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sur le thème

Electronic Dance Music scenes in the United Kingdom from the 80s to nowadays: a subculture?

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“The subcultural use of music is perhaps music consumption at its most active. The consumption of music is one of the means through which a subculture forges its identity and culturally reproduces itself by marking its distinction and difference from other members of society.“[1]

[1] Storey’s (2003) definition of subculture and music in Wagner, Andrew Matthew, "Gettin' Weird Together: The Performance Of Identity And Community Through Cultural Artifacts Of Electronic Dance Music Culture" (2014). Theses and Dissertations. Paper 131, p.33

Abbreviations:

I will often use the terms EDM and DIY in this piece of work. EDM stands for Electronic Dance Music, a genre of electronic music which is the object of study in this mémoire. DIY stands for Do It Yourself, which means the creation of one's thing without buying a piece of equipment that is already built or made.

I will refer to the EDM scene as the attendants to EDM events such as festivals or raves. Scene also refers to the different places where EDM music is played at.

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Research:

Introduction:

"The spirit of house music, electronic music, in the beginning was to break the rules, to do things in many different ways."[2] Daft Punk member Thomas Bangatler's words resonate in today's society. Even though this artist is French, he has been an active member of the Electronic Dance Music (EDM, a music genre which I will more clearly define in the first part of this mémoire) scene for the past three decades, creating major hits when it comes to EDM.

In a time when music is everywhere, when one can enjoy it on any electronic medium, we have to take a look at this very genre to fully understand its impact on the current society.

Electronic music has been part of the overall society for decades now, and if we consider music as a broader entity, it has settled in people's everyday life for centuries. Although Electronic Dance Music is a quite recent thing, music has been there for quite a long time, and even if it is often said to unite people, it was also a means to divide society into different social classes. Indeed, two centuries ago, and even before, with composers such as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig Van Beethoven, Frédéric Chopin or Claude Debussy, music was mainly made to please the wealthiest part of society. Kings and Queens could enjoy music with their fellow aristocrats, and music was a noble thing to which the masses did not have access. But with the redefinition of power at the very beginning of the 18th century in Great Britain thanks to the creation of the Parliament of Great Britain in 1707 (the association of the English and Scottish Parliaments), when societies turned into so-called democracies, the access to common goods became easier. Music later became a thing the masses could enjoy, for in the 18th century, English middle-class people could go to the theater, opera, and thus attend concerts. Music also began to be played in the streets and in common places. Music soon became a common good that almost everyone could enjoy, and more than just an art, it also became a means to gain access to a proper community.

As such, music could be considered a tool to the creation of a greater community. However, this idea comes from a narrower notion of identity and culture. Britain has a strong cultural identity, that one can find in many countries that were part of the British Empire. And music is no exception to the rule. Britain got influenced by many countries

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[2] Thomas Bangalter Quotes, BrainyQuote.com. BrainyMedia Inc, 2018. https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/thomas_bangalter_711540

when it comes to music, but has also influenced many of them. For example, reggae which originates from Jamaica was a hit in the UK, although it was not a music genre originated from Britain. Many music genres originated from the UK though, and one of the most relevant would probably be punk music. This is a perfect instance of the following statement: with music come culture and identity. Some of the British embraced the punk way of life, although it was much different from the one dictated by the UK Government, for some of its core values were to reject the establishment, that is to say the Government's rules, for example. Identity and culture are two terms that I will discuss later on in the first part of this work.

Electronic Dance Music, which I will also define and discuss in my first part of analysis, took the same path as punk music, as it was its heir in some way. Punk music shaped the Electronic Dance Music scene, as it borrowed one of the major elements of this musical philosophy, especially the Do It Yourself values. As David Hyde (member of the music band Underworld) said, "Rave was more punk than punk. Ten thousand people in a warehouse, making records in your bedroom, pirate radio… You could have a career entirely outside the conventional music business."[3] The punk actors and fans sought freedom in many ways, such as the freedom of creation, but also political and social freedom. It claimed another way of life, and EDM can be considered the heir of this music genre, for this very genre also adopted and still adopts the Do It Yourself ethics and values. As such, punk music created a subculture — I will define it later on in the first part of this study — for it advocated values that were against the hegemony of the Government. The group that can embody the quintessence of the punk genre is certainly The Sex Pistols, and their song called *God Save the Queen*, which was really controversial, for it was insulting to the Queen, the Head of State, as well as provocative in a time when the working-class youth had no future for it denounced the situation in the UK in a politically incorrect way. Thus, The Sex Pistols were advocating a better future without the British Government and all the entities attached to it; they were advocating a new idea of freedom, of a new culture. And this is what made of punk music and its fans a subculture, for they lived in an established culture and world they knew but wanted to flee from, thanks to the Do It Yourself characteristics they were to embrace. That was quite the same with the Electronic Dance Music scene in the 80s, as it was what came after the punk movement. Members of the Electronic Dance Music scene took up the hope for another way of life, and this is what I will discuss in this very piece of work.

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[3] LYNCH, Will, Karl Hyde's quote in the documentary "*How punk shaped electronic music?*", *Resident Advisor* https://www.residentadvisor.net/features/3192

What will thus be analyzed is the question of the Electronic Dance Music genre and scenes, focusing on the UK from the ‘80s to nowadays, by analyzing them as a subculture.

The first part of my analysis will discuss the very idea of culture as opposed to the idea of subculture. I will first define the concept of culture, for it will be considered as the basis of the subculture’s concept. Thus, it is really important to clearly define this concept. Then of course, I will define the concept of subculture, as this is the object of this mémoire. Then, I will discuss the idea of deviants or non-conformists to a pre-established culture with the concept of youth music culture in a time of political establishment. I will finally define the concept of electronic music in relation to the Electronic Dance Music genre.

The second part of this study will be focused on the concepts of identity and freedom. First of all, I will analyze the concept of dress-code and analyze the dress-code of the Electronic Dance Music scene. Then, I will analyze the concept of mask and the action of hiding one’s face behind a mask (mask, scarf, hoodie, etc.) as a means to escape reality or an act of rebellion. Thirdly, I will study the concept of mask among the DJs (Disc Jockeys) as a tool to get recognition and fame, which I will oppose to the idea of the creation of a *persona*: is the action of wearing a mask as a DJ a quest for glory or a quest for anonymity?

Finally, I will deal with the Do It Yourself values and ethics and the underground scene in my third part of analysis. I will first address the raves and free parties as illegal gatherings issuing a lack of freedom. Then, I will discuss the appropriation of venues and space by analyzing the flee from city clubs to the outside space. Alongside this point, I will also discuss the creation of sound systems as a core Do It Yourself value of the raves and free parties promoters. I will also discuss the act of creating music in one’s very bedroom to stages or the transition from intimacy to the action of sharing. And I will finally deal with pirate radios as the illegal democratization of the Electronic Dance Music.

A didactics section will then follow, in which I will discuss how to teach this topic to teenagers in a pedagogical way: I will discuss both the theoretical and practical aspects of the creation of a lesson plan, by analyzing the way I built and taught the lesson plan I created in relation to my mémoire.

I- A general definition of the concept of subculture in the UK culture.

In this first part of my mémoire, I will define the different concepts prior to analyzing the Electronic Dance Music genre, scene and actors as a subculture.

I-1 Defining the concepts of culture and subculture.

When people refer to the word “culture“ today, they may think about the broader concept of knowledge. However, the concept of “culture“ is not that easy to define, and is much more subtle than the idea of knowledge. To be able to analyze the EDM scene as a subculture, I therefore have to define the very concept of “culture“, which is where “subculture“ originates from.

After having searched for the definition of the word “culture“ in the Cambridge Dictionary, here is the first definition I can give: “[culture is] the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.“[4] However, this is a too general definition of the concept of culture. Indeed, if we take a closer look at the definition under study, we have to pay attention to the words “a particular group of people at a particular time.“[5] This means that there is actually much more than one general culture, since there are many groups of people, or what we can call communities, in the UK. Thus, the number of cultures is growing everyday. But what is interesting here is the fact that culture is mainly defined as a “way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs.“[6] Culture is then understood as an addition of different habits that people share. A country can then have its own culture, and the inhabitants of this country can also have their own culture, also called a subculture, which I will explain later on in this first part.

In her compilation, Spencer-Oatey (2012) quotes the British anthropologist Edward Tylor (1870) and his definition of culture as a “[…] complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”[7] Here, Tyler’s words, as quoted by Spencer-Oatey, do depict culture as a tool one uses to become a member of the broader society. In fact,

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[4] *Cambridge Dictionary.*

[5] *Supra*, p. 4.

[6] *Supra*, p. 4.

[7] SPENCER-OATEY, Helen, (2012) “What is culture? A compilation of quotations“, p. 1.

culture is here pictured as what makes one a member of the society, regardless of which society. It is something one “acquire[s]“[8] throughout his / her life within the society.

She also quotes Geert Hofstede (1994) who said that “[culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.“[9] This quote is really relevant regarding the question under study in this mémoire, since I will discuss the EDM scene as a subculture. And in this quote, we are given to understand the separation process of a given culture (or group) from the dominant culture: a community or a “group […] of people“[10] is differentiated from another, and thus, we can see this community as a deviant one regarding other groups of people that we can consider as being members of the dominant community existing within the broader culture of the country they are evolving in. I will now discuss the concept of subculture.

In his thesis, Andrew Matthew Wagner depicts the concept of subculture by quoting Blackman who said that “The concept of subculture at its base is concerned with agency and action belonging to a subset or social group that is distinct but related to the dominant culture.”[11] He then carries on by reformulating what Blackman wrote and says “This is to say, a subculture is a group held together by ideological principles similar to one another, yet contradictory to the dominant ideology.“[12]

The concept of subculture can be then defined as the grouping of individuals uniting around shared principles, which are deviated from the established ones (dictated by the larger society and community they live in). We see that one can not create its own culture, which would be referred to as a subculture: a subculture is based upon “ideological principles“[13] shared by several members, this is not an individual’s power to create his / her own subculture, for it could not be shared and embraced by other members of the broader community. A subculture can be created on the basis of a shared thought, a shared feeling, or even a shared necessity for something new, or at least something different from what people live in their everyday life. Wagner adds: “This is to say that

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[8] *Ibid*. p. 2

[9] *Ibid*. p. 2

[10] *Ibid*. p.2

[11] WAGNER, Andrew Matthew, "Gettin' Weird Together: The Performance Of Identity And Community Through Cultural Artifacts Of Electronic Dance Music Culture" (2014), Blackman’s definition of the concept of subculture, p. 32.

[12] *Ibid*. p. 32

[13] *Ibid.* p. 32

subcultures, and the cultural practices associated with them, are the product of the collaborated efforts of like-minded individuals to combat class-struggles that happen within society."[14]

These are the ideas that I will use throughout this mémoire to discuss the EDM scene and its participants as a subculture: as expressed in this very subpart about the concept of subculture, I will analyse the EDM scene as a means for British people to escape their everyday life by embracing new codes, new norms, both socially and musically speaking. Bearing this in mind, I must say that EDM is quite a new scene, since it appeared in the 80s in Europe, after the appearance of punk music. Thus, discussions about the EDM scene are often referred to as "youth music culture"[15], a concept that I will discuss in the following subpart. But this idea of "youth music culture" clearly shows that this new wave of music created a new culture or subculture when it first appeared and throughout the years. It is not mentioned as part of the established culture, but discussed as a subpart of it, otherwise there would be no need to be so specific about it, especially regarding the name it was given.

I will discuss this point more precisely in the following subpart.

I-2 Youth music culture, or the deviant culture fleeing the establishment.

Youth music culture represents the culture embraced by young people, but not only. In the context of the UK, this culture of music being embraced by the youth can be clearly explained within the sphere of clubs and raves. The new scene (EDM) led to the creation of many clubs, some of which were legal, while some others were not. But in both cases, people still saw a place to party, and it was soon embraced by young citizens. EDM and all its subgenres are often depicted as being liked by young people, and this is often a label that is put on the EDM scene: many young persons listen to EDM, for this is the new trend. And this can be explained thanks to one simple point: since EDM made its appearance in the music world not so long ago, it has reached the youth more easily than the elderly, for the latter often keep on listening to what they used to listen before, regardless the new music genres. Wagner stated that "[r]esearch carried out by British subcultural theorists

[14] *Ibid*., p. 33

[15] *Infra*, p. 6

has framed the cultural practices of youth music cultures as being based around the inequalities faced by the youth, working class in their transition into adulthood."[16]

Indeed, when EDM first hit the UK, many people (including the British youth) were unemployed.[17] Waves of protests started to appear throughout the UK, mainly organized by people belonging to the working class. Clubbing soon turned out to be the means to put aside the harsh life they were leading to many young people in Britain, for a few hours at least. Clubbing and partying then became part of the UK way of life in the 80s, and its importance can still be noticed nowadays.[18]

Of course, club owners and party promoters were older than the public they usually greeted in their clubs. But the British youth was willing to try out something new, something the elderly never knew before them. With the advent of acid house parties, youngsters began to do drugs but social and legal policies did not allow the use of it, whether one was clubbing or not. However, because of the unemployment rate in the UK, people kept on claiming more rights, and of course, jobs and proper housing. But as they started realising the situation would not change soon, many of them began to take part in illegal gatherings, both musically and politically leaning.

