao street art?**