By doing so, EDM music lovers and the British youth became the enemies of the political establishment that was trying to put an end to illegal parties and raves. Music was a way to say out loud what one could not say on his / her own. It was a way to spread a message to the masses, and to convince people to react to a given situation. As EDM gained more and more recognition within the youth community, it started to settle itself in clubs which were then attracting communities belonging to different social backgrounds.

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[16] *Ibid.,* p. 33.

[17] ESPIET-KILTY, Rapahaëlle, "The Legacy of Thatcherism in Question : an Introduction", *Observatoire de la société britannique*, p. 5: "In addition, public sector workers were accused of lacking in efficiency and of pursing their own personal interest at the expense of customers, *i.e.* the taxpayers whom they served. Ever-growing, the state also encroached upon people's lives and welfare policies were blamed for rendering recipients helpless and dependent on assistance. Public sector reforms were two-fold. The part of the public sector that the Thatcher governments could not do without would have to change its structure and culture, to become better value-for-money or, cost effective, and more competitive. The rest would be dismantled or privatised. Three sectors that were to be reformed with the aim of creating a public sector market and to introduce a private-sector management ethos, were the National Health Service (NHS), the civil service and education."

[18] KUBĒNA, Roman, *Rave Scene As a Specific Part of Youth Culture in Britain*, Thesis, Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies, pp. 8-9: "In the working class milieu, characteristic features of youth culture include flamboyance and even defiance, which serve as compensatory forces for their lack of power and authority. Being a part of youth culture gives young people a sense of identity and power to deal with everyday problems. Working-class youth culture fits John Fiske´s description of "jouissance," which "is theorized as a moment of pleasure when the body breaks free from social and cultural control" [...] (Fiske 94). This culture is also characterized by the resistance to the dominant powers of the system."

Since the youth saw no future in their country, they chose to protest both physically with protests and marches, such as with the miners' strike (1984-85), as well as with music and raves. They used this new music genre to escape the society they were living in and the social situation they were facing.

I will discuss the concept of electronic music in relation to the EDM genre in the following subpart.

I-3 Definitions of "electronic music" and "Electronic Dance Music" (also referred to as EDM).

Electronic music is defined as follows by Lejaren Hiller: "any music involving electronic processing, such as recording and editing on tape, and whose reproduction involves the use of loudspeakers."[19] This does not refer to the genre called EDM (Electronic Dance Music, which I will define later on in this subpart) but rather to the means to create music. Indeed, music can now be created thanks to many tools, and not only by using classical instruments such as a guitar, a piano or a violin for example.

Nowadays, music is often created thanks to recorded sounds, noises, or even instruments. The recording process is what defines electronic music as such (even if it is not the only element to this), for before nothing had to be or even could be recorded; it had to be played live. But now, musicians can record instruments and almost anything they want to use in their creations, which widens a musician's possibilities regarding the music he / she makes, for anything useful can be stored and re-used whenever needed.

Music genres that are labelled as electronic music are often "played back through loudspeakers either alone or in combination with ordinary musical instruments."[20] Thanks to technological progress, classical instruments began to be replaced with electronic instruments such as synthesizers and the recording process of a music piece began to change thanks to tape recordings:

> "This history seems split into three main periods: an early (by now classical) period lasting from the commercial introduction of the tape recorder immediately following World War II until about 1960; a second period that featured the introduction of electronic music synthesizers and the acceptance of the electronic medium as a legitimate compositional activity; and the third period, in which

[19] HILLER, Lejaren, *Electronic music*, https://www.britannica.com/art/electronic-music

[20] *Ibid.*

computer technology is rapidly becoming both the dominant resource and the dominant concern."[21]

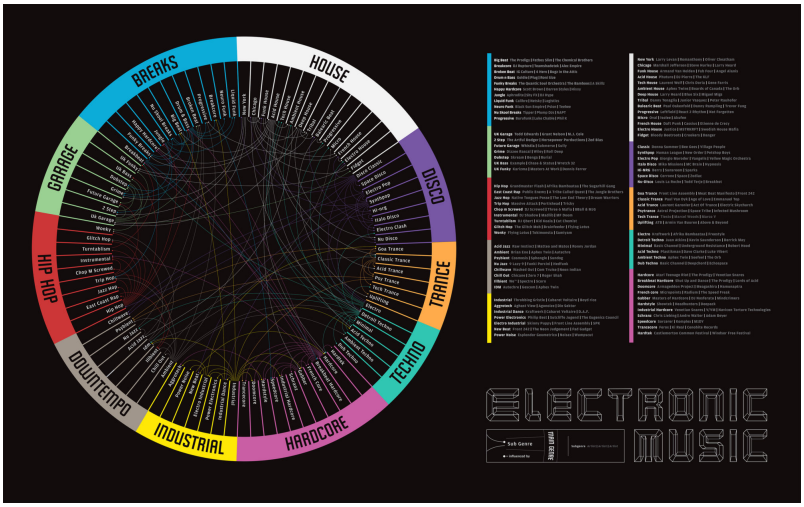
We see that the musical landscape has evolved throughout the centuries, and even in the last decades. The current period is then a period in which electronic music is part of the music industry, for many artists use electronic instruments.

"With the invention of computers, electronic music took on the form of more computer-based production and synthesis in the 60s and 70s. Synths paved the way for the early movements of electronic music, allowing artists to connect synthesizers to traditional instruments, making an entirely electronic production. As synth pop and disco grew during that time, artists were seeking a way to branch out and create a unique sound. Groups like Pink Floyd and the Beatles started incorporating Moog synthesizers to have more experimental sounds."[22]

EDM is defined as follows by Michaelangelo Matos:

"Electronic dance music, also known as EDM, umbrella term for a panoply of musical styles that emerged in the mid-1980s. Rather than designating a single genre, electronic dance music (EDM) encompasses styles ranging from beatless ambient music to 200-beats-per-minute hardcore, with house music, techno, drum and bass, dubstep, and trance among the most-notable examples."[23]

Fig. 1[24]



[21] *Ibid*.

[22] HOLMBERG, Emma, *The History of Electronic Music and How Classics Still Define Modern EDM*, http://dancemusicnw.com/history-electronic-music-classics-define-modern-edm/2/

[23] MATOS, Michaelangelo, *Electronic dance music*, https://www.britannica.com/art/electronic-dance-music

[24] Figure 1, EDM subgenres.

EDM is the music genre under study in this mémoire. I will use it as an object of study by referring to the EDM scene, that is to say the genre in itself in relation to the people who listen to it and places where this genre is played. However, I will not discuss the different sub-genres contained in the EDM broader genre, for there are too many of them for me to discuss one by one. I will thus focus on the broader genre without making references to precise sub-genres to the exception of acid house which somehow paved the way for the EDM genre's settlement in Britain's culture. Having defined the different concepts under study in this piece of work, I will now discuss the question of identity in relation to the concept of subculture within the EDM scene in the UK.

II- Looking for identity: a way for people to meet their true selves or to lose themselves in the immensity of identities: *personas* and anonymity.

Identity is quite an important word when it comes to community and culture. Indeed, one can belong to a community which has a common identity, claiming for all its members to follow and respect its rules, that is to say obeying to a broader identity. However, the latter can also refer to the idea of uniqueness of a person. In the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, the term "identity" is defined as follows: "the distinguishing character or personality of an individual", "the relation established by psychological identification".[25] We see here that the main idea behind the concept of identity is the unique aspect of a person, both in their being and their thinking. In short, identity is what makes one as he or she is, from the way he or she dresses to the way he or she thinks, from what he or she believes to what he or she knows. However, an identity can also be shared by many members of a given society, making of one's uniqueness a tool to create a collective identity.

II-1 Wearing a mask: a means to escape reality or an act of rebellion?

Now considering the wearing of a mask, one major question is to be asked: at the beginning of the 90s, when Conservative policies were fighting against the Electronic Dance Music and what it advocated (freedom to the people, dance and pleasure thanks to illicit products, etc.), was the wearing of a mask a way for the actors of this scene to escape from the harsh reality of the UK in the 80s or was it a simple act of rebellion? Was it a simple way for people to change their identity for a moment, or a proper act of protest against the political establishment?

I will start this subpart by quoting Simon Frith, who quoted Jonathan Rée, a British writer, historian and philosopher:

> '"If narrative is the basis of music pleasure, to put this another way, it is also central to our sense of identity. Identity, that is to say, comes from the outside not the inside; it is something we put or try on, not something we reveal or discover. As Jonathan Ree puts it, "The problem of personal identity, one may say, arises from play-acting and the adoption of artificial voices; the origins of distinct personalities, in acts of personation and impersonation."'[26]

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[25] *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

[26] FRITH, Simon, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, p.122.

In this very quotation, we can see that Frith challenges the concept of identity as a personal tool to gain recognition in a broader society, especially when he says that it is “something we put or try on“. In this sense, we can understand identity as a sort of a play, in which one is an actor, a comedian who plays a role defined by the mask he or she wears. This mask is thus interchangeable, in a way that will allow the one who wears it to become someone else anytime he or she wants, and then to be able to come back to the social reality and community he or she belongs to. With this idea in mind, the wearing of a mask is thus closely linked to the concept of identity: one’s identity depends on what makes him or her who he or she is and in this sense, the mask is a way for one to play the role of who he / she wants to be at a given time, someone they are not in their everyday life. But for a moment, and thanks to this mask, one’s identity can be changed for an indefinite moment in time, hence the idea of a life made of role-plays. Identity is defined as what one shows outside, and thus, masks, even if invisible, can be understood as a means to reach identity. In this very sense, wearing a mask can be seen as a way to reach freedom: people can change their identity whenever they want, without any efforts, and then become completely different persons at any time. *“*A literal use of a mask, on the other hand, may be seen as adjusting these variations in role- taking through a more deliberate - or at least far more *conscious* - act that can be instead described as ‘role-playing’.“[27] This statement recognizes the wearing of a mask as a tool for role-playing as I said previously, and it narrows the scope of my subject to the extent that it more particularly deals with the wearing of masks in the Electronic Dance Music community. Again, this perfectly depicts the use of masks, even though virtual, conceptualized, invisible, as a way for one to get access to one's own reality. It allows people to flee from the set communities and realities imposed by the social identities people have to display everyday. And Cookney states that “the literal mask provides an escape from the confines of the social mask.“[28]

Furthermore, he refers to Oscar Wilde when he quotes “man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth.“[29] This quote will guide my analysis on the question of identity to another point: the act of rebellion.

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[27] COOKNEY, Daniel, *Masked: Depictions of anonymity in Electronic Dance Music*, p. 135.

[28] COOKNEY, *Masked: Depictions of anonymity in Electronic Dance Music,* p. 135: “Yet these more explicit enactments may similarly be associated with the presentation of an idealized version within the somewhat less playful relinquishing of an established self: where the literal mask provides an escape from the confines of the social mask.“

[29] COOKNEY, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

As Wilde said, the wearing of a mask is a means to create your own reality, your own truth. Thus, it can also be a way for one to defy laws, morality and social establishment. At a time when Margaret Thatcher was in charge of the British Government (1979-1990), freedom began to be a rare thing. Because of unemployment (especially in Northern England) and ever-increasing taxes (such as the poll tax regarding housing taxes which would become the Council Tax in 1993), people began to be outraged. Miners strike started in the mid '80s, and it was one of the major strikes England has known so far. Through protest, miners formed a broader entity that was stamped as rioters. Thus, they put their rioter masks on, and a massive police assault started. Many people in Yorkshire at this time would probably not have taken part in the protests against the closure of mines, but with the social cohesion and the miners community, they dared to go upfront and face the police forces. We can say that a general abstract mask was adopted by the people in Yorkshire in the mid '80s, for it created a larger community allowing them to fight for their rights and for better living conditions. In a way, a common identity was given to the Yorkshire inhabitants, and they put a common mask on their faces. In that sense, people having participated in the protests were less visible, noticeable by the police forces and thus the Government, thanks to their belonging to a broader community. Plurality soon became individuality, thanks to these people standing as one against the Government and Margaret Thatcher's policies.

Today, we can also find protesters, even in the Electronic Dance Music scene. Indeed, in a Vice documentary on raves' revival in Britain[30], we are given the possibility to see several persons wearing a mask, for quite straightforward reasons. One young rave organizer and promoter, who goes by the name of Jimmy Wild, directly says to Clive Martin, the interviewer, that "At the end of the day, there are a lot of things that I have done in this scene, and a lot of things that my group has done in this scene, that I would prefer not to put a face to the picture."[31] He carries on by saying "What I do, I do it for statement. And I do it just to literally say to the police 'Try and govern this'."[32] This is a quite straightforward way to show his denial of the police forces' power on him and the broader movement of raves and free parties. His wearing of a mask shows that stopping them from doing what he and his crew do will be a hard thing to accomplish, for without a face, this man is a nobody only going by a nickname. Scumtek Collective members, rave organisers

[30] *VICE*, "Britain's illegal rave renaissance, Locked Off".

[31] *Ibid*. (9'30-9'38)

[32] *Ibid*. (9'40-9'45)

in the UK, also stand up against the Government and the political and social establishment. In this documentary, the members of this collective appear to be wearing masks (more precisely scarfs) while being interviewed. They mention the fact that one of their events (Scumoween, 2015)[33] led to riots and fights between party-goers and police forces. Thus, the fact that they are wearing a mask can quickly be seen as a manner for them to hide themselves from the media, the Government and the laws that are in effect in the country. In this sense, these members of the community are not only claiming a certain idea of freedom, but also an idea of rebellion against the overall control of the Government, and it thus can be seen as an act of rebellion against the society and the rules they have to abide. This global idea of rebellion, or defiance, can apparently be found amongst promoters and activists of the rave and free party movement. However, it may also be conveyed by casual members, who are not promoting this on an everyday basis, but who find themselves dragged into riots and fights with the police forces because of the general movement, the general atmosphere.

The general aim of the mask, either abstract or physical, as discussed in this subpart, is for the people to flee from the reality they live in, in order to reach their own reality. The uniqueness of a person can be found when people are given a mask to wear, a mask that will remove the mask imposed on them by the broader society they lives in. There are rules one has to abide, to follow, and thanks to this mask, people can become the person they want with much less fear to be caught by the Government if they do not behave as they are told. To that extent, the mask can be given two distinct reasons to be adopted by someone: people may want to escape the reality they are imposed to live in, with the rules and the norms of a given society and community, and in this sense these persons can meet their true selves by the creation of an alter-ego. But if a person does so, then the mask can also be regarded as an object of defiance, as people will not be who they are in their everyday life; then, people can possibly see many opportunities to do things they would never do in normal times. The mask, as discussed here, can quite easily be linked to the story of the *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, by Robert Louis Stevenson, for the everyday man (Dr Jekyll) abides by the rules of the society, whereas Mr Hyde, who actually is the same man, murders people and frightens others, all because of Mr Edward Jekyll double personality's issue. When Jekyll is actually acting as Hyde, we can assume he is wearing his devilish mask, whereas during the day he wears his social mask, the one making him the doctor he is. This is quite the same with the theme of

[33] *Ibid*. (9'50-10'13)

identity in the question under study: people can wear a social mask all day long, and then suddenly, their taste for freedom awakes and leads these persons to put on the mask of who they want to be.

> "As Pollock explains: "the mask is normally considered a technique for transforming identity, either through the modification of the representation of identity, or through temporary – and representational – extinction of identity."[34]

I will now more specifically discuss the wearing of a mask regarding the artists of the EDM scene.

II-2 Wearing a mask: DJs as recognized *personas*

To keep on with this idea of identity, I will quote Cookney again: "And as the primary indicator of the guise, the mask — as both signifier and novelty — becomes more prominent than the music."[35] In this very quotation, Cookney brilliantly sheds the light on one of the major effects of the wearing of a mask by an artist. Indeed, he challenges the idea that if artists wear a mask on stage, then their identity is no longer defined by their music, but rather by the character they impersonates. This is this issue that I want to challenge here. I discussed the wearing of a mask's impact from a sociological point of view, but I now need to discuss it from an artistic point of view, in order to discuss the full potential of the mask when used by an artist: "By putting on a mask, you are 'putting on' an audience."[36]

Nowadays, a lot of artists wear a mask when they are playing on stage, both live and as DJs. Yet this trend is quite recent, for it appeared back in the '90s with Orbital and their "torch glasses".[37] Soon, the trend was launched: "visual gimmick came courtesy of another UK duo, Altern-8—namely, they'd take the stages of early-90s raves wearing biohazard suits and yellow gas masks."[38] When I searched for "Altern-8" on the Internet, here is what I found:

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[34] COOKNEY, *op. cit.,* p.162.

[35] *Ibid.*, p.136.

[36] *Ibid.*, p.162.

[37] MATOS, Michaelangelo, *VICE*, "A Brief History of Masked DJs—From Orbital to Marshmello".

[38] MATOS, *VICE*, "A Brief History of Masked DJs—From Orbital to Marshmello", art. cit.

Fig. 2: Altern-8[39]



In this picture, we can clearly see two men wearing face masks covering half of their faces, alongside what is said to be “biohazard suits“[40]. This trend went on and on, and artists from the Electronic Dance Music scene began to create aliases more and more often by creating face masks that covered only a bit of their faces but also the whole of it for some of them. Even though they are not British, if we discuss the wearing of a mask one will probably think about the emblematic French duo of EDM producers Daft Punk. Known all over the world, Daft Punk is a well-known duo because of their music of course, but also because, or thanks to, their helmets, that are their trademark.

Even nowadays, DJs and artists from the EDM scene keep on wearing masks or helmets in order to cover their faces, and at the beginning, some of them such as Orbital’s members claimed that it was quite useful because of the smoke in the clubs, because of the blinding lights. However, even if this was true at some point, the wearing of a mask raises another question: is it a way for an artist to stand out from the plurality of music-makers and producers?

Many artists are getting their names heard because, or rather thanks to, the *persona* they incarnate by using a mask. Someone who does not know any track made by Daft Punk has probably seen their masks at least once, and they may not be able to tell whether their tracks were made by them or not. Fortunately, once they are told some tracks were made by them, they will “put a face to the [track].“[41] This very example could probably work with more recent artists, such as Marshmello or Deadmau5. And Marshmello is probably one of the most recognizable artists in the current EDM scene, as his mask represents a big marshmallow. This can not be a coincidence: this artist is now one of the most known of the current EDM scene, and there is one main reason to his fame: people speculate on his identity, but nobody really knows who is the man behind the mask. And from this lack of knowledge rises the interest of people, the fans and the media. A mask can thus lead to fame and glory, under the condition it is appropriately used: some

[39] Figure 2, Altern-8.

[40] MATOS, *VICE*, “A Brief History of Masked DJs—From Orbital to Marshmello“*,* art. cit.

[41] *VICE*, “Britain’s Illegal Rave Renaissance, Locked Off“, art. cit.

of these artists, such as Marshmello, The Bloody Beetroots, as well as the well-known British dubstep producer Funtcase have reached such a level of fame through anonymity. Indeed, and especially when discussing the case of The Bloody Beetroots, music producers and DJs, there are very few information on who they are in their private life, and they are mainly recognized thanks to their masks. Fame is thus attainable through the visual impersonation of an invented character, an invented *persona* that one can not be in his / her everyday life. The creation of an alter-ego is thus a profitable process to artists, for this can be their trademark and it allowed some of them to become famous and to stand out from the plurality of DJs and composers. The mask and its visual aspect are fascinating communication tools to an artist, for this is what people will picture when they read or hear his / her name, and from this comes a fascination for the *persona*, the character, the fictional identity of the artist itself, in addition to the music (if ever there still is a fascination for the music in itself): "[the mask] is there to "represent the transformed person" (Pollock, 1995, p.584), but also, and perhaps more importantly, to demark a separate and specific character."[42]



Fig.3[43]



Fig.4: [44]



Fig.5[45]

Although the mask can be seen as a useful tool in one's quest for glory, fame and recognition, it can also be seen as a tool for anonymity, invisibility and namelessness.

II-3 Wearing a mask, pseudonyms and identity: DJs as unknown persons, or the creation of a whole *persona*; artists willing to be anonymous.

[42] COOKNEY, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[43] Figure 3, SBCR.

[44] Figure 4, Deadmau5.

[45] Figure 5, Funtcase.

In the current society, and because of Internet and the media, information is to be widespread on the Internet, and today Mr or Mrs nobody can suddenly be put at the forefront of the public attention. This being said, how can today's artists retain a tiny bit of privacy, without their whole life being exposed in the media? Cookney quotes the "label owner Rob Hall [who] also notes what he sees as the futility of such an approach [the wearing of a mask] given how information regarding identities becomes freely available on the World Wide Web."[46]

However, it seems that the wearing of a mask is not only trendy, but also useful when it comes to privacy. Indeed, today's EDM artists are well-known, mainly by the youth communities. However, if some of them do not refuse to give interviews, and do talk about their private life or even take photographs without their mask on, some others are still attached to their privacy. And to keep their life private, some artists choose to become nameless, almost invisible in the media, by refusing to use a "fixed identity"[47].

Artists in the EDM scene have sometimes changed their masks, to incarnate another *persona*, another character that was yet unknown to the public. As artists created side projects, their artist's names, also called pseudonyms, changed alongside their new artistic projects. As Cookney puts it:

> "There is, for example, the representation of a conscious delineation of identity as removed from one that has already been established. In cases where the pseudonym is signifier, this has required the adoption of a guise and an associated moniker that is distinctly removed from what may be described as the composer's so-called true identity (as in an official or 'core' identity that bears their full name). Yet this process may also be undertaken to develop an identity that has been designed as being different to at least one other recognised unofficial guise that has been solely constructed by the composer for the issuing of his or her music."[48]

Again, Cookney addresses the theme of identity as an issue in the EDM scene. As discussed by him, pseudonyms were and still are a way for artists to create a whole new *persona*, that is much different from the person he/she really is. As artists, they incarnate a character, they are role-players, and this is often made possible thanks to the use of a pseudonym and sometimes a mask as well.

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[46] COOKNEY, *op. cit.,* p.136.

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

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

This again shows how impactful the notion of identity can be: even if some artists of the EDM scene do use their real name, the majority do not do so, for the reason that some of them still stand against the fame that media, labels and brands value. EDM scenes were purposely underground at first, for artists and promoters tried to avoid clubs, labels and other communication tools to remain discreet, and more importantly, free.

Both the wearing of a mask and the use of a pseudonym can thus be seen as a will to remain free: the fact that people do not know who you are can lead to fame of course, for it arouses interest over the artist's *persona* and their true identity, can also allow him / her to remain free from harassment by the media or the fans. Moreover, changing one's pseudonym is also a good way for artists to break away from their previous projects. This way, the artist can start afresh with a completely new project, under a new name and with a new mask on. As opposed to the star system that was imposed by labels and media during the rise of pop and rock music in the UK, the EDM scene was intended to be universally accessible and was especially wary of the authority and the establishment. In this sense, artists used different names to remain anonymous in some ways: the focus was less on the artist himself rather than on the music in itself. Indeed, many artists produced dozens of tracks without ever getting noticed and signed on a label, and this was what some of these artists were seeking: a complete freedom of production, of time. And all of this was often achieved thanks to pseudonyms that artists used to reach anonymity:

> "Rietveld and Melechi's discussion of this type of disappearance is notably applicable to a broad range of behaviours within early EDM scenes, yet the continued and prolific nature of the pseudonym suggests a continued refusal of fixed identities despite on-going media and commercial pressures for EDM – while expanded as a potentially profitable area within the music industry – to incorporate typical star system indexes."[49]

The main goal (fame and glory) of some is not shared by all of the EDM scene members, according to Cookney. The refusal of some for identification and glorification in favour of anonymity is a distinctive feature of this culture, which was to be found in the punk-rock culture as well. Disappearing in the plurality of artists then was a strategy for EDM music-makers to remain free and to keep this scene underground, hidden from a broader audience. Cookney carries on, saying that "the pseudonym then may work

[49] *Ibid.*, p.139.

alongside Hesmondhalgh's observance of EDM's obscured authorship as "a key ideological goal"."[50]

However, many media still tried to deal with this freshly discovered scene in the UK, its impact upon the society as it was and the new generation of youngsters that showed a certain interest to this genre. Even if masks and pseudonyms were and still are used by artists of this scene to disappear from reality, as well as from the media, the EDM scene still appeared and appears as an opportunity to unify people. Individuality was not the principle of the EDM scene in the UK, especially when it first appeared (after the miners' strike in the mid '80s), and the use of a mask (in the literal and abstract senses) advocated an idea of common identity that one could be a part of, and the concept of aliases was also to be noticed in the lack of codes in this scene.

II-4 Breaking away from the norm, a new sense of social emancipation and freedom?

Advocating freedom, this community is also advocating the emancipation from social codes, at least in the typical social and political senses. Indeed, members of the EDM scene (artists, public members and fans) recognize themselves outside the imposed everyday life codes, in appearance, at least. If we take a look at the way people are dressed and look in typical EDM festivals, even in the UK, we notice that the trend is not the same, especially when we search in the early years of rave culture. Because clubbing became so popular, clubs had to open their doors to larger groups, and it soon turned out the EDM scene in the UK was attractive to the youth, especially from the suburbs and the countryside as well as the city-dwellers: people from very different social classes joined together to celebrate.[51] Thanks to rave culture that appeared in the UK in the early '80s, fashion became a way to express oneself. The trend at this time was to wear colorful clothes, baggies, smiley face t-shirts: almost everything one would not wear in his/her everyday life to go to work or to go and get the kids back from school for example: "club style went from bourgeoisie to bohemian, drawing influences from the dressed-down clubbers of Ibiza and Summer of Love psychedelic imagery."[52]

It was also a way for what is now called LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community members to make their coming out, as any kind of fashion was accepted. Actually, there was one rule at the beginning: following the Summer of Love of

[50] *Ibid*., p.142.

[51] *BBC*, "The Summer of Rave 1989, a BBC documentary". *(*24'25 - 24'45).

[52] CERNI, Mary Grace, *The Evolution of Rave Fashion.*

the late ‘70s, the new era of EDM advocated freedom for all, regarding identity and all of what identity bears in its meaning, that is to say sexual identity as well.

Fashion was also really important, for during the ‘80s, in a time of social crisis, people wanted to gain representation. Thus, the “bourgeoisie“ — as quoted a few lines above — was to be evicted by youngsters from the suburbs who also wanted to go clubbing. Dresses, suits and designer clothes began to give way to tracksuits, hoodies, bright and colorful tops. And it was mainly because of drugs. Indeed, Acid House, a new music genre — as well as a movement — began to flourish in the UK. Promoting the use of acids, club owners and rave organizers were keen on the use of acids and drugs to attract people in their clubs and to their events. And fashion was a good way to react to these drugs, especially thanks to the colours worn by the audience. The whole (drugs associated to bright and colourful clothes) was a stimulating experience for the audience, and people started to try this new experience out. Thanks to this, and the smiley face that was emblematic of this genre, people started gaining their freedom of identity and bodily expression back. This was all about freedom and love. But it was also about physical transformation: women also wanted to gain freedom, and it was to be found in one’s physical appearance as well. Indeed, women started to wear make-up massively, but also necklaces, earrings, bracelets, in order to be attractive.

This physical transformation was and still is an effort at sensuality and sexuality. As I have mentioned before, rave culture and the EDM scene allowed people to find their true identity and to reveal it. Nowadays, it is stil the case: women wear short clothes, such as crop-tops and mini-shorts, but it can go even further, and women sometimes wear a bikini only. The cult of the body is then part of this culture, especially in the current scene. People who wanted to get rid of the social pressure now give importance back to one’s physical looks. However, the fact that women wear less and less clothes shows one thing: people got rid of the social norm that requires to be properly dressed in society when fellow citizens surround you.

The ephemeral atmosphere of bodily expression through clothing and fashion that reigned in the early rave culture and that still does reign among the EDM current scene (especially in festivals) thus proves one thing: the quest for identity has not been completed yet, and people tend to embrace freedom of expression through bodily enactments. The separation from the social pressure was completed though, for people and especially rave attendees managed to get rid of the clothing norms by dressing the

way they wanted, no matter what the person next to them would think. People used to embrace the lack of codes and norms back then and actually still do: nowadays, people escape from the social reality of the society and community they belong to by partying at raves and festivals in a way they would not do in a club for example. The difference is quite clear: some clubs have adopted the social norms back, and attendees to these clubs have to follow a strict and sometimes almost posh dress-code, whereas rave and festival attendees still enjoy the freedom to dress the way they want. However, one question still remains: is this breakaway from the social clothing norms allowing people to stand out from uniformity? Is it a means to get a new and ephemeral identity, or can this be considered a new social code imposed by the EDM community?

As I have said before, the way people dress when attending a festival or a rave can be regarded as a sort of breaking through the doors of escapism, as it can be understood as an attempt from members of this community to flee from their everyday lives. However, this act of seeking freedom from the social pressure can also lead to uniformity. And if it is the case, can there really be a true sense of freedom? Are these not new codes that are being embraced by a large community, then recreating a sense of uniformity and thus losing the idea of individual identity?

My goal here is to discuss the dress-code that is adopted by attendees when going to a festival as a proper dress-code, and not only a way to get rid of the everyday life norms.

Indeed, the theory of the basic rejection of the social codes regarding fashion can not only be seen as the adoption of freedom. The fact that today, the EDM scene has settled in youth culture implies that youth will create new codes based upon what was advocated by their elders before them. I will then challenge the idea of social recognition and integration within the scope of the EDM scene thanks to the idea of identity and uniformity as my objects of study here.

Attendees to EDM festivals such as Electronic Daisy Carnival (EDC, a famous festival that has quite recently been launched in London, UK) often dress the same. Men, or male teenagers, are depicted as wearing “tanks or tees and shorts and accessorize with hats, furry hoods, sunglasses, and bandanas.“[53] And if we make a quick research on the Internet, we will be provided with pictures and photographs of men wearing sunglasses and showing off their muscles such as this one:

[53] LE, Angela, *IHeart Raves*, “What do I wear to a club event vs a rave or festival?“.

Fig.6:[54]



It goes even further, for there are EDM fashion dedicated websites that advise men wondering what to wear when attending an EDM festival and this is the same for women:

Fig.7:[55]



These pictures are followed by a rather interesting sentence:

> "Although many changes have taken place in the culture of the scene and trends have shifted, rave fashion has kept true to the empowerment of self-expression and youthfulness. While ravers today may wear more revealing clothes, the inspiration comes from the same place it always has – a desire to be different, to escape reality, and the need for a creative outlet. Rave fashion is and will always be whatever you want it to be, a reflection of yourself embraced by everyone around you."[56]

This quote is relevant in relation to the question under study, for one reason: the words "yourself"[57] and "everyone"[58] are reflective of the question of identity at festivals and

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[54] Figure 6, picture *Muscle bros at a festival*.

[55] Figure 7, LE, *IHeart Raves*, "The Evolution of Rave Fashion", art. cit.

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] *Ibid*.

raves. Indeed, the two words as linked here convey one key idea: the notion of individual identity is at first given to be a possible thing to put in practice. However, the quote also shows that there are people that will probably dress the way one did. If so, how can the notion of individual identity still be a thing?

Fashion creates a common sense of identity, a cultural identity that many members will adopt. Thus, the idea of individuality can no longer be, and this is why the assumption that there are no codes in the EDM scene, especially when it comes to fashion, is false. Fashion, in its rave and festival use, does provide a sense of liberty, freedom and escapism to its users. It also does help attendees with their quest for integration and recognition within a broader group or community. But social codes still exist in such a scene, especially regarding fashion. Thus, the EDM scene is now determined by its proper norms. Even if EDM community members claim for freedom, they still abide by some rules.

Fashion can be seen as part of what makes the EDM scene a subculture. There is a social conformism within the EDM scene, for it also has codes and norms that members follow. By seeking freedom and the revelation of their true selves, people are actually causing the loss of their individual identities in favour of uniformity and conformity, for they all create a broader entity, a broader community whose members embrace the same codes, even though they are not the ones in use in the UK's everyday life social policies:

> "Perhaps even more absurd than the technological production of music that has distinguished EDM from all other types of music are the unorthodox, material styles and fashions appropriated by members of EDMC. Commodities such as khandi—festival bracelets frequently traded among festival goers—neon-colored clothing, tribal headdresses, and glow-sticks used by members of EDMC serve as identifiers with the culture that are radically different than other commodities produced by the larger, dominant ideology of society and reality."[59]

[59] WAGNER, *Gettin' Weird Together: The Performance Of Identity And Community Through Cultural Artifacts Of Electronic Dance Music Culture* (2014), art. cit., p. 30.

III- Do It Yourself values, or the modern era of music: the underground scene.

Do It Yourself, also known as DIY, was a largely applied principle in the EDM scene, especially when it came to raves and free parties. In such modern times, music is given to be both heard and played by the masses, and its practice has been quite simplified since the appearance of electronic music. People were seeking freedom, and to gain it, they dared to stand out of the established policies and break through the doors of a new world filled with possibilities. A new way of partying soon appeared to have conquered the UK music scene and the way people saw music changed in such a way that they recreated the hippie Summer of Love (‘60s) in the Summer of Rave in the late ‘80s.[60] Music was to be changed by the EDM scene and what it advocated, and most notably because of its DIY policies.

In this final part, I will challenge the concepts of rave parties and free parties as illegal gatherings issuing a lack of freedom in relation to the concept of space and its appropriation by considering the club space as opposed to the warehouses and the outside open world. I will also analyze the concept of sound-systems and its impact on how music was spread. I will consider and challenge the concept of bedroom producer in relation to the status of artist. And I will ultimately discuss the concept of pirate radio as a communication tool to the open and free world, leading to the democratization of a new music genre.

III-1 Rave parties or free parties, or the gathering of music lovers: illegal gatherings emanating from the lack of freedom and the appropriation of space.

A rave party is defined as “a party [usually] at a [warehouse] where rave music (techno or trance) is playing.“[61] “The playful realm of the Temporary Autonomous Zone, or TAZ (Bey 2003), provides a space for transgressive radicalism.“[62] In her study, Alice O’Grady, lecturer at the University of Leeds, UK, discusses the spaces of play within the underground culture of the EDM scene. This quote is rather interesting regarding my object of discussion here, for it gives a clear idea of what raves and free parties can be: ephemeral spaces where people are abiding by new norms, new codes and new rules. This idea of this ephemeral and autonomous party space is thus accurate because it

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[60] *BBC*, “The Summer of Rave 1989, a BBC documentary“.

[61] *Urban Dictionary*.

[62] O'GRADY, Alice, (2012), *Dancecult*, “Spaces of play: the spatial dimensions of underground club culture and locating the subjunctive“, p.100.

perfectly depicts the main idea behind these new ways of partying: their ephemeral aspect is what makes them what they are, for raves and free parties only last for a given time, and are thus not to last forever. As with the concept of mask that has been previously discussed in the second part of my mémoire, I will show that raves and free parties promoters and organizers actually make an illegal use of spaces, although I will show that some of them are well-aware of laws regarding space occupation and the risks they are facing when doing so.

> "The "nowhere / nowhen" space of the underground party (Reynolds 1999: 55) is a curiously floating context that is not necessarily rooted to the precise geographical location in which it takes place but can be inhabited as a place of transience and impermanence that, in turn, imbues it with a certain looseness and freedom."[63]

In this quote, what is important to notice is the word "underground"[64], which can have several meanings: the first and most obvious one is the spatial location of parties in the underground, that is to say parties taking place in a "subterranean environment"[65]; the second, which I will use here to discuss the idea of illegality, is the more philosophical-like notion of something hidden from one's glance, as defined in the Merriam-Webster online dictionary: "produced or published outside the establishment especially by the avant-garde", "existing outside the establishment", "conducted by secret means" and "in or into hiding or secret operation".[66] Thus, we can see that the word underground in itself means that something is hidden, and in this very case, raves and free parties were hidden from the Government and the establishment, or at least they claimed to be so.

In this very sense, the EDM scene advocated freedom through secrecy. This flourishing scene was aiming to remain hidden, and to do so, it relied on the DIY ethics and values, because this allowed this scene to be almost completely independent from the hegemony of the regulated clubs. I say almost completely, for one reason: the activists in this scene had to remain quiet, although they wanted people to come to the parties and join the movement. This last point implied the actual revelation of the EDM scene to the

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[63] *Ibid.*, p.91.

[64] *Ibid.*, p.91.

[65] *Ibid.*, p.91.

[66] *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*.

masses and the Government's glance.[67] The scene finally became more attractive to people from all social classes: two famous rave parties (Sunrise in 1989 and Castlemorton Common in 1992) were held. Those two massive raves were major ones when discussing the EDM history in the UK. Thousands of people attended these events to celebrate political freedom, love, fun and music. However, they led to the decline of the scene in a way: after these events took place, a persecution towards the EDM scene was launched by the British Government, and in cause, it was the gathering of several thousands of people having fun in a way that could not be controlled by higher authorities. And the parties actually got out of the organizers' control as well. But as these events were reaching their peak, an Act was passed by the Government: the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, providing the police forces the right to remove attendees to an undeclared festival or rave.[68] But because of this Act, and the raves still being held, in complete illegality and secrecy though, and even if its numbers were diminished by this Act, the Government had to pass another Act stating that any venue providing alcohol and considered a place of gathering needed a license to be able to keep doing so: the 2003 Licensing Act which is "An Act to make provision about the regulation of the sale and supply of alcohol, the provision of entertainment and the provision of late night refreshment, about offences relating to alcohol and for connected purposes."[69] And those two Acts are also referred to in the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act.[70]

All of these Acts and what they claimed show that the Government had a true willingness to shut the parties down expressed by the Government, hence the desire of rave organizers to keep on making more and more noise as a response to the Government's repressive measures. But this was until police forces got massively deployed on a peacekeeping and law enforcement mission: "The free-party dream was already dead by the time the Government introduced Part 5 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, a wide-ranging measure that targeted not just ravers and travelers but squatters, hunt saboteurs and eco-warriors."[71]

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[67] *BBC*, "The Summer of Rave 1989, a BBC documentary". (34'50-35'53)

[68] *UK Government*, "Criminal Justice and Public Order Act".

[69] *UK Government*, "Licensing Act".

[70] *UK Government*, "Anti-Social Behaviour Act".

[71] LYNKSEY, Dorian, *The Guardian,* "Castlemorton triggers the rave crackdown".

In both BBC documentary “The Summer of Rave 1989“ and Vice documentary “Britain’s Illegal Rave Renaissance, Locked Off“, we are given much information about locations and how they are found and used. But the main ones are apparently to be found outside the inner city-centers, both in warehouses or on fields, basically everywhere far from the potential police and media harassment. I will now discuss the appropriation of space, as linked to the fleeing from regular clubs in favour of the outside space.

> “[…] Rietveld offers what has become a historic basis for EDM’s refusal of a fixed identity (1999, p.65) that has, in turn, assisted with “the articulation of a new space of the non-spectacle” that escaped “traditional sites of surveillance” (Melechi, 1999, p.34). Therefore the resisting of the fixed identity – while observed as a device for the recognition/easy identification of scene participants – is thus defined as “the only ‘tactic’ left [...] an escape, a moment of moving to the other side of the mirror which is held up by established discourses such as the media discourse” (Rietveld, 1999, p.65).“[72]

What is discussed by Cookney (2015) when he quotes Rietveld is the concept of identity, but in a way, this can be understood as the notion of place as well, thanks to the idea of “escape“ and “moving to the other side of the mirror“: one’s identity is not fixed, as well as his / her body. People are free to reveal their true identity, and the other side of the mirror can be interpreted as the world of rave parties that flourishes outside of the social and political norms. As mentioned before, cubs were left empty by ravers after the Government’s numerous attempts to close the clubs and the illegal raves that were taking place. So rave organisers had to find a solution to remain hidden from CCTV and police forces.

People started breaking into industrial wastelands, warehouses and even the outdoors to enjoy the right to party they granted themselves. “Rave locations ranged from farmers’ fields to aircraft hangars“.[73] What is interesting regarding the question under study is this idea of plurality, which can also be linked to the notion of identity. In the documentary published by the BBC, we can see several interviewees who played an important role in the world of raves in the UK. Charlie Colston-Hayer, a rave promoter for Sunrise Festival in 1989, mentions the fact that “it was so important to keep the location secret because if it got out, your party was over. […] It was the most closely kept secret

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[72] COOKNEY, *Masked: Depictions of anonymity in Electronic Dance Music*, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.

[73] *BBC*, “The Summer of Rave 1989, a BBC documentary“, *art. cit. (*27’50-27’53)

since the Holy Grail."[74] The location was kept secret by the organizers as a hidden gem which people would not discover until late at night, and who would only be given directions to find the ephemeral place.

This idea of ephemeral space is also really important here, for it perfectly conveys the values of DIY. Some place is transformed for a few hours, by people who are willing to party in an unusual place, a place which was not initially made to welcome ravers into its midst. And this appropriation of space is often made illegal by the Government. But to many, this is what makes them thrive.

As with the question of identity, the fact that rave promoters don not have any fixed location to a party, to a rave, makes it more underground, more thriving, and this is one of the reasons why youngsters and confirmed ravers had to escape from the club space in favour of a less conventional space. The whole process of finding a location or a venue renders this notion of freedom even more exciting to some. And the latter is also to be found in the sound system concept and its nature.

III-2 Sound systems, or the creation of a very own music system.

DJ Mike Anthony, one of the founders of Rampage Sound System (one of the most famous sound systems and crews to play at the Notting Hill Carnival, where one can listen to Carribean music and other genres on large and loud speakers, aka sound systems), said:

> "As Rampage, we take our music very seriously. […] If we play a genre of music, we want to play it with the justice it deserves. But the sound system culture isn't just about knowing the music – it's about having your own speakers, setting up your own equipment and throwing your own parties, whether it's in a field, a house or the street. It's about transporting it, wiring it up, knowing how to build the speaker box."[75]

A sound system is defined as follows in the Collins dictionary: "A sound system is a set of equipment for playing recorded music, or for making a band's music able to be

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[74] *BBC*, "The Summer of Rave 1989, a BBC documentary", *art. cit.* (27'28-27'47)

[75] LANCASTER, Claire, *Culture Trip,* "Notting Hill Carnival's Biggest Sound System On the Beats That Changed Britain".

heard by everyone at a concert."[76] Sound systems were brought by Jamaicans in the 70s when they emigrated to the United Kingdom. At first, sound systems, as defined above, were largely used to play reggae and dub music, with heavy basses. But this way of playing music on home-made speaker systems reached rave organisers. With the rise of acid house parties in the 80s and 90s in Britain, sound systems offered a lot of possibilities to ravers and free party organisers.

Indeed, and as discussed above, free parties and raves were set in many locations, making them ephemeral. And these new tools would allow them to move from one place to another even more easily than before. The most useful element to a sound system, when referring to the speakers, turntables and other electronic equipments and not to the crew, would be the generator. Often using petrol, this power source does not need to be plugged to another power source. It is fully functional as long as it has petrol in. This way, this allows rave organisers, DJs and sound system crews to settle almost wherever they want. This is what makes them free to move.

In addition, sound systems are often built by the crew members, the DJs and the rave organizers on their own. Of course, they need to buy the different pieces that will make the whole thing work, but then they can build it from scratch and make it look and sound the way they want. This is one of the different DIY elements you can find into the underground rave culture. And again, what is important to understand here is that the opportunity to create a sound system is in everybody's reach, thanks to the DIY values. One can create a sound system to one's image, and that makes it an interesting element of the underground subculture.

A sound system is also seen as a moveable system, it is actually the perfect opposite to a club. The club is the location where people go to party, but the sound system goes both to clubs and to more underground venues; it is the sound system that moves around town and goes from place to place. As with the notion of identity in the EDM subculture, the sound system is not to be fixed and forever located in the same place. This echoes the idea of movement within the EDM community, with people going from a rave to another.

By creating their very own PA system (Public Address system) or sound system, crews and DJs gain a sort of freedom that would never be reachable within the club culture and especially without the DIY values that it embodies: a club is a fixed space, a fixed location, whereas a sound system can move to the will of its creators. There is no

[76] *Collins Dictionary*.

constraint regarding the possible location where to launch a party or a rave, party people and sound system creators are completely free, if we do not take laws into consideration, of course.

Thomas Bangalter once said “We don't want to replace what's around; we just want to widen the possibilities“[77], and this perfectly illustrates the DIY values under study in relation to the notion of sound systems, the notion of the appropriation of space, as well as with the following notion: the bedroom producers.

III-3 The creation of music in one’s own bedroom to large stages, or the transition from intimacy to the action of sharing: bedroom producers to artists.

The image of bedroom producers flourished in the last two decades. This concept is defined as follows in the Urban Dictionary: “Someone who produces music, usually electronic music, using a computer in their bedroom, usually for a small audience. Most bedroom producers use little to no external hardware setup in the creation process.“[78] This definition pictures the bedroom producer as a producer, but not really as a musician. The reason to this is that a bedroom producer is not seen as an instrumentalist. The only instrument he / she needs is a computer, and eventually the Internet:

> “Digital home-recording equipment and computer software have opened the floodgate of music composition, resulting in the appearance of a new type of music artist, one independent from the physical and mental complexities of learning to read, write, and perform (instrumentally) music […] .“[79]

Even though music performances are often seen as musicians playing an instrument (guitar, drums, trumpet, piano, etc.) on stage, the bedroom producer (who can also be a DJ) is not less of a musician than a pianist. This is a completely different approach to the process of creating music, and this is what created the boom of bedroom producers during the last twenty years or so.

By using a computer software, one can create almost any sound and music he / she wants. This idea of creating music on a computer thanks to a software is often regarded within the EDM scene. Indeed, many artists and DJs do use these softwares for it allows them to create non-classical sounds: they have the opportunity to create a sound as well

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[77] *Thomas Bangalter Quotes*, BrainyMedia Inc.

[78] *Urban Dictionary*.

[79] WAGNER, *Gettin’ Weird Together: The Performance Of Identity And Community Through Cultural Artifacts Of Electronic Dance Music Culture, op. cit.*, p. 29.

as to modify a pre-existing sound. Some may also work with samples (extracts from existing tracks, which may be drums, or a guitar riff as well as vocals) which help them to create their own tracks and sounds or even to recreate and remix some tracks created by other artists (which tracks do not necessarily have to be EDM oriented).

The most interesting point to this new way of composing and creating music is that one can teach himself / herself to do so: as with classic instruments, one can be self-taught, but the main difference is that within a day, one can create a track even if it will probably not be perfect. One can surely not do the same with a piano or a guitar, for these instruments take years to master. If anything, music production is also hard to master, but one can create a drums pattern, a bass line, and play along with some piano sounds. One does not need to know the different notes to an instrument, for these are all directly shown on the software screen. This clearly embodies the DIY values, since one person can make a full track with many instrument-like sounds on her own, whereas before it took a whole band to create a full track (since a pianist does not necessarily knows how to play the drums).

This way of creating music is thus definitely linked to the EDM genre, since artists regarded as DJs often work on their own to create their tracks. Of course, many bedroom producers also know how to play instruments, and sometimes even do use them to create their music, but not all of them do. This is this aspect of EDM music producers, which is inherent to the genre, that makes it more open and close to hand to anyone who wants to try and produce music at any time, without specific music skills:

> “In 1996, Steinberg released the VST (Virtual Studio Technology) format which allowed virtual instruments and effects to be used in DAWs [Digital Audio Workstation], and DAW manufacturing companies emulated the digital signal processing in a synth to create VSTis (VST instruments). Bedroom producers were now able to create entire albums at home at only 1% of the cost of hiring a professional studio. “[80]

And nowadays, one major tool allows bedroom producers to get their name and music heard by the masses: the Internet. Many bedroom producers, such as Flume, an Australian EDM music producer, keeps on exchanging with his fans thanks to the Internet. Of course, he is now a well-known artist in the music industry, but he started as a bedroom producer with not much equipment (here referring to hardware). The Internet allows artists

[80] YELLEPEDDI, Vijay, *Medium,* “The Rise of the EDM Bedroom Producer“.

to keep up with their audience, to release new tracks directly on some dedicated platforms, while it was a completely different and longer process back in the 80s and 90s: artists had to get signed on labels and release records on proper physical mediums such as tapes or vinyls. But nowadays, artists can release their new tracks, singles and albums in a simple click of the mouse: they just have to upload it on any platform, and it is out; the wait for an album to be released physically by a record label is over. And this makes the whole notion of fame more reachable than before. An artist, and especially in the EDM scene, is now in turns the producer, the publisher, the communication manager: one can deal with his / her music on his / her own, from the start until the end of the creation and the publishing process: “this is the only time in history that passionate producers have a decent chance of hitting it big and in the worst case, recovering their investment if it doesn’t click — something that would have been impossible to pull off in the 80s and 90s.“[81]

In a time when the EDM genre is expanding all over the world, the DIY values are more than ever a real thing regarding electronic music production, for it definitely “widen[s] the possibilities“[82], as Thomas Bangalter said.

III-4 Pirate radios, or the illegal democratization of a new genre of music.

The impact and importance of music industry have been discussed for years, and still are. In the UK, and even in many other countries, people wanted to fight against music broadcasting policies. In the 60s, rock music and pop music were reaching a larger and larger audience, but the British Government established a ban on the broadcast of these new genres on the radio. At this time, the radio was governed by the Government, which means radios were not free to play and broadcast whatever they wanted; they actually had to follow a set list of rules and tracks to broadcast. And there were only a few official radios after World War Two which were allowed to play music on the radio waves: they all belonged to the British Broadcast Company (BBC) which was the official TV and radio company in Britain at this time.

But as I mentioned before, people were seeking freedom, and this was also to be found in music tastes: with the appearance of rock, pop and later on punk music, people were willing to listen to new music genres. They were looking for change, for an escape from the political and musical choices the Government had made for them. This is when pirate radios popped out of the international waters.

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[81] *Ibid.*

[82] Thomas Bangalter, “We don't want to replace what's around; we just want to widen the possibilities“, see page 30.

> “Nightclub owner and music manager Ronan O'Rahilly was frustrated by the hold that major record labels and other organisations had over BBC radio, and decided to take them all on by broadcasting illegally from a boat off the east coast of England. Radio Caroline started transmitting in 1964, and teenagers in the UK and large parts of Western Europe were able to hear modern pop, rock, jazz and soul on their radios for the first time.“[83]

Radio Caroline was one of the most famous pirate radios throughout Europe, especially thanks to the stand it took against the musical monopoly taken by the Government and the BBC: “pirate stations were a reaction against mainstream radio programming“[84]. As a result, “Caroline inspired others to drop anchor, such as Radio London, and forced the UK government to draft new legislation – 1967's Marine Offences Act – to ban them. It also inspired the launch of the BBC's new pop station, Radio 1.“[85]

Fig. 8[86]



The Marine, &c. Broadcasting (Offences) Act of 1967, chapter 41[87], stated that broadcasting from any ship or aircraft within UK, its sea limits and the international waters was prohibited. It redefined the limits of its maritime territory and defined the terms of ship and aircraft in clear terms. This way, pirate radios would have less chances to be left unpunished.

However, despite the enactment of this Act that was aimed at the suppression of any pirate radio in the UK, the latter kept on flourishing, trying to provide true entertainment and music. Many of them were shut down and their members arrested, but

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[83] PARKIN, *Redbull,* “This is the brief history of pirate radio“.

[84] NICOLOV, Alice, “*The history of UK pirate radio – and why it’s still here“.*

[85] PARKIN, *Redbull,* “This is the brief history of pirate radio“, art. cit.

[86] Figure 8: *Radio Caroline*, the pirate radio.

[87] *UK Government*, “Marine, &c. Broadcasting (Offences) Act“.

they fought for an ideal of life and against the political and social establishment in Britain. One of the most known movies that illustrated the whole concept of pirate radios at this time is *The Boat That Rocked*[88], showing music lovers on a boat in their attempt to provide people with new music and shows.

But pirate radios were not only dedicated to rock and pop music. With the advent of acid house music, as well as drum and bass or jungle, EDM was lacking ways to be played and broadcasted within Britain and abroad, to the exception of rave parties. Ships were not necessarily needed, for it was still regarded as an underground genre, although it was reaching an ever-growing community. However, people were still looking for places where to listen to this newly discovered genre, and since raving in warehouses was forbidden, some of the community members thought about recreating the same pattern that Caroline Radio members thought of before them. Pirate radios were a big thing in the beginning of the '90s in Britain, and especially in London. Young and old ravers started on illegally broadcasting EDM from the "blocks"[89]:

> "Broadcasting from high-rise tower blocks across the country, these stations were involved in a cat-and-mouse game with Department Of Trade And Industry agents, but as these pirates became more and more popular, they invested in new technology that made it harder for the DTI to trace them."[90]

This way of creating a radio and broadcasting is a true aspect of the DIY policies held in the early and underground EDM scene. This concept of pirate radios in London is to be seen through the social situation in Britain at that time (the 90s): people, and especially youngsters, were claiming freedom, jobs, property. They were basically young and old people with dreams and hopes, and one way they found to express themselves to a restricted audience was to build up pirate radios, and sometimes they did it from scratch, with very basic tools: "When they started, they didn't have a clue. The first aerial they put up was on a broom handle."[91] Again, this quote clearly conveys the idea of the DIY concept. There was not much needed to be able to broadcast in one's block and around, one just needed to be patient and determined:

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[88] RICHARD, Curtis, *The Boat That Rocked*, Working Title Films, 2009.

[89] PARKIN, *Redbull,* "This is the brief history of pirate radio", art. cit.

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] NICOLOV, Alice, "The history of UK pirate radio – and why it's still here," art. cit.

> "As those people got sucked into the world of pirate radio, stations became more than just places to play music. You became part of the station, so you started having to go up with them on the roof, carrying scaff poles for the aerials. You'd be up there in the night, with the wind blowing a force ten gale and someone on the phone going, 'Left a bit, right a bit. Stand still!' "[92]

The concept of pirate radio was not only about music itself, it was about creating a proper community, within the pre-established broader community and codes: "For kids coming from council estates, the radio provided a sense of camaraderie. "If you weren't accepted in other walks of life, pirate gave you the feeling of, 'It's me and my mates against the world,'" […] "It was definitely a 'council estate of mind,'" […] "[93] Once again, this proves the creation of a subculture within the broader and general culture: if one can not fit in the pre-existing community, then he/she can find his/her place within the pirate radio community. Thanks to this quote, we are also given the chance to understand the notion of social class: pirate radios, at least in London, did not offer an opportunity to join a new community, but it actually offered an opportunity to join one to those who did not have any opportunity to join the larger community. In this sense, pirate radios can be seen as creators of independent communities, and as such, creators of subcultures. And again, those who did not follow the established patterns and ways of life offered by the Government were quickly seen and described as troublemakers:

> "Throughout pirate radio's history – but particularly with the genesis of grime – pirate was viewed frostily by the mainstream. On top of the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) mission to eradicate pirates from the airwaves, the communities themselves were under attack. The media painted pirates as an underground drug/gangster movement, with a cycle of violence perpetrated by the music they promoted."[94]

This perfectly proves the idea that being a deviant to the norms was very badly seen by the Government. Because these people were advocating the DIY values in order to find what they were not given, the media quickly turned their way of life, their values, and the larger DIY concept into something bad, something frightening. In that sense, these people were labeled as criminals and would thus remain labelled as such as long as the

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[92] *Ibid.*

[93] *Ibid.*

[94] *Ibid.*

Government would not have a better perception of them, of their values and the music they broadcast. And all of this began because of music tastes and the lack of representation on the airwaves of public and governmental radios. The use of the word “pirate“ is not a coincidence: members of this community did not abide by the set rules, they were doing their own thing, no matter what the Government would say and do; this was the basic principle of pirate radios.

What is also interesting about them is their ephemeral aspect. Some of those radios did not last up to two days: “New stations come and go all the time, literally overnight.“[95] The reason to this may be the way they were built up: by advocating the DIY values, the creators did not always have many means to keep their radio on air, they sometimes just could not keep it up to their expectancies. However, some pirate radios still managed to make it until today. This is the case for Rinse or Radar radios, which were both pirates at the very beginning. The lasting presence of these radios on the airwaves is quite easy to explain: in order to fight back against the Government and its will to shut down all the pirate radios, it now broadcasts legally online. Of course, doing so is less pirate than it used to be, but this allows them to keep on broadcasting underground music. Thus, they still belong to this underground subculture, even if the whole process of broadcasting is now more legal than before.

Nowadays, we can count at least thirty London-based pirate radios, which means some communities are still willing to broadcast music according to their definition of underground music that they think is not always broadcast by public radios. There is still this willingness to emancipate from the Government and the musical establishment.

[95] *Ibid.*

Conclusion:

All in all, the EDM scene has had a major impact on the British youth and even on the elderly from the punk generation. As the UK was facing a major employment crisis, the masses felt like they were left behind, not being taken into consideration by the Government. Music has been and still is a way for people to express themselves, and can thus be seen as a way to denounce a situation and then to change mentalities. Punk music is known for being rebellious, almost chaotic. EDM can be seen as quite similar, especially regarding the chaotic depiction the media and the Government convey, although it is actually well organised.

With the EDM scene came an ideal, a desire to set free from the Government's constant gaze upon its participants, from the social division the social crisis (unemployment, people being impoverished) the country was facing. Some people fought back in order to protest against the social policies Margaret Thatcher (UK Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990) put into practice (families whose members were on strike would see their social benefits cut down, and they would become subject to taxes, taxes were increased, etc.). While punk music advocated a loud and clear social rebellion, the EDM scene advocated a more underground way of existing.

A movement is born out of the EDM scene in the UK, which is also known for the raves carried out on its land. Indeed, the British youth found a way to freedom with the EDM scene: people had the chance to go clubbing, at least for a short time, before the Government shut the parties down in clubs thanks to various bills and restrictions. Clubbing in the EDM advent era was less gentrified than it used to be with other genres of music, and it was a time (in the 80s) when people from all social backgrounds would join together for a time of self appreciation and saw an opportunity to get to know each other. The working class found a place where to emancipate itself from the social trouble and harassment, a way of expressing themselves, a place called the underground where they were allowed to exist the way they truly were for a short period of time. The underground values the EDM scene embraced allowed people to go clubbing dressed as they wished, to party the way they wanted, regardless the social codes and norms they had to follow in their everyday life. In that sense, the EDM scene advocated a new way of life, far from all the social restrictions: it created a subculture, using some pre-existing social codes and implementing new ones.

It created a new community of EDM music lovers, especially when acid house parties were launched in the 80s. The question of identity is quite important regarding the

idea of subculture, for one has both a social and a personal identity: one does not behave the same way regarding who he / she is in company of. For example, one will not behave the same way when he / she is with his / her boss than when he / she is with his / her friends. Here, social norms define the way one has to behave. But with the underground aspect of the EDM scene, people got rid of all the social codes, for they found a place dedicated to their true existence. At night, party-goers and rave participants were no longer miners, cashiers or else, they were numerous identities and personalities creating a new and wider community: the ravers. This way, the social pressure endured by the masses was left at the entrance door, as they identified as ravers, no matter what social background they belonged to.

But soon the Government made an attempt to get rid of clubbing, mentioning drug use as a reason for the closure of many clubs across the UK. So people had to find new places where to enjoy their newly retrieved rights, and they soon moved to warehouses and open fields to party. Thanks to the Do It Yourself (DIY) values that were in use in the codes of the underground raves, rave organisers found a breach in the system that the upper world, led by the Government, had set for them.

Rave promoters, organisers and party-goers used these places to hide from the Government and the media, from the police and the troubles they could face if they got caught. The game of hide-and-seek started, and the Government started to chase down any illegal rave that was not following the existing codes which were regulating the British nightlife. More bills and bans were passed by the British Government in order to dismantle the British rave culture, but parties went on. Thanks to sound systems and portable generators, rave organisers were able to set raves almost everywhere, as long as police forces did not hear of them.

These aspects of the EDM scene make it underground, but they also make it a subculture, for it existed not only in regular clubs, but in a much more illegal way in private places that were not made to greet such a community. The EDM scene in the UK can be considered a subculture, for it created its own ways of existing within the political and social establishment from the 80s to the present day in the UK. Raves are stil organised throughout the country, and even though the EDM scene is not really underground anymore for it has been democratized in the last decade with the emergence of EDM superstars, it still has its own codes and norms that members of this ever growing community cherish and embrace.

Didactics:

Introduction

Dans cette seconde partie de mon mémoire, je vais proposer une exploitation pédagogique de documents traitant de la question étudiée ci-dessus en adoptant un point de vue didactique. Ainsi, je vais proposer des pistes d'exploitation dans le but de démontrer comment j'ai pu traiter de ce sujet avec mes classes.

J'enseigne au collège Victor Considérant à Salins les Bains, à des classes de Troisième générale ainsi qu'à une classe de Quatrième générale. Dans cette seconde partie, je me concentrerai sur les classes de Troisième générale, puisque c'est avec eux que j'ai traité du sujet de mon mémoire. Ces deux classes sont composées de vingt-huit élèves, élèves au niveau de maîtrise de la langue anglaise très hétérogène. Cependant, ce sont des classes avec lesquelles il est facile de travailler, notamment grâce à l'intérêt qu'ils portent aux sujets choisis.

La classe de Troisième générale s'inscrit dans le cycle 4, à savoir le second cycle du secondaire. L'apprentissage des langues dans le secondaire s'inscrit dans une réglementation et un cadrage bien défini par les directives du Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, ainsi que par le Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECRL) qui définit les différents niveaux de maîtrise des compétences à acquérir par les élèves. Aussi, en fin de Troisième générale, et en vue de l'obtention du Diplôme National du Brevet (DNB), les élèves doivent valider les cinq compétences langagières (à savoir s'exprimer à l'oral en continu et en interaction, comprendre à l'oral, s'exprimer à l'écrit et comprendre à l'écrit) en atteignant le niveau A2 dans ces cinq compétences langagières, et en atteignant le niveau B1 dans deux de ces cinq compétences.

La séquence traitée dans cette partie de mémoire s'intitule "Underground arts: are they still underground?" et s'inscrit donc dans des objectifs langagiers de niveau A2 mais aussi de niveau B1, puisqu'elle a été étudiée en fin d'année scolaire. J'ai inscrit cette séquence dans les thèmes « Langages », puisque le but est de pouvoir percevoir l'art comme moyen de dénoncer et de s'exprimer, ainsi que « Rencontres avec d'autres cultures », puisque l'objet de cette séquence est la culture de l'art urbain et de l'art underground. Elle traite de l'art urbain au sens général, autrement appelé "street art"; le point central de cette séquence est donc l'art du graffiti, son impact et son importance

dans la société actuelle. Par ailleurs, et en lien avec mon mémoire, elle traite également de la musique électronique comme art “underground“. Le lien entre “street art“ et musique électronique établi dans cette séquence réside en la question de la place de l’art urbain et de la musique électronique dans la société actuelle: est-ce que ces arts sont encore perçus comme “underground“, ou sont-ils devenus reconnus et ainsi qualifiables de “mainstream“?

Dans un premier temps, je vais décliner les différents objectifs visés de la séquence en procédant à la présentation de cette dernière.

Je proposerai ensuite une partie plus didactique et pédagogique dans laquelle je présenterai les documents étudiés en lien avec mon mémoire ainsi que leur exploitation.

Enfin, je présenterai l’intérêt culturel que cette séquence a pu avoir tant pour les élèves que pour moi.

I- Présentation de la séquence et objectifs.

Cette séquence se décline en plusieurs niveaux d'objectifs. L'objectif premier ici est culturel, mais elle couvre tout de même les différents objectifs préconisés par l'Institution concernant la création de séquences. Elle s'articule autour de deux tâches (ou projets) à réaliser par les élèves, respectivement intitulées tâche intermédiaire et tâche finale. Ces deux tâches sont bien distinctes l'une de l'autre, mais ont tout de même un ancrage et un but communicationel commun. En effet, la tâche intermédiaire permet aux élèves de se préparer à la réalisation de la tâche finale. Ces tâches ne sont par ailleurs pas évaluées, mais comptent dans l'évaluation des compétences à acquérir en fin de cycle 4 par les élèves. Ainsi, elles s'articulent comme suit:

- Tâche intermédiaire: "Banksy has been arrested in Bristol and is now being sued by the Mayor. As Banksy's attorney, you have to defend the case of your client. Answer the judge's questions by telling about his work and its impact on the communities and the world we live in, in order to oppose the prosecution's statement."
- Tâche finale: "As a curator, you want to introduce some street art artworks to the Tate Museum. You've juste heard about Banksy's artwork that has self-destroyed and you want to have in the museum, but your colleague does not agree with you: he thinks street art and underground arts belong to the street, not to museums. Make a statement on why you think it would be a great thing to have such an artwork in a museum, and debate with your colleague about it."

Ces tâches visent donc à faire travailler et maîtriser la compétence d'expression orale en interaction (EOI) en fin de séquence. Comme mentionné ci-dessus, le but de la tâche intermédiaire est de préparer les élèves à proposer une production claire et efficace afin de faire montre de leur acquisition de la compétence langagière d'EOI.

Les différents objectifs de la séquence sont déclinés comme suit:

Objectifs de la séquence	
Lexicaux	Le lexique de l'art (street art, stencil, painting, artist, canvas…), la dénonciation (this artist criticizes the way… / this artist denounces…), de l'expression (this artist's drawing means that… / this mural conveys the idea that…), de l'engagement (this artwork stands for / this mural stands against…), du milieu underground (undiscovered, odd, bizarre, not famous, illlegal, rave…) en comparaison avec le milieu mainstream (mainstream, fame, famous, legal, outside, law…).

Objectifs de la séquence	
Grammaticaux	Rebrassage: prétérit / présent simple / présent Be + V-ING (description d'image) Introduction: present perfect.
Phonologiques	L'accentuation pour convaincre, l'intonation dans la phrase affirmative à contraster avec celle de la phrase interrogative.
Citoyens	L'engagement et l'expression à travers l'art. Le respect d'autrui en tant que personne mais aussi le respect des propriétés de chacun.
Sociolinguistiques	Les différences d'accents britanniques, les différents niveaux de langue.
Méthodologiques	Savoir faire une sélection d'éléments afin de procéder à un plaidoyer pour défendre et débattre de l'impact de l'art.
Pragmatiques	Savoir relater des évènements afin d'appuyer son argumentation dans le but de convaincre un auditoire.

La séquence se déroule en douze étapes, de manière à établir une réelle progression dans l'appropriation des savoirs par les élèves. Ainsi, je vais présenter ces douze étapes de manière synthétique, afin de montrer la progression proposée avec cette séquence.

En premier lieu, je procède à une anticipation à la séquence. Ceci permet de proposer une entrée dans la séquence, de dégager des idées mais aussi et surtout de voir quelles sont les connaissances des élèves sur le sujet de la séquence. Ici, je propose un montage photo avec plusieurs oeuvres de street art afin que les élèves s'expriment sur leur ressenti sur ces oeuvres. Cela permet de lancer un début de débat sur la nature du street art ainsi que sur les aspects positifs et négatifs de cette forme d'art. Je propose également de définir le concept d'art underground.

Suite à cette anticipation, je propose aux élèves de procéder à une étape de compréhension écrite d'un article tiré du site du *British Council* intitulé *History of graffiti*[96]*.* Ce document me permet d'établir une chronologie de l'évolution du graffiti. Il me permet également d'introduire l'idée d'art en opposition à l'idée de vandalisme souvent perçue dans le graffiti.

En deuxième étape, je propose une compréhension orale à partir d'un document vidéo intitulé *Banksy creates street art and mystery*[97]. Le but de ce document est de permettre aux élèves de prendre conscience de l'engouement pour certaines des oeuvres de Banksy, un artiste britannique mondialement connu, et de montrer aux élèves la gloire

[96] *British Council*, ''LearnEnglishTeens - The History of Graffiti''.

[97] TRACY, Ben, *CBS News*, "Banksy Creates Street Art and Mystery".

que l'artiste rencontre même si son identité n'est pas connue. L'étude de ce document me permet également de montrer aux élèves l'aspect underground / secret de l'artiste graffeur.

En troisième étape, je propose une autre compréhension orale à partir d'une nouvelle vidéo intitulée *Banksy: Better out than in*[98]. Le but de l'étude de ce document est de montrer la pluralité des oeuvres de Banksy, on peut aussi voir que la vente d'oeuvres dans la rue ne marche pas vraiment, bien que ses oeuvres soient connues. Ainsi, ce document permet d'amener les élèves à se questionner sur l'impact de l'art et surtout du street art: qu'est-ce que l'art, et dans quelles conditions est-il le mieux présenté?

En quatrième étape, je propose aux élèves de réaliser une recherche sur Internet, aussi appelée "webquest", dans le but de préparer la tâche intermédiaire. La recherche se fait sur le site web http://www.artbanksy.com[99] qui propose bon nombre d'informations sur Banksy et sur ses oeuvres. Ainsi, les élèves pourront formuler des arguments en faveur ou contre Banksy à partir des informations qu'ils auront trouvé sur le site.

En cinquième étape, les élèves procèdent à la réalisation de la tâche intermédiaire mentionnée au début de cette première partie.

En sixième étape, je propose l'étude d'un document écrit et procède donc à une compréhension écrite sur un document intitulé *The Relationship Between Graffiti And Electronic Music: the integration between the two worlds might be said to relate to the personalities of those caught up between both subcultures*.[100] Le but de l'étude de ce document est de voir que la musique électronique est à la musique ce que le street art est à l'art graphique: les deux arts se confondent dans les valeurs "underground" et "urban". On y lit l'aspect peu traditionnel de la musique électronique et du graffiti, décrit comme peu conventionnel. On y lit également le terme "subculture" et on y comprend l'idée d'art rebelle.

En septième étape, je propose l'étude d'une vidéo intitulée *See No Evil Project*[101] qui traite du festival de street art éponyme situé à Bristol. Le but de l'étude de ce document est de faire comprendre aux élèves que le street art a une place légitime dans le monde de l'art et que beaucoup de personnes font vivre cet art urbain. Il s'agit également de voir que cette forme d'art se démocratise, à tel point que la ville de Bristol a

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98 *BANKSYFILM*, "Better Out Than In - The Movie".

99 http://www.artbanksy.com

100 *The Ransom Note UK*, "The Relationship Between Graffiti And Electronic Music: the integration between the two worlds might be said to relate to the personalities of those caught up between both subcultures".

101 *Hurricane Media*, "See No Evil Project - Nelson Street Bristol".

accordé le droit à certaines personnes de monter un festival de street art dans la ville et que cette dernière finance ce projet.

En huitième étape, je propose l'étude d'une nouvelle vidéo intitulée *Graffiti: Art or Vandalism?*[102] Le but ici est de voir que le street art peut à la fois déplaire mais aussi plaire: le street art dans la rue agace certaines personnes, comme les commerçants par exemple. Par ailleurs, le street art se démocratise puisqu'il trouve sa place dans des musées. On voit donc l'appropriation culturelle que les musées font du street art qui n'était à la base pas destiné à être affiché sur les murs de musées. Ici, il est important de débattre de la place du street art et de ses origines ainsi que de son but. Par ailleurs, il faut aussi débattre de l'accès facilité à la perception du street art pour certaines personnes qui n'appréciaient pas cela en temps normal, alors qu'elles finissent par l'apprécier comme toute autre forme d'art à partir du moment où elles voient ces oeuvres dans un musée.

En neuvième étape, je propose à nouveau l'étude d'un article intitulé *London's Famous Graffiti Tunnel to Become a Focal Point of a Regeneration Project*[103]. L'étude de ce document a pour but de montrer l'importance du street art au niveau culturel mais aussi l'impact que cela peut avoir sur l'économie et le tourisme d'une ville comme Londres. Il s'agit également de voir qu'un lieu public en extérieur peut être considéré comme un musée ouvert qui attire énormément de monde et autour duquel se construisent beaucoup de structures touristiques socialement et économiquement attractives.

En dixième étape, je propose une dernière compréhension écrite avec un article intitulé *Is Electronic Music Still Underground?*[104] Le but ici est de montrer que la musique électronique, tout comme le street art, alors considéré comme underground, n'est plus vraiment considérée comme tel avec l'avènement de l'EDM dans les festivals grâce à de nombreux artistes de renom (que les élèves connaissent très probablement, puisque cette gloire de l'EDM est assez récente et se développe de manière exponentielle depuis les cinq voire dix dernières années).

La fin de la séquence s'articule autour de l'évaluation sommative (ou finale) puis de la réalisation de la tâche finale mentionnée en début de partie.

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[102] TRACY, Ben, *CBS*, "Graffiti: Art or Vandalism?", April 23, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2Eu2na_diY.

[103] MCCARTHY, Annemarie, *Lonely Planet*, "London's Famous Graffiti Tunnel to Become a Focal Point of a Regeneration Project," November 16, 2017, https://www.lonelyplanet.com/news/2017/11/16/londons-graffiti-tunnel-leake-street/.

[104] *MN2S*, "Is Electronic Music Still Underground?," November 21, 2016, https://mn2s.com/news/features/is-electronic-music-still-underground/

Je vais désormais procéder à la présentation plus approfondie des documents retenus en lien avec mon mémoire, ainsi qu'aux approches didactiques et pédagogiques adoptées dans la mise en oeuvre de cette séquence.

II- Didactique et pédagogie: quels documents exploiter et comment les exploiter?

Je ne pouvais décemment pas aborder le thème des raves et autres aspects inhérents à la culture EDM avec des classes de collège. Il a donc été nécessaire que je trouve une manière moins directe de traiter de la question de sous-culture avec des collégiens et collégiennes.

J'ai tenté de penser cette séquence de sorte à apporter des connaissances aux élèves tout en partant de ce qui les intéressait. Aussi, pour susciter leur intérêt pour cette séquence mais surtout leur implication directe, je propose aux élèves de présenter brièvement un artiste de street art ou un artiste producteur de musique électronique (quel que soit le sous-genre) en début de séance, le tout en solitaire ou par paire, accompagné d'une oeuvre de cet artiste (court extrait musical dans le cas de la musique). De cette manière, les élèves sont motivés à prendre la parole puisqu'ils présentent quelque chose qui leur plait, et cela s'inscrit parfaitement dans la séquence. Bien évidemment, après avoir défini le concept d'art underground en début de séquence, les camarades du ou des élèves qui présentent leur artiste doivent définir si l'oeuvre en question peut être considérée comme underground ou non, tout en justifiant leur choix. Ceci représente le rituel de début de séance, à laquelle j'ajoute un rituel de fin de séance en leur faisant écouter un extrait musical d'un sous-genre d'EDM en leur demandant à nouveau si cet extrait musical est qualifiable d'underground ou non. Je leur donne également le nom du sous-genre musical auquel correspond l'extrait. Bien évidemment, les élèves doivent justifier leur choix de réponse brièvement.

Le premier document retenu en lien avec mon sujet de recherche est un document écrit intitulé *The Relationship Between Graffiti And Electronic Music: the integration between the two worlds might be said to relate to the personalities of those caught up between both subcultures*.[105] L'étude de ce document constitue l'étape six de ma progression de séquence. Comme mentionné en première partie, ce document permet d'établir le lien entre graffiti et EDM. Ce document n'est pas traité comme brut, j'ai procédé à quelques modifications avant de l'exploiter avec mes élèves. Un document brut et authentique n'est pas constamment propice à l'exploitation par des élèves du secondaire, et encore moins par des collégiens. Il est donc important de manipuler le document, de le didactiser et de le rendre accessible tout en gardant un certain niveau de difficulté (en

[105] Voir Annexe 1

adéquation avec le niveau des élèves) pour pouvoir prétendre à apporter une chance de progression aux élèves.

Je distribue le document accompagné de la liste du vocabulaire important correspondante. Ce vocabulaire donné en même temps permet aux élèves de pouvoir saisir la globalité du texte avec plus de facilités, puisque cela limite le non accès au sens direct de certains segments, et permet donc de rassurer les élèves sur la base d'une liste définie du vocabulaire à retenir de la séquence:

Dans un premier temps, je procède à une lecture collégiale du document. Ainsi, les élèves peuvent entendre la prononciation de certains mots qui peuvent leur sembler compliqués à prononcer. Pour rendre ce travail de prononciation efficace, je reviens sur certains mots suite à la lecture complète du document dans le but de les faire répéter de manière collégiale par les élèves, et ce au moins deux voire trois fois par mots pour qu'ils tentent d'assimiler au mieux la prononciation des mots donnés.

Une fois cette étape de lecture et de répétition collégiale des termes importants et / ou compliqués, les élèves passent à l'étape de relecture individuelle. Pendant cette relecture, les élèves prennent en note les termes inconnus ou ceux qu'ils estiment importants pour cette étude de document juste à côté de la liste de vocabulaire donnée. Suite à la relecture individuelle, nous passons à une mise en commun du vocabulaire inconnu, incompris ou jugé important par les élèves afin de procéder à une étape de mise en contexte pour leur faire deviner le sens de ces termes ou, en dernier lieu, une étape de traduction des termes en français. J'essaye de m'effacer le plus possible, et incite les élèves à communiquer entre eux lors de cette étape, pour valoriser leurs connaissances personnelles pouvant leur permettre d'aider leurs camarades en difficulté.

Une fois le lexique dégagé et compris, les élèves passent à l'étape de compréhension écrite à proprement parler. Cette étape se déroule en deux temps: en premier lieu, les élèves doivent répondre à ce que l'on appelle la compréhension globale; ensuite ils doivent répondre à des questions de compréhension détaillée.

La compréhension globale consiste à trouver les repérages de base dans un document. Pour trouver ces repérages, il n'est pas nécessaire de formuler de vraies questions telles que "Who are the characters?" ou encore "Where does the scene take place?". En effet, je donne des mots clés tels que "Place(s)?" ou encore "Character(s)?" pour guider les élèves dans la recherche des repérages basiques.

Par ailleurs, l'étape de compréhension détaillée s'articule autour de questions clairement formulées pour guider les élèves de la manière la plus claire possible. Les

questions reprennent les énoncés issus du document que je reformule sous la forme interrogative. Les questions suivent l'ordre d'apparition dans le document, ainsi les élèves savent que la réponse à la question numéro une se trouve avant la réponse à la question deux. Cela constitue également une forme de guidage, puisque cela évite aux élèves de chercher dans le document entier.

Enfin, nous procédons à l'étape de correction des questions de compréhension

WORDBANK	**To enhance**: améliorer **Mood**: humeur **Behaviour**: comportement **Taste**: goût **Raving**: aller en rave party **Lack**: le manque de… **Exposure**: couverture médiatique **Disregarded**: méprisé / ignoré **Lane**: ruelle **Subculture**: sous-culture **To showcase**: mettre en valeur **Mischievous**: espiègle/malicieux **Odd**: étrange **To make a living**: gagner sa vie **Record sleeves**: pochette de vinyle **To move on**: passer à autre chose	**Your words:**

globale et détaillée. Pour ce faire, je demande à un(e) élève désigné(e) comme assistant(e) du professeur en début d'heure de venir au tableau afin de noter les réponses de ses camarades. L'assistant(e) professeur désigne au choix un(e) élève qui doit lui fournir la réponse à la question donnée, puis il ou elle note cette même réponse au tableau. Cela permet de faire parler deux élèves à la fois, puisque l'assistant(e) professeur et un(e) autre élève s'expriment à tour de rôle. Une fois la réponse donnée puis notée au tableau, je demande aux autres élèves s'ils sont d'accord avec cette réponse, et demande qui a répondu la même chose. Cela me permet de me rendre compte de qui a compris le document, et qui ne l'a pas compris, que ce soit dans sa globalité ou en détails. Si la réponse est correcte, j'invite les élèves à la noter dans leur cahier, en dessous de la question se trouvant sur la fiche de préparation. Cette étape permet la vérification de la bonne compréhension du document par les élèves, et permet d'ancrer les connaissances acquises grâce à l'étude du document dans le cahier des élèves.

Je procède exactement de la même manière pour le second document en lien avec mon mémoire, à savoir l'article étudié en étape dix de ma séquence intitulé *Is electronic music still underground?*[106]

[106] Voir Annexe 2

Conclusion:

Ce sujet est d'actualité avec les différents festivals consacrés à l'EDM qui voient le jour chaque année. En effet, cet effet de mode est devenu très important chez les jeunes britanniques et américains qui sont de plus en plus nombreux à assister à des festivals ou des concerts où l'EDM est le genre musical dominant. Ainsi, il est intéressant de parler de la musique et de son impact avec les jeunes générations, qui font parfois partie des personnes à consommer la musique (électronique) de manière quotidienne. Ce fait de société se reflète chaque jour sur les plateformes de streaming musical qui peuvent parfois recenser les musiques les plus écoutées par tranches d'âge des auditeurs. Il est également intéressant de les sensibiliser sur la question de la nature de la musique, et de son importance dans la société actuelle.

Cette séquence s'inscrit dans le parcours artistique et culturel[107] notamment grâce à l'étude du street art, mais aussi grâce à l'étude de la musique électronique ou EDM, puisque ces formes d'art sont traitées sous la problématique de l'aspect "underground" qui étaient auparavant inhérent à ces formes d'expression artistique. Il est intéressant de voir que le street art, tout comme l'EDM, étaient à la base des arts destinés à rester dans l'ombre, mais que cette situation a changé au fil des années. Ces documents proposent une évolution du changement de statut de ces formes d'expression artistiques et nous permet de nous prendre conscience des raisons de ce changement.

L'exploitation de mon sujet de mémoire dans une séquence n'a pas été simple, mais j'ai trouvé intéressant de procéder à des recherches de documents pouvant s'intégrer dans une séquence sur les arts urbains et undergrounds. Cela m'a permis de sensibiliser mes élèves à un art que j'affectionne particulièrement. Cela m'a également permis de les sensibiliser sur le statut de la musique qu'ils peuvent écouter ainsi que de leur faire découvrir de nouveaux genres musicaux. Ainsi, j'ai pu, par l'étude des documents et pas les extraits musicaux écoutés en classe, leur faire découvrir des choses qu'ils ne connaissaient pas forcément, et ils ont eu l'occasion de faire de même avec les artistes et musiques qu'ils ont présenté. Cette séquence a permis un enrichissement mutuel des savoirs intellectuels et culturels grâce au partage des connaissances de chacun, ainsi qu'une ouverture sur le monde de l'art urbain et underground.

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[107] *Eduscol*, "Le parcours d'éducation artistique et culturelle", http://eduscol.education.fr/cid74945/le-parcours-education-artistique-culturelle.html

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Appendix:

Appendix 1:

Document 1, “The Relationship Between Graffiti And Electronic Music: the integration between the two worlds might be said to relate to the personalities of those caught up between both subcultures“*, The Ransom Note*, [Online]. https://www.theransomnote.com/culture/articles/the-relationship-between-graffiti-and-electronic-music/

The Relationship Between Graffiti And Electronic Music: the integration between the two worlds might be said to relate to the personalities of those caught up between both subcultures.

Taken and adapted from an article on https://www.theransomnote.com/culture/articles/the-relationship-between-graffiti-and-electronic-music/

Art offers perspective, contrast and has the ability to **enhance** our **mood**. It exists perpetually all around us, ever changing and progressive.

Perhaps this is why art has always been fascinating to me. This notion, placed categorically alongside those primary school classes in which you were directly ordered to colour within the lines, may be the very reason for my **behaviour**, **tastes** and interests in adulthood: a love for graffiti, music and their association.

Little is done to encourage young people to discover electronic music, unless you were raised in a family in which your parents spent time **raving** during past times. This is the result of a significant **lack** of public **exposure** towards the genre. Schools train students to use "instruments" in a "traditional" sense, computers and machines are regarded as being less real or valid. It is the first in many comparisons which tie the genre to graffiti - an art form which is widely ignored, **disregarded** and lacking in credibility.

I certainly didn't hate art itself. Who were these people that decided what qualified as worthy and what did not? Why must you colour within the lines? I remember my parents being shocked by tags which covered the **lanes** near our house when I, on the other hand, was intrigued by the mysterious persons who drew on walls during nighttime. How long did it take? Who were they? Why did they do it? Was it "art"?

The link between the two **subcultures** has evolved across time. Various films **showcased mischevious** marauders, many would define them as little more than criminals.

Soon, graffiti, electronic music and all things **odd** became the accompaniment to a world of rebellious "art" and the crusades of those whom had drawn outside the lines.

The faceless dancer embraces culture under the darkness of a club while another walks in solitude in the middle of restricted spaces for the purpose of cultural expression. Dance music and graffiti offer an alter ego which allows someone to disappear and become something else.

The lifestyle of a graffiti artist doesn’t allow him **to make a living**. As a result, **record sleeves and** rave flyers have offered a sense of continuity to those who have **moved on** from running around in the dark.

Appendix 2:

Document 2, “Is electronic music still underground?“, 2016, *MN2S*, [Online]. https://mn2s.com/news/features/is-electronic-music-still-underground/

Is electronic music still underground?

Taken and adapted from an article on https://mn2s.com/news/features/is-electronic-music-still-underground/

Being ‘**underground**’ has been a large part of electronic music history and culture, but with the genre’s **rise** in popularity, is it really correct to use this term? Writer David Ireland **argued** that electronic music’s commercial success in the “last five or six years” means it can no longer be said to be ‘underground’ in the way it once was. Is he right?

Often listen to by oppressed minorities such as the black and LGBT communities, electronic music took place away from the **mainstream**, in **venues** most people would never visit, and with sounds most people would never listen to or understand. It makes sense to call this music underground because that’s exactly what it was. Illegal raves and club nights had to be underground or the police would shut them down. Yes there were a few **breakthrough** house hits, but electronic music remained in the clubs.

Despite its underground beginnings, there is no doubt that electronic music has become mainstream in a way many thought impossible. Trax Records founder Screamin’ Rachael herself told us about her struggle to be taken seriously as a musician because many of her peers did not consider house music to be ‘real music’. Now, all music is about dance. Turn on the radio, and you will hear countless chart hits that are undeniably influenced, at least in part, by electronic music composition and trends. Justin Bieber, the archetypal mainstream child star, has worked with electronic cool kid Skrillex for some of his most popular hit tracks.

Several of the biggest artists of the moment, in fact, are DJ-producers. Calvin Harris, David Guetta, Avicii, deadmau5, Diplo. These artists are selling out arenas with their brand of electronic dance music. But that’s where the problem comes in. This is all because these artists, whose music is undeniably based on electronica, are referred to as EDM artists. And especially in recent years, the term EDM has become somewhat of a dirty word in the ‘real’ electronic music community. To differentiate house music that continues in the vein of original house, techno and rave’s pioneers, electronic fans have started using the term ‘underground’ to define themselves once again.

This is a quote attributed to Frank Zappa: “The mainstream comes to you. But you have to go to the underground.” You have to make the decision to be a fan. You won’t hear underground electronic music in the background unless you know where to find it. That, for many, makes electronic music still underground